

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 1921

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The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Bertram, *Maree*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock p.m.

QUESTIONS.

COAL CONVEYED TO GYMPIE BY RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

Mr. BRAND (*Burrum*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. What quantity of coal did the Railway Department convey to Gympie from coal areas south of that centre for year ended June, 1921, as to—(a) Railway Department; (b) other consignors?"

"2. What quantity of coal did the Railway Department convey to Gympie from coal areas north of that centre for year ended June, 1921, as to—(a) Railway Department; (b) other consignors?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Larcombe, *Keppel*) replied—

"1. (a) 18,754 tons; (b) 1,595 tons.

"2. (a) 1,457 tons; (b) 544 tons."

EXPENSES OF NORTHERN TOUR OF HON. J. G. APPEL.

HON. J. G. APPEL (*Albert*) asked the Home Secretary—

"1. Is it not a fact that the Under Secretary accompanied me on my Northern tour, and thus had a first-hand knowledge of all expenditure incurred, and was thus in the position to control any illegitimate outlay?"

"2. Is it not a fact that every item of expenditure was represented by a voucher giving details thereof?"

"3. Will he explain why—when hon. members on the Government benches, from their recent speeches, had a full knowledge of the details of such expenditure, only to be obtained from such vouchers—that in spite of my repeated requests such vouchers are not immediately available on the table of the House for the information of members generally and the taxpayers of the State?"

"4. Was the expenditure involved in a special visit to the Cloncurry district, including Charters Towers, Hughenden, Cloncurry, Mount Emu, Friesland, Mount Elliott, Hampden, and the Duchess—made at the urgent request of the late Hon. William Hamilton and John May, the parliamentary members for the electorates visited—who, with certain friends whom they requested permission to invite, were members of such party, and whose expenses were borne by the Mines Department, included and debited as part of the personal expenses of my tour as Home Secretary to North Queensland, the islands of Torres Strait, and the Gulf?"

"5. Were the expenses of the Under Secretary for Mines and the Chief Inspector of Mines, whose presence was necessary to assist in determining the many important matters which came before me as Secretary for Mines, also debited against me as personal expenses of the Home Secretary?"

"6. Were the expenses of a visit to Mount Emu, made also at the request of the same members who accompanied the Under Secretary, Mr. Jackson, and myself, and whose expenses were borne by the Mines Department, likewise debited to me as personal expenses of the Home Secretary?"

"7. Was a cash travelling allowance in addition to travelling outlay paid to me as Secretary for Mines?"

"8. Is it not a fact that since the Labour Government came into power the old tradition of the Home Department—viz., that the Minister should draw no personal cash allowance—has been broken, and that, in addition to the payment of all travelling expenses, a cash allowance of £2 2s. a day within the State and £3 3s. a day without the State has been claimed and paid to the Minister by the department?"

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*) replied—

"1. He did and he should.

"2. It should be.

"3. The hon. member had better ask those hon. members. I am not their keeper.

"4. The Hon. W. Hamilton and Mr. John May are both dead, and there are no known means of ascertaining if they did ask the hon. gentleman to go to Cloncurry.

"5. I have no knowledge. The Mines Department may have the information.

"6. Address this question to the Department of Mines.

"7. Address this question to the Department of Mines.

"8. I have no knowledge of any such tradition."

ENDOWMENT ON DONATIONS FROM LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO HOSPITALS.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*) asked the Hon. W. Forgan Smith—

"1. As the Home Secretary, in answer to my question yesterday, claims that donations from local authorities to hospitals carry endowment, how does he explain his department's answer to me of the 22nd July last, advising that a £500 donation by the Auburn Shire Council to the Mundubbera Memorial Hospital Building Committee would not be subsidised?"

"2. If the amount of £500 is claimed to be too great to carry subsidy, is the statement correct, which appears in the Brisbane Press from day to day, claiming that the Government will give a subsidy of £2 to £1 on the £20,000 asked for on behalf of the Brisbane Children's Hospital?"

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) replied—

"1. Donations from local authorities towards cost of erecting infectious diseases hospital wards are endowed by this department, subject to the usual conditions relating to endowment, at the rate of £2 to £1, but no endowment has been given on account of donations from local authorities to the ordinary building funds of district hospitals.

"2. Subsidy referred to is for maintenance purposes, and is controlled by the Home Secretary. The hon. member would be well advised to read such statements more carefully and get some understanding of the difference between endowment for maintenance and the erection of buildings."

STATE WHEAT POOL.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

"1. Has he made the statement that no further legislation is necessary for the continuance of the State wheat pool?"

"2. Does the present law give the board sufficient powers to mortgage the wheat in their possession, or held by farmers, in order to make advances to growers while such wheat is retained for sale?"

"3. Will he follow the example of the Victorian Government and advance the board 4s. per bushel?"

"4. As the present law takes away the right of the grower to sell to any other person except the Wheat Board, will he see that the wheatgrower has the power to compel the board to take the wheat when ready, or stand the loss, if any, through deterioration or any other cause?"

"5. If any wheatgrower can prove that his wheat was f.a.q. when offered to the board, but through the board's inability to take delivery such wheat deteriorated until the price realised did not pay cost of production, will the Government under their guarantee pay the grower the difference between the amount realised and the guarantee of 8s. per bushel?"

"6. In cases where the Wheat Board sent f.a.q. wheat to millers, and such millers refused to take delivery and the wheat deteriorated through no fault of the grower, will the Government guarantee of 8s. per bushel stand good to the grower?"

"7. If wheat fit for milling purposes is being sold in the markets at much reduced values, is there any power to prevent this wheat being gristed into flour and competing with Warwick millers who stocked up at 9s. per bushel?"

"8. Will he make inquiries and see if any second-class flour is being made from such wheat?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*) replied—

"1. Yes.

"2. No; but this power can be given the board by Order in Council.

"3. I do not know exactly what the Victorian Government are doing, and I do not think such advance will be necessary, but the Government will, I have no doubt, assist the board to make adequate arrangements to finance the next harvest.

"4. The hon. member personally asked for the Act, and raised no objection to the board being nominated by the growers. The Act compels the board to take all f.a.q. wheat delivered to them.

"5 and 6. The board are the servants and agents of the growers, and the

Government are not responsible for any alleged neglect of duty on their part, and the hon. member is now suggesting that the farmers are unable to manage their own business.

"7 and 8. No f.a.q. wheat has been sold as suggested by the hon. member."

ILLEGALLY OBTAINING RATIONS.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*), without notice, asked the Home Secretary—

"Will he make inquiries and inform this House as to the correctness of a statement reported in the 'Darling Downs Gazette' of Wednesday as being made by one of the unemployed at a meeting of the unemployed at the Trades Hall on Tuesday, 13th instant, namely—

"One man had produced £100 in notes and he had been getting rations."

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*) replied—

"I will make inquiries, and, if it is true, the man will be prosecuted."

DESTRUCTION OF RATS.

Mr. DASH (*Mundingburra*) asked the Home Secretary, without notice—

"In view of the statement published in the Press this morning with regard to the plague, is it the intention of the Home Secretary to take steps to have all the rats in the vicinity of this House killed?"

Mr. PETERSON: I left an infected ship.

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

"I will tell the local authorities to kill all rats in the vicinity of this House."

PRESENTATION OF DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*), without notice, asked the Premier—

"In view of the fact that we shall be discussing the Estimates very shortly, will he see that the various departmental reports are laid on the table of the House and circulated amongst hon. members as soon as possible?"

The PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*) replied—

"I shall have much pleasure in inviting the departments to present their reports as soon as possible."

PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

1. By-law No. 150, re joint rail and steamer tickets, Brisbane and North Queensland.
2. By-law No. 151, re special charges, rates, and fares for conveyance of goods and passengers, Mourilyan and Geraldton Tramways.
3. By-law No. 152, re haulage charges on wharf branches.
4. By-law No. 153, re shunting charges, Cairns Railway.
5. Amendment of Rule 291, Book of Rules, By-law No. 102.

AGREEMENT BETWEEN COMMISSIONER FOR TRADE AND FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*) moved—

“That there be laid upon the table of the House a copy of the agreement setting forth the terms entered into between the Commissioner for State Enterprises and the Fishermen's Association re carrying on the fish markets at South Brisbane and the depôt or market at Wynnum.”

Question put and passed.

GOVERNMENT MOTOR-CARS.

Mr. FRY, in moving—

“That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing the number of motor-cars owned by the Government on the 30th June, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920, and 1921, respectively, together with the purchase price of each car, and the total aggregate cost of upkeep for each year; also, the number of cars sold, if any, since 30th June, 1914, and the net proceeds on the sale of each car”—

said: I regret very much that I have been compelled to take advantage of private members' day to endeavour to secure information about motor-cars owned by the State. On numerous occasions during the years 1918, 1919, 1920, and 1921, requests have been made to the Government for information on this subject, but the information has been refused by the Government, who have practised scientific evasion. What there is to hide I am at a loss to understand. The motor-cars were purchased with public funds by the Government, and they cost a certain amount of money for their upkeep. The Government should be made to realise their responsibility to the people by giving them any information required in regard to the cost of the cars. It is said freely outside the House that these cars have cost an enormous sum of money, and that their upkeep costs anything from £10,000 to £20,000 per annum. We are not in a position to say what the amount is, because the Government have studiously refused to give us the information; but on the figures mentioned we are justified in assuming that probably the Government have paid as much as £50,000 for the cars and their upkeep during the term of office of the Ryan-Theodore Governments. My reason for moving this motion is to get accurate information. I hope the House will express its opinion in such a manner as will influence the Government to treat the matter with more than the passing notice which they have given to it in the past. The Auditor-General in his report for 1918, on page 30, makes the following statement:—

	£	s.	d.
Maintenance, repairs, petrol, oil, etc., motor-cars, and motor-cycles	4,261	6	6
Wages of employees, motor garage	1,482	17	0
Total for year 1917-18 ...	5,744	3	6

Then the Auditor-General also stated that the Department of Public Works had twenty-four motor-cars and six motor-cycles in Brisbane and the country. He also stated that there were twenty-five cars and thirty-one

[*Mr. Fry.*

cycles belonging to other Government departments. We have endeavoured to secure information with regard to these cars in various ways, but every time we have attempted to get the information one Minister has adopted the tactics of referring us to another Minister, or of putting us off by saying that the information will be obtained. We were told by the Premier the other night that the reply “that information would be obtained” does not necessarily mean that it will be communicated to the House. Scientific evasion in answering questions? I would like to read what the present Premier, when in opposition, said on this question. In “Hansard” of 8th August, 1911-12, page 444, volume cviii., I find the following:—

“The PREMIER: I move—That this House do now adjourn.

“Mr. THEODORE: At this stage I want to draw attention to the manner of answer I received last evening from the Treasurer to a question I addressed to him after notice. I think courtesy was not shown to me. The question was respectfully worded, and I think the Minister deliberately evaded giving the information.

“The SPEAKER: Order!

“Mr. THEODORE: On one or two occasions I have noticed a deliberate desire to avoid giving information.”

The hon. gentleman at that time complained that respectfully worded questions were not properly answered, and the wail was taken up by others associated with him. What does he think of his own record? When I quote it to the House, I hope members opposite will see the inconsistency of the hon. gentleman. On Friday, 4th October, 1918, the hon. member for Toombul (Mr. Petrie) asked the Chief Secretary—

“Will he, in view of the Auditor-General's recommendation, take immediate steps to have the huge fleet of motor vehicles now owned by various Government departments placed under the management of a State motor vehicle department responsible for everything connected with their purchase and use?”

That was quite a courteous question, and this was the reply—

“This question is based on incorrect premises.”

On the 14th August, 1919, the hon. member for Mirani (Mr. Swayne) asked the Acting Premier—

“1. Were any of the twenty State-owned motor-cars, kept for the use of Ministers and Government departments in Brisbane, ever used for the conveyance of sick or wounded returned soldiers from the Central Railway Station to Kangaroo Point Hospital?

“2. If so, on what occasions?” and the answers were—

“1 and 2. Inquiries are being made.”

They did not know whether one car had ever been used, at a time when private car-owners were lending their cars by the hundred for the purpose, and after they had made inquiries they did not know, because, had they used any of their cars for that purpose, you may depend upon it they would have availed themselves of the opportunity to make the most of it in order to secure political capital. On 3rd September, 1919,

Mr. Gunn, the late member for Carnarvon, asked the Treasurer—

“1. In view of his statements—(a) That there were twenty State motor-cars in Brisbane, including those used by the Governor (12th August); (b) that there are twenty motor-cars owned by the State in use outside Brisbane (28th August)—has his attention been drawn to the Auditor-General's report for 1917-1918, in which it is stated that there are twenty-four State cars owned by the Department of Public Works, and twenty-five belonging to other Government departments—a total of forty-nine?”

“2. How many motor-cars have been purchased by the Government since 30th June last, and from whom?”

“3. How many motor-cars have been sold by the Government, and to whom, during the same period?”

The answers were—

“1 to 3. The information will take some time to prepare, and, when available, will be laid on the table of the House.”

I want to draw attention to the fact that on the 12th August, 1919, the hon. member for Mirani asked the Acting Premier—

“The number of State-owned motor-cars there are in Brisbane?”

“The ACTING PREMIER replied—

“Twenty motor-cars, including cars used by His Excellency the Governor and Ministers and cars used in connection with the official duties of officers of various departments.”

On 28th August, 1919, the late member for Carnarvon, Mr. Gunn, asked the Acting Premier—

“How many motor-cars, other than those in use in the Brisbane metropolitan area, are owned by the State Government?”

“The ACTING PREMIER replied—

“Twenty.”

That makes a total of forty cars. But the Auditor-General told us that there were forty-nine. How could the Government make such a big mistake as not to know of the existence of nine motor-cars? Nine were neither here nor there so far as the Government were concerned. I doubt whether they knew who owned the cars and who were running the cars. It was said that when hon. members on the Government side of the House wanted a motor-car, they rang up and got one, and went off picnicking and entertaining their families and friends, and that may explain why they did not know whether they owned forty or forty-nine cars. On the 23rd October, 1919, the hon. member for Mirani asked the Secretary for Public Works—

“1. Has his attention been drawn to the great reduction (it is said to six) recently effected by the British Government in the number of State-owned cars in London?”

“2. If so, will he make a corresponding reduction in the number of those owned by our State in Brisbane, and also enforce a similar rule preventing their use for family purposes or pleasure trips?”

“The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. Larcombe, *Keppel*) replied—

“1. No.

“2. See answer to No. 1.”

He said that his attention had not been drawn to the fact that in London the Government motor-cars had been reduced to six, and he also said that he did not intend to take steps to reduce the number of motor-cars used by the Government in this State. On 16th January, 1920, the hon. member for Nanango asked the Secretary for Public Works—

“Will he make available to the House a return of the number of motor-cars and cycles, etc., owned by the Government before the Estimates of his department are discussed?”

“The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. Larcombe, *Keppel*) replied—

“Information will be supplied during the course of the discussion on the Works Department's Estimates, showing the number of motor-cars and cycles owned by the Works Department. Similar information concerning other departments can be obtained in the usual way.”

We know that, when we got to the Estimates, the Government talked them right out, and would not allow us to come down to debate the State enterprises. From one end of the Government benches to the other they simply got up and talked and took up as much time as possible, and, when a man was seen to be pausing in his speech, his comrades got round him and supplied him with stuff and kept him talking until he had taken up his full time, simply because they did not want hon. members on this side of the House to have the opportunity of debating this matter on the vote for State enterprises. On 13th February, 1920, the hon. member for Mirani asked the Premier—

“1. How many motor-cars are there now in use within the Brisbane area by the following Ministers and their respective departments:—The Chief Secretary, the Treasurer, the Home Secretary, the Secretary for Public Works, the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock, the Secretary for Public Instruction, the Secretary for Mines, the Assistant Minister for Justice, the Secretary for Railways, and the Secretary for Public Lands?”

“2. Are such cars used for the official work of Ministers and their departments only, or are these cars used partly for official work and partly for the private use of Ministers, Under Secretaries, and their respective families?”

“3. How many cars did each of these departments possess within the same area on 30th June, 1915?”

“4. What was the approximate cost annually for these cars in the way of petrol, lubricants, repairs, and chauffeurs during the years 1918 and 1919?”

“5. How many chauffeurs are employed in the care and driving of such cars, and the salaries paid them respectively?”

“The PREMIER replied—

“1 to 5. The information will take some time to compile. I suggest the hon. member move for a return.”

Mr. Fry.]

[4 p.m.]

On 17th February, 1920, the hon. member for East Toowoomba, for the hon. member for Mirani, pursuant to notice, moved—

“That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing—

1. The number of motor-cars now in use within the Brisbane area by the following Ministers and their respective departments:—The Chief Secretary, the Treasurer, the Home Secretary, the Secretary for Public Works, the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock, the Secretary for Public Instruction, the Secretary for Mines, the Assistant Minister for Justice, the Secretary for Railways, and the Secretary for Public Lands.

2. The uses to which the cars are put by Ministers, their departments, and Under Secretaries.

3. The number of cars each of these departments possessed within the same area on 30th June, 1915.

4. The approximate cost annually for these cars in the way of petrol, lubricants, repairs, and chauffeurs during the years 1918 and 1919.

5. The number of chauffeurs employed in the care and driving of such cars, and the salaries paid them respectively.”

The House carried that motion directing the Government to furnish the information, and the Government did not do so. They ignored the House; they ignored the people. On 19th February, 1920, the hon. member for Mirani asked the Premier—

“When will the return ordered by Parliament showing the number and cost of upkeep of the State motor-cars be available?”

This is the reply—

“So soon as the desired information has been collected and collated.”

Then, on 19th November, 1920, the hon. member for Enoggera asked the Premier—

“1. How many motor-cars are owned by the State of Queensland at the present moment?”

“2. How many were owned by the Queensland Government on 31st December, 1914?”

“3. What was the cost of annual upkeep of State motor vehicles in Queensland in (a) financial year 1914-15, (b) financial year 1919-20?”

The answer was—

“1 to 3. This information will be obtained.”

Then, on the 25th November, 1920, the hon. member for Burnett, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

“1. Was any State motor-car in use in the electorate of Carnarvon during the two months ended 9th October last?”

“2. If so, for what purpose was it being used, how many days was it in use, what was its itinerary, and what was the cost to the State of its tours, inclusive of wages and expenses of driver?”

The answer was—

“1 and 2. Inquiry will be made.”

Then, on 31st August, 1921, I asked the Premier—

[Mr. Fry.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will be out of order in quoting a previous debate during this session. He can make a reference to it.

Mr. FRY: I asked the Premier for some information. That information was the same as I am asking for in this motion.

The PREMIER: Not the same information.

Mr. FRY: Exactly the same. Scientific evasion is not going to lead me astray. Hon. members opposite might lead astray the younger members of the Chamber. (Government laughter.) Hon. members laugh. They would like to lead me off the track, but it is as well that they should take a good dose of this medicine, because it is going to do them good. Now that we have seen the scientific evasion of the Government, it is just as well that I should refer to the purchase for the State of two motor-cars by the late Hon. W. Kidston at the time he was Premier. I am not going over all the comments which were made, nor will I say anything about the articles in the newspapers which were then supporting the Labour Opposition, and now are supporting the Government. Their party papers came out with cartoons and many references of a peculiar nature in regard to Mr. Kidston and his two motor-cars. I will quote from “Hansard” of 7th December, 1908, page 410. Mr. Bowman was the leader of the Labour Opposition at that time. I am sorry the Labour party have not continued on the course that he set. They got a new head, but, unfortunately, they lost their brains. Speaking of these two motor-cars, Mr. Bowman asked—

“Are they simply for the convenience of Ministers to pop round Brisbane?”

“Hon. R. Philp: The leader of the Opposition can get one.

“Mr. BOWMAN: The leader of the Opposition does not want one. I think it is extravagant.”

The crowd which followed after Mr. Bowman do not think that forty-nine are extravagant. Mr. Bowman went on to say—

“If those cars were going to be used by any of the departments, and would thereby render service to Queensland, there could be very little to cavil at; but if they are going to be kept purely for the convenience of the Premier and distinguished visitors, and the hon. gentleman's colleagues sitting on the front bench, I strongly object to the expenditure of money in that manner.”

“Mr. Mann: He nearly ran down the hon. member for Balonne the other day.

“Mr. BOWMAN: He tried to seduce the hon. member to go into the car, but the hon. member for Balonne was not taking any. He would probably have made a good cartoon if he had been able to get him into the car, but the hon. member said that he preferred the penny tram rather than the motor-car.”

