Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 1929

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The SPEAKER (Hon. C. Taylor, *Windsor*) took the chair at 10.30 a.m.

QUESTIONS.

ADVERTISING ALTERATIONS IN RAILWAY TRAFFIC RATES.

Mr. PEASE (*Herbert*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. Will he instruct that any alterations in traffic rates be advertised throughout the State at least one week before coming into operation?

"2. In view of the fact that the truckload of flour and bran from Sydney to South Johnstone incurred increased rates, and neither consignor nor consignees were aware of such increase, will he have the matter reviewed by the Commissioner?"

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

"1. The advisableness of doing so will be considered in each instance, although it was not the practice of the previous Government to do so.

"2. As this consignment was in transit prior to the new rates being known at sending stations, instructions have already been issued to apply the old rate of freight."

COMMISSION PAID ON SALE OF STATE CANNERY.

Mr. HANLON (*Ithaca*) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

"1. In connection with the deduction of £766 3s. 10d. referred to in the Auditor-General's report as being paid in commission to the agent who lodged the successful tender for the purchase of the State Cannery, what was the name of the agent to whom this commission was paid?

"2. In view of the fact that the idea of tendering is to obviate the payment of commissions which otherwise would ordinarily be payable if the property were sold by auction or through an agent, why was it necessary to insert such a stipulation as to the payment of commission in the conditions of sale for the State Cannery?"

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgroarty, *South Brisbane*), for the SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*), replied—

"1. The Commonwealth Finance and Investment Company, Limited.

"2. In order to make the best possible sale of this business, the assistance of agents was essential, and that could be best secured by an offer of commission on such sale."

SALE OF STATE STATIONS.

Mr. HANLON (*Ithaca*) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

"1. What State stations have been sold privately up to the present time, and what are the respective amounts of the sale prices?

"2. What deductions, if any, have been made in each case for commissions on such private sales, and to what persons,

firms, or companies have the respective commissions been paid?"

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgroarty, *South Brisbane*), for the SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*), replied—

"1 and 2—

Stations.	Sale Price.	Total Commission Payable.
	£	£
Lyndhurst	70,000	700
Dotswood, Wando Vale, Vanrook, and Strathmore	250,000	2,650
Dunbar	50,000	600
Brooklyn and Maitland Downs	18,000	370
	..	£4,320

"The commission is payable to the agents associated with the sale of State stations, viz.:—Messrs. Dalgety and Company, Limited; The Queensland Primary Producers Co-operative Association, Limited; Messrs. Sturmfels Primary Producers' Co-operative Association, Limited; The Australian Mercantile Land and Finance Company, Limited; The Australian Estates and Mortgage Company, Limited."

COMMISSION PAID ON SALE OF STATE BUTCHERIES.

Mr. HANLON (*Ithaca*) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

"What amount was paid by way of commission on the sale of State butcher shops by public tender, and to whom was such commission paid?"

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgroarty, *South Brisbane*), for the SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*), replied—

Name of Shop.	Name of Agent.	Amount.
		£ s. d.
Ayr ..	C. G. M. Boyce Ltd.	131 5 0
Booval ..	Winchcombe Carson Ltd.	21 5 0
Charleville..	New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Co., Ltd.	31 0 0
Gympie ..	Winchcombe Carson Ltd.	68 15 0
Ipswich ..	Winchcombe Carson Ltd.	32 10 0
Townsville..	T. J. Leonard, Mackay	125 0 0
Brunswick St. (B.M.P.)	Winchcombe Carson Ltd.	22 10 0
Bulimba ..	Sturmfels Primary Producers' Co-operative Association, Ltd.	38 15 0
Clayfield ..	B. F. Canniffe Ltd. ..	13 0 0
Paddington	Winchcombe Carson Ltd.	32 10 0
West End ..	Winchcombe Carson Ltd.	32 15 0
Woolloongabba	Winchcombe Carson Ltd.	21 5 0
Rockhampton	D. D. Dawson and Co., Rockhampton	100 0 0
		£670 10 0

PAYMENT TO PROFESSOR MELVILLE FOR REPORT ON PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF BUREAU OF ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS.

Mr. BOW (*Mitchell*) asked the Premier—

"What was the amount paid by the Government to Professor Melville for his report on the proposed establishment of a Bureau of Economics and Statistics, under the following headings, viz.:—(*a*) Travelling and/or daily allowances and expenses; (*b*) honorarium?"

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

"No amount has yet been paid; the amount payable has not yet been determined."

CATTLE PRODUCERS AND ABATTOIRS.

Mr. DUNLOP (*Rockhampton*), without notice, asked the Premier—

"As the Government probably intend to purchase Swifts Meatworks for abattoir purposes, has the Premier given the cattle producers of the State an opportunity of discussing this important question fully."

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

"On Monday last, in response to my invitation, representatives of the Cattle Growers' Association and representatives of the United Graziers' Association discussed the whole question with me after the salient features of the report had been indicated to them. They unanimously requested that I should proceed with the proposal of the Government to establish abattoirs."

Mr. BULCOCK: They can get information, but we cannot.

The PREMIER: I supplied the Leader of the Opposition with a copy of the report concerning the matter, and, if he cares to disclose the contents to members of his party, that is his business. I have no objection to his so doing.

BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL AND ABATTOIRS

Mr. HANLON (*Ithaca*), without notice, asked the Premier—

"As the major portion of the responsibility involved in the establishment of abattoirs will fall upon the people of Brisbane, has the Premier consulted the Brisbane City Council or the representatives of the people in connection with the matter?"

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

"I have consulted the Mayor of Brisbane, and I have supplied him with a copy of the report and with all information required. I understand that it is the intention of the Mayor to bring the matter before the next council meeting. Nothing will be done until a reply is received from the council."

Mr. HYNES: You have already made an offer for the works.

The PREMIER: No. I told hon. members yesterday that the Government had not made any offer.

EXTRA CHARGE FOR TRAVELLING BY TOWNSVILLE MAIL TRAIN BETWEEN TOWNSVILLE AND MACKAY.

Mr. DUNLOP (*Rockhampton*), without notice, asked the Secretary for Railways—

"Does he not consider the charge of 11s. 3d. for the privilege of travelling on the Townsville mail between Townsville and Mackay and vice versa to be exorbitant?"

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

"The charge was imposed for a special reason, and I see no justification for reducing it."

PAPER.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under the Supreme Court Act of 1921.

INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE BILL.

THIRD READING.

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

"That the Bill be now read a third time."

Question put and passed.

LAND TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

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

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

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Land Tax Act of 1915 by extending the operations of the Super Land Tax until the close of the financial year ending the thirtieth day of June, 1930."

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: What are your reasons?

Mr. PEASE (*Herbert*): No wonder, when you, Mr. Speaker, read prayers this morning, the Treasurer bowed his head. The hon. gentleman is very moderate. I have been in Parliament for many years, and I have witnessed many strange gestures; but I think the most peculiar gesture I have ever seen is the gesture of this morning and the Treasurer is the grand jester, when he introduces a Bill which he has repeatedly condemned and ridiculed, and said that it imposed the most iniquitous tax that has ever been passed. He does not tell us why he is doing this; and I think it is due to us that, when he introduces a proposal that he has so utterly condemned in the past, he should give us his reasons. It is up to a man who has to do something which he has condemned in the past to explain his reason for doing it. I submit that the Treasurer should give some reason to the Committee as to why it is necessary to reintroduce this measure. If the question is one of finance, why is he not man enough to tell us so? Surely the Committee should have some knowledge of why there is a necessity for the re-enactment of this Act. If there is a reason, why does the Treasurer not tell us? Here we have a Government whose Premier and all on the front bench in page after page of "Hansard" condemned this measure that is now being reintroduced. Why does the Treasurer not tell us the reason for that? If ever a Government goes down into history as the Government of broken promises, it will be this Government, who have broken every promise ever made by them. I think the Treasurer, in consideration of those people who voted for his Government, and in view of the promises made, should have told hon. members why it was necessary now to reimpose this tax. In the Premier's policy speech he told the people of Queensland: "If you give us your votes, we will see that this tax is wiped off the statute book. Return us to power, and we will see that it is done." They are now in power, and this promise and other promises that they gave to the people are being broken, and no reason is given why they are being broken. In clause 30 of his policy speech the Premier says—

"Reduction of land tax with a view to its ultimate abolition except a tax on undeveloped land."

There is no necessity to go back to the dark ages to find arguments to show the inconsistency of hon. members opposite. We need only refer to page 533 of "Hansard" for last year to find the following remarks made by the Premier, who was then leader of the Opposition—

"The Opposition have discussed this question in the hope that their protest may be taken more notice of than has been the case in the past. It is pretty generally recognised that this class of taxation is detrimental to the interests of the State. I do not intend to say anything further on the matter on this occasion. We voted against it on the previous occasion, and we intend to vote against it on this occasion."

Turning to the division list, we find the name of Mr. W. H. Barnes heading the list of "Noes," and further down it is shown that Mr. Moore also opposed the measure, as did other hon. members who are now sitting behind the Government. If this taxation was detrimental to the State when introduced by the Labour Government, why is it less detrimental at present when it is fathered by the Tory Government? Can any member of the Government answer that question? Does it not show the insincerity of hon. members opposite, now that they have assumed control of the Treasury benches? Listening to the debate yesterday I was amused to hear various Government members quote the remarks of Labour leaders in the past; yet we have only to turn to the records of the last session of Parliament to find proof that the Government are now scrapping all the promises they made to the electors. That is dishonest, seeing that the Government gained power on a promise—amongst others—to abolish this land tax. The Government have taken down the electors of Queensland in this respect. I guarantee that thousands of electors throughout Queensland voted for the Nationalists because they promised definitely to abolish this land tax; and a feature was made of that promise in most of the Western constituencies. The Government now repudiate that promise; still they have the cheek to talk about Labour repudiating something or other. Is there any sincerity in the present Government? Why even the "Telegraph" of yesterday's date, after

taking the Treasurer to task for breaking his promise—and that is a further proof that it was a promise when the "Telegraph" has been misled—said that no doubt the Treasurer would say, "My poverty, not my will, consents." That, however, cannot be the case, because of all the Governments in Australia the present Government in Queensland cannot advance the argument of poverty for re-enacting this measure. The Government were left with ample funds to carry on—so much so that they need not take any of the funds from the loan which is at present being floated.

Mr. KENNY: You don't know what you are talking about!

Mr. PEASE: Facts and figures show that I do.

The TREASURER: They are distorted.

Mr. PEASE: When the Government assumed office, they had £5,000,000 to the credit of the Loan Fund, which was a legacy from the Labour Government.

The TREASURER: That is not revenue.

Mr. PEASE: The Treasurer's Financial Statement says definitely—

> "Queensland is fortunate in that we do not require any of this money."

The hon. gentleman was referring to the recent issue in London of Commonwealth Treasury bills, and must stand condemned if he advances the argument of poverty as a reason why this measure should be re-enacted. Why do the Government not require this money? The answer is that, fortunately for Queensland, the Labour Government so handled the finances that they left a credit to the Loan Fund, and put the present Government in a more advantageous position than any other Government of the Commonwealth. We have this definite statement of the Federal Treasurer—

> "Queensland was not sharing in this loan, that State having ample loan funds at its disposal."

There is absolutely no financial reason why this measure should be introduced by the Government, particularly as it is a measure which they have stated in very definite language is an iniquitous one.

I might also refer to the remarks of the Premier, who, when leader of the Opposition, stated at page 232 of "Hansard" for last year—

> "I personally do not think that it is at all desirable that this Bill should be introduced. . . . What a detrimental effect the provisions of such a measure have had upon the State of Queensland in the past. The one thing that is essential to-day is to reduce taxation—not increase it. This tax is not having a good effect."

Did the Premier and his colleagues not consider the Premier's word when they decided to re-enact this measure? It shows what a great statesman the Premier is. He stated why he thinks this Bill is going to have a detrimental effect on Queensland, and now he has the colossal check to reintroduce it. If ever a man stands condemned for repudiation, it is the Premier; and I am astounded at the financial men sitting behind the Government allowing him to get away with it. As reported on page 233 of "Hansard" for last year, replying to the present Premier, who was then Leader of the Opposition, the present Leader of the Opposition said—

> "As a matter of fact, if, by some strange freak of fortune, you become Treasurer, you will continue this measure yearly."