Can you imagine these gentlemen opposite wanting to ride in penny trams to-day when they have got a fleet of motor-cars? Two cars were extravagant when Mr. Kidston bought them, but to-day fifty cars are hardly enough to go round. Extravagant! Where is the consistency of hon. members opposite? I could quote what other hon. members opposite said about those two motor-cars. There are a lot of members sitting behind the

Government to-day who were in the House under Mr. Bowman's leadership. They raised a howl about the extravagant waste of public money when two motor-cars were bought; but what are they saying to-day? It might be as well to mention some of the gentlemen who used to howl about the extravagance of two motor-cars. Some are sitting on the front Treasury bench, and some are sitting directly behind the Government. Listen to these names of members who condemned Mr. Kidston for extravagance—the hon. member for Bundaberg, Mr. Barber, who is secretary to the Labour party; the hon. member for Warrego, Mr. Coyne, who is now Secretary for Public Lands; the hon. member for Buranda, Mr. Huxham, who is now Secretary for Public Instruction; the present Attorney-General, Mr. Mullan; the hon. member for Mitchell, Mr. Payne; and the hon. member for Queenton, Mr. Winstanley, the Government whip. All these gentlemen talked about the extravagant expenditure of public money when Mr. Kidston spent £2,100—and yet the Ministers and the Government party have spent from £10,000 to £20,000 a year in the upkeep of motor-cars, and they have nothing to say about it. What have hon. members opposite been doing to prevent this extravagant waste of public money? If they were genuine in their opposition in 1903, and if they thought it was absolutely necessary for the Government to study economy then, what have they got to say now? Why do not these members bring influence to bear on the Government? There are sufficient of them to turn the Government out of office if they want to do it. They have the whole situation in their hands and yet they sit mutely by and cheer the Minister. (Government laughter.)

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You don't expect us to cheer you.

Mr. FRY: When the Ministers give us false information I do not expect them to cheer me when I am exposing them. It is not necessary for the Minister to cheer me. If I said anything that was favourable to the Government, the Minister would cheer me; but, while I am exposing the contemptible administration and lack of business methods on the part of the Government, I am not going to be cheered by the Minister nor anyone sitting over there.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: The people will cheer you.

Mr. FRY: There is no doubt that the people will cheer me. I hold the confidence of the people outside, which is more than the Government do. I am rewarded sufficiently by the fact that the party I am associated with has got the confidence of the people outside, and that is more than the Government have. I am also rewarded by the fact that there are no white ants or dry rot in the planks of our party, as there are in the planks of the Government party.

Mr. KIRWAN: The present leader of the Opposition was leader of your party last year, and look where he is now?

Mr. FRY: He is sitting in a very good position. The leader of the Opposition is sitting in a position where he has got the Government on tenterhooks, and they are very nervous about it. I feel very sorry for the whip of the Government party to-day, because he is wearing a worried look. (Laughter.) The whips on this side of the House go about smiling. Why? Because we

know that both parties in opposition have the confidence of the people behind them, and that is worth more to us than the emoluments of office.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I rise to second the motion. It seems to me that these cars were bought for public purposes, and they have been disposed of. We have heard all sorts of rumours about these cars. I am one who believes that where there is smoke there is fire, and I want to know if the Government are willing to give us any information. If everything was aboveboard, the Government would not be afraid to give all the information about the motor-cars. Most important questions have been asked, and the Government evade those questions in a scientific manner. It is an absolute disgrace the way the Government withhold information. If any incorporated company in Queensland did the same thing as the Government, the directors would be shot out mighty quick, or criminal proceedings would be taken against them. We have heard a lot about the Government motor-cars. We know that the Education Department had a beautiful car—fit for the Governor to go about in; but it did not suit the then Secretary for Public Instruction. I am not referring to the present Minister, who has acted absolutely honestly and squarely in this matter, but the late Secretary for Public Instruction. He had a beautiful car, but it did not suit him and he got another one.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: He bought a Ford.

Mr. WARREN: There was no Ford about it. I rode in the car myself to Sandgate, and I can tell the hon. member it was a beautiful car. That car has disappeared. It was not numbered, and we do not know where it has gone to. It was a "clean skin," and no one knows where that car is.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: The statement is absolutely false.

The HOME SECRETARY: Do you know anything about it?

Mr. WARREN: The Home Secretary may know something about it. I do not see why I should not have one of these cars if they are going to be thrown about like this. Somebody must have this car. It may be in the syndicate that is running these cars. I have never asked any of these questions, but I want to know what has become of these cars because the public want to know. We are living in a time when the country is being bled white, and we want our financial affairs cleaned up. How are we doing it? The fact of the matter is that the Government purchased those very expensive cars, and now they have been lost. It seems that the insides have been eaten out of them and they are not fit to sell, or they have been handed over to somebody in some mysterious way, and the Government are ashamed to say what has become of them. Is it not a fair thing that we on this side, who represent a majority of the people of this State, should know what has become of these cars? It is not a small thing. If it was only a matter of £200, we are entitled to know something about it; but I question very much whether it has not meant thousands of pounds. The upkeep of these cars was enormous. They did not carry only Government members. We know they carried crowds, and I was told a little while

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ago that a car belonging to the Education Department went up One-tree Hill with fourteen on it. That is the way they ill-used the cars. We know that on another occasion—I think it was the same car—a motor-car tried to knock a tram off the line and it became disabled, although the tramcar seemed to get on pretty well. We are not asking the Government why these cars were purchased, but we want to know what has become of them. We know it was a bad business deal, and we know that the big businesses of this State are not run on those lines. It is cheaper to hire a car once a day than have to pay for the upkeep of a car day after day. Is it not a reasonable thing that men who have an interest in the State, and who have a right to some part in the management of the State, should be told what has become of these cars. Why have they not been told? I ask the Premier, I ask every member of the Government, and I ask every member sitting behind the Government, if there is nothing to be covered up, why this evasion? It is called scientific evasion; but there is nothing scientific about the Government at all. It is not their bad business methods that we are complaining of; we want to know the worst, and we want to know the best. If it was a good business deal, we would have had these gentlemen rushing in and giving the information, but there is no such thing as rushing in if it is anything to the discredit of the Government. As we cannot get a straight-out answer, we can only judge that there is very little to the credit of the Government in this business. We are continually hearing members of the Government asking the Opposition to help in the government of the country, to help them to do something for the good of the country. How can we ally ourselves in any way with people who lack business principles so much that they go in for things of this description and then evade a very honest request, not once, but every session? Very often in the session these questions have been asked, and we have been deliberately and wilfully refused an answer. There is no evasion about that at all. I presume there are honest men in this Assembly, and I ask those honest men to say whether this is the way Queensland should be treated. Men who are the pick of the party are put on the Treasury benches to govern Queensland; and, if this is all we can get from them, what can we expect in other matters? They have no right to ask us to assist them in destroying the credit of Queensland, as they have shown themselves to be absolutely bad business men and false to the trust they have received from the people.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*): I rise to support the motion. I have no objection to any member of the Government using a motor-car, or to any department having a motor-car, so long as it is used for legitimate purposes and in the interests of the State. Although this may be called a frivolous matter by some hon. members, and we may be told that we are taking up too much of the time of the House, I would point out that the time of the House would not have been taken up had the Government answered these questions that have been asked from time to time regarding the Government motor-cars. On 4th October, 1918, I asked the Premier, in view of what the Auditor-General said at the time as to this motor-car business having grown to such huge proportions, if he would take immediate steps to establish a

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State motor-car department, and I got this very evasive answer—

“This question is based on incorrect premises.”

I do not know what the Government wished to cover up. I do not care what Government may be in power—whether it is a Labour Government or any other Government—they have a right, when straightforward questions in connection with matters of State are put to them, to answer them without hesitation. This motor-car business became so great that statements were made—whether they were true or not I am not in a position to state—and it became a perfect scandal outside. If these rumours outside were incorrect, the Government should have given the information required.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Rumour is a lying jade.

Mr. PETRIE: If the Government have nothing to fear, why hide anything? The “Patriot,” which supports hon. members opposite, in its issue on 4th September, 1921, concludes an article on another matter in these words—

“In conclusion, the ‘Patriot’ desires to convey the following information to its readers:—During the present session a question in connection with the use of motor-cars—which rumour declares to be wildly extravagant on the part of the Government—was asked. And instead of giving an honest reply, a miserable shuffle was attempted, which was not alone impudent but was a defiance to the whole community, and which the ‘Patriot’ was sorry to note was received with cheers by certain honourable—sic—members behind the Minister.”

That paper says that the Government should have given a straightforward answer; and, if they have nothing to fear, why not give the information? I have asked questions this session, the answers to which have all been evasive. I am sorry that the time of the House has to be taken up with a discussion like this, but it is rendered necessary because Ministers will not give information which is sought by hon. members. I admit that they should not answer irrelevant questions, and that there may also be questions which, for confidential reasons, they should not answer; but the Speaker has the power to excise anything that is irrelevant. I like fair play on both sides of the House.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: I hope you will not become indignant.

Mr. PETRIE: If the hon. gentleman was on this side, and was treated like we have been treated by the Government, he would get angry and roar like a bull.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You have always been treated with extreme courtesy.

Mr. PETRIE: The Minister treated me with courtesy when I asked a question the other day; but I might mention that I asked a question with regard to cold storage, and the reply I obtained first was that the information was being obtained. I then asked when the information would be supplied, and the Minister in question said it would be given when the Estimates of the department were being discussed. What harm would there be in giving me the information direct? I hope that Ministers

will give us correct answers in future to any reasonable questions we ask in the interests of the State.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*): It is usual for hon. members opposite to bring forward motions on private members' days with a view to getting a little prominence for themselves and airing their own pet theories. Hon. members who have spoken have not advanced any reason why they desire this particular information. There is no reason why it should not be made available; but the speeches made have been based on a number of innuendoes. The hon. member for Murrumba referred to a motor-car which he said had disappeared. He knows that it is quite wrong to make a statement of that kind. I desire to give hon. members opposite the very fullest information with regard to this matter, and will move an amendment to enable that to be done. I move the omission of all the words after the word "number," on the second line of the motion, with a view to inserting in place thereof the words—

"of vehicles, horses, and motor-cars owned by Government departments and used for the conveyance of officials during each year since the 1st July, 1913; also, the price paid for such vehicles, etc., and the annual cost of upkeep and maintenance of the same."

Anyone who understands the position will recognise that motor-cars are the cheapest means of conveyance at the present time. We know that the Government have bought a number of motor vehicles since they came into office, and I venture to say that that practice has been in the interests of the department, which has been enabled to carry out work more efficiently than in the past. What are these motor-cars used for? We know that in the old days for many departmental functions involving the services of inspectors horse vehicles were used. Take, for example, the assessing commissioners of the Lands Department, who assess the value of pastoral properties. We can easily imagine the time it must have taken those men to get round the country with horses and buggies, and how comparatively little work they would be able to do in the year. It is in the interests of economy and efficiency that they should be supplied with motor vehicles to enable them to proceed more rapidly with their work. The cost of maintenance and upkeep is practically about the same, and an assessing commissioner, with the use of a motor-car, can do a lot more work in the course of a year than one can do with the use of a horse and vehicle.

The same thing holds good with regard to inspectors in the Works Department, where we have twenty-six motor-cars and four motor-cycles, which are used for a multitude of purposes. Hon. members opposite would like, of course, to have some of those inspectors cut out altogether.

Mr. Fry: That is untrue.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: We know that prior to the passage of the Factories and Shops Act the old Act was more honoured in the breach than in the observance. A few inspectors were scattered in various parts of the country, and they had no means of getting round their districts properly. Motor-cars are now used for that purpose. The same thing holds good with regard to the inspectors under the Shearers and Sugar Workers' Accommodation Act,

who are supplied with motor-cars to see that the accommodation provided for the men conforms to the requirements of the Act. One can quite imagine hon. members opposite, who have the interests of large capitalists at heart, being annoyed at that. The purchase of motor-cars has resulted in economy and efficiency in the directions I have mentioned.

Reference has been made to the use of motor-cars by Ministers. That system was initiated by previous Governments, the Ministers of which were provided with cars which they used very frequently. I remember before this Government took office seeing Ministers and Ministerial parties use cars on every possible occasion, not only to go about the country themselves, but to convey an army of their friends about. Prior to 1915 it was common to see cars controlled by Ministers of the Denham Government outside Finney, Isles, and Company's shop and other places in Queen street.

Mr. MORGAN: They never took Ministers to the races.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: This Government some considerable time ago dispensed with these things. Those cars have been sold, and the cars I am now referring to are used by officers of the various departments.

Mr. BRAND: By Ministers' wives.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: They are used by inspectors of the departments to enable them to carry out their work properly and efficiently. There is no desire to burke any information. By means of my amendment full information will be given, and perhaps members opposite may be astonished at the result.

Mr. DASH (*Mundingburra*): I second the amendment, because I realise that, if any information is given, we should have the whole lot. Of course, we know that hon. members opposite would just as soon see an inspector going around with his swag on his back, as they would like to see the workers. The Government are going to see that the interests of the worker are attended to, and that their inspectors have the most up-to-date facilities for doing their work. When inspectors had to get around on horseback they could not carry on their work. In fact, the Government of those days did not care whether they carried out the work or not. It was to their interests to allow the squatters to disregard the law and for the workers to put up with any accommodation the pastoralists liked to shove them into. Since this Government came into office they have endeavoured to see that the inspectors had no excuse for neglect of duty in that regard.

Mr. Fry: Why did they not supply the information when it was asked for?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Because they were not under an obligation to supply it.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Miraní*): The amendment is one of those sidestepping moves so often adopted by the party now holding office when they want to evade quite justifiable inquiry into the Government departments. We are not concerned about the use of Government conveyances, whether motor-cars or horse-drawn vehicles, by Works Department inspectors or other Government officials in the prosecution of their duties; but there is no getting away from the fact that for a number of years past the way in which Government motor-cars have been

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used by members of the Government and other members of the party for private purposes—joy rides and so on—has been a scandal in Brisbane. For the last three years there has been a constant succession of questions on this matter, but we could never get a straightforward answer. When the ordinary question was not answered, we approached the Secretary for Works, or perhaps the Chief Secretary, on the Estimates; but always we were shunted from one to the other. All we got to know—I think in answer to a question by myself—was that there were twenty-two State-owned cars in Brisbane that were not used by inspectors of the Works Department. We asked, quite justifiably, what they were used for and by whom they were used. We could never get that information, and I congratulate the hon. member for Kurilpa on bringing the matter to a head by his motion. On page 831 of "Hansard" for 1920, during the discussion of the vote for the inspection of machinery and scaffolding, the deputy leader of the Opposition is reported as having raised the question. The hon. member for Burnett also referred to it, and I pointed out that the only information the Minister had given was that twenty-four or twenty-two cars were used by his department, and that they included those used by the Inspector of Machinery and Scaffolding. To that the Minister interjected that two motor-lorries also were used by the Works Department for carrying materials. The previous information was that there were twenty-two cars, exclusive of those used by the inspectors of the Works Department. I urged then, and I repeat now, that all the State-owned cars should be garaged together under the control of a responsible Government official, and that any department requiring their services should get them by requisition, specifying the purposes for which they were needed. An account should be kept of that information, the mileage run, the cost, and so on, so that we would know exactly what the cars were costing and what they were used for.

If ever anybody charges this Government with anything, the most we get from them is, "Somebody else was worse." They never try to justify themselves. They never point out that the accusation is groundless, because they cannot do so. But I say that other people were not worse in that respect. Previous Administrations were comparatively blameless in this respect. I think I am fairly safe in saying that every Minister now is taken home in a State-owned car—or, if he is not now, he has been in the past. Let me compare that practice with what obtained in years gone by. When Mr. Kidston was Premier, I used to see him and Mr. George Kerr, the then Secretary for Railways, and Mr. George Jackson, Chairman of Committees, walking home in the evening, like any ordinary citizen, or, if they did not walk, taking a tramcar home. When Mr. Denham was in office I remember that he used to have his sulky here. I did the same, and we used to drive along Stanley street together going home from this House. Very often his wife would drive up, and they would drive home together, or, if not, he would go home on the trams. There were no State-owned cars then, and no one can say that they were used by those gentlemen when they were at the head of the State. The present party in power are quite different to the old-time Labour party in every way. As showing the attitude of the old-time

Labour party—the real Labour party, and not those now passing under the name of the Labour party—I would like to quote the remarks of the Hon. W. Hamilton on the question of State-owned motor-cars in 1914. He was a member of this House at that time, and he objected to the Commissioner of Police having the use of a State-owned motor-car for private purposes. He said—

"They could afford to pay the Commissioner a salary of £1,000 a year, and provide him with a motor-car, chauffeur, horse, and buggy."

Mr. Hamilton pressed the question and moved for a reduction of the vote for the Police Department by £1, because the Commissioner of Police at that time was using a State-owned motor-car for his own private purposes. That was their attitude then. Contrast it with the present! We can move as many resolutions as we like, but we will never get this information. We will be sidetracked by the hon. member for Mackay, who tries to turn it on to the officials in that department who use cars in attending to their duties. In carrying out those duties I am prepared to admit that it is economy to have the cars. It is most desirable in the interests of the public of Queensland, when the need for economy is so pressing, that we should get the information; but, while the present Administration is in power, we shall have these cars used for private purposes and will never get any information. We have a right to that information right from the top to the bottom. The employment of these cars may save a good deal of money, but at the same time you cannot run twenty-two cars, pay the drivers, pay for the petrol used, and pay for their upkeep, without considerable expenditure—expenditure that Queensland cannot afford at the present time unless it is for some useful purpose. On this point a suggestion has been made that these cars should be stabled together and a careful account kept of the purposes to which they are applied, and whether used for departmental purposes, the cost of running, and so on. That recommendation was never acted upon. I do hope that before this session closes, for the good name of Queensland and for the reputation of those who are now controlling Queensland's affairs, that they will relieve themselves of the odium of the accusations which have been justifiably or unjustifiably made against them and give the information we have asked for. The whole of this afternoon might have been saved if they had answered questions as they should be answered.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I desire to say a few words on this matter. Several times during the last session of Parliament I asked for information in regard to State-owned motor-cars, and every time I was bluffed off and told we would get it in the Estimates; but when we came to the Estimates, we were told that the question should be raised on some other department. There is nothing dishonourable in wanting to get information about cars that are said to be kept for the benefit of the State. The Minister says they are economical, and he says they are used by the officials in various departments. If their use is in the interests of economy, what is to be hidden? Why should not the information be given to the House? Let the House judge whether they are economies or not. I am prepared to admit that motor-cars are very useful and economical for inspectors in carrying out

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their duty by enabling them to get through their work quickly and get over more ground. If they are necessary, why should not information be given as to what those cars cost? We know perfectly well that there have been letters in the papers, all sorts of remarks made, and rumours going about the town about State-owned motor-cars not being used by officials of the departments, but used by individuals for joy rides. When we ask for information, instead of getting that information, we are sidetracked practically every time. About a month ago there appeared in the "Courier" the following paragraph about Government motor-cars:—

"GOVERNMENT MOTOR-CARS.

"A Digger who Believes in Fair Play" writes:—"Sir,—About six months ago, when the Government cars were being sold, a sum of £450 was offered for one of them and refused; £500 being wanted. Until lately the car has been stored in a garage behind the offices of the department to which it belonged, but the car has now been sold for £150. It would be interesting to know who was the purchaser of the car, and the circumstances of the sale. The Treasurer, who is calling for £2,000,000, would do well to endeavour to effect some saving by the Government, for cars are still being used for shopping expeditions, etc., and it may be assumed that the hire is not paid out of the Ministers' pockets."

There is a definite accusation made in the public Press that a sum of £450 was offered for the car but not accepted, and six months after it was sold for £150. When a statement like that is made, surely it is only reasonable to have the information we have asked for in this House. Instead of the Minister supplying information, he simply gets up and sidetracks it by introducing a lot of extraneous matters that no one wants to know anything about. We are only asking for ordinary information. I think it is most unfair that the Government are so autocratic or afraid to expose their financial doings in this matter! Surely, they must have something to hide! We do not object if they can show that the cars are being used for a useful and economical purpose.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member for Mirani and myself had a ride in one of the cars.

Mr. MOORE: I am very pleased to hear that. I have no objection to that, but, when information is asked for concerning State-owned cars, we have a right to that information, and I strongly object to the Minister side-stepping information on a financial question as he has done repeatedly during the last few sessions of this Parliament. When a man writes to the Press and makes a definite statement, it is only reasonable we should get the information. When a question was asked on that, we were told that the information was being obtained. The question asks about the cars that have been sold. The Minister has sidetracked that part, and moved for a return of vehicles, whether horse or motor-cars, used in the Government departments. Surely there is no occasion for subterfuge like that in the departments to-day! We ought to get above that. I have pleasure in supporting the motion, and I trust the Minister will think better and withdraw his sidetracking amendment, and give the information to the House that we have a right to ask for.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): I desire to support the motion. Referring to the Standing Orders of this House, we find there is a private members' day, provided for the purpose of legitimately placing before the House

and the community things which [5 p.m.] they ought to know, and for ventilating grievances. The Government have gone out of their way to-day to deviate from the ordinary channel. The whole issue in the motion has been sidetracked and clouded, as is usually done by the Government. Even if there is anything to hide, the information should be given to the people. One cannot realise that men who are responsible for making and carrying out enactments should have anything to hide in regard to a matter which is of great public concern to-day. There is no doubt it is going to do the Government a great deal more harm than the rumours which are flying round, not only in Brisbane, but throughout Queensland. From 1915 up to the present time questions have been asked in this House, and it is safe to say that every question has been practically turned down. To-day, when we thought we would get this information, and after hon. members had gone to a lot of trouble to show why they should receive it, the question has been sidetracked on to something which does not concern the motion. The motion is quite simple. There are various departments in Queensland, and, as the Minister has explained, they all necessarily require motor-cars and vehicles to travel round the country and carry out their undertakings. As the Auditor-General says, they are a business undertaking, and it is cheaper, perhaps, to have motor-cars. But we do not want the information in relation to the departments. If we did, we could get it from the accounts of the departments. It is the information contained in the vouchers suddenly sprung on us from time to time that the people want. I would like to see, also, the amount of money paid to private garages for cars. It is more than scandalous that the motion should be sidetracked and that we should get no further than we are. It is hardly realisable that the Government should step in and prevent the publication of something which the community want to know. It is going to take the accountants in the various departments months to get at the information required by the amendment. I trust that when the division is taken some Government members will be absent and we will get the information.