He knew very well that, when the Government got into power on broken promises, they would re-enact this financial measure. To-day his words have been proved to be true. This is what the present Premier said in answer to that—

> "It is very easy for the hon. gentleman to say that, but in my opinion this is the most iniquitous tax that could be imposed."

To-day we have the spectacle of the Premier and his colleagues bringing forward a measure which, last year, the Premier described as the most iniquitous tax that could be imposed. Could there ever be a stranger volte face in any Parliament in Australia? I do not know of any similar instance where the Premier of the day has re-enacted a measure after making such a strong attack on it. How on earth can the Treasurer swallow that? It is astounding. Surely the Government could have found some other method of raising the necessary revenue if they had so desired! "It is a most iniquitous tax!" The man who said that is the Leader of the Government to-day who now re-enacts it. That is all I am going to say in that regard; and I shall now deal with the tax itself.

Labour members always said when they were in power that this is not so much a tax on country lands as a tax on town lands. We approve of the tax for certain reasons. The report of the Commissioner of Taxes presented to Parliament on the operations of the Land Tax Act shows that the total assessments on city and town lands amounted to £277,765, while the total assessments in respect of country lands amounted to £183,906. That shows that what Labour members have always said is true—that the bulk of the tax is paid by city interests. I quite realise why the "Telegraph" is so annoyed at the Government re-enacting this measure. When we were in power, the Opposition said that this was a tax on the country people; and they said that, when they got into power, they would see that it was not re-enacted.

The hon. member for Bowen, who spoke on the same occasion, produced facts and figures to show that the tax was mainly a tax on city lands—on people who could afford to pay it.

When we were in power we did not break our promises in regard to farming interests. I remember at one election telling the farmers that, if we were returned to power, we would exempt working farmers to a greater extent than had been the case in the past. Immediately we were returned to power we saw that the working farmers were exempted from this taxation. We did not do what the present Government have done—go out on the hustings, gain votes, and then come to this Chamber and repudiate their promises. We carried out our promise. This is what happened: The Commissioner of Taxes, in his report dealing with special exemption to farmers, says—

> "In the amended Act of 1922, a special exemption was granted to farmers and graziers. Details are shown in Table F. These show that the tax was reduced to

the extent of £23,324 and that 8,765 persons benefited by this special exemption, of whom 6,632 were totally exempt from tax."

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would like to point out that a general discussion on land taxation is not in order on this motion.

Mr. PEASE: If you look up "Hansard" for last year, Mr. Roberts, you will see that members of the then Opposition were allowed to say what they liked.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am not concerned about what appears in "Hansard" in connection with previous debates. I am concerned about the debate to-day. I say that this is not a general discussion on land taxation, but on the super land tax only.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. PEASE: Surely we can discuss the report of the Commissioner of Taxes, showing exactly what the imposition of the super land tax means!

The CHAIRMAN: Only in regard to its application to the super tax.

Mr PEASE: There is a different ruling this time.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am in the chair.

Mr. PEASE: What I want to prove is that the super tax, if re-enacted, is going to affect the dairying and other industries of this State. When we were in power, we saw to it that people really engaged in farming pursuits were considered in such a way that they were allowed to do well. Facts and figures prove that that was so.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to resume his seat. I want him to understand that he is not going to get in any matter which I have ruled out of order. I ask him not to continue to do so, otherwise I shall ask him to resume his seat. I will give him another chance.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*): I rise to a point of order. The motion reads—

> "Consideration in Committee of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Land Tax Act of 1915 by extending the operation of the super land tax until the close of the financial year ending the thirtieth day of June, 1930."

I submit that at this stage we affirm the desirability or otherwise of doing that. Therefore, I submit that any matter bearing on this particular phase of the land tax is in order in this discussion.

The CHAIRMAN: I have already ruled that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition can discuss any matter affecting the super land tax, but he cannot discuss general land taxation; and he is not going to be allowed to do it.

Mr. POLLOCK: This is the stage at which we can deal with the scope of the Bill.

Mr. PEASE (*Herbert*): I realise that we have got under the skin of the Government. I say that the re-enactment of this tax is a broken promise of the Government. The Premier, Treasurer, and other Government members stand condemned by every voter in Queensland as having made promises on the hustings which put them into power, and now they deliberately break them. I quite understand I have got under their skin, and I am quite satisfied that I have said enough.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Wynnum*): The hon. member who has just resumed his seat has failed to tell this Committee some of the reasons why it is necessary that the super land tax should be introduced at this particular time. Unfortunately, the position is one which has to be faced by reason of the absolute mismanagement of the finances of this great State by the previous Government.

Mr. PEASE: That is a deliberate lie.

The TREASURER: Mr. Roberts. I ask whether the hon. member is in order in saying that I have told a deliberate lie?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Herbert knows that the expression is not parliamentary, and he must withdraw.

Mr. PEASE: I withdraw, but I had very much pleasure in saying it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I understand that the hon. member made the statement that the Treasurer was telling a deliberate lie. I said that he knew it was wrong, and asked him to withdraw. I want him to withdraw without any reservation.

Mr. PEASE: I withdraw.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*): I rise to a point of order. My point of order is this: Your ruling, Mr. Roberts, was that hon. members speaking on this motion must confine themselves entirely to the super land tax—in other words, that the debate must be confined within narrow lines. I would like to call the attention to the lines on which the Treasurer is now proceeding.

[11 a.m.]

The TREASURER: I was proceeding to show the necessity for the introduction of this Bill, in answer to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Two points must be emphasised. One is that, unfortunately, as a result of the maladministration of the previous Government——

Mr. PEASE: Untrue.

The TREASURER: I repeat, the maladministration of the previous Government——

Mr. HANLON: That is your excuse for every bungle you make.

The TREASURER: The losses in borrowed money are disclosed on page 21 of my Financial Statement, and show that the added interest burden as a result of that maladministration amounts to £275,000 per annum —money that was absolutely wasted—thrown into the gutter—by people who did not know their first duty in regard to finance. (Opposition dissent.) The second point is that the present Treasurer cannot pursue the practice that was followed previously.

Mr. HANLON: You are following the same practice.

The TREASURER: Hon. members opposite this morning are trying to mix loan account matters with revenue account matters; but I cannot follow that practice. I am not going to loan account when there are shortages in revenue account, in order to pay interest that is not being earned. I say that it is dishonest, and any Government who pursued that course—and the late Government pursued it—were absolutely dishonest. There could be no justification for a Treasurer attempting to finance in that way.

Mr. POLLOCK: What did the Auditor-General say about your financing?

The TREASURER: The position to-day is that, unfortunately, the Government have to do certain things in order to try to balance accounts. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to revenue account as if it were loan account. Loan money is not credited to revenue account, and we have to balance our accounts; and, if hon. members will look at the figures, they will find that unfortunately the revenue is going to be much less than it was last year.

Mr. PEASE: What about the sale of Crown lands?

The TREASURER: The hon. member is probably talking about State stations. The Government have carried out their policy in other directions, but in this respect, by reason of the absolute failure in sound finance of the previous Government, they are forced to ask for an extension of this tax till 30th June next; and they believe that, as a result of their efforts and their sound finance, they will be able to do that which the late Government were never able to do. (Opposition interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The TREASURER: I want to say further that one of the strongest evidences of the confidence of the people in this Government is the amount of money that is coming over the counter and the amount that is coming from the Savings Bank. Confidence has been restored because the present Government know their job and are doing it. The aim of this Government will be to lighten taxation. They have already done a great deal in that direction; and they are going to do a great deal more in the days to come. (Opposition dissent.)

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*): When the Treasurer was talking about the amount of money spent by previous Governments, I do not know whether he was referring to Mr. Bruce, who left a deficit of £5,000,000 to his successors in the Federal Parliament, or to the late Labour Government of Queensland, who left a surplus of £2,500,000, or, I understand, with the amount that has since come in, of practically £4,500,000. I do not wish to conflict with your ruling, Mr. Roberts, and I shall get on to the question of the introduction of this Bill.

This super land tax is not permanently on the statute-book of Queensland, but must be reimposed by the Government every year; and it is being reimposed by the present Government, despite their pledges to the people. It cannot even be said that the Government are going to permit this tax to continue; they must reimpose it every year before it can be effective. In spite of their promises to the contrary, the Government now propose that the super land tax shall be collected during the current financial year. The promise made to the electors was that they would not reimpose it. Here we witness the Government introducing new taxation. On a previous occasion hon. members opposite argued that there was no possible justification for this taxation. In support of my contention, I desire to quote from "Hansard," and I venture the opinion that the Treasurer would be the happiest man in Queensland if he could establish a "corner" in "Hansard" to prevent hon. members on this side from reading them.

When the Land Tax Act Amendment Bill was introduced last year, the present Premier, who was then Leader of the Opposition, said—

> "This tax is not having a good effect. It is rather having a detrimental effect throughout the length and breadth of the State. During the ten years this super taxation has been enforced the amount raised by means of this super tax has been—
>
> | | £ |
> |---|---|
> | Town areas ... ... | 629,582 |
> | Country areas ... ... | 592,412 |
> | Total ... .. | £1,221,994 |
>
> This super tax, which was brought in as a war measure, is continued year after year because of the supposed necessities of the Government. I do not consider that there is any necessity at all for it, because I consider money could be saved in other ways, and the development that would take place in the State if the land tax were wiped out altogether would far more than compensate for the amount of money taken by this taxation from the people."

He further stated—

> "Most companies are not developing the State as they should because of having to pay this tax. There is no reason for imposing it, when it is having such a disastrous effect throughout the State."

Mark those words—"There is no reason for imposing it, when it is having such a disastrous effect throughout the State." He further stated—

> "It is absolutely wrong, because our whole efforts should be to enable the credit of this State to appreciate as far as possible."

He further stated—

> "If the Government wiped out this tax, I do not think any additional taxation would be necessary in its place, because there would be more development."

I do not propose to deal at further length with the statements of the present Premier.

The present Secretary for Labour and Industry on that occasion said—

> "How is it possible for industries to be established in Queensland under such a crushing load of taxation? How is it possible for manufacturers faced with that and all other charges to meet the opposition of their Southern competitors? It is impossible."

He went on with a long diatribe about super land taxation, and further stated—

> "The imposition of a land tax is a most glaring example of the incapacity of the present Government to govern."

I wonder if he means that for his colleague, the Treasurer. Surely he could not be so unkind! He further stated—

> "If the losses on State enterprises were abolished. . . ."

They have all been sold, or as many as possible—

> ". . . . There would be no need for the imposition of this tax. Why should the people of Queensland be bludgeoned, as it were, to pay this tax simply because of the incapacity of hon. members opposite to govern?"

Could anything more unkind be said of the Government by the Secretary for Labour and

Industry? He gave expression to those opinions only about eight to ten months ago. The hon. member for Logan said—

> "I am trying to convert the Government to the conviction that land taxation—we must bear in mind that all wealth comes from land—is not going to help improve our conditions. I realise the Government, in adhering to their present policy, need this money, but at the same time it seems rather a sorry spectacle for them to be faced with financial ruin if they abolish a tax which only yields them a small return, which was imposed as a war measure, but which, nevertheless, is retained fourteen years after the war started."

Well this is fifteen years after, and he is now a party to doing it himself. He continued—

> "I hope that we shall at any rate be able to prevail on them to drop the super tax, and ultimately abolish land tax altogether."

The hon. member for Fassifern also said—and this was only twelve months ago!—

> "This form of taxation is so seriously interfering with business that there should be some immediate revision. For many years we were led to believe by the Treasurer that super land taxation would be abolished; but so long as the present Government remain on the Treasury so will they introduce super land taxation as a hardy annual. The people of Queensland are looking for some relief in taxation because it is having a most distressing effect upon production in this State, and has a very important bearing upon unemployment which is so rife here."