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Bremner*): I rise to support the motion, and to support it in its wider form by supporting the amendment. The hon. member for Enoggera reminds me of the man who went into the barber's shop for a shave. Inadvertently, the barber not only shaved him, but cut his hair as well. He said, "You are giving me more than I wanted." He still had his shave, so I do not know why he should complain when he got his hair cut as well. The hon. member for Kurilpa asked for a shave, and the amendment proposes to give him a haircut as well, and he is immediately dissatisfied. I wonder why?

Mr. KERR interjected.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: The hon. member for Enoggera does not want a barber. He talks more like a beardless boy than anything I have heard. (Government laughter.) The

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hon. member for Kurilpa will refer to our past. He knows very well I was a clown in a circus once earning good money, while he was there as the educated pig.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I dare say he would earn good money yet as the educated pig in a circus, if he would only better his talents in that direction.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I cannot understand the objection to the amendment by hon. members on the other side of the House.

Mr. KERR: No one would expect you to understand.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: If they knew anything about the motor-cars owned by the Government, they would know that a considerable number of motor-cars were purchased before this Government came into power.

Mr. KING: How many?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I do not know. I can tell hon. members that there were more purchased prior to 1915 than since. I want to know the number purchased prior to 1915, and the prices paid for them. Had I had any hand in the framing of the amendment, I would have seen that the names of the firms from whom they were purchased were also given. I think we might get that information as well. Why hon. members opposite should object to the information being of the fullest nature, I cannot understand. I think it is a very desirable thing that we should have the very fullest information on this point.

Mr. CATTERMULL: Why has it not been made available long ago?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: If the hon. member knows anything, he must know that answers to questions are, at best, a matter of courtesy.

Mr. KERR: We realise that. You are not even courteous.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Hon. members are getting the whole of the information they ask for, and more information than they are asking for. I can quite believe there is a certain amount of smothering up, and it is being done by hon. members opposite in objecting to the information being made available in regard to purchases by the party they support. They are objecting to their deeds being paraded alongside our deeds, because their deeds are ever so much worse than the deeds of Ministers on this side of the House. They know it, and that is the reason for their cry of "Smother" and "Sidetrack." It is not sidetracking; it is running two tracks side by side, showing theirs with ours; and they are objecting because ours is so much better than theirs.

Mr. FRY: You ought to run side by side with the truth.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I was side by side with the hon. member for Kurilpa once, when he was secretary of the Ipswich Workers' Political Organisation. If anybody has run off the track, it is not I; it is the hon. member for Kurilpa. I will give the hon. member the opportunity of perusing some of the minutes he wrote and some of the motions he moved.

Mr. FRY: You are a parasite, destroying the movement.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. gentleman must withdraw that expression.

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Mr. FRY: In obedience to your instruction, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw it.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I wanted to discuss this matter free from any bitterness. I started the discussion in that way, but hon. members opposite immediately commenced to attack me, and, when statements are made about me on the other side of the House, I must reply. I am astonished to hear the hon. member for Murrumba make a charge like he did to-day to the effect that a motor-car owned by the Government has absolutely disappeared. The only other instance where I know of anything disappearing was in connection with the Conservative Government in Victoria, where they lost a railway engine. I cannot understand the hon. member for Murrumba making such a charge. He said that a motor-car used by the late Secretary for Public Instruction, Mr. Hardacre, was unregistered, and that it entirely disappeared. The inference was that somebody profited by that loss. I trust that, when the information is furnished and the return presented, a full statement will be made by the Minister of this matter. I know the Minister denied it, but hon. members opposite keep repeating this statement only on the hearsay evidence of the hon. member for Murrumba.

Mr. WARREN: The Minister did not deny it.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: The Minister did deny it. The Minister says it is absolutely false, and yet the statement is repeated.

Mr. WARREN: Did the Minister say what became of the car?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: A number of Government cars were sold, and that was one of them.

Mr. WARREN: Why does the Minister not say what became of the car?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I cannot understand the opposition to the amendment. I want to give the fullest possible scope.

Mr. WARREN (to the Home Secretary): I believe it to be true, and you believe it too.

The HOME SECRETARY: I don't. I believe you to be a storyteller. You told a little story. (Laughter.)

Mr. F. A. COOPER: That is an excellent description. It was a little story. I want to get as full information as possible on this matter. When questions are asked, the Ministers answer them out of courtesy, but, when a resolution of the House is passed, we get full information. That is why I support the amendment.

Mr. WARREN: I deny the accusation of the hon. member for Bremer that I made such a statement. I said that there is a report that a car has disappeared.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: You never mentioned a report.

Mr. WARREN: That was the purport of my statement, and I believe it to be true, although hon. members opposite do not like it.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: No one likes lies.

Mr. WARREN: If this car has not mysteriously disappeared, why do not the hon. gentlemen say so?

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: We don't follow cars up after they have been sold. How do we know where the cars are to-day?

Mr. WARREN: I have already stated that I believe the present Secretary for Public Instruction to be absolutely honest in this matter, but there is something mysterious about this car, and the report is that it has disappeared. If the report is not correct, I ask the Minister to tell us the truth about it.

The HOME SECRETARY: We were told that you got £1,000 from Kessell, but we did not believe it.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You lost £50 by making a wild statement once.

Mr. WARREN: I did not lose £50. You are making a deliberate and wilful misstatement.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. gentleman is not in order in making a remark like that about another hon. member.

Mr. WARREN: The hon. member is not in order in making a false accusation. Am I not in order in contradicting that false statement?

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You were convicted by the court in the Keers case.

Mr. WARREN: The hon. gentleman makes a false and wilful statement.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in order in accusing another hon. member of making a false and wilful statement.

Mr. WARREN: I bow to your decision, Mr. Speaker. I always respect your decision, and I am always willing to assist you in carrying out your arduous duties. I ask the Minister to tell us the truth of the position.

If there is nothing wrong to cover up, then why, in the name of all that is good, cannot these gentlemen opposite tell us?

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You will get all the information when the amendment is carried.

Mr. WARREN: The hon. gentleman seems to be in trouble. The "Honorary Minister for Mistakes" seems to the outside public to be the one that is guilty of the most trouble. If the Government of Queensland is willing to allow itself to be used for these sort of things, then the credit of the State is going to be clouded. If the Government want to appear honest before the people, let them answer these questions. I do not stand here to try and destroy the credit of Queensland. I have already stated that I do not believe the present Secretary for Public Instruction to have anything to do with the matter. I want to see Queensland governed in an honest way. I have been sent here by honest people to see that the country is governed in an honest way, and I do not care if hon. members opposite are against me. I will stand here for honesty, if I stand alone. Hon. members opposite do not like it. I am going to support the motion.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot discuss the motion until the amendment has been disposed of.

Mr. WARREN: Well, I will vote against the amendment and support the original motion.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Hindson*): Anyone who has the slightest regard for the honour of Parliament must regret the discussion that has taken place this afternoon. We have had a fair amount of it lately in connection with Ministers' expenses and other matters in connection with the carrying out of their duties.

I take it that, if certain questions had been answered in the House, there would have been no necessity at all for a discussion such as we have had to listen to during the whole of this afternoon. Any man, be he Minister or be he a member of Parliament, who has to deal with public funds cannot be too careful with regard to the expenditure of those moneys; and, while I do not believe that a Minister in carrying out his duties should have to put down in his pocket-book every penny or two pence he spends on a postage stamp, at the same time I do think Ministers and responsible officers of Parliament should be most careful with regard to all documents relating to public expenditure.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You will get the fullest information if the amendment is carried.

Mr. TAYLOR: A motor-car on a moonlight night and a pretty girl—well, it is a pretty good man who can resist the temptation. (Laughter.) Most men realise that we are men of the world and have to mix up with the things of the world. We know this motor-car business is a great temptation, and, so far as the Government motor-garage is concerned, I would be opposed to it any time and all the time, because it does not matter what sort of supervision you may try to exercise in connection with it, you will always have trouble. Practically every week we read of some scandal or other connected with or associated with motor-cars and jazzing at night.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: What has that to do with the Government cars?

Mr. TAYLOR: I hope it has nothing to do with Government cars.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Why are you suggesting it has? Why not be honest about it?

Mr. TAYLOR: Why does not the hon. gentleman be honest? He told us that Government motor-cars in the Denham-Barnes time used to stand outside Finney Isles while Ministers' wives were shopping inside.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: That is true.

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not believe a word of it, and I do not believe the Minister can substantiate the statement. There is no objection to a Minister having a motor-car to carry out his duties. It is an absolute necessity in modern times, and I go further and say there is no objection to a Minister's wife, when she is carrying out a public duty in connection with a public function, having a motor-car. I take it that that is the attitude of this side so far as motor-cars and Ministers are concerned, and that being so, why should there be any fear or any attempt at secrecy when certain questions are asked in this Chamber with regard to the upkeep of Government motor-cars? We are entitled to all the information Ministers can give us with regard to public matters. There are times, as I said before in this House, when questions are asked when it is not advisable, in the best interests of the country, that the information should be given; but when information is sought by members on this side, the least Ministers can do is to give that information and not attempt to sidetrack it by saying it is a small matter. Some people outside look on these matters as big matters. Ministers should court all the publicity they can with regard to any expenditure they incur while carrying out their duties as Ministers.

Mr. Taylor.]

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*): The amendment, if carried, will be very useful in giving an illustration of the manner in which the Government have enabled various inspectors in country districts to do their work. When this Government came into power, men who were called upon to do the work of hut accommodation inspectors were compelled to go round in ordinary buggies. They had to provide those buggies out of their own salaries, and their salaries, by the way, were very small. When the Labour party took office the Government doubled the number of inspectors and provided a Ford motor-car for each of them, and the result has been that, while previous to 1915 the administration of the Workers' Accommodation Act was a dead letter, as the inspectors were unable to get round their districts in any reasonable time by buggy or pack horse, they are now able to do their work thoroughly, and one of the troubles that besets the Opposition is that these men are able to do their work too thoroughly, with the result that to-day the accommodation in Western Queensland is, at any rate, something of which no Labour man need be ashamed. I merely mention that to show that in this direction the Government have done a good deal for those whom they were sent here to do something for. I personally am rather proud of the fact that the Government have spent a good deal more money—if it is true—than their predecessors on departmental motor-cars, because any man who has a large business—and the State is a large business—knows very well that it is only by having a rapid method of transit that the business can be effectively organised. I hope hon. members opposite are not going to complain about this. Really, the object of the motion and the object of the questions that were asked in this House, was not for the purpose of letting the public know just what money was being spent on motor-cars for the public benefit, as this money has largely been spent, but for the purpose of trying to gull the public into the belief that this money was being spent on Ministerial motor-cars for Ministerial joy rides.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Don't you think the public should know?

Mr. POLLOCK: I have no objection to the public knowing everything about the State's affairs, but I have an objection to hon. members asking questions deliberately designed for the purpose of making political capital against this Government, and then, when they get the obvious reply, squealing about it. I do not object to them getting every item of information they ask for, but I do object to questions being deliberately designed to mislead the public. Members of the Opposition are always asking questions that are so framed as to mislead the public if the Government gave the answer that would suit them, and, when the Government object to answer questions of that kind, hon. members opposite should be sports and say, "Well, the object of this question has failed: let us take our gruel." Instead of doing that, they come along with a motion designed, in the same way, to mislead the public, and the speech of the hon. member for Kurilpa was delivered in such a way as to mislead the public into the belief that these motor-cars were for Ministers.

Mr. FRY: It was not. It is your guilty mind that twists it.

[*Mr. Pollock.*]

Mr. POLLOCK: I have no guilty mind on this question because, unlike the hon. member's leader, I do not confess to these temptations on a moonlight night with a pretty girl in a motor-car. The hon. member may speak for himself, and, if he is afraid that Government motor-cars are going to lead to these temptations, I should advise him, if ever he gets on the Treasury benches, to sell all the motor-cars. These motor-cars that are used bona fide in departmental, and incidentally in the public interests, are cars on which money was well expended, and this amendment, which calls for the fullest publicity, and which calls also for a comparison between the number of motor-cars now used where the old, slow vehicles were previously used, is something which the public ought to have and deserves to get, too.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): The information which will be supplied under the amendment will be of some value and interest to hon.

members, and we do not object to [5.30 p.m.] it. What we object to is the sidetracking by the amendment of the information which we desire. The information sought by the hon. member for Kurilpa has been looked for by the country for a long time, and why should the Government withhold it? The people in the country should know what number of motor-cars were purchased for Ministerial use, and which were used in Brisbane.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You know that no cars were purchased for Ministerial use.

Mr. CORSER: How did the Government acquire the cars which the Ministers were using?

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: From the Denham Government.

Mr. CORSER: The Minister knows that a number of those cars have been sold, and we should know what price was received for them. Although we cannot support the amendment, that does not say that we do not want the information intended to be given by it; we do not like the evasion which is being practised in regard to information which is sought. We know that it is necessary for the inspectors in the back country with regard to advances to settlers to have motor-cars for quick transit. We want to know where the cars which we saw being used in 1917, 1918, and 1919, during the war, came from, and what was paid for them. On many occasions after the House adjourned you could hardly get out of the gate for the number of Government members and officials of the House who were waiting for motor-cars to take them home. Opposition members had to walk home. (Laughter.) We want to know the cost of the cars used in those years when the Government were in a big majority, and what was received for those which have been sold.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*): I agree with some other hon. members who have spoken, and regard the amendment of the Minister as an attempt to sidetrack the motion.

The HOME SECRETARY: You seem to know a good deal about what sidetracking is.

Mr. MAXWELL: I have not had the experience which the hon. gentleman has had.

The HOME SECRETARY: You used a motor-car which cost the city of Brisbane £1,000 a year.

Mr. MAXWELL: I am not dealing with the Brisbane City Council; I am not a member of it now. If the Minister chooses to sidetrack the motion of the hon. member for Kurilpa, under which it is sought, on behalf of the people, to obtain reasonable information, the responsibility will rest on the Government. The amendment is moved for the purpose of getting information with regard to the cars used by certain officers.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: No; all departmental cars.

Mr. MAXWELL: I admit that it is necessary that inspectors should have motor-cars to enable them to carry out their duties efficiently; but, if hon. gentlemen opposite are sincere, there can be no harm in giving the information sought by the hon. member for Kurilpa. I am sorry that that hon. member did not go a little further in his motion, and ask for a full statement as to the motor-cars engaged by Ministers in connection with private garages. Every time hon. members on this side ask questions, they are practically told that they have some ulterior motive in asking them. My only object in asking questions is to secure information which I think it necessary that the people I represent should know. The Brisbane City Council could always tell what the cost of the motor-cars used by the council was.

The HOME SECRETARY: No; they could not. You would not give the information; you would sidetrack it.

Mr. MAXWELL: I thought the hon. gentleman, as Home Secretary, knew that the whole of the accounts of the City Council are submitted to the Government auditor for approval, and that no money can be paid without that being done. The expenditure of any money by any local authority, the City Council if you like, is submitted in the form of an account, and is audited by a man appointed by the hon. member's department. I want to secure this information so that I shall be able to satisfy any person outside who has any doubts as to whether these cars have been judiciously or injudiciously used. The hon. member in charge of the department is barking the question by trying to limit the information to cars used by certain men only, and by inserting the words with regard to horse vehicles and other conveyances. When we on this side of the House ask questions, we are met with the statement that the Denham-Barnes Administration did certain things. That was an Administration they did not believe in, so the Government are following a practice of which they did not approve. I do not stand for such hypocrisy. If the Denham-Barnes Government did things that were wrong, why do this Government not do the square thing and let us know the exact position of affairs? We court publicity, and the members who are supposed to be the representatives of the workers or the people should be the last in the world to refuse information.

The HOME SECRETARY: I challenge you to produce a balance-sheet of the City Council showing the cost of the motor-car.

Mr. MAXWELL: Hon. members on the other side are very good at challenging. Perhaps the Auditor-General or the auditor concerned, or his Under Secretary, will be able to give him all the information he requires. But I am not dealing with the Brisbane City Council, and I want to tell

hon. members opposite that we do not ask for this information as a favour. It is a right we claim, and, if hon. members refuse to give it, the time is not far distant when we shall be able to get it ourselves, and we put the whole responsibility on their shoulders.

Mr. KING (Logan): I say without any hesitation that the amendment is a deliberate attempt to sidetrack the issue and hoodwink the public. It is all very well for the hon. member for Bremer and the hon. member for Gregory to say that the amendment is bigger than the motion and that the greater includes the less. It is nothing of the kind. The motion and the amendment are altogether dissimilar. The motion asks for a return showing the number of motor-cars owned by the Government. The amendment seeks to substitute the words, "vehicles, cars, etc.," but it also seeks to limit the information to the use of cars and vehicles by officials during certain years. We ask for particulars of the cars used for all purposes.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You will get all that information.

Mr. KING: The amendment does not say so. We know perfectly well that, if the amendment is carried, hon. members opposite will shelter themselves behind its exact wording. We want to know if there is anything in the suggestion that the cars have been used for private purposes, as it is rumoured they have—for joy-rides and that sort of thing. The amendment will not give that information, because it is intended—I say it advisedly—to limit the information to the use of cars for official business only.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Do you not want to hear any information about wheat on the next motion?

Mr. KING: I am not worried about wheat. If cars are used in connection with the inspection of wheat, well and good. Nor have I the slightest objection to their use for the inspection purposes mentioned by the hon. member for Gregory. That hon. member let the cat out of the bag, and gave us the reason why we have not been able to get information in reply to civil, courteous questions. The reason is, we are told, that we want to make political capital out of the answers. Does not the very fact of the Government's refusal justify us in assuming that they want to hide something and give us a handle to make political capital out of it, although, in point of fact, there may be nothing from which we could make capital? I go further, and say that the amendment in another respect is by no means equal in its scope to the motion, which asks also for the numbers of cars sold since 30th June, 1914, the prices, and any profits made on the sales. There is no word about that in the amendment. Does the Minister intend to give that information?

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You will get that information if you go about it in the proper way.

Mr. KING: The hon. member is not game to say that his amendment covers that information. It is idle on the part of the Minister or members opposite to try to hoodwink the public or members on this side of the House into the belief that the information which the amendment would give is the

Mr. King.]

information we ask for. It is an insult to their own intelligence and ours to suggest it.

Mr. FRY: My motion was not intended to limit the information to be given. I am prepared to take the fullest information on this matter. I hope, for the good of the people, that this afternoon's discussion will mean a reformation in the direction we have in view.

I want to point out clearly that the Minister is misrepresenting my intention. For four years the Government have studiously withheld this information, and now we have been forced to the extreme limit of taking it up on private members' day. Any information given to us by the Government, so long as it is full information, will be satisfactory.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. W. McCormack, *Q/rens*): I agree with the leader of the National party that it is a pity that these matters are dragged into the House. I was in opposition in this Parliament for a number of years, and the Labour party, when in opposition, did not waste its Thursday afternoons discussing the question of ministerial motor-cars, although Ministers had motor-cars in those days. The Hon. W. H. Barnes had a car, Mr. Denham had a car, and the Hon. J. G. Appel had two cars, and they were in use in those days, and I take it that they were used for the same purposes as the Ministers following them used cars for.

Mr. KERR: Possibly.

The HOME SECRETARY: I find men are much the same.

Mr. MORGAN: Why not give the information?

The HOME SECRETARY: The information was given. I know that in the Home Department there was a motor-car when I went there first, and that motor-car was sold for £40 less than was paid for it, and it had been in use for some time.

Mr. MORGAN: It was a very good sale.

The HOME SECRETARY: It was a good sale by reason of the fact that cars had increased in value.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Why did you sell it?

The HOME SECRETARY: I sold it because I did not need it. I believed that I could get better service by hiring a car when I needed one on official business than always having to pay a man to sit all day in the garage when the car was not being used. I did not use the car in the daytime, and when I wanted to go anywhere I found that I had to pay overtime to the driver. If I need a car to-day, I hire one.

Mr. MORGAN: Your predecessor bought that car.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Albert bought two cars when he was Home Secretary.

The HOME SECRETARY: It does not matter who bought it. The car was there. When Mr. Theodore became Treasurer he took the Hon. W. H. Barnes's car, and so on with other Ministers. I take it that the hon. member for Bulimba and other hon. members on the other side of the House who happened to have been Ministers had a certain amount of common sense and used cars judiciously. They did not abuse them,

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and they did not go joy riding in them. Do hon. members agree with the leader of the Nationalist party in saying that the cars were used for taking girls out joy riding? What other inference can we take from the statement by the hon. gentleman? If the inference is there to hon. members on this side of the House, I say it is there to hon. members opposite. I make no inference whatever that the cars were abused at all. I think that a Minister has a perfect right to use a car and to take his wife to functions of a public nature. That was done by Liberal Ministers, and it has been done by Labour Ministers, and it will continue to be done. The running of a car entails very heavy expense, as the hon. member for Toowong knows. He has complained about the supplying of this information. He had a car at the public expense for quite a long time. There is nothing to conceal in the matter, and there is nothing to conceal by any Minister.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Then why the amendment?