Mark that—on the question of unemployment! Then the hon. member for East Toowoomba, whom you have heard of, Mr. Roberts—I do not know whether he has changed his mind since, and whether in the party caucus he voted for the reimposition of this super land tax—but only last year he said—

> "I know men with families in the city of Toowoomba who have been unemployed for twelve months. . . . There is evidence that Queensland is overburdened with taxation and that this taxation is the cause of the stagnation that we find on every hand. Employment has become restricted, for, unfortunately, employers have to get rid of their labour as it is unprofitable. Is any further evidence required in support of our request that expenditure should be lessened and taxation reduced in order that employment shall be no further curtailed?"

The hon. member for East Toowoomba said that, and he was allowed a very wide latitude by the Chairman of Committees, who was myself.

Another hon. member at present in the Government, and who is supporting this measure, is the Secretary for Railways, who said—

> "Western Australia is going ahead by leaps and bounds because it has a sane Government. . . ."

I want hon. members to remember that—

> "Western Australia is going ahead by leaps and bounds because it has a sane Government, while Queensland is going back because we have a Government which taxes the backbone of the country—the man who goes on the land with a view to making a living from it."

The hon. gentleman inferred that Western Australia was going ahead by leaps and bounds because it had a sane Government, whereas a Government which imposed a super land tax was insane. Well, the hon. gentleman is now a member of a Government who are doing that; and apparently the application seems to suit the hon. gentleman who now holds Ministerial rank. He went on to say—

> "The only way in which the Government can give the cattle-grower relief is by reducing the land tax upon his property."

Yet the hon. member is reimposing it! He is a cattle-grower, and he argued the other night, when I suggested that some land legislation was stupid, that I was against the interests of the cattle-growers. Here the Minister definitely condemns himself and his Government by reintroducing this measure which he alleged on that occasion was against the interests of the cattle-growers that he alleges he is here to preserve. Referring to the late Government, he said—

> "They are going to give the cattle-owners some help, if they possess leaseholds, by reducing their rentals; but, unless they give the man with freehold a reduction in land taxation, they cannot give him any concession at all."

But he is reimposing the super land tax!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Who said that?

Mr. POLLOCK: The hon. member who is now interjecting; and he also said—

> "Surely he is deserving of some consideration! Is he a criminal because he owns land?"

We say he is not; and we emphasise that that is not preventing the Minister from reintroducing this legislation. I could go on reading this sort of stuff for hours and then would not come to the end of what was stated by hon. members on the other side when sitting in opposition to this super land tax. It seems to me that quite a considerable change of opinion has taken place since those hon. members ceased to be oppositionists and became Government members. If the thing was wrong from the standpoint of the party opposite last year, what has happened in the interim to make it right this year? Nothing that I know of. I believe in the tax, which I think is equitable. I think the city interests pay by far the larger part of this taxation, and that the small man on the land pays little or nothing by way of land tax. But I ask the Treasurer, the Speaker, you, Mr. Roberts, and all hon. members who represent city constituencies, who have promised the big interests that they would take this load of super taxation off their shoulders, "What are you going to do about it when these people ask you how you have redeemed your promises?" We can leave these gentlemen, yourself included, Mr. Roberts, to the tender mercies of those people when they take the Government to task for the attitude they are now adopting, despite the promises made to the contrary.

Mr. DUNLOP (*Rockhampton*): I realise that this matter will probably go to a division, and, as it is an important matter, I deem it my duty to express my opinion, so that all concerned may know where I stand on the matter. To suit their particular purpose, hon. members on both sides have not failed to make use of remarks made on previous occasions, extending years back, and, not content with that, they have reiterated those statements to hon. members so that they will be indelibly impressed on their mental wax sheets! (Laughter.)

When the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition were quoted from "Hansard" the other day, the hon. member said, "I stand up to every word I said." That was honest, and I admire him for it, but, in spite of that, someone else got up, namely—I use the term in a very sportsmanlike manner from a parliamentary point of view—the "Ringbarking" Attorney-General——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I want it to be understood that I am not going to allow any hon. member to refer to the Attorney-General in such language. It is unparliamentary, and I will not allow it even "in a sportsmanlike manner."

Mr. DUNLOP: I certainly withdraw the expression, which is the proper and decent thing to do. Just to make myself clear, the Attorney-General quoted again the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition, notwithstanding that they had already been quoted by the Secretary for Labour and Industry. I take it that "Hansard" is a true record. The Government have three years in which to put their policy into operation. Nobody can expect any Government, and especially a newly-elected Government, to put every promise made into operation within one session of Parliament. The people should be satisfied if the policy of the Government is put into operation during the course of the next three years. That is all right so far as it goes, but I understand this super land tax has to be re-enacted each year. Members of the Opposition, when they were in power, apparently were so consistent and persistent that they reintroduced this tax each year for revenue purposes—in order to get the £500,000 which we have heard about to enable them to ride very safely in the saddle—whether it was on a racehorse or on a common draught horse.

I have a perfect right to support either side, but I can see the position the Treasurer is in. He feels that he is financially embarrassed to a certain extent. Hon. members, when in opposition, find it quite easy to speak at large on any matter, but it is quite different when they get into power. I have no desire to embarrass the Government, but I take it that the idea is to reimpose this tax for one year only. The Treasurer should let us know whether that is so, and frankly say, "I made an honest mistake, but we only require this money up to 30th June, 1930." If the hon. gentleman will say that if, after the expiration of that date, it has tided the Government over their difficulties, and it will not be reimposed, I shall vote with the Government. If the hon. gentleman is not prepared to give me that reasonable answer so as to enable me to exercise an intelligent independent vote, I shall cross the floor and vote with the Opposition.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*): It was rather interesting to listen to the speech of the Treasurer this morning. In submitting the resolution he never attempted to give concrete reasons for introducing the Bill. In common with his usual methods, he made a number of assertions and endeavoured to justify his attitude by unfounded assertions. He said, in effect, that the justification for his change of attitude on this Bill was that, owing to the financial position, he required the money which the Bill would give him. That, if anything, is the basis of the case.