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member for Toowong had a car—a big, heavy, and costly car to run—a limousine, I think they call it.

Mr. MAXWELL: Which is very seldom used. (Government laughter.)

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman used it very frequently, because I have seen him in it.

Mr. MAXWELL: I use my own Ford.

The HOME SECRETARY: I am not complaining. The hon. gentleman had a perfect right to use it. The mayors of all the big cities of Australia have cars, which is quite right; but the hon. gentleman has the inufferable hide to criticise Ministers for doing what he did. He says the Auditor-General audits the accounts of the City Council, but that is not so. I do not suggest that the City Council carries on its business without an auditor, but the Auditor-General does not audit their accounts. Of course, those accounts are audited, just as every pound that is spent by Ministers upon any service whatever is checked by the Auditor-General; and if the Auditor-General considers the cost is too great, he has a perfect right to call the attention of this House to the fact. Has he called the attention of this House to the fact?

Mr. MORGAN: We have not got his report yet. We do not know.

The HOME SECRETARY: The extraordinary expenditure that hon. members have referred to took place a number of years ago. It is not mentioned in the accounts of the Brisbane City Council what amount the hon. member for Toowong spent on his motor-car. I have looked at the accounts.

Mr. MAXWELL: Have another look.

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not want to have another look; but the hon. member should be the last to get up and criticise Ministers in connection with this matter. The hon. gentleman spent £1,000 on entertainment last year. I have no desire to know how he spent it. I do not want to drag into the council chamber for discussion how every pound or every shilling was spent on entertainment by the hon. gentleman. I take his word that he spent it as the mayor of Brisbane, and surely he should take my word as a Minister of the Crown that I only

spend as much money as my duty necessitates. That is not the attitude adopted by hon. members' opposite.

Mr. MOORE: What about taking a vote?

The HOME SECRETARY: We will take a vote after tea. (Laughter.)

Mr. BRAND: What about your majority?

The HOME SECRETARY: I think we can spend our time more profitably than in discussing a motion of this sort.

Mr. SIZER: I beg to move—That the question be now put.

The HOME SECRETARY: I could expect that from the hon. gentleman. He may be making a speech some day in this House, and I may move—That the question be now put. The hon. member for Kurilpa is a political adventurer. He has belonged to every party. He is very versatile, not only in industry but in politics.

Mr. FRY: It is the parasites of the Labour movement who are killing it. The white ants are there now.

(At 7 o'clock p.m., the House, in accordance with Sessional Order, proceeded with Government business.)

SUPPLY.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Kirwan, Brisbane, in the chair.)

Question stated—That there be granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1921-1922, a sum not exceeding £300 to defray the salary of the Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor.

Mr. GREEN (Townsville): I listened intently to the delivery of the Financial Statement by the Treasurer, and I have since carefully perused it, and I am quite convinced it is a monument of arrogance and sarcasm. I refer to the remarks which the Treasurer saw fit to make regarding financial experts on this side of the House, when he said—

"I would like, while on this topic, to offer a word of encouragement to genuine financial students in this and the other Chamber. The prevailing practice of those opposed to the Government is to condemn our financial administration. It has developed into a sort of catch-cry; yet hardly one member of the Opposition can, in a common-sense way, analyse, dissect, or criticise our revenue, loan and trust expenditure. This practice of the untutored opposite has become almost a vice. The more ignorant, the more dogmatic! The more stupid, the more assertive!"

Words like those, uttered by a Treasurer with a record in financial administration such as the present Treasurer possesses, are an insult to hon. members. Let us look at the present Treasurer's Estimates. For every year that we have had a Labour Treasurer there has been a very large discrepancy in the estimation of revenue and expenditure. Take the two years the present Treasurer has been occupying that position. There was a discrepancy in the first year in his estimation of revenue of £870,943, and in the second year of £419,031. In regard to expenditure, in the first year there was a discrepancy of £848,382, and in the second year of £420,589—a total in the two years of £1,289,974 in regard to revenue, and of £1,268,971 in regard to expenditure. If we

add to those the discrepancies of the Treasurer who preceded the present Treasurer, we find that the total discrepancy in regard to revenue has been £2,223,662, and in regard to expenditure, £1,984,931. The present Treasurer was Secretary for Railways for a while, and he went to America at the expense of the public of Queensland to learn how to finance and control railways in a satisfactory way. When he came back the financial administration of that department was no better—if anything, it was worse—than it had been under any previous Secretary for Railways.

In the second place the Financial Statement is an evidence of a spirit of base ingratitude. That is shown by the remarks concerning those who subscribed to the loan. The Treasurer stated that the citizens of the State had every confidence in the Government of this State—a bombastic utterance—notwithstanding the fact that a majority of 20,000 electors at the last election condemned the present Administration and voted solidly in support of the parties sitting on the Opposition benches. Those citizens of the State who supported the Government loan total only 5,201, and I venture to say that 90 per cent. of those subscribers were opponents of the present Government, but felt that above everything else their duty to the State was paramount, and they should assist the State by subscribing, notwithstanding the wretched administration of the Government, rather than see further unemployment created as the result of the holding up of railway construction and development work in all directions. Right throughout there has been abuse of those who, though opposed to the Government, stood behind the State in connection with this loan. In one of his progress reports the Treasurer stated—

"All the banks and life insurance companies subscribed handsomely. The pastoralists and graziers responded with £300,000; the merchants, manufacturers, and trading companies replied with £256,000. Their total was not unsatisfactory. An outstanding item was £64,000 subscribed by the farmers of this State."

Yet we find that the Government vilify those who stood loyally behind the State when applications were called for the loan and assisted the Treasurer gratuitously and willingly to make the loan a success. I trust it will not be necessary to raise further loans locally; but, if it is found necessary to ask the assistance of the same individuals, the Government should manifest some gratitude rather than vilify them after they have stood to the State in the hour of its trial.

Looking through the Financial Statement, it appears to me there is every indication of a callous disregard of the present unemployment and industrial position in Queensland. We do not find one mention of the unfortunate position regarding unemployment. We do not find any sympathetic reference to the position of our industries, which are being crushed with taxation, and owing to the collapse of the overseas markets are struggling to make a bare existence. There is no evidence that they enter into the consideration of the Treasurer or of the Government. We find no reference in the Financial Statement to the industrial troubles which are afflicting the State slightly at the present time; but a Government that has the welfare of the State at heart, and not only the

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Government but the Opposition as well, and also all local authorities, business men, and individuals should realise the responsibility in connection with industrial troubles and in connection with the unemployment which exists in the State at the present time. We do not see any reference in the Financial Statement to development and land settlement. If we are going to overcome the unfortunate crisis through which we are passing at the present time, if we are going to overcome the industrial troubles threatening us at the present time, that will only be done by adopting a determined and statesmanlike policy, namely, by development and land settlement. It is only by producing that we can build up industries. The cities rely largely for their sustenance and for the work provided therein by the success of the farmers and by the prosperity of the primary producers in all parts of the State. The Financial Statement makes no reference to Queensland's financial position or to its future prospects and welfare. Notwithstanding the pressure used by hon. members sitting behind the Government, it appears from the Statement that we have reached the limit of taxation. Taxation not only hits those who are striving to build up industries, but, unfortunately, notwithstanding what the economic experts on the other side say, it all comes back on the working man and hits him every time. The Treasurer realises that taxation has reached its limit in Queensland. The Treasurer has little to say regarding the proposed compulsory loan, although we have members on the other side telling us that we must have a compulsory loan or the Government will be wanting in its duty. They say that they were going to search the pockets of the people.

Mr. HARTLEY: Hear, hear!

Mr. GREEN: The man who says "Hear, hear!" to a statement of that kind is an enemy of the working man.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. GREEN: There is practically no mention of the result of the wasteful expenditure of the Government. We are told that economy is essential, and we know that it is. What economy can we find in the Statement? Not one iota. The only economy manifested by the Government is the sacking and putting off of individuals. The estimated revenue for the current financial year is a record; yet the expenditure is practically the same as it was last year. The cost of materials and everything else has dropped, yet it appears to me that the only manner in which this Government can economise is by that system known as "deflation." The Treasurer in his Statement carefully omits any mention of the necessity for redeeming the £28,000,000 of loans falling due in a short time. Surely in such a Statement as this we would have expected some indication of the prospects of redeeming our loans and the probable rate of interest which will be charged. The Treasurer thought that he was only presenting this Statement to the members of this House. Nominally he did so, but actually he was presenting it to the people of Queensland. If we look at the Statement from beginning to end, can we find anything to bring gladness or joy, happiness or hope, to the people of Queensland during the next twelve months? It seems as though the people of Queensland asked for bread and they were given a stone. The Treasurer's only excuse is that things

certainly are bad in Queensland, but he said, "We can excuse ourselves by the fact that they are bad elsewhere also." That reminds me of a rogue who says, "I am a rogue, but the other man is a bigger rogue, and, because the other man is a bigger rogue, I will continue to be a rogue until the end of my days." It is no excuse for the Government to say that other places are worse. We know that during the war and since, Queensland has been placed in an unenviable position rather than otherwise. I would like again to mention that this Statement shows to the people of Queensland that this Government cannot economise. The estimated revenue of this year is £12,270,689, the largest estimate of revenue on record, and although we know that costs of material are falling, we find that the Treasurer estimates a deficiency of £465,038. It is very cold comfort for the people of Queensland to look forward in the near future to deficits of that amount. I consider that the Financial Statement is absolutely a testimony of incompetency itself as it stands, and it requires no further condemnation from hon. members sitting on this side.

Mr. FORDE: Tell us how to economise.

Mr. GREEN: The hon. member will have an opportunity to speak afterwards. No member on this side has ever denounced Queensland as a State. What we do denounce is the administration of the present Government, and we denounce the Government without any fear of threats from hon. members opposite. We have a number of financial experts sitting behind the Government, and we heard the hon. member for Mundingburra saying the other night that they were at war with capital; yet, almost in the next breath hon. members opposite are asking capital to come along and assist them by subscribing capital to make a success of their affairs in Queensland. We have been told that they are going to have compulsion in connection with the loan that is to be floated locally. I want to make my position clear in connection with that loan. If we want financial distress, if we want industry tied up, if we want unemployment, then go on to the local market for money and prevent those people who have money to invest and the financial institutions from using their money in a legitimate way, and you will get all the unemployment and all the financial distress that you are after.

They tell us that capital is the enemy of the working man, and they preach class consciousness and class hatred. When I listened to such remarks falling from the lips of various hon. members on the Government side of the House, I felt quite sure that the old proverb was quite true, "He whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad." Instead of capital being the enemy of the working man, capital will assist the working man; capital will find employment for the working man, and capital is only too ready to work hand in hand with labour, if those who preach that class consciousness and class hatred would only get out of the way and not prevent capital and labour coming together for the benefit of the whole community. They are the real enemies of the truly industrious and thrifty men of Queensland when they give utterance to such statements as that. During the debate on the no-confidence motion, I drew attention to the fact that borrowing in Queensland and

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being cut off from the home market would entail a large amount of additional expense to the State of Queensland in connection with the payment of interest in future; that the £3,000,000, instead of being debited to the loans which might have been subscribed on the other side, would have to be remitted from Queensland to pay interest due in England, and the exchange on that large sum of money would be very great indeed. The hon. member for South Brisbane, while submitting that it was apparently a sound argument, controverted the statement and said it would be far better to borrow in Queensland and have the money here. I would like to know how that would affect the position. We would still have to send that amount of money home to meet our liabilities there, and we would still have that obligation resting on us. Just fancy a man saying it would be far better to borrow £3,000,000 in Queensland than to borrow £3,000,000 on the London market and allowing the £3,000,000, which, by compulsion, you take out of the pockets of the people in Queensland, to be spent in the development of Queensland and in the industries of this State! If we borrowed the £3,000,000 in London, it would mean that the business people of this State would be spending their £3,000,000, and we would be receiving £3,000,000 from London. We would be spending £6,000,000 in Queensland instead of £3,000,000, and £3,000,000 of that would be spent on the responsibility of those who have sufficient faith in the future of Queensland and in the development of this great State. The hon. member for Herbert also referred to the finances of this State. He said that the public debt was £56,859,046 when the Labour Government took office. This he said was a legacy piled up by the previous Governments. The public debt in 1921, according to the Statement which we have had presented to us, amounts to £72,846,202. That means that in fifty-five years the previous Administrations of this State piled up the debt of the State each year by £1,033,932, and in the six years of the administration of the present Government they piled up the debt each year to the extent of £2,662,859. This from a Government that had a plank in its platform originally of no borrowing at all, and finally of only borrowing for reproductive purposes; and yet very little of that money has been wisely spent on reproductive works in this State. The hon. member for Herbert also said that this increase was due to the payment of interest. Can anyone imagine a more absurd contention than that? Did not the previous Administration have to pay interest?

Mr. PEASE: We have to pay interest on their debt.

Mr. GREEN: Yes, and we will have to pay on yours in a few months. Not only did they pay interest, but they also showed a surplus. Let me give a simple illustration of the position. Just fancy a company with large assets owing financial institutions £1,000,000! The directors had run that business successfully for many years. Not only had these directors run the business and paid interest on the £1,000,000, but from the revenue derived from it they were able to pay their interest and also to distribute to the shareholders each year a certain amount in dividends. Then others came along and said, "You have had a good thing too long.

We will put some other financial experts in control." And they took over the control of that affair, with the result that within four years the earning capacity of the whole concern was destroyed. Not only that, but they piled on debts and took from the shareholders in the shape of calls or taxes about four or five times as much as the previous directors had done, and they ended up with a tremendous deficit instead of distributing dividends. I venture to say that the shareholders of such a company as that would soon kick out the directors who had brought about that state of affairs and would bring back again the directors who had so successfully controlled the destinies of the company for so many years. That is the exact position of the State of Queensland at the present time. There was certainly a debt when the present Government took office. A State like Queensland must have debts in order to develop it, but those debts were necessary and the earning capacity of the assets was so good that not only did they earn sufficient to pay the interest but also enough to show a surplus at the end of each year. Now we find that the earning capacity of the railways has been destroyed by this Government. Taxation was increased five times, the deficits are mounting up at an alarming rate, and yet we are told by hon. members opposite that the Government have been good managers and have handled the finances in a practical manner. The shareholders of Queensland are only awaiting an opportunity to pass judgment upon the administrators of the finances of this State of Queensland. We should look at the position from every standpoint, and I ask what is the reason for the present position? The people of Queensland are asking what is the reason for the present position. Some of the present position has been brought about, no doubt, by industrial troubles. There is no question about that. I say here, emphatically, that the men are not always to blame for industrial troubles in connection with the industries of this State. There are faults on both sides. The overseas market at the present time has had some effect on the financial position of the State during the present year, but that could not be applied to the four previous years of the administration of this Government. Largely the position of the State is due to the wasteful administration of the present Government.

Mr. COLLINS: To the war.

Mr. GREEN: It is due to the fact that the Government have not got due recompense, due reward, and due work for the money expended. Frenzied finance is manifested over and over again in the Financial Statement presented to us on the present occasion. The financial position of the State evidences the need for cultivating a higher [7.30 p.m.] sense of economic responsibility in connection with our affairs. The Treasurer, when speaking at Wynnum on the occasion of the turning on of the water supply there, said—

"Money was scarce, and to-day they had to appreciate the difference between what must be called luxuries and what must be called necessities; they must think more of the necessities of life than of the luxuries."

Those were words of wisdom; but we cannot see any appreciation by the Government in their financial administration, or in the Financial Statement of the Treasurer, of

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the difference between luxuries and necessities, or the manifestation of a due sense of responsibility in connection with the finances of the State. The present state of things has been caused by the policy of squeeze adopted by the Government ever since they came into power. If, with our small population, we draw money from the pockets of our people up to the limit, and impose compulsory loans upon them, we are going to prevent them from putting their money into useful industry and from developing the resources of the State.

Right from the inception of their administration there has been a policy of squeeze adopted by the Government in connection with taxation. For instance, in 1910-1911, with a population of 599,000, we had a revenue of £5,320,000, and an expenditure of £5,314,720. In 1920-1921, with a population of 725,000, we have a revenue of £12,601,031, and an expenditure of £12,591,830. The Treasurer, in his Financial Statement, anticipates a revenue for 1921-1922 of £12,270,689, and an expenditure of £12,735,727. In the period I have mentioned we find that our population has increased 27½ per cent., but that the burden of taxation imposed upon the people has more than doubled itself. The same thing applies to the expenditure. Notwithstanding all the talk of the Government about economy, there is no economy being practised except the method of deflating men. We have at present more unemployment than ever we had, and the threat of deflation is being made in all departments.

I want to refer to the burden of the railways, which is perhaps our largest State enterprise. The present Government took over the railways from the Liberal Government as a profitable concern, but they have been converted into a heavy burden upon the taxpayer. The people have been misled with regard to the railways. We have been told over and over again that the necessity for this so-called economy and deflation is caused by the decrease in the railway revenue, but the figures prove the opposite. In 1918 the revenue was £3,983,077; in 1919, £4,936,496; in 1920, it increased to £5,330,312. This year it is estimated that it will be £5,164,000. Those figures show an increase in four years of practically £1,200,000. Although the revenue has increased, the railways have been turned from a profit-making concern into a financial burden upon the people. This is evidenced by the deficiencies which have occurred in the department. In 1918-1919 there was a deficiency of £1,432,199; in 1919-1920, a deficiency of £1,253,233; and in 1920-1921, a deficiency of £1,688,575.

Mr. BRENNAN: What would you do to remedy the position—sack the men?

Mr. GREEN: No; you are doing that. We have these big deficiencies on the railways, which previously under a Liberal Government were paying interest and upkeep. We find that the total mileage on 30th June, 1920, was 5,685, including the Chillagoe Railway, which was taken over by the present Government. When the present Government took office in 1915, the total mileage was 5,153 miles. There has been an additional mileage provided during that time, including the Chillagoe Railway, of 532 miles. We find that even in railway construction the present Government are far behind previous Governments. The

capital value of the 5,685 miles of railway in operation on 30th June, 1920, was £42,168,985. The capital value of the 5,153 miles on 30th June, 1915, was £35,464,770. If we dissect those figures, we find that the 532 miles constructed or taken over from the Chillagoe Company by this Government increased the capital value by £6,704,215, equal to £12,883 per mile. The capital value of the railways when the Government took office with those 5,153 miles worked out at £6,882 per mile, so that the railways constructed or purchased by this Government have cost the State nearly twice the amount per mile that the other Governments had to pay, and we must take into consideration also that previous Governments had to construct such great works as the Ipswich railway workshops, and great city railway stations, such as those at Brisbane, Townsville, Rockhampton, and elsewhere, which were included in the assets at the time the Government took office, whereas on the other hand there was no heavy expenditure in the way of big buildings on the lines constructed or bought since that date. From these considerations we can see extravagance, we can observe that value has not been obtained by the Government for the work accomplished in connection with the railways. Is it any wonder then that in the North we find such an announcement as this—

“QUEENSLAND RAILWAYS.

“Office of the Commissioner for Railways,

“Brisbane, 20th August, 1921.

“Auction Sale, Monday, 29th August, and Tuesday, 30th August.

“On the Grounds at Ingham Main Railway Camp, including buildings, vehicles, horses, harness, horse rugs, timber, galvanised iron, varied assortment of new and second-hand plant, tools, furniture, and general camp equipment.

“Terms cash.

“G. R. STEER, Secretary.”

The absolute closing down of the coastal railway! I wonder what the hon. member for Herbert has to say in regard to that!

Mr. PEASE: I will say it, when you have finished.

Mr. GREEN: Now let us look at the burden of taxation—the squeezing of the public of Queensland, so that political financial spend-thrifts might have more and more to spend. In 1902-3, the income tax was a small amount of about £110,000. It had increased in 1914-15, when the present Government took office, to £547,000. In 1919-20 it had risen to £2,023,316, and in 1920-21 to £2,410,171, or nearly twenty-one times greater than in the first year of its collection, and four times greater than when the present Government took office six years ago. Do you wonder that such a burden is causing unemployment and preventing capital from being used in the right direction?

Now let us look at the land tax, and see how an additional burden is pressing on the people of the State. When this Government took office there was no land tax, but they inaugurated a land tax in 1915-16, pressing hardly on the people who were developing this country. The amount received in the first year was £247,000. In 1919-20 it had increased to £459,000, and in 1920-21 to £469,175. Besides that, the pastoralists and others—and the pastoralists to a large extent

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are the backbone of the community at present, and the Hon. Premier and Hon. Treasurer admitted that when they said in the Governor's Speech that the position of the pastoral industry caused the financial administrators to look upon the position in Queensland in a serious light—are being taxed also by this Government by retrospective rents.

Let us look at the stamp duty, and we shall see that all these taxes have the common characteristics of growing year by year since the present Administration took office. They all bear on the general community, ultimately resting on the workers. In 1910-11 the stamp duty amounted to £245,000, whilst in 1919-20 it had increased to £698,000, and in 1920-21 was £660,768.

We are told by those who know and should know that the timber royalties press upon the working man and everyone else who wishes to build to the extent of almost £100 a house. That is a burden on the thrifty man, the industrious, upon the worker, who is worth something to the State. The Secretary for Public Lands and others in this Committee have emphatically denied that there was any such thing as timber royalties, and yet, when we look at the Treasurer's financial tables, we find that the hon. gentleman says that they brought in a sum of £165,008. The cost of workers' dwellings has increased, and I would like to point out a danger which confronts us in regard to those fine buildings—because they are fine buildings, well built, due largely to the careful inspection of the officers of the Workers' Dwelling Department. I take it, that now they draw practically all their timber from the State, and I know that a lot of the timber that is being supplied at the present time is second-class as compared with what was used in previous years, and that there are knots and other faults in it. If this timber is supplied by a public department of the State, do you not see the unfair position in which the inspectors are placed? Previously they had no compunction in rejecting timber not up to the standard, but now it is just a question whether they will reject timber supplied by a State department.

Now I come to State insurance. I favour State insurance. (Hear, hear!) I always have favoured it; and, although I was a director of an insurance company I refused to sign the petition protesting against the compulsory clauses of the State Insurance Act dealing with workers' compensation believing that the State could administer an insurance department financially successfully, and to the benefit of the State. But the system is in danger of becoming a means of squeezing taxation out of the people, and in the Bill now on the business-paper I see a clause to which one might apply that comment. It says that insurance shall be compulsory in respect of persons earning practically £10 a week—£500 a year. Now that I say such a man should not be insured, but, if the Government are going to raise the amount in order to pour out additional insurance for people, they are adopting an indirect way of obtaining taxation to assist the State Insurance Office. It is passing strange on the part of the Government that they should make a wages limit of £300 in the case of public servants applying to the Arbitration Court, yet they are going to raise the limit to £500 in connection with the compulsory sections of the Insurance Act.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in order in referring to a Bill which is on the business-paper.

Mr. GREEN: I would like now to deal with the public debt. In 1919-20 we find that the people of this State had to pay £2,978,644 in interest on the public debt, and in 1920-21 they had to pay £2,930,703. That is one-fourth of the total revenue of the State of Queensland at the present time. That is a very heavy burden for a very small population that is striving to develop the country and perform their duty faithfully and well to the State of Queensland. We have these debts which are falling due, and we shall probably have to renew our maturing loans. If the Government have lost the confidence of the financial people on the other side of the world, it is very likely that they will have to pay a higher rate of interest, and that is going to increase the burden of the interest on the public debt to a very large extent. We must admit that there is stagnation, and we must admit that it is largely due to the financial administration of the present Government. We must admit, perhaps, the timber royalties have affected the building of houses. I have here an extract concerning the census, which says—

“One of the most striking indications of the economic position of the States is contained in the information of the census as to the number of houses in course of construction: New South Wales, 2,663; Victoria, 2,009; South Australia, 674; Tasmania, 295; while in Queensland the population at the same moment happened to be building only 324. There is a bad appearance of stagnation about a province the size of Queensland which only requires houses for its people at that rate.”

Cannot we attribute that position and the unemployment in the building trade largely to the fact of these royalties and the heavy burdens of taxation which have been imposed on the people of Queensland? What is the reason for this stagnation? The Premier and the Treasurer still state that it was the Philp delegation. If the Government could get plenty of money, they could heap on the burden, and they could squander the money in the same manner as they have done. I do not think the Premier will accuse me of having a hand in sending that delegation home. If that delegation went home to interfere with the finances of this State, they did a wrong thing—a thing that was not right in any respect.

The TREASURER: Why do you not tell the hon. member for Toowong that?

Mr. GREEN: But I will say this with respect to the delegation: I have known Sir Robert Philp ever since I was a boy, and, if he says he did not go home to interfere with the finances of this State, I am prepared to accept his assurance, although I have disagreed with him in politics in days gone by. I know that he is a man who is honourable in every respect, and his word is his bond absolutely. If that man said he did not go home to interfere with the finances of the State, I think the majority of the citizens of Queensland would believe him. I would not insult the intelligence of the Premier or the Treasurer by imputing that they really believe that that delegation had anything to do with their failure to raise a loan; but some of the hon. members behind the Government may think that the delegation

had something to do with it. Fancy the financial experts in London, who control the finances of the world and have their finger on the pulse of the finances of the world, requiring a delegation to go home to tell them the position of affairs in Queensland! They knew the position before the delegation went home, and they knew before the Premier ever left the shores of Queensland about the legislation that had been passed—the repudiatory legislation, the confiscatory legislation.

Mr. COLLINS: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in saying that this Chamber passed confiscatory legislation?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It is true.

The CHAIRMAN: I trust that the hon. member for Townsville will realise that the phrase is liable to reflect on the House, and I would ask him not to use it again.

Mr. GREEN: Out of deference to you, Mr. Kirwan, I will not only not use it again, but I will withdraw it.

The TREASURER: What did the delegation go home for?

Mr. GREEN: How can we remedy the position to-day? That is a question which should concern every hon. member in this Chamber. I would say unequivocally—by removing the hampering restrictions. I shall have no hesitation in voting that the Act known as the repudiation Act be removed from the statute-book of Queensland if I ever have the privilege of voting with a Government on that side of the House. The present state of affairs can only be remedied by the development and the settlement of this great State of Queensland, and that development and settlement demand a broad statesmanlike policy. They demand that the restrictions with regard to freehold land must be removed. If the Government were ready to prepare farms for those who were willing to go on them and cultivate them, they would be doing a good turn to the citizens of this State and to the State of Queensland. Just recently I was in the Malay Peninsula, and the Executive Council there are now endeavouring to open up large areas of suitable land for sugar cultivation, and have adopted the policy of giving land for ten years free of any obligation whatever to anyone who is prepared to take it. They are removing for five years any export restrictions or any export duty from those who take up the land. It would pay a State like Queensland, with our vast resources and our vast extent of territory, to act on such a broad and statesmanlike manner as that instead of squandering the money on State stations, and having it lying idle, and, instead of talking about taking over the tramways—a policy that would be of no benefit to anyone, tying up £2,000,000, or £3,000,000 there. It would be no good to the community. It would be like New South Wales, and, instead of getting penny sections, we would have to pay 2d. per section. If this Government got control of the tramways we would be in the same position as they are to-day in Sydney. If, instead of talking about tying up £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 in the purchase of the tramways, that money is devoted to the development of this State in opening up and preparing suitable land and building homes, if necessary, on it, and placing suitable farming immigrants on it, we would have prosperity and

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no unemployment. We would have our railways and rolling-stock working to the fullest extent. We would have our harbours full of ships, and our working men would be satisfied in every respect. The present Government are not able to realise that at the present time. The Treasurer also said this in his speech at Wynnum—

[8 p.m.]

“We have the finest country in the world, a country which has unlimited potentialities, and we should develop it thoroughly and properly. He might also say scientifically.”

Those are words of wisdom. What have the Government done to carry that out? Instead of tying up millions of money, if they had used it in the way I have indicated, the people would have shown their confidence in them and returned them to the Treasury benches. They have not developed the State as they should have done, and I feel sure that, when they have the opportunity, the people will manifest their displeasure in a thorough manner. I intended speaking of arbitration as it affects the present position of the State, but I will reserve my remarks until the Estimates are being discussed. I stand firm for industrial arbitration.

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

Mr. PEASE (*Herbert*): Opposition members, in criticising the Financial Statement, condemn the Treasurer's handling of the finances. Yet, when the Estimates were being considered last year, no tangible saving was propounded, but in many instances increased expenditure was urged. Those hon. members now criticise the expenditure of last year. I was in the Chamber the whole time the Estimates were being discussed last year, and I did not hear any words of wisdom from the financial geniuses on the other side, nor anything which could show Queensland, or the Government, any means of doing better than they have done.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Give the men a fair deal.

Mr. PEASE: We on this side have to listen to lectures on finance from hon. members on the other side, when we know those members cannot control their own finances. I want to tell the Chamber who the hon. member for Townsville is. He is the chief executive officer of a municipality which to-day is in a parlous condition by reason of financial mismanagement, and has had to close down.

Mr. GREEN: That is deliberately untrue.

Mr. PEASE: It is true. He talks about arrogance, and lectures the Treasurer, who knows more about finance than he does. (*Opposition laughter.*) The hon. member for Townsville certainly knows something about high finance. He gets bigger profits than I have ever got in my life.

Mr. COSTELLO: He works for them.

Mr. PEASE: I get a fair profit, and give a fair return for it. The fact that I have been able to conduct my business so successfully for many years is proof that what I say is correct. I object to our having to listen to financial lectures from hon. members opposite who have been dismal failures when they have been in control of finances. I am going to show hon. members where the

hon. member for Townsville has landed the finances of the Townsville municipality.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: He was elected by the people the other day.

Mr. PEASE: I am satisfied that, when the people know the position he has got them into, he will not be returned again. In June, 1921, the bank overdraft of the Townsville City Council was £33,269 17s. 9d., whereas the legal limit under the Local Authorities Act is only £31,448.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Oh!

Mr. GREEN: That is absolutely untrue.

Mr. PEASE: It is absolutely true. I will tell the hon. member what he does not know. I want to impress upon this Chamber the fact that this financial genius has involved the Townsville City Council in an illegal overdraft—an overdraft for which he and the aldermen of the council are responsible, because under the Local Authorities Act he knows as well as I do that that amount cannot be repaid. On Tuesday of this week the Townsville City Council held a meeting. I have had wires about the matter, but I will quote from the Brisbane "Daily Mail" to show that what I say is true. This is a wire which was received by the "Daily Mail" from its Townsville correspondent—

"Townsville, Tuesday.

"At a meeting of the Townsville City Council this afternoon, the following recommendation was submitted by the finance committee:—

We recommend that, owing to the financial position of the general account of this council, no further work shall be passed; and that all works previously passed excepting loan work be held in abeyance until such time as the council is in a position to finance any new work. We also beg to recommend that all uncompleted work on the roads other than loan money and works contracted for be rescinded until the council's financial position will permit of reconsideration."

I am advised that various aldermen of the Townsville City Council—and they are not Labour aldermen—were astounded when they found out the financial position of the council. I know even more. I know that the hon. member for Townsville has had to come to the Treasurer and borrow money, and also to get an enabling Bill passed in order to set the affairs of the council in order. Yet this hon. gentleman talks about arrogance! He also talks about the worker. The worker in Townsville has very little time for him now, when he understands that through the financial bungling of this genius he has done what he accuses the Government of having done. The council have had to sack their men. Had the hon. member not got up I would not have said anything about this. I wanted to see if he would have the arrogance he talks about to get up and give a lecture to this House on finance; and he did it. He is the real picture of arrogance to come here and dictate to this House how to manage the public finances when he has landed the Townsville City Council on the rocks, and has sacked the poor, unfortunate men who were deluded into putting him there. They have wakened up now, and have realised that he is what I always thought he was ever since he came into this House. These remarks apply to nearly every local authority in Queensland.

Mr. MOORE: Nonsense!

Mr. PEASE: When the adult franchise was given to the people the financial geniuses on the other side said, "Don't put Labour men in; they don't know how to handle the finances."

Mr. MOORE: And they did not put them in.

Mr. PEASE: I have had some experience, and so has the Home Secretary. I was an alderman on the Cairns Town Council. There were about three of us, and we straightened up the finances of the council. (Opposition laughter.) The Home Secretary can bear me out in that. The present Premier, who was then Treasurer, visited Cairns, and we introduced to him a deputation of aldermen begging him to help them out. The Cairns council was then in the position that the Townsville council is in to-day. They had exceeded their legal limit. There was not one Labour man on the council until we got there, and we cleaned up the finances. Mr. Draper was more honourable than the hon. member for Townsville, and the hon. member for Cairns can bear me out in this. Mr. Draper did not go yobbing about the state of the Cairns council finances, but he said to Mr. Theodore, "We have landed the Cairns Town Council on the rocks, and we want you to help us out." Mr. Theodore was Treasurer at that time, and he helped the Cairns Town Council, and at the same time he dressed the aldermen down. He told them exactly what they needed to be told. Yet these people opposite profess to be great financial experts, and they claim that Labour men have no right to be financial experts. I heard an hon. member opposite cast an aspersion on the Minister for State Enterprises because he was a painter. It was said, "How dare a painter aspire to a position on the front Treasury bench?" If Our Saviour were on earth to-day, He would be treated in the same way. The Saviour was a carpenter, and we all have some reverence for Him, although He was only a poor carpenter; yet these gentlemen opposite would talk about a poor carpenter aspiring to save Christendom! What applies to Townsville also applies to South Brisbane. At a meeting of the South Brisbane Council on 15th September, Mayor Faulkner advised the aldermen that he had been assured by the Government that the South Brisbane Loan Act Amendment Bill would be hastened forward so that they could set their finances right. Did the Labour people of South Brisbane put the finances of the council in that state? Mayor Faulkner also said, "Meanwhile, we are broke." The other aldermen concurred in that statement—everyone of them. The aldermen over there are anxious that this Queensland Labour Government, who are not supposed to have any financiers among them, should put through the amending Bill they desire. The hon. member for Townsville is quaking at the present time, because he knows what he is going to get from the people when he goes back to Townsville. The aldermen there are blaming him for the position they are put into. The hon. member for Townsville, and other hon. members opposite, malign the Labour Government and say that they have no financiers among them, yet they appeal to the Government and say, "For God's sake put our affairs in order." To the credit of the Government, instead of refusing these gentlemen, they always help them. The Government help the Cairns council and also the

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South Brisbane council. By doing that they showed they are prepared to do their duty to the people of Queensland, and help them to place their affairs in order. The hon. member for Townsville will be a sorry man if he does not get a similar Bill passed in connection with Townsville. Hon. members opposite continue to say that the Labour party know nothing about finance. It would be a poor day for Queensland if it were not for the Labour members we have in this House to-day.

Regarding the speech made by the hon. member for Oxley, if any hon. member likes to go into the library and look at the "Round Table" magazine, he will find the big bulk of the hon. member's speech there. I admire his memorising, for he memorised it very well. But there is just this difference between the hon. member's speech and the article in the "Round Table"—the article really condemns the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, and the hon. member for Oxley clapped all that out and used it as an attack on this Government. Any hon. member who likes to look at the "Round Table" will see that what I say is true. The hon. member for Oxley talked about repudiating the war debts. I am of opinion myself that the ordinary people should not be asked to pay the war debts at all. Why should the ordinary people be called on to pay them? They did not cause the war. It was not the ordinary people of the world that caused the war, but the people who have the money; yet the ordinary people are called upon to bear the whole burden.

Mr. COLLINS: Hear, hear! That is right. It was the junker crowd who caused the war.

Mr. PEASE: The ordinary people should be relieved of that burden, and let the people who have the money pay for it. That is my belief, and I am prepared to say it in any part of Australia. The hon. member for Oxley talked about increased production being necessary. He also said that he would tell us all about it later on; but he dodged the issue. Regarding increased production, I think the problem to-day is to find a market for the goods that are produced. If we had a market for our cattle, our wool, our metals, our butter, our wheat, and everything else, we would not be in the position we are in to-day. It is not increased production we want, but markets for what we have already produced. Nature has been good to us. We have had good seasons throughout Australia, and every member in this House knows that it is not increased production we want at all. The members representing farming industries know quite well that we only want the markets for what we can produce in Queensland, and that that will put an end to all our troubles. I would like the hon. member for Oxley to tell his squatter friends to produce more cattle. If he does, they will laugh at him. What were the cattle sold for last week? What are we getting for our wool at the present time? I understand that there are two clips of our wool at the other side of the world still unsold, and yet an hon. member here tells us to increase production! We cannot get rid of what we have already. If we could, our whole trouble would disappear. Then the hon. member talked about increasing the hours of labour. For many years I have taken a keen interest in the Labour movement, and I have always preached for a fair

deal for the worker. I have gone into the question very carefully, and not in a haphazard fashion. I could never see any good in increasing the hours of labour. Lord Leverhulme, who is one of the world's experts in the employment of labour, does not believe in increasing the hours of labour. He believes in reducing the hours to where a man reaches his efficiency.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Reduce it to what?

Mr. PEASE: To what means absolute efficiency.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: What is that?

Mr. PEASE: It does not mean fifty hours per week, at any rate. Lord Leverhulme says thirty-six hours are sufficient, and I intend to quote some remarks of his when we are dealing with arbitration. You do not increase a man's efficiency by extending his hours of labour. If you ask a man to work sixty hours per week, you do not get the best out of him. I know in my experience as a clerk I worked hard, and I often worked more than sixty hours per week. I worked twelve hours per day, and I got stale. I came to the conclusion that a clerical man reached his absolute efficiency by working eight hours per day. A man cannot get the same efficiency by working twelve hours per day.

The hon. member referred to the Commonwealth steamers. I know something about that question, and I know the Treasurer is correct, and the position, so far as the Commonwealth Government is concerned to-day on the London money market, is due to the Commonwealth line of steamers. I am going to quote a bigger authority than the hon. member for Oxley on it. I am going to quote Baron Incheape. Baron Incheape said distinctly that the Commonwealth Government must get out of the shipping industry, and I refer hon. members to the debate in the House of Commons on the matter. Mr. Hughes cabled home to the British Government and instigated a debate in the House of Commons about April of last year, and attention was directed to the statements made by the shipowners that Australia should get out of competition with the shipping ring.

Mr. EDWARDS: That is only one man's opinion.

Mr. PEASE: That man controls the shipping of the world. Baron Incheape has all the shipping of the world in his hand. He can do as he likes. He could cut off your wool and he could cut off your meat from the markets of the world. I will tell you what the shipping magnates did to the Commonwealth Government. The Victorian Government dared to bring some steel rails to the Victorian railways in some of the Commonwealth steamers, and hon. members who understand commerce know that there is a system of deferred rebates in operation in the shipping ring. You ship your goods for six months with a certain line of steamers, and at the end of the six months they give you back a percentage of what you pay, and a pretty big percentage, too. The Victorian Government dared to ship some steel rails in the Commonwealth steamers; and do you know that this shipping combine at the other end of the world did some repudiation? They turned round and held up the rebates belonging to the Victorian Government—not to ordinary people, but to a Government. That is what they dared to do, and the Victorian

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Government threatened them, and they said, "You dared to ship some rails by the Commonwealth line of steamers to Australia, and you are not going to get these rebates." The Victorian Government then appealed to Mr. Hughes, the Prime Minister of Australia, and said to him, "You collect our rebates for us." But the combine would not give them to Mr. Hughes; and do you know who paid those rebates? You paid the rebates—you and everyone else in Australia, because Mr. Hughes, when he could not get the rebates from the shipping ring, paid them out of the revenue of the Commonwealth, and my friend the hon. member for South Brisbane will bear me out in that. The Commonwealth Government paid those shipping rebates. That is, the people of Australia were bled to the extent of thousands of pounds, which were held in the coffers of the shipping people at the other end of the world. That is the fact, and yet the hon. member for Oxley says that we have got no shipping ring. Fancy pitting ourselves against the shipping ring that can dictate to the Commonwealth Government! If the Commonwealth Government do not get out of the shipping business, then they will get no money whatever in London.

Mr. RICHARDS: The shipping combine subscribe to the election funds of hon. members opposite.

Mr. EDWARDS: Are you suggesting that the Commonwealth Government should get out of the shipping business?

Mr. PEASE: I would recommend hon. members opposite to learn something about the shipping business, and then they will find out that the gentleman I quoted—Baron Incheape—has got the whole of Australia in his right hand.

The hon. member for Bulimba had something to say about the finances. I am not daring to pit myself against him, because he is an ex-Treasurer. I am not an ex-Treasurer, but I am going to quote some figures to show you exactly the position in regard to the Commonwealth and the State. These are taken from the Commonwealth "Year Book," and I am going to be fairer than the hon. member for Oxley. I am not going to quote the figures that only apply to the State and leave out the Commonwealth, like he did—only the other way about. The consolidated revenue of the Commonwealth in 1913-1914 was £21,741,775, equal to £4 9s. 3d. per head. In 1918-1919 it was £44,716,918, equal to £3 17s. 9d. per head. That is practically double the amount it was in 1913-1914; and the ordinary expenditure, excluding war loans and State subsidies, in 1913-1914 was £15,459,776, and in 1918-1919 it was £32,262,565, an increase of 150 per cent. I did not hear of hon. members opposite sending wires to their colleagues in the Federal House protesting against this. Our figures in Queensland are nearly twice as good as those of the Commonwealth, and you say nothing to the Commonwealth. You come here and criticise the State. You know very well that the State has done better in relation to the finances—three times better—than have the Commonwealth Government—an anti-Labour Government. Then, take taxation. The direct taxation of the Commonwealth in 1913-1914 was £3 8s. 1d. per head, and in 1918-1919 it was £6 10s. 8d.

Mr. ELPINSTONE: Did they not have to pay war debts?

Mr. PEASE: There are no war debts in these figures. That is absolute revenue and expenditure.

Mr. ELPINSTONE: You are talking rubbish.