Little or no change has taken place in the conditions of Queensland since this measure was last enacted. The Treasurer and those hon. members who comprise the Government must have known full well when speaking against the measure last year that the money was required for certain purposes. Anyone who impartially reviews the position in the Commonwealth at the present time in the light of the economic position of the country, apart altogether from party views regarding forms of taxation, must realise that it is impossible for any Government in Australia to reduce taxation. No one likes to impose taxation—no one likes to pay it. The Chairman of Committees of the United States Congress some time ago wrote a very interesting series of articles on taxation in the United States of America. The powers of Congress under the Constitution are varied, and are to some extent affected by the powers of the various States regarding taxation. In setting out the case for the control of the central authority in regard to income taxation, he commenced his article by saying—

> "That taxation must be levied in order to carry on the public service is a proposition with which everyone must agree. Everyone will also agree to taxation proposals that leave himself free and tax the other fellow."

That, of course, is the general attitude of the individuals towards taxation. No one likes to pay it; but it is necessary in the interests of the State; and the Treasurers of the State Governments have the duty cast upon them to find the least irksome and most equitable form of taxation possible.

[11.30 a.m.]

In regard to the inevitability of taxation and the difficulty of reducing its incidence, let me point out that Mr. Eggleston, an ex-Minister in Victoria, who is also a very able individual—outstanding in a Nationalist party of mediocrities—in dealing with this problem of taxation said that any responsible member of Parliament or any responsible public man who says that taxation can be reduced at the present juncture is either a fool or a knave. That is the statement of a man of wide experience in Victoria, and a member of the Nationalist Party, writing in "Stead's Review." We believe in the principle of this taxation. I consider that land taxation is one of the most equitable forms of taxation; but I rose principally to call public attention to the fact that all the conditions that now prevail prevailed during the period when the present Treasurer opposed this measure. He and the members of his Government denounced it in every possible way, and promises were made to the public that at the first opportunity they would repeal it. They made no proviso about the financial circumstances of the country. They did not say, "Immediately we can afford it and the public funds are

buoyant enough to justify it, we will do certain things." They were definite in their assertion that the tax was iniquitous and would be removed at the first opportunity.

The Treasurer has at his disposal certain forms of revenue that the previous Government did not have. The Government have decided to sell the public estate, and they have also decided that, on the sale of the public estate, the moneys accruing therefrom shall be paid into consolidated revenue. Everyone knows that Governments in the past of a like party to that now sitting on the Government benches made surpluses by the sale of land. This year and during the years which hon. members opposite will be in power until the next election they will have sources of revenue which the previous Treasurer did not have—that is to say, the proceeds of the sale of land. It can be argued with justification that, having regard to that fact, the Treasurer would be justified in repealing this taxation. That, of course, is a matter for him. He must take the responsibility for the line of activity that he now pursues. The position indicates, however, the importance of members of an Opposition being careful to review all the facts affecting any question before they make their speeches. I know of no instance in the public life of this State where a Treasurer and a Government had so completely and so quickly to eat their words as the present Government have had to do in regard to this proposal.

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

The CHAIRMAN: Before leaving the chair, I want to make a statement as to a ruling which I gave earlier in this debate. At the outset I want to say that, from want of knowledge or for some other reason, the hon. member for Gregory made a statement to the Committee which was totally untrue. He said that, when he was in the chair during the last session of Parliament, certain hon. members—the present Secretary for Public Instruction, the Secretary for Labour and Industry, the Secretary for Railways, and the hon. member for Fassifern—were allowed to say certain things on this question—that he allowed them to do so.

Mr. POLLOCK: I quoted what they said.

The CHAIRMAN: I want to point out to the Committee that that statement was misleading—possibly not wilfully. When the question of the reimposition of the super land tax was being considered at the same stage last year, the present Secretary for Labour and Industry was repeatedly called to order by the then Chairman of Committees, the hon. member for Gregory, who pointed out that the hon. member must confine himself to the question before the Committee. The present Secretary for Labour and Industry moved an amendment to widen the scope of the Bill.

Mr. POLLOCK: He moved an amendment to narrow the scope of the Bill—not to widen it.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member may have it that way, if he likes. The object of the amendment moved by the present Secretary for Labour and Industry was to remove all land taxation except land taxation on undeveloped land; and the late Chairman ruled that the hon. member must confine his remarks to the amendment. I realise definitely my responsibilities as Chairman of Committees. I have one desire—to do the fair thing by each and every hon. member—but I will not allow any hon. member to make a statement that is not in accordance with the facts as recorded in "Hansard" or in the journals of the House.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution.

Resolution agreed to.

FIRST READING.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Wynnum*) presented the Bill, and moved—

"That the Bill be now read a first time."

Question put and passed.

Second reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION BILL.

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. BEDFORD (*Warrego*): The salient features of this debate up to now have been the absolute ignoring of the principles of the Bill by almost every Government speaker, including the Minister who introduced the Bill. There has been much talk about conciliation until conciliation has become a most blessed word—as blessed as the word "Mesopotamia." It is only right to consider what different constructions can be put upon the word. For instance, it is well known that during the slave trade the most Christian men in Bristol engaged in that trade fully believed that they were animated by a Christian spirit. We have had the hopes expressed by the hon. member for Bulimba and the hopes expressed earlier by the Secretary for Labour and Industry that something called a change of heart would take place when someone wanted a change of mind, because any change would be a betterment. Any attempt by anyone to say that conciliation is the only thing necessary displays a lack of knowledge of human nature. There has been conciliation of such sort as the Sicilian Vespers, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, the Walls of Derry, and the Battle of the Boyne. Presumably that is the kind of conciliation that this Bill is to bring in. You are asked to believe that conciliation is the only thing necessary for industrial peace; but justice is the real thing that is necessary, and nothing else. You are asked to believe that there is no such thing as a rapacious employer; you are asked to believe in some ridiculous and impossible little paradise where labour and capital should not be only mates but should be like dear litttle sisters in white dresses, blue sashes, golden curls, innocent blue eyes, and pantelettes tied round their ankles. The conciliation that is most likely to be practised under the provisions of this Bill is well quoted by Victor Daly in some verses on the struggles on 17th March and 12th July. Of "The Orange and the Green," Daly said—

"They killed each other for conciliation, and hated each other for the love of God."

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Lover said that.

Mr. BEDFORD: The other fellow said it better. The hon. member for Bulimba

believes in a new heaven and a new earth and is anxious that this Bill, prepared by mischievous minds——

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. BEDFORD: It could only be a success if it were administered by gods, and not by faulty human nature. The hon. member for Bulimba is quite honest in believing that the present Government have come into power, full of virtue, and the hon. member—judging, perhaps, from her knowledge of the efficacy of a little castor oil on children—thinks that grown-up people might do better on large doses. One thing that the makers of this Bill have forgotten is that the Australian is not short of memory, and will not be coerced, and therefore the "Castor Oil Bill" will bring about such a state of affairs that the new title of the Bill will be the "Irritation and Industrial Abortion Bill."

The SPEAKER: Order! Order! The hon. member must confine himself more closely to the Bill, and must not indulge in such language as he is now using, or I shall have to ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. BEDFORD: The Bill itself is so revolutionary that it must have disastrous effects. I propose to show that in this State not only has Labour's policy of arbitration not failed, but it has succeeded. The opponents of Labour are as intolerant as prohibitionists, who are not content with seeing the world gradually becoming increasingly temperate, but want to perfect it all in a moment. To such peculiar minds scandal is greater than sin. This Bill proposes to put back the clock to 1915, and the workers of 1929 will refuse to return there. The general mass of the people have such short memories and only an immediate appreciation of the thing which is an immediate menace that the present Government might proceed with the crime of selling the public estate, and it would not be felt for a generation or so.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BEDFORD: But in this particular case, where they are touching the living conditions of 85 per cent. of the community—conditions which must immediately register themselves—they are absolutely making a certainty that they disappear from the Government benches after the next elections.

Mr. BLACKLEY: That should please you.

Mr. BEDFORD: It does; but I do not like the confusion by which the result is to be obtained.

Here the Tory and Communist are on common ground—in natural coalition as extremists, neither of them believing in arbitration.

Mr. COSTELLO: You are the greatest Tory in this House.

Mr. BEDFORD: That is as true as all the other things the hon. member says. There is no truth in any of them.

Let us go back to the beginning of arbitration in Australia. It really started with the shearers' strike of 1890; and, seeing that the attempt is now being made to put back the clock and to revert to the "open go"—the rule of tooth and claw——

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Nothing of the kind!

Mr. BEDFORD: The hon. gentleman who is interjecting devoted all the time that he was speaking to a kind of Babu exposition of half-baked economics. He scarcely ever mentioned the Bill. Probably he does not even understand it, if he has read it.

Mr. POLLOCK: Nor did the Attorney-General touch upon the Bill.

Mr. BEDFORD: Of course not. In 1891 armed aggression became necessary—and these are the conditions to which this Bill will put us back if the majority of the people to be affected would agree to be so affected—and it is reported on page 117 of "Hansard" for the year 1891, in a record of the remarks of the late Sir Samuel Walker Griffith, who was then Chief Secretary—

> "I gave instructions to Colonel French in the afternoon to send, by a steamer advertised to leave at 5 o'clock, the men of the Permanent Force, with a Nordenfeldt gun and a fieldpiece. When that order was given there were great doubts whether they would arrive in time."

In the Governor's Speech at the opening of Parliament in 1891 we find this passage—

> "I deeply regret that, notwithstanding the bountiful provisions of Providence in the form of exceptionally favourable seasons, the prosperity of the colony has been most injuriously affected by an organised attempt to override the reign of law and order and to prevent the carrying on of one of our most important producing industries, except in accordance with the dictates of an irresponsible tyranny. The operations of this organisation, which sometimes seemed to assume an insurrectionary character, extended over a very large area of the interior, and for a time there appeared grave danger that the freedom of men to pursue their lawful avocations under the protection of the law would be seriously impaired."

I am reading this for the information of Ministers opposite. After the turmoil which must come from this Bill, when they are preparing the next Governor's Speech they may be able to get that sort of phrase in without imposing too great a tax on their minds——

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BEDFORD: It continues—

> "My Ministers recognised that it is the first duty of every civilised Government to secure this freedom to its citizens, and took prompt measures accordingly. The ordinary police force being naturally insufficient to deal with so extensive a combination, it was found necessary to call out large bodies of the Defence Force in aid of the civil power. I am glad to say that the conduct of the officers and men of both forces, often under circumstances of extreme difficulty, has been such as to reflect the greatest credit upon them, and has shown that Queensland possesses, in the Defence and Volunteer Forces, a body of troops who may be relied upon to discharge their duty whenever called upon. These organised disturbances have now ended, and happily without bloodshed, but not without entailing a very large direct outlay, as well as shaking public confidence and materially interfering with the settled industries of the colony."

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Why don't you make your own speech?

Mr. BEDFORD: The hon. gentleman cannot make a speech at any time. The speech he made yesterday only confirms the impression that he is a "dud."

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BEDFORD: Mr. Speaker, you said last night that any member who interjected must take what was coming back to him.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BEDFORD: That was a despatch written in the true spirit of conciliation; and the "Castor Oil" Bill proposes to put the position back to what it was in 1915.

The SPEAKER: Order! If there are any more references to the "Castor Oil" Bill, I shall ask the hon. member to resume his seat.

Mr. BEDFORD: When the Unemployed Workers Insurance Bill was before Parliament, I believe it was alluded to by yourself, Mr. Speaker, and other hon. members as the "Loafers' Paradise" Bill, but presumably any such facetiousness is to be denied me.

If we were asked why we object to this Bill being brought in except at the behest of the people, who wish to get back to the conditions from which this country, no matter what the Government may say about it, has definitely emerged, we would naturally reply that the statistics relating to industrial disputes during the term of arbitration legislation would answer such an objection. I have here a list of industrial disputes in Queensland, provided by the Commonwealth Government Statistician—

Industrial Disputes.