Mr. PEASE: The hon. member is talking rubbish. That is the direct taxation. Now take the indirect taxation. The Commonwealth Government impose indirect taxation, and they impose it in a very subtle way. Take the Post and Telegraph Department. In 1913-14 the revenue from the Post and Telegraph Department was £4,511,307, and in 1918-19 it had increased to £6,110,522. Mark you, this was before the increase in postages by double, 33½ per cent. increase on telegrams, and a large increase in the telephone rates. Then we get excise duty—another means of indirect taxation. In 1913-14 the excise duty amounted to £2,325,333, and in 1918-19 it was £5,821,560. These duties have again been largely increased in the last tariff revision. Do not forget that that is a very subtle way of indirectly raising taxation. Customs duties during the war, despite the fact that very few goods were coming into Australia, were practically stationary, and yet they increased the Customs duties the other day by double and treble. That means that, now imports are normal, there is going to be a terribly big indirect taxation upon the people of Australia and the people of Queensland in that direction; and the ordinary people have to pay these duties. Then, the Federal Government get the profits on coinage. In 1918-19 the profit on coinage was £116,060 on silver and £9,574 on bronze. That is a total profit of £125,634 out of coins. Hon. members on this side do not see many of them, although members opposite have plenty of them. Then, again, the Commonwealth have got the note issue. The accumulated profits in connection with the note issue to 30th June, 1921, amounted to £7,780,524. Sir Joseph Cook, in his last Budget, spoke of this as a great windfall; but he said nothing about the loss to the State through losing this note issue. Then, again, they have the profits in connection with patents, trade marks, copyrights, etc., which amounted in 1918-19 to £23,623. The Commonwealth expenditure on new works in 1914 amounted to £2,576,000, while in 1919 they only spent £405,656, and yet the Queensland Government year by year are increasing their expenditure on public works.

Now we come to the question of the Federal Government encroaching on State rights as regards finance. I do not think it right for the Federal Government to come along and encroach on State rights as regards finance, and I am not alone in that. I saw the other day where the Western Australian Assembly, instead of wasting time discussing trivial things like motor-cars, discussed the loss to the State through federation, and on a private members' day, too. There is a motion before the Western Australian Assembly which reads—

"That it is desirable a joint select committee be appointed to inquire into the effect of the Federal compact on the finances and industries of this State and advise what amendments to the Constitution are desirable in the interests of the State.

"The Treasurer (Mr. Owen) was quoted as showing the net monetary loss to the State through federation from 1901 to 1919 amounted to over £3,000,000

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and by this date as approximately £10,000,000.

"It was stated, 'the Commonwealth had encroached unjustifiably on the State rights by taxation, direct and indirect, and had rendered the development of the State's secondary industries almost impossible, and that the Federal expenditure has been wildly extravagant.'"

That shows what gentlemen opposite should be doing. They could be doing something to direct attention to where the Federal Government are collaring our funds and wasting them, but instead of doing that they come here with carping criticisms about Ministers driving in motor-cars. The New South Wales Chamber of Commerce has got a little more spirit, and passed a

[8.30 p.m.] resolution at its last meeting placing on record its conviction

that Commonwealth Government local borrowing should cease. Now we come to Commonwealth borrowing. Exclusive of loans from the British Government, and exclusive of loans for war purposes, and of forced loans from the banks by note issues, the loans of the Commonwealth are as follows:—

	£
"1911-12	700,000
1912-13	1,300,000
1913-14	210,000
1914-15	2,429,320 "

These are all under a Labour Government. Then the Labour people, who hon. members opposite say do not know anything about finance, went out of office, and the other Government came in. This is what they borrowed—

	£
"1915-16	37,904,462
1916-17	45,736,410
1917-18	69,916,987
1918-19	46,531,442
1919-20	27,753,102 "

These are exclusive of loans for war purposes. I want to contrast the increase under the present Commonwealth Administration as compared with the Labour Government's control. I want hon. members to take into consideration the increase of taxation all the time. The Federal Treasurer, speaking on Supply, on 20th July, 1921, pointed out that he had used the notes profit windfall, nearly £8,000,000, and other unexpended votes, amounting to £18,291,871, to reduce the public debt. Yet it was pointed out by a gentleman who stood high in the respect of the people of Australia, but who, unfortunately, is not here now—the late Hon. T. J. Ryan—in practically his last debate—

"You are now going to float another loan, and yet you have put cash into the purchase of bonds falling due in the future, and I query the wisdom of what has been done."

I ask hon. members opposite to ponder over those words. I query the wisdom of what is being done. The Treasurer had a windfall of nearly £19,000,000, and yet he dared to put another impost on the people of Australia. The Commonwealth note issue at 28th July, 1920, and prior to the transfer of the Notes Branch to the Commonwealth Bank, showed the value of notes issued and unredeemed at that date was £57,441,932, and of this total £23,990,000 (or practically £24,000,000) was in £1,000 notes, representing forced loans from the banks of the Commonwealth and without

interest. It represented forced loans from the banks of Australia—I want hon. members opposite to understand that. The Commonwealth Government can manipulate a loan of £24,000,000 without any publicity, and force it at that. The money in the banks belongs to the investing public. The directors are responsible to the public, but they act in an irresponsible way. The Commonwealth Government said, "You have to take £24,000,000 of our notes. We are not going to pay any interest." Hon. members opposite talk about this Government forcing a loan. Why do they not talk to the Commonwealth Government, which they represent?

I am going to show how the Commonwealth Government have treated this Government in regard to their investments. The Treasurer may have got later figures, but these are the figures which I have got. Out of £35,000,000 invested, Queensland only held £800,000, the lowest of all the States. The table is as follows:—

"New South Wales, £8,200,000; rate of interest, 3½ per cent. and 4½ per cent.

"Victoria, £4,834,000; rate of interest, 3½ per cent., 4½ per cent., and 5½ per cent.

"South Australia, £2,600,000; rate of interest, 4½ per cent.

"Western Australia, £3,690,000; rate of interest, 3½ per cent. and 4½ per cent.

"Tasmania, £1,460,000; rate of interest, 3½ per cent. and 4½ per cent.

"Queensland, £800,000; rate of interest (highest rate), 5½ per cent.

"Fixed deposits, various banks, £6,972,800, and in Commonwealth stocks, £7,544,141; at 3½ per cent., 4 per cent., and 4½ per cent.

"Total, £36,109,941. (Noted Queensland rate, 5½ per cent.)"

Then, the Commonwealth collared the credits in the sugar purchase account—

	£
"1916-17	431,690
1917-18	20,390
1918-19	6,547 "

And they badly managed the buying of the imported sugar and paid an excessive price. Hon. members opposite know how the Commonwealth Government mismanaged the purchase of that sugar. It was not a Labour Government who did that.

I want to show how the Commonwealth Government encroached on the finances of the insurance companies. I have the last official report of the Australian Provincial Insurance Association. It shows that the company received in premiums from new businesses alone in Queensland in 1920, £16,000—one-eighth of the company's business is done in Queensland—and, as the annual premiums received in 1920 were £250,000, this would equal £32,000 received in Queensland, whereas the total amount of investments of this company in Queensland stocks was £15,400—not even a year's new business—as against £526,996 in Commonwealth stocks. And the same remarks can be applied to every insurance or financial business in the State. The hon. member for Townsville said that 5s. out of every £1 received in taxation in Queensland has to be paid in interest on the public debt, but the last British Budget shows that it now takes 8s. in every £1 of taxation to pay the interest on the national debt of Great Britain. Excluding pension charges, the money provided in the last British Budget

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for interest and naval and military expenditure alone amounted to £702,000,000, made up as follows:—

	£
Interest on ordinary debt	365,000,000
Interest on war loans, etc.	100,000,000
Per war services	193,000,000
Charges arising out of war	44,000,000

The vote for education in Great Britain has decreased, but our Government have increased the education and State children's vote to a greater extent than was ever done by any previous Government.

Then we may take the United States Budget. The report of the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives, dated June, 1920, shows—

“Prior to 1913 the largest sum ever appropriated for one year's Budget was equal to about 11 dollars per capita of population, and in 1920 was 225 dollars per capita of population.”

What has America done compared with Australia? I say that Australia did more in the war than any nation in the world. The report continues—

“Many ideas and plans had been suggested to simplify taxation and secure adequate revenue, and it was noticeable that many of the suggestions proposed taxes that would fall upon their neighbours and not themselves.

“The substance of most communications was, ‘We recognise the Government's need of revenue and are in favour of adequate taxation, but the particular provisions affecting us are unjust.’”

We could apply that to Australia to-day, and to Queensland also.

Now we come to some criticism of taxation, and I am not relying on my own ideas in a way, I am giving you what I have dug up. An authority on taxation says—

“The test of taxation is that it should be applied in proportion to the ability of the taxpayer to meet it. It would not be a fair basis to tax a man earning £100 a year to the extent of £10, a man earning £1,000 a year to the extent of £100, and a man earning £10,000 a year to the extent of £1,000, and so on.

Yet that scheme has been propounded. I know that up North members who are anti-Labour have suggested that 1s. in the £1 shall be deducted from everybody, that is to say, that the child earning £1 a week would have deducted 1s. a week, whilst the rich man with £10,000 a year would only pay 10,000 shillings. That is unfair taxation, because—

“(1) The man with large income owes more to the State than the man who only has a bare existence.

“(2) A successful business man could not earn that success on a desert isle and owes it to the conditions of the State made possible by Government development.

“(3) It is bad policy to impose taxation upon those who are struggling on the margin of subsistence.

“(4) Taxation that increases the misery of the miserable is bad.”

But that*taxation has been proposed throughout the North, and, I take it, here also. I

am satisfied that, if by any misfortune hon. members opposite got over here, that is the sort of taxation they would impose. (Opposition dissent.) They would tax the poor unfortunate. What is the remedy? The remedy proposed is to pool the war debts of all nations and free the respective budgets from the payments of war interest. And until that is done the situation in Queensland and Australia will never be remedied. Until something such as this is done there must be financial difficulties in Queensland as well as throughout Australia, in common with all other parts of the world. You cannot blame Governments for the position. What is wanted is for all to get together—(Hear, hear!)—none of this carping criticism of financial geniuses. (Laughter.) The fact that West Australia and New South Wales are making proposals such as I have mentioned clearly proves that the attacks on this Government by the Opposition are most unfair and unwarranted. The position in Queensland is world-wide and must be recognised and remedied.

I am sorry to have kept the House so long, but I think that on this question—it is not repudiation—we should get into line with Britain and France and America, as pointed out by the Treasurer, and consider this question and not burke it. They are considering the question of wiping out the war debt, and yet if we dare to suggest anything of the kind we are branded as disloyal. An hon. member opposite got up and said that because I said something like that I want to stop the Diggers' Loan. I do not want to stop the Diggers' Loan. I want to put it on the shoulders of the people who should bear it—on the shoulders of the people who caused the war, not on the shoulders of the people of Australia, who, again I say, did more than any other people in the world. They made us produce and they took our products. Sir Robert Philp told us to grow wheat inside the railway fences, and so on. What happened? It went to the other end of the world, and the middlemen get hold of it and squeezed all they could get out of the people who needed it.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: You are a middleman.

Mr. PEASE: I am not afraid to go amongst the people with whom I have spent my life. (Hear, hear!) I am prepared to take their opinion, not that of hon. members opposite. What I am saying here I am quite prepared to say in any part of Queensland. I hold that it is absolutely wrong for people to be frightened to say anything about this thing, when it is taking 5s. in the £1 to pay our interest and Great Britain is paying 8s. I say that the situation will never be remedied until these war debts are pooled and the burden of interest is taken off the Budgets. Hon. members accuse me of talking about repudiating interest. The point I was making was that our Government have paid more in interest than they have increased the debt. Of course, we had to pay interest. If we were a repudiatory Government, as hon. members on the other side say we are, we would have said, “We did not incur the debt. The people of Queensland have put us here. We want a clean sheet. You have not given us a clean sheet. We had to take over the legacies left behind by other Governments.” We have paid interest on those legacies, we took over the

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concern, and it was a poor concern too. I am prepared to say that the people of Queensland are the best judges. They will wake up eventually to the fact of where they are.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. PEASE: I am not afraid of their waking up. They are waking up in Townsville; they are waking up in Mount Morgan, as the hon. member for Mount Morgan pointed out. It is the process of evolution over again. This Government gave to the people the extended franchise in municipal management. That is what we stand for, and the Home Secretary, when he introduced the Bill, knew as well as I did that it would not have the effect that members opposite thought it would. He laughed at them when they talked about the nomad vote. He knew better. He is a man who reads; he is a professional politician if you like—a man who devotes his life, like all other members on this side, to his work. Hon. members opposite come in here and devote the fag-end of their days to the State's business. They get their dividends outside. No wonder they come along and say, "Do away with your salary." How am I going to live and keep my wife and family if I have no salary? I come here to do the best I can for the people who sent me, and I claim that I am entitled to my fair value.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. PEASE: Members on the Treasury benches devote more time to their duties than managers of concerns getting £5,000, £6,000, and £10,000 a year.

Mr. JONES: They show poor results. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. PEASE: They do not. Queensland has been developed in the North, in spite of all the criticisms. We have put the people in the North and given them a chance to live. This Government have done that. I claim that this Government stand for the people, not for the privileged classes. They give their whole time and attention to the affairs of the State. In the early days, how often did you find a Cabinet Minister in his office? An hour a week! Now you can go at 9 o'clock in the morning; you can go at half-past 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and you find every member on the Treasury benches in his office. This party do their duty to the country, and I am satisfied that the people in the country will wake up and we shall not be kicked out.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. G. P. BARNES (Warwick): There is a natural feeling, not only among the major portion of members of this House, but also throughout the entire country, that this is the most momentous occasion in the history of Queensland. After waiting some two or three days for somebody from the Government benches to respond to the arguments and criticism advanced from this side of the House, we find that the hon. member for Herbert is the man delegated to present the position for them in connection with the most serious state of affairs that exists. It almost seems impossible, when a juncture of this kind arises in the House on a discussion so weighty and critical regarding the financial administration of the Government, that we should have to listen to a disquisition dealing largely in the first place

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with the hon. member for Townsville in connection with local government, knowing full well that that hon. gentleman has no possible opportunity of referring to the charges that have been made, which, in any case, are distinctly outside the question before the House. Then we are landed away in Victoria, and told that the Commonwealth Government have sins of omission. Then we are taken another 15,000 miles away to England, and we have a comparison made of the conditions of things in Queensland and in old England, which has borne the burden and heat of the day in the fight for freedom. What are you going to say to a man who gives vent to his feelings and passions in a direction like that? Then we are landed after another brief moment right away in America, and we are shown how much more wisely we are governed than the American democrats are. It is about time that men faced the condition of things that exists here. We have to look to our own roof. The shingles are pretty loose just about here. It is our roof, and we should be dignified enough to face the fearful conditions that are now confronting the people of the State of Queensland.

Mr. ROXBAN: How did you get on with the wheat pool?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I am not going to bother my head about that just now. I have a matter of distinctly greater importance to deal with. The affairs of the State and the affairs of the whole people of the State demand our individual attention, and we should combine to face the conditions that exist, and strive to pull this State out of the terrible condition of bankruptcy which it is in to-day due to the mismanagement of hon. gentlemen opposite.

The TREASURER: You have no right to say that.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Considering the financial position of the country, no more disappointing deliverance and no more disappointing Financial Statement has ever been presented for the consideration of hon. members and for the consideration of the people of the country.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You sold wheat to Mr. Howes of the State Produce Agency last year. We would not have bought it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Tell us all about it now.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Probably we did sell him wheat, and, if he had been wise, he would have shipped it months before he did. He committed the same error that the wheat board committed by holding on to the wheat. Eventually the wheat was sold to a Southern miller, whereas, if it had been shipped at the right time, it would have brought a heap of money. I did not intend being drawn off the track of the great matter we have under consideration just now, but now that the matter has been mentioned, if the hon. member for Drayton were here, I would call him as a witness in this particular matter.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why do you not be a witness yourself?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I am quite capable. The hon. gentleman's statesmanship, if he may be called a statesman, just extends to the action he may commit, but he cannot see where the reaction comes in. The hon. member for Drayton and I travelled the other

day with a wheat grower who was a member in one of the Southern Parliaments.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: What was his name?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Hall or Hill, I believe. He said that an error had been committed by many people in connection with the sale of wheat; they were holding wheat over in order to secure lower freightage. He said, "You know wheat is being shipped to-day in Melbourne into two boats side by side, and in one instance the freight is £2 10s. per ton, and in the other the freight is £6 per ton; and in the case where the freight is £6 per ton we are netting 10s. a bushel."

To come back to the Financial Statement, it is a hopeless summary of the past, and I challenge any man to show that it conveys one ray of hope or light to the people of Queensland. The country asks for something, and they have got nothing whatever. The Statement is entirely destitute of statesmanship. There is no attempt to grasp or deal with the great broad questions at issue. There is no attempt to deal with the financial position of the State at the present time. There is not a word indicating the financial position of the country in its true sense, or how the position may be got out of. I say emphatically that there is not a word that will either inspire confidence here or abroad. If there is a word, lay it before the House and tell us where we can hope for relief as a result of the Financial Statement presented to this House. Last year we had a statement from the Premier—a broad, statesmanlike exposition setting out the financial position of the country—in which he laid bare the fact that the country was in a state of stress and danger, and it was urgent that we should give our best attention to retrieve our position, and so on.

The TREASURER: Why have you not done so?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Where is there in the Financial Statement any degree or sense of responsibility? Where is there anything that will indicate to anyone that the Government of the day are going to right the affairs of the State? There is an utter absence of anything that will indicate a sense of responsibility in dealing with the finances of the State. There is no reference in the Financial Statement to the country's loss of credit. Surely that was worthy of some reference there, and surely the Treasurer might have indicated how he was going to help to rehabilitate the country and finance it in the eyes of the country and the eyes of the world. There is not one word there. There is no reference made to maturing loans or to what is going to be done regarding them.

The TREASURER: You are quite wrong.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I am not quite wrong. There is no reference to the industrial unrest which rules to-day. We are told in language which is fairly brief and

[9 p.m.] sure is so-and-so, that the estimated revenue is so-and-so, and that there is going to be a deficit of £465,000. What I want to stress in connection with the finances is that the amount stated as being the likely debit at the end of the period will probably be enormously increased. I have looked back over the past and have found

that the Estimates have been invariably increased as far as expenditure is concerned.

The TREASURER: Did you go back to your brother's term?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I did not go back as far as that. If I went back to the commencement of our State life it would not matter; it would only help my argument, which is that, while we may indulge in the feeling that the Statement presented to us is a correct one, and that expenditure is not going to exceed the Treasurer's estimate, the experience of the past is that that estimate will be enormously increased. Another thing, there will be an adverse calculation to be made in connection with excess revenue. There is no possible chance of obtaining excess revenue this year; we have got to the end of our tether in that direction. But, if you go back four years, you will find there have been excess revenue and excess expenditure, and, when those two items are put together, they amount to a fairly large sum. For the year ended 30th June, 1913, the expenditure over the estimate was £174,015, and the excess revenue £238,852, or a total of £412,865. In 1919 the two figures came to £758,130. In 1920 the excess expenditure over the estimate was £848,382. Just imagine putting another £848,000 on top of the Treasurer's estimate for the current year! Where would we be landed? The revenue in excess of the estimate was £870,000; the two amounts totalling £1,293,325. When we come to last year we find that the expenditure over the estimate was £420,539, while the revenue in excess of the estimate was £419,031, or a total of £839,620. My contention is that the experience of those years is going to be repeated this year so far as expenditure is concerned.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Hear, hear!

Mr. G. P. BARNES: You will not find at the end of the term that we have come out with a loss of £465,000, but you can readily conclude that that amount will be enormously increased.

The TREASURER: You are really too cheerful.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You are a Jeremiah.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: You can call me what you like. I fear the position of things as they exist to-day, and the condition of things as they are estimated by the Treasurer, will be infinitely worse on 30th June, 1922.

The TREASURER: You have been in Parliament for years, and your own party would never even give you a portfolio.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I did not want it. I have never been ambitious in that direction.

The TREASURER: They would not trust you.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I am not going to bother my head about it. I may tell the hon. gentleman that he has failed ignominiously in connection with the finances, and the Government are as big sinners as he is in this matter.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Hear, hear!

Mr. G. P. BARNES: They have landed the country in a state of financial bankruptcy, and have brought us to a condition of things to which no other country that I am aware of has been brought. We find

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ourselves to-day with our credit gone, and utterly helpless in the direction of obtaining money to carry on the necessary works of the country. It is still doubtful how the figures in connection with the estimated expenditure and revenue from various sources are going to come out.

The TREASURER: You know very well that you do not understand them.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I understand them perfectly. I have taken them from the hon. gentleman's figures. If his Statement is correct, then what I am stating is correct. In 1920-21 he had from revenue £12,591,201; the Loan Fund expenditure was £3,234,000; and the Trust Fund expenditure £4,644,000; a total of £20,469,201.

The TREASURER: You are quite wrong there.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: They are the hon. gentleman's figures. If he had included—as he should have done—the amount from the Commonwealth, the figures might be different.

The TREASURER: Read the preceding paragraph.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: In connection with the Loan Fund the hon. gentleman shows a credit of £1,423,491.

The TREASURER: What is wrong with that?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: At the end of June he showed a credit on Trust Fund account of £1,085,030. This Committee must remember that, whilst there was that credit, £1,000,000 of it belongs to the Bank of England. No doubt, the bank could not make use of their money, and they have asked the Treasurer if he would be good enough to utilise the sum for a further period, and they granted him an extension of time.

The TREASURER: What nonsense!

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The Treasurer's "Good Man Friday" made overtures to the Bank of England and got an extension in regard to that money, which was borrowed at short call, and should have been paid earlier. Were it not for that £1,000,000 from the Bank of England, allowing for the expenditure during the last three months, the Loan Fund would be pretty well exhausted. The Trust Funds are in credit to the extent of £1,085,000; but, in connection with the Trust Funds, we know that the Government had the privilege last year of enjoying £2,287,799, plus the previous £1,000,000 from the Savings Bank.

The TREASURER: You are stupid. You had it all taken out long before we got into power.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: You expended the money before it belonged to you in order to get yourselves out of a difficulty. You sacrificed the people's best asset—namely, the Savings Bank of Queensland—and you passed it over to the Commonwealth in order that you might enjoy a permanent loan of the Savings Bank money. Nothing more discreditable has ever been done in connection with our public life than that. How hon. members opposite can sit there and allow the Government to transfer the State's Savings Bank to the Commonwealth is quite beyond my comprehension.

The TREASURER: I will prepare a memo. on Tuesday next with regard to that.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I want to point out definitely and firmly the condition of things

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as they exist to-day, and as they are anticipated to exist, according to the Treasurer's Statement. I want to let this House and the country know that the Treasurer has not taken many things into account. Referring to railway matters and to all the efforts made in connection with railway expenditure and a reduction therein, we find that the expenditure last year was £5,048,498, and in spite of all their discharging of men we find from the Estimates that the Government are going to run the country into a still greater expenditure in the Railway Department for the current year amounting to £5,770,000. If there was ever a question that demanded the earliest attention of the people it is the way in which the railways of the State are being administered, and have been administered, by the Government. They have simply passed their friends in wholesale till they burdened the railways with an excessive amount of employees to the tune of some 4,000 men.

Mr. COLLINS: Do you say there are 4,000 excess men in the Railway Department?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Now they are doing the cruel thing by discharging them.

Mr. COLLINS: Will you answer my question?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: It is a cruel thing that the railway men should be discharged. Men have given their lives to a certain department, and then suddenly find they are turned adrift. Why not carry out that very good idea to which the Government are giving some notice, and that is pool the men's time so that every man in the service may be retained.

Mr. COLLINS: Did you ever pool your profits with the men you employed?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I could surprise the hon. gentleman, but I am not going to deal with that question now. I could take the hon. member into my confidence and tell him what we do in connection with the firm of Barnes and Co., Ltd. I can tell him that I know of no more liberal arrangement with employees than that made by Barnes and Co., Ltd., of Warwick.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. G. P. BARNES: But, when a member is debating affairs that are of paramount importance, and that have to do with the very life of our State, it is really too bad to have these personal matters thrown at him.

Mr. COLLINS: Always let the worker suffer so long as you get the profits.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: There is something wrong in the management of the railways of Queensland when the expenditure is being increased as it has been for years. The railways were a paying concern under the Liberal Government, but since this Government came into office they have gradually fallen off in their returns on the capital invested in the following directions:—In 1915 the railways earned £3 13s. per cent.; in 1916, £2 11s. 3d.; in 1917, £2 1s.; 1918, £1 8s. 10d.; 1919, 13s. 1d.; 1920, £1 6s. 10d.; and last year, according to the Treasurer, 11s. 11d., but, according to Mr. Steer, 10s. 7½d. I suppose there is some explanation for that. At any rate, even the doctors in the Railway Department disagree in this matter. The difference is not very great, but it shows that, whilst we are on the verge of having to pay 6½ per cent. for money, and whilst the Treasurer is paying it for any money he can get hold of to-day, the railways are

only returning about 10s. per cent. towards the interest on the capital invested. We want to run the railways on business lines, and, if that is done, the railways will pay. What about the loans that are maturing? Do you not think it would have been worthy of the Treasurer to have made some reference to the loans maturing in 1922, 1924, and 1925? Certainly, he should have made reference to the loan maturing in 1922 amounting to £2,529,752. It would have been fair to this House if the Treasurer had enlightened us as to how it is intended to meet that contingency.

The TREASURER: Read the table and you will see all those loans are mentioned.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: They are mentioned in a most casual and flippant way; but this Committee wants something different to that, and the country demands something different to that.

The TREASURER: What do you want?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: We want to know how you are going to meet those loans with your credit gone. You are defaming the capitalists abroad, and the Premier of the country threatens in one breath that he will see that these people on the other side do not even get their interest.

The TREASURER: The Premier never said that. That is a deliberate lie. The Premier never said that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Withdraw! Withdraw!

The TREASURER: I will not withdraw.

Mr. SIZER: I rise to a point of order. Is the Treasurer in order in saying that the statement made by the hon. member for Warwick is a deliberate lie?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He did not say that the member told a deliberate lie. He said that the statement about the Premier was a deliberate lie.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I am not very particular about what the hon. gentleman says, but I will read the statement the Premier did make.

The TREASURER: That is better.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: This is what the Premier says. It is under the heading of "Driving capital out of Queensland"—

"Mr. Theodore made it clear that the Government was going to call upon those foreign capitalists who have been responsible for the failure of the London loan to leave in Queensland in Government securities the profits they make out of Queensland."

The TREASURER: Do you know what you said? You said the Premier had stated that he would not pay the interest on our loans.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I think I did say that.

The TREASURER: I know you did.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I will own up to that, but what I want to say is that, so far as the tangible thing goes—the actual handing over of the cash to the creditors in London—that is what the Premier of Queensland did say, and, when commenting on the statement that the Government would appropriate the dividends due in the State to outside investors, the "Pall Mall Gazette" says that "Mr. Theodore has been reduced to the naked methods of the highwayman."

That is how he was thought of on the other side.

The TREASURER: Why did you say the Premier said something he never said?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I put that right so far as that goes.

The TREASURER: I am glad of that.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: There are many things the hon. gentleman ought to put right, and he ought to set about it pretty quickly.

The TREASURER: I put you right on that.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The hon. gentleman ought to set about putting the finances of the country right.

The TREASURER: There is no better liar than a good Christian.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I am very much obliged to the hon. gentleman.

The TREASURER: You should be.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The position of maturing loans certainly should receive the immediate attention of the Government, and the only way in which to provide for the payment of these loans is to aid in the restoration of confidence, and you are not going to do it on the lines you are following.

The TREASURER: What would you do?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I would see that that Land Acts Amendment Act was amended. I would see that the Brisbane Tramways Act was repealed. Why should it not be? What better thing can you do than to acknowledge the wrong you have done and rectify the impression you have made abroad, and show that you are manly enough to right things according to the usages of a free, honest nation? Then you should encourage the establishment of secondary industries—

Mr. COLLINS: You blocked the iron and steel works.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: And assist new industries that do not enter into competition with any existing industry, by relieving such industries of income tax for three years. You should encourage something to be done in that direction. Encourage land settlement and production by relieving the farmers of land tax and income tax to the collective amount of £300. The hon. member for Herbert said we were overproducing in wheat and butter. The thing is quite fallacious and quite untrue. You could go on producing commodities to as great an extent as you liked and you would find a ready market for them, and the same thing applies to wool that has been referred to. We are suffering disabilities in connection with the production of meat, but that thing will regulate itself, and we are not going out of business just now simply because there is a difficulty in this direction and that direction and the other. The country is all right, but the Government are all wrong. If the Government will turn their attention to righting the industries of the country and the credit of the country, there will be no dearth of employment. The unemployment has been brought about by the mischievous administration of the Government, and I do appeal to them at the eleventh hour—it is more than the eleventh hour—to take a note of how their administrative acts have affected the life of this community, and immediately to give consideration to the restoration of confidence so that the workless men may be employed

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and each component part of the community may share and join in the building up of the State and share also in the prosperity of the country.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): I congratulate the Treasurer on being truthful for the first time in his life in regard to the Estimates, when he says we are going to have a deficit of £465,000. I had the curiosity to read a number of Financial Statements delivered by different Treasurers, and in looking through the 1912, 1913, and 1914 Financial Statements, I find something that a man may be proud of—something that would lead the people of Queensland to believe that the Government were going to do something, and that they proposed to try, as far as possible, to advance the prosperity of the country.

Mr. COLLINS: They would lead you to believe it all right.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: In 1915, the first Financial Statement delivered by the present Premier when he was Treasurer compared very favourably with the ideas that were enunciated by the hon. member for Bulimba in the three previous years. There we find a Financial Statement from which the people could learn something, and from which the people could realise that probably the Government had ambitions. In 1916 the same thing occurred again. But in 1917, 1918, and 1919, as the Government gradually got more and more in want of money and found that they were getting into still greater difficulties, we find the whole tone of the Financial Statement alters. I have listened with a great deal of interest to the debate that has taken place to-night, and I have listened with pleasure to some of the remarks that were made. I listened to the hon. member for Herbert when he travelled from one side of the world to the other; when he travelled from Australia to England, from England to America, from America to Timbuctoo, and then right back again to Australia, and I failed to see what the financial obligations of the British Empire had to do with the financial obligations of the present Administration in Queensland. We were told by the hon. member for Herbert that the enormous debts of the British Empire were infinitely worse than anything we have. Even if it is a fact, why should the hon. member go outside of Australia for comparisons? Why not be absolutely honest with the people of Queensland and with the people of Australia? Why not confine himself to the financial situation as we find it in Queensland, in Victoria, in New South Wales, and in the other States? If he will take the trouble to compare what the Government have done during the last five years with what other Governments have done in the other States, he will find that the situation in Queensland is not quite so favourable as the Treasurer would like the people to believe. I am not here to cry "stinking fish," and I do not want to cry "stinking fish."

The TREASURER: Why do you do it?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: When I congratulated the Treasurer on being truthful, I want him to understand that I was not even then crying "stinking fish." When we come to compare the taxation that has taken place in Queensland during the last five or six years with the taxation in Victoria and New South Wales—and our friends on the other side of the House are repeatedly showing what was

done in New South Wales and what was being done in Victoria—what do we find? I am going to point out the land tax collected in the different States. In 1913-1914 we find that the New South Wales land tax amounted to £4,692; in Victoria it amounted to £302,224; and in Queensland it amounted to nothing. There was no land tax collected in Queensland in 1913. In South Australia it amounted to £136,602, in West Australia £46,201, and in Tasmania to £79,085. In 1914-1915 the land tax collected in New South Wales amounted to £3,315, in Victoria to £293,550—in Queensland again there was no land tax collected—and in South Australia it amounted to £131,396. In 1915-1916—that was the year in which our friends on the other side took over the reins of government in Queensland—the amount of land tax collected in New South Wales was £3,190, in Victoria £352,353, and in Queensland £247,044.

At 9.30 p.m.,

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*) relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I would like the hon. gentleman to remember that in that year, which was the year in which the Government took over the reins of office, they collected £247,044, as against Victoria's collection of £352,353. In other words, they collected £105,000 less in land tax that year than Victoria. Our friends opposite are always quoting Victoria. In South Australia they collected in that year £154,483, and in West Australia £47,716. In New South Wales in 1916-1917 they collected £3,215, in Victoria £369,486, in Queensland £362,535, in South Australia £139,372, in West Australia £42,431, and in Tasmania £83,535. In New South Wales in 1917-1918 only £2,921 was collected, in Victoria £353,156, in Queensland £344,547, in South Australia £166,469, and in West Australia £63,363. In 1918-1919 they collected in New South Wales £2,800, in Victoria £324,232, in Queensland £578,253—which was easily the greatest land tax paid in any State of Australia that year—and South Australia £154,000. The latest statistics with regard to population show that Queensland has a total population of 755,573, so that the amount of £578,253 paid in land tax in 1918-1919 was very large, in view of the population. That is something, I suppose, on which hon. members opposite will commend the Government; but the people who are engaged in the production of food-stuffs, and whom hon. members opposite say they are out to help at all times, will not thank the Government for imposing that heavy burden upon them. During that period the Federal Government had to carry on the war, and Queensland had nothing whatever to do with that responsibility. The Commonwealth Government in 1913-1914 collected in land tax £62,006, in 1914-1915 £66,326, in 1915-1916 £104,000, in 1916-1917 £105,195, in 1917-1918 £105,095, and in 1918-1919—when the State Government increased the land taxation by over £200,000—the Federal Government managed to reduce it, and, as against the £105,000 of the previous year, collected only £85,550. Whilst hon. members opposite are always talking about their desire to help the man on the land, they think so little of him that they taxed him to the extent of £578,253 in connection with land taxation; but the Federal Government, with all the burdens it was shouldering in connection with the war, decreased the land tax by an appreciable amount.

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We come now to dividend and income taxes collected by the different States. In New South Wales in 1913-1914 they collected £1,290,370, in Victoria £527,705, in Queensland £572,918, and in South Australia £240,995. In 1914-1915, New South Wales collected £1,655,923, Victoria £506,214, Queensland £517,275, and South Australia £236,270. In 1915-1916, New South Wales collected £1,717,403, Victoria £702,745, and Queensland £766,560. In 1916-1917, New South Wales collected £1,973,477, Victoria £766,746, and Queensland £756,292. We had nearly reached Victoria. In 1917-1918, New South Wales collected £2,132,117, Victoria £773,463, and Queensland £867,420. That was a very considerable increase over the previous year, and it put us ahead of Victoria so far as the dividend and income tax collections were concerned.

Mr. COLLINS: What are you trying to prove? Queensland is a very rich State—far richer than Victoria.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Victoria has a population of 1,500,000, as against Queensland's population of 755,000. You would hardly expect that a Government which professed to be in sympathy with the producers would place this heavy taxation upon their shoulders. In 1918-19, New South Wales collected £2,385,000; Victoria £928,210; and Queensland £1,667,335. Summarising, I would like to say that in the period of six years, New South Wales increased her income tax by £1,054,873; Victoria by £400,505; and Queensland by £1,194,417. And yet people say that they wonder why Queensland is not in a prosperous condition! Can you honestly expect people in a State taxed in that way to feel a desire to get on, to effect improvement, to produce more, to work a little harder? I think it was in 1915 that the then Treasurer, Mr. Theodore, speaking upon the necessity for assisting primary production, talked about the amount of stock carried by the railways from drought-stricken districts into more favourably situated country, and came to the conclusion that a bold railway policy should be the policy of the Government; that in order to encourage primary production and the settlement of people on the land, the policy of the Government should be to open up the country with railways, and do everything to facilitate the carriage of our primary products. Yet we find that in the short period of five or six years they have loaded the primary producers with direct taxation to the extent of £578,253.

Mr. COLLINS: What is that from?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: That is from land tax.

Mr. COLLINS: That is not from primary producers.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: They have loaded them up very considerably with income tax, and I do not think that the Treasurer quite appreciates the position, although he says that he is the author of this Statement; yet, as the author of this Statement, after giving full consideration to the facts, he admits that he is going to have a deficit of £455,000. I take it he is not only giving the facts received from the heads of the departments that consideration which they deserve, but he must also realise that further taxation of the man on the land is absolutely impossible. We cannot go on under present conditions, and no man should realise it better than the Treasurer.

In 1919-20 Queensland wool averaged 16.62d. per lb. on 120,000,000 lb., whilst in 1920-21, the average is going to work out somewhere in the vicinity of 10½d. for a little over 121,000,000 lb. That means that the pastoralists and the Government lessees are going to share a loss of income on wool somewhere in the vicinity of £3,000,000 this coming year. What is going to happen as the year progresses only the Treasurer can tell us. I am not going to predict what is going to happen between this and the end of the financial year, but the fact remains that there is going to be a loss on wool of something in the vicinity of £3,000,000.

The TREASURER: Not from Queensland.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Yes.

The TREASURER: You are quite wrong.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: In 1919-20 it was safe to put down the price of cattle at an average of £12 a head. This year it would be quite safe to put them down at an average of £6 a head, and perhaps in doing that I am a little over the mark. The number exported from Queensland in 1919-20 was over 500,000, which, at an average loss of £6 a head, means a further loss of £3,000,000 to be divided amongst the lessees of the Crown and the farmers. Then there are sheep, and perhaps some people do not quite appreciate the fact that sheep are exported in large quantities. Last year a little more than 1,000,000 sheep were exported, and the average price was in the vicinity of £1 a head. The price to-day is somewhere in the vicinity of 10s., and I believe that in putting the price at that figure for the sake of argument I am perhaps over-valuing them. So that on the export of our sheep we are going to lose £500,000 in the coming year. The result is that, so far as the pastoral industry and many of the Government lessees are concerned, we can look forward to their losing something in the vicinity of from £6,000,000 to £6,500,000 of money during the next twelve months. Surely that is enough to make people wonder where we are drifting, and what is going to be the end of this particular Government and the country when it is fortunate enough to get them away from the Government benches. In addition to the enormous losses that the pastoralists are going to suffer, I would like to point out that the land revenue shows an enormous increase since 1912-13. The table is as follows:—

Year.	Land Revenue.	Land Tax.
	£	£
1912-13 ...	543,402	...
1913-14 ...	943,135	...
1914-15 ...	961,608	...
1915-16 ...	944,825	247,044
1916-17 ...	956,603	362,535
1917-18 ...	1,088,540	344,475
1918-19 ...	1,087,082	578,253
1919-20 ...	1,258,013	459,188
1920-21 ...	1,693,200	469,175

Mr. COLLINS: The farmers paid only 4 per cent. of the land tax.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I do feel, in view of those facts, that we have got to realise that our position is extreme. With all due deference to the financial magnates that we have on the other side of the House, I say they will want all the brains that they can collect, and I would recommend that the Treasurer should perhaps take to

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heart that famous paragraph in his report appearing on page 9, which says, "It is well known that the most eminent banker would not be listened to on finance by experts who arrived in Parliament direct from the farm." I feel that, if you compare the previous six years' finances with the finances of the six years previous to that, one appreciates the fact that even the Treasurer had no necessity to go outside this Chamber to get some sound advice. He might have got some sound advice from the hon. member for Bulimba which would have been to a very great extent of benefit had he done so. No. Rather than do that we find that by degrees the Treasurer's Statement under this Administration has gone from bad to worse. In the first year it was full of hope, in the second year it was still full of hope, in the third year they began to realise that things were getting serious, and in the fourth year we find there was quite a different tone. Now we come to the present Financial Statement and find that the Treasurer even gets down to being almost abusive. At any rate, one cannot say that he is in any way complimentary. I presume that he meant that the men who came from the country districts, the men who are legitimately engaged in primary production, have not got brains enough to appreciate the fact that sometimes they might get good advice from a banker. It is about on a par with the usual advice the Treasurer gives to hon. members on this side of the House. I fail to see anything here that would lead me to believe that the Government have any idea of how they are going to get out of the mess into which they have got. The increased taxation would lead me to believe—and lead the people of Queensland to believe—that they have got into it without the assistance of this side of the House in any shape or form. They have got there because they thought they realised that they had an unlimited amount of revenue that they could draw upon at any time they wanted it. Now they find that they have not got it, and they have to realise that they have got to admit that they are going to have a deficit, and they have to put that deficit to as low a margin as possible.

Mr. BRENNAN: What about the West Australian and the Commonwealth Governments?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I showed the returns in regard to land tax, and I will show the Commonwealth returns in regard to the dividend and income tax returns for Queensland during the last four or five years. With all the enormous taxation and the enormous responsibilities that the Federal Government have had to shoulder, their increased taxation from dividends and income tax, so far as Queensland is concerned, does not compare with the enormous increase that has taken place in the State revenue derived from the same sources. After all, the Federal Government do not continue to say that they are out at all times to look after the man on the land, and they do not say for a moment that they are out at all times to look after simply this particular State of Queensland; but we have the hon. member for Toowoomba repeatedly telling the farmers just outside Toowoomba that he lives for them and does nothing else but think about them, and that he dreams about them. Then he gets among his friends in Toowoomba, who do not believe that it is desirable to help the man on the land, and he says,

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"Let us down then on every possible occasion."

Mr. BRENNAN: That is not true. You should apologise.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I am looking forward to the time when the hon. member for Toowoomba will be as candid as the Treasurer. This time the Treasurer has been candid and admits that he is going to have a deficit, which he puts down at something less than £500,000, but probably he will find out at the end of the year that it will be near £1,000,000. I suppose it will be manipulated in the same way as he has manipulated his past credit balances. We all know very well how he got them. We all know very well how he showed a surplus. If you come to the Taxation Department and put up a good case and show that they are overtaxing the people, there is no possible chance of getting a refund until after the end of June. We know very well that these overcharges were reimbursed in July or August. Probably the hon. member for Toowoomba does not know it; but the Treasurer does, and he should be perfectly candid with the hon. member for Toowoomba and give him sound advice.

Mr. BRENNAN: Who grew the best crop of wheat on the Downs? You know I did. I was the best farmer on the Downs.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The Treasurer knows very well that refunds are made in the Land Tax and Income Tax Department, and he knows as well as I do that there are assessments sent out which even the Commissioner cannot stand for. The assessments are sent out and payment is demanded, and later on, shall I say, a readjustment takes place? To be charitable I will put it that way.

The TREASURER: No.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I am not going to insinuate that they deliberately do that sort of thing so that they have the people of Queensland lending the Government anything from £100,000 to £150,000 free of interest. I am not going to be uncharitable enough to say that; but I am going to say that reimbursements are made in July and August that are decided upon in May. They are not made until after the end of the financial year. The Treasurer showed a surplus of £26,000 the year before last, and that is the way he made his surplus this year of £9,000.

The TREASURER: I do not think you are deliberately giving voice to those untruths. It is due to pure ignorance.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: When one goes back he can read in the Financial Statement of 1915 the Premier, who was then Treasurer, making this statement in regard to immigration—

"At the end of the war everything was in preparation for the reception of large additions to our population from those sources."

I would like to know what has become of the immigration policy that was then enunciated. It seems to be non est, and, so far as this Statement is concerned, it is non est altogether. I take it that the Government have definitely decided that there shall be no immigrants coming into this State. I suppose they will argue that they have got enough people here and cannot cope with any more. We have heard hon. members opposite talking about the desirability of

increasing the white population of Queensland, and we repeatedly hear them saying that it is the safeguard of the State.

At 9.55 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The safeguarding of the State depends upon the populating of our coastal areas with a strong, vigorous, white race. Whilst I believe the Australian to be an excellent man, I also believe that the Englishman, the Scotsman, the Welshman, and the Irishman are desirable for this country, and I hope we shall see an immigration policy enunciated by the Treasurer or the Premier at a near date. It is ridiculous to think there is no provision for immigration during the next twelve or eighteen months.

Mr. BRENNAN: How can you without the money?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I am very pleased to hear the hon. member admit that they have not the money. I suppose that, next to the Treasurer, the hon. member for Toowoomba is the one man who can explain exactly what is meant; he is the greatest financial genius we have. It does not get away from the fact that we should have a strong immigration policy. The hon. member says we cannot do it without money. I am not going to argue that we can. But the money so expended would be well spent. Every person you can encourage to come out and go on the land is going to be an asset to the State.

Mr. BRENNAN: Find work for those who are here before you bring anyone else.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: Why don't you do it?

Mr. BRENNAN: We are trying to do it.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The hon. member for Toowoomba is a member of the party who have held the Treasury benches for the last six years. He has been in Parliament about four years. I do not know why, with a man of his calibre behind the party, we should be in a position of lacking money. (Opposition laughter.) Perhaps at a later date the hon. member for Toowoomba will enlighten us as to why the Government have failed.

Mr. BRENNAN: Because the "Bob" Philp delegation went home to England.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: When I got up to speak I had a headache. When the hon. member for Toowoomba reverts to that old parrot cry of "Bob Philp" and the delegation it makes my headache infinitely worse.

Mr. BRENNAN interjected.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: My head is not as thick as the hon. member's.

Mr. BRENNAN: What about the Ford car?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: When we come to the question of immigration we find that the Premier in 1915 made the statement that we were going to have a very strong immigration policy. Only the night before last the hon. member for Bowen said they never threw over a plank of their platform. Yet the Premier can turn round now and say we are not going to have immigration. I want to know why the Treasurer did not tell us in this Statement that we were going to have a policy of immigration.

I was very interested to hear the Treasurer pass over State enterprises. He said he did not wish to deprive us of the pleasure of finding out all the information we could when

the Auditor-General's report is placed before us. The State enterprises should receive far greater consideration than the scant statement made here. We are told by the Treasurer that he does not propose to anticipate the reports of the Auditor-General and the Commissioner for Trade upon the various State enterprises. He says—

"I think it wiser to wait until the audited balance-sheets are available before commenting upon the financial result; naturally the collapse of the overseas markets for meat and tallow, metals, etc., will be reflected in the balance-sheets."

Why should they be? After all, you are only taking the accounts up to 30th June, 1921, and there was not any very great fall until the early part of May. Surely hon. members opposite are not going to argue that it is going to affect us to that extent? The fact of the matter is that the Treasurer in his heart feels that State enterprises are a mistake. I take this to be a tacit acknowledgment on the Treasurer's part that State enterprises as a whole are a great mistake, and he is afraid to comment upon them; because a certain number of his followers believe it does not matter whether we lose a million or two on State enterprises, they are still to be continued. It is a pity, especially in regard to the State butcher shops, that the Treasurer did not give us a little information.

Mr. BRENNAN: Do you want to close the State butcher shop in Toowoomba?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I do not think for one moment that the Government are going to close it. Peter Venaglia will close it. He is underselling them now by about 4d. per lb. When he does succeed in closing it, we shall find what the hon. member has to say in regard to its closure. Apart altogether from the butcher shops, it would have been enlightening to members on this side to have heard something from the Treasurer in respect of what they propose doing with the State stations. Nothing is said as to whether they propose to carry them on or wipe them out altogether. Yet, if we read the Financial Statements of 1917, 1918, and 1919, we find that practically half the Statements were bolstered up with what they are doing in regard to State enterprises; and to-day the only State enterprise they can point to as having been at all successful is that of insurance. The railways, as our friends know, are in a rotten condition. The State stations might possibly be in a worse condition even than the railways. Everything they have touched in regard to State enterprises has proved a failure with the exception of insurance, in which they have a monopoly on certain business. If they were to have a monopoly in other things they could possibly run them successfully too. There was one particular statement made by the Premier when he was Treasurer—on the 1st November, 1916—to which I take exception. That statement having been made in one Financial Statement, it is up to the present Treasurer now to tell the people of Queensland that the debt which was then referred to has been honourably met. In talking on the question of railways, it began to dawn upon the Treasurer that the railways were becoming a losing proposition, and he had to find some way to get out of it. He had to find some excuse, and one of the excuses was this—

"To some extent the increase was

Mr. J. H. C. Roberts.]

accounted for by the general activity in removing stock from drought-stricken districts to the coast. In this way the railways have saved to the State hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of stock which otherwise would have perished, and furnishes a further demonstration of the wisdom and necessity of prosecuting a vigorous railway policy to serve and develop our primary industries."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Is that not correct?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman asks if it is not correct. I would not believe the Premier could possibly tell a falsehood. My experience of the hon. gentleman would lead me to believe that everything he says is right and correct—according to him. (Laughter.) If occasionally he would be as truthful as he is here, people would give him more credit for it. He goes on to say in his Statement of 1st November, 1916—

"A rebate of 33½ per cent. each way was allowed on starving stock; amount involved being £18,181. Fodder for starving stock was carried at especially low rates—a reduction of 75 per cent. off ordinary rates, equivalent in freight to £20,566.

"The principal items are—

Purchase seed wheat and expenses of storage and distribution ...	£33,138
Purchase seed maize and expenses of storage and distribution ...	570
Purchase seed fodder to assist farmers during drought ...	13,200
Purchase cane plants ...	147
	£47,055 "

What I object to is that that statement appears in the Treasurer's Statement of 1st November, 1916, and the present Treasurer a few days ago did not mention the fact that that debt was being honourably met. He may have ascertained from the Secretary for Agriculture the amount of money the Agricultural Department was going to receive from the certificates for wheat, and he might, at any rate, have acknowledged the fact that the debt which stands to-day to the debit of the farmers was being honourably met by the repayments from the wheat certificates which the Secretary for Agriculture will be sure of collecting in the near future.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They have not been collected yet, any way.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Yet we have members like the hon. member for Toowoomba and others telling us times without number that the farmers are spoon-fed. In substantiating their argument, they deliberately point to facts like this which appear in an authority which no one can deny. I am not trying to deny it. I am perfectly willing to admit that an amount of assistance was rendered to the man on the land at that particular period; but I object to the argument that the farmers are continually being spoon-fed, and the statement made by the Treasurer in 1916 should be rectified by the Treasurer to-day. He could easily say that he expects the Secretary for Agriculture to receive from the farmers a certain sum of money. That is only a fair thing to ask, and I only ask it as a matter of justice for the man on the land. Many people are ignorant, and when they read this sort of thing they will say that the farmers received

[Mr. J. H. C. Roberts.

assistance from the Government and they ought to give us our bread a little cheaper. The people who read that statement of the Treasurer will expect to get their butter and cheese a little cheaper, because the Government have more or less spoon-fed the farmers.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Who made use of the phrase that "the farmers were spoon-fed"?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The Secretary for Public Lands has lived in this world for about seventy years, and would have us believe that he has not heard that statement. (Laughter.) If he has never heard that statement then he is not a fit and proper man to occupy the position he does. Surely the Government are not going to come to a young man like me to tell them anything like that. (Laughter.) I read the statements very carefully through—the different Treasurers' Statements—and, although I read what the Government did for the farmers, I never saw any statement in regard to the amount of money distributed "under the bush," so to speak, in connection with the distribution of rations to people, many of whom are not deserving of them. There are hundreds and hundreds of pounds expended every year in rations that are given to people that are not deserving of them.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: If you know of any cases, why don't you be honest and give information about them?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: You can get plenty of cases if you wish to find out. You have only to ask the policemen in the different country centres.

Mr. BRENNAN: That is not true. That is a reflection on the police.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: You have only got to ask them and they will tell you. Owing to the ignorance of the Secretary for Public Lands in connection with these matters, I must invite him to travel round the country with me for a day or two. (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I would not be seen with you. (Laughter.)

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: We do not see any statement about the amount distributed in rations to these men; so why should the farmers be singled out every time? Why should the Government mention the farmers particularly as having received assistance from the Government? I would like to know how many free passes were given by the Government during the twelve months. Let us have that information and see how it compares with the paltry sum of money mentioned here as having been distributed to the farmers in regard to a reduction in freights. We are told that £50,000 was given to the farmers in the shape of freights and that is put on record, but we do not see any record of the number of free passes distributed to people, nor do we see any reference to the number of people who are getting relief from the Government, and who are not deserving of that relief at all. We should have these statements side by side in order to show that the farmers are not the only section of the community who are deriving benefit and assistance from the Government. (Hear, hear.)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You have supplied us with the best propaganda stuff that we have had for a long time.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: If the Secretary for Public Lands wishes to use the truth for propaganda work let him wade in. I am glad that the hon. gentleman recognises the truth when he sees it. Times without number we have been told that the farmers have been supported, and I object to that statement. (Hear, hear!)

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Who said that?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: In spite of these statements, and in spite of the enormous taxation put on to the man on the land during the last five years, we are still continuing to produce. In spite of the fact that the Government have loaded us with taxation in every shape and form, and even loaded our co-operative companies, we are still producing. The butter factories, the cheese factories, and the ham and bacon factories are still working, and still striving and still determined to produce more and more in spite of the advice given to us by the hon. member for Herbert to-night. While we are doing that, we object to having it repeatedly stated that we are always and at all times asking for assistance from the Government. We are trying to carry out our business in an honourable way, and whatever assistance the Government can see fit to give us we will be very grateful for, but it is not given to us as individuals; it is given to us as a section of the community that is providing food for the people. Without the primary producer the people in the cities would starve.

Mr. BRENNAN: And without the people in the cities the man on the land would starve.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I do not know about that, because I believe the men in the country have always common-sense enough and ability enough to come along and build another city. If Brisbane were to disappear to-morrow, the people in the country could come along and build another Brisbane. I say there is no section amongst the workers—and I include the bona fide farmer as a worker—there is no better example of anything in the way of hard work than you will find right throughout the country districts in our co-operative companies. We have large co-operative companies, and many of them are doing work that the Government ought to be doing.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do you include yourself in the category of worker?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I did; but since I came to this House I have put myself down in the same category as the Secretary for Lands—a gentleman at large. (Laughter.) We find many of the co-operative companies doing the work that perhaps the Government should be doing. For instance, let me take the Downs Co-operative Dairy Company, and I will show you what they are doing. The Downs Co-operative Dairy Company went out into a newly-settled district—a district in which the Government had a lot of land to settle—the Miles district—and they built a factory. The original factory put in somewhere in the vicinity of £2,500, provided the settlers in and around Miles would put in a like sum, and we gave them twenty-four months in which to put up their £2,500 to become shareholders, and we put in, not only the £2,500 and the new factory we built and the land we purchased, but we put in also the share of the assets of the big company at

Toowoomba. The hon. member for Toowoomba knows that, and he knows that we not only went there, but we also built a butter factory at Dalby on the same lines; and, in my opinion, it was the duty of the Government to have rendered assistance in so far as the Miles settlers were concerned.

Mr. BRENNAN: Why?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Because they settled a large number of men on prickly-pear selections, and had it not been for the butter factory and the cheese factory, they would have starved long ago. They did not come down and ask for Government assistance; they built the factory themselves. We have in the Downs Co-operative Dairy Company five butter factories and innumerable cheese factories, and we have not asked the Government for one penny. I want to point out that the Government should appreciate the work that is being done by the co-operative companies.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: So we do.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: They should appreciate the fact that there are co-operative companies taking on big responsibilities; and, as an original shareholder of the Downs Co-operative Dairy Company—I think it is some eighteen or nineteen years ago since they started—I say that, if you take the trouble, you will find that our shares to-day are only worth £1, in spite of the fact that we have got butter factories at Miles, Dalby, Crow's Nest, Clifton, and Toowoomba, and we have got cheese factories at five other centres as well.

Mr. BRENNAN: You have to return the money to the farmers.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Why, then, should the Treasurer insist upon the heavy taxation he is putting on us?

Mr. BRENNAN: What taxation do you pay?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I will give you an example. At one cheese factory they showed a profit—

The CHAIRMAN indicated that the time allowed the hon. member under the Standing Orders had expired.

Mr. NOTT (*Stanley*): I have listened to what hon. members on either side have had to say during this debate with a great deal of interest. I have heard volumes of figures quoted and a great deal of trenchant criticism, and I will do my best to avoid repetition. I may say that I read the Treasurer's Statement with a feeling of relief, because I honestly thought, from what I had seen of the actions of the Government during the last twelve months, that the position would have been a good deal worse. The Treasurer claims that he has had more than one surplus, but, considering that he has been able to claim a surplus and also that he received a considerable sum over his estimate, one would have thought, in a country where surpluses were flying round, that the railways would be in a paying position, and also that the country would be in a very healthy and prosperous condition. But what do we find? Instead of this healthy and prosperous condition existing in the country, we find that the Government who have had this surplus have been forced to go in for retrenchment, and where they have not gone in for retrenchment they have had to go in for "deflation"; and it seems to me that in many cases this deflation was practised because the Govern-

ment funk'd retrenchment. Instead of taking the bull by the horns and going in for retrenchment, they went in for deflation. Certainly, the Treasurer had a great windfall in that he received £419,000 over his estimated revenue, and yet he only had a surplus of approximately £10,000. When you bring it down to figures that the man in the street can understand, it means that for every £419 he received above his estimate he was able to save £10. When you look at it in that way it is a very small thing. Reduce it still further, and it means that for every £100 he received over and above his estimate he was able to save £2 10s.

I notice in one part of the Statement an amount of £450,000 is referred to. The Treasurer has received a renewal of this amount from the English money-lender, and I would like to know at what rate of interest he has received the renewal, particularly when we consider that, if a pastoralist gets in arrears in his rent, the Government charge him 10 per cent. I would like to know if the Government receive any more sympathetic treatment from the Jews or money-lenders, as they are called from time to time, than they are prepared to give to the man on the land when he is in arrears with his rent.

Railways at the present time are responsible for one of the biggest losses in the country.

Mr. FORDE: What would you do? Increase rates and fares?

Mr. NOTT: I would not increase rates and fares. As a matter of fact the loss on the railways has been increasing every year, which means that the development in country districts is not what it ought to be, and that primary products are not being sent over the railways. We have for some [10.30 p.m.] years had a deficit on our railways in Queensland. Our population has not increased sufficiently to enable the railways, at the old rates of freight, to pay the extra expenditure incurred through increased cost of wages and material. Had the Government done their duty in seeing that the development of the country was carried on, the conditions of the railways would have been improved.

Mention has been made about the falling off in freights from Mount Morgan. I think that the Government should have done more than they have done in order to get the mine reopened. When the hon. member for Murilla was speaking the other night, he quoted figures showing that taxation is twice as much per head in Queensland as it is in Victoria, and an interjection came across the Chamber that they had a much greater population in Victoria. At the same time, as we are able to offer much greater inducements to settlers than Victoria, our population ought to be increasing at a very much greater rate than it is at present. There is no doubt that, if development in primary production and in other necessary ways was going on apace, the railways would not have suffered to the extent they have done. I hold that the trade unions in the State have used the Arbitration Court as a bludgeon to extort an excessive amount from industries, so that it has been rendered necessary for the people engaged in those industries to curtail operations.

The TREASURER: Would you wipe out the Arbitration Court?

[Mr. Nott.

Mr. NOTT: I would not wipe out arbitration. I believe thoroughly in the Arbitration Court, but it must have proper control, and be able to enforce the observance of awards by employees and employers alike. The hon. member for Bundaberg remarked in his speech that he had listened with interest to a "Mother Caudle" lecture that I delivered on this subject on a former occasion in the House. I would impress on the hon. member the fact that Mother Caudle was a lady who was not afraid to state her opinions truthfully and without fear. The hon. member also quoted from the report of the Commission, and said it would, perhaps, be advisable to dig up some of the history of the hon. member for Stanley. The hon. member deliberately made statements with the idea of misleading the House, and quoted some evidence given before a commission some years ago in Bundaberg. He led the House to believe that it was my evidence; but what he quoted was not my evidence. I can say that the evidence was correct at the time it was given. He said it was stated that 9s. a day could be earned by cancutters. Since then I have had some cancutters working for me at 7s. a day, and at that time 9s. a day was a good rate of wages. The hon. member, to be honest, should have quoted the general rate of wage at that particular time. I have nothing to fear so far as my history is concerned. My family were originally in New South Wales, and took part in the development of wheatgrowing and flourmilling; and, when they came to Queensland, they were pioneers in connection with meat and sugar production. I think my people had something to do with the formation of Vanrook Station. I recently saw some of the cattle from that station in the saleyards in Brisbane with the brand FN4, which stands for F. Nott. The hon. member for Herbert quoted Lord Leverhulme as stating that thirty-six hours a week was a fair number of hours for a man to work. I am certain that Lord Leverhulme in making that statement expected at least efficiency, and not the "go slow" method. We know that Labour in Queensland has encouraged the "go slow" method.

The Treasurer had something to say in regard to loans, and mentioned that he will be asking for more loan money. I doubt very much whether the next loan asked for will be so easily forthcoming as the last. I notice that the estimated expenditure on relief is somewhere about £117,000. When you come to think that the expenditure on relief amounted to about 1s. in the £1, is it any wonder that people will be a bit chary about putting their money in?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is not paid out of loan money.

Mr. NOTT: I do not say it is, but it is got from somewhere. The Government are spending somewhere in the vicinity of 1s. in the £1 of the loan they have asked for on relief, and the bad feature of it is that we see very little result for this relief. People are being prosecuted for getting relief to which they had no right. I heard something said a little while ago in reference to the Main Roads Board. It seems to me that, as they have done a certain amount of inspection, they ought to know perfectly well that a number of roads want attention around Brisbane, and I suggest that you have only to look at the road between here and

Ipswich to see that some of the unemployed could be profitably employed on it.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: The road between here and Ipswich will not be a main road under the Act.

Mr. NOTT: Even if it will not, it would be far better to put some of those men on the road between here and Ipswich than merely giving them these doles.

A matter of which the Treasurer seems very proud is the cheap rate at which he raised the last loan in comparison with what he has had to pay in England; but it was a very dear rate, I consider, because so much money has been taken from the people of Queensland that would otherwise have been used, especially in the country districts, in developing the country. There is a paragraph here that I would like to read—

"I would like while on this topic to offer a word of encouragement to genuine financial students in this and the other Chamber. The prevailing practice of those opposed to the Government is to condemn our financial administration. It has developed into a sort of catch-cry; yet hardly one member of the Opposition can in a common-sense way analyse, dissect, or criticise our revenue, loan and trust expenditure. This practice of the untutored opposite has become almost a vice. The more ignorant, the more dogmatic! The more stupid, the more assertive! It is well known that the most eminent banker would not be listened to on finance by experts who arrived in Parliament direct from the farm, or by these financial pundits who sit in a back room in Queen street writing leading articles."

Very often members of the Government cry, "We are the friends of the farmer," or something to that effect. I have no objection to seeing such a paragraph from the Treasurer, because I think it is the sort of thing the farmer must expect if he wants his genuine opinion.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You know you farm the farmer up there.

Mr. NOTT: There is also this to show that these are the Treasurer's thoughts. When somebody was speaking about the Advances to Settlers' Corporation, he interjected that they were refusing advances to save the fools from themselves.

The TREASURER: No; that is not correct.

Mr. NOTT: That goes to show that the paragraph I have read is something we might legitimately expect the Treasurer to prepare, and I would like to say it is through the actions of the Government during the past few years that there is a Farmers' party in here at the present time—the farmers recognise that they dare not trust the Government any further. The small farmers, rather than give the Government any support, have decided to cut adrift and support it no longer and to have representatives of their own. They had their big try at the last election, with the result that you see on this side, and I am pleased to say that we are gaining recruits even before the next election comes along.

If this country is going to hold its own and increase in prosperity, we must get further population, and that without any very great delay, or there will be great danger that the White Australia policy will

have to be thrown overboard. From many years' experience in the North I am prepared to say that the climate is such that white people will thrive there. The climate of North Queensland has been very much maligned. Certain diseases, such as hook-worm—which to my knowledge has been in existence from Cairns south for years—and malaria, and other diseases that were not always recognised at once and treated as quickly as they should have been treated, have had a lot to do with the bad name which has been given to it.

The hon. member for Herbert made some reference to shire councils, and described them as coming to the Treasurer as mendicants. It seems to me that a good many people are under the impression that the Premier on his trip to England went very much in the same capacity. I hope that the shire council authorities will be more successful than the Premier was on that occasion.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported progress.

The Committee obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

The House adjourned at 10.52 p.m.