Year.	No. of Disputes in Queensland.	Workers Involved.			Working Days Lost.	Total Estimated Loss in Wages.
		Directly.	Indirectly.	Total.		
						£
1913	17	1,781	225	2,006	55,288	28,374
1917	39	12,074	971	13,045	317,699	178,125
1918	84	8,803	1,875	16,678	183,383	131,142
1919	69	9,078	6,336	15,514	586,661	327,537

And then gradually the work of the Industrial Arbitration Court, and the general sense that injustice was to be removed, with quick ability to get to the court in any dispute have resulted, despite the increase in population, in these lower figures—

1920	55	3,775	2,033	5,808	68,298	44,493
1921	53	3,367	1,512	4,879	95,560	69.793
1922	38	2.611	620	3,231	36,730	32,589
1923	25	2,724	340	3,065	55,131	53,081
1924	25	2.889	246	3,135	47,214	42,018
1925	22	20,432	840	21,272	219,826	164,480

In 1925 a railway strike intervened, and, although there were only twenty-two disputes, the number of men concerned became 21,272.

In 1927, another railway strike intervened.

Mr. CARTER: How did you get them back?

Mr. BEDFORD: You would never have got them back without bloodshed. We got them back easily and decently. In 1927, the number came down to these figures—

1926	29	2,054	391	2,445	30,118	27,412
1927	30	29,594	640	30,234	428,135	525 884

Under this Bill the Industrial Arbitration Acts of 1916, 1924 1925, and 1925, and the Basic Wage Act of 1925 are all repealed to the extent indicated in the schedule; and the schedule indicates the repeal of nearly all that matters. Not only are all country workers except canecutters and shearers and men working in factories engaged in the manufacture of articles from primary produce to have no award, but the Governor in Council can exempt numbers of other persons; therefore, why proceed to get awards at all? Instead of appointing a judge, they may appoint anybody qualified to be a judge—meaning thereby that a little "dud" barrister, who might become Attorney-General, may also be qualified to be a judge. (Laughter.) The Governor in Council may appoint him at any salary he thinks fit to give. Under the Industrial Arbitration Act we fixed the salary. The boards are to be appointed in a manner which is reminiscent of the old wages boards. A board can hold up a dispute for three months before it can get to the court in the ordinary way on account of the considerations in regard to which many of these boards fail to agree. Fixation of wages and standard hours are not considered in their effect on the standard of living; but principally from their economic effect on any industry concerned. Take the case of an industry now flourishing in Tasmania, for instance, using the hydro-electric power supply at a cost of £4 per horse-power per annum. Suppose a similar industry operates in Queensland, where hydro-electric power cannot be got; and where probably the cost per horse-power per annum from coal will run into £35 or £40. Are wages to be shaved in order to make that industry pay? That is precisely what the Bill says can be done.

There are to be two conciliation commissioners, and then after that as many more as you like, and as many conciliation boards as you like, with two or four members each. There have to be employees' representatives and Employers' Federation representatives;

and, although the employees' representatives may not appear, the Employers' Federation representatives never fail to do so. The Minister can appoint representatives for the unions in that case. Union officials who would have a knowledge of all the conditions of the men at the conference—where the big fellow usually kicks the other fellow on the opposite side of the table on the shin—are barred. Union officials are not to be nominated; but a solicitor can be sent there to assist the board.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Who said that a solicitor could go in?

Mr. BEDFORD: There is provision for a solicitor to appear to assist in the deliberations. The union official is cut out, but the solicitor can go in.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Read a later section.

Mr. BEDFORD: The man who is to represent the worker on the board must be an actual worker in the particular industry concerned. It is manifestly easier for the other people—members of the Employers' Federation—to have no union official to argue the case of the employees in court or before the board; but to bring a man who was a quarry worker yesterday into court to argue in an environment totally foreign to himself is absurd. From the beginning the position has been that the Employers' Federation can hire the best counsel it likes, and he has a right to be heard. He has a right to be heard in the jurisdiction which is the end of the board's deliberations, or the end of the result of the board's deliberations; but the workers are to be still more penalised by the fact that the only trained man they can get—the union official—is not to be permitted to appear.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: He is.

Mr. BEDFORD: He is not.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BEDFORD: Then the industrial provisions are to apply to sections of workers. Agreements may be legally made—100 agreements without one award. There is to be time and a-half paid in regard to nine holidays. That is one good portion of the Bill. It wipes out four holidays which are of no value to anyone. As a matter of fact, giving a holiday to the imaginary St. George—who was a fraudulent army contractor in Cappadocia—is just about as right as giving an Australian holiday to St. David, the patron saint of the Ancient Britons who could run fast enough to save their lives, all other Britons having died at the hands of the Saxons.

The Bill also proposes to wipe out overtime, and under that system of wiping out overtime it would be possible in the Railway Department for men to go back to the old 96-hour fortnight. Assuming that a 44-hour week were retained, it
[12 noon.] would be possible for men to be worked on three days for 14⅔ hours a day, and for those hours to be taken as their weekly total without payment of any overtime.

Then, as to preference to unionists, the Bill provides that non-unionists who receive the benefits of unionism are to be encouraged to stay out of the unions and loaf on the unions, which have given them their favourable conditions.

Who is to be the judge of "equal qualifications" in the matter of discharging a unionist to take on a non-unionist? Presumably the employer. Or can it be the board, that takes three months to say "Good morning"? It means encouraging conscript unionists to get out of the unions that protect labour, and discouraging men from putting up their money to help the unions in getting better conditions for industry.

After a board has made its award, or an industrial agreement has been made without the decision of a board, the court may cancel either; may make any other award it pleases; exempt an industry from the award or agreement; or make any other award or agreement that pleases it.

The Bill is cluttered up with obstructions and obscured by dead timber—timber that has been appropriately ringbarked. New industries are to be protected, although new industries are protected at the Customs House under the Federal law. A manufacturer who, in view of this promise of protection, may decide to start a new industry may yet find that there will be some modification of the methods proposed, and that the only manufacturer who can receive protection is the man who gives his workers a fair wage and fair conditions of living. Anybody may establish a new industry under this Bill, buoyed up with the idea that certain economic facts or natural disadvantages are to be wiped out and that an industry may be started in Queensland in competition with an industry in Tasmania working with hydraulic power. But the man who is encouraged to establish such an industry here, believing that awards have been thrown right overboard, may yet discover that there is a Federal Parliamentary Labour Party in power in the Commonwealth, and that it may take steps to see that the protection which applies to the manufacturer elsewhere in Australia applies also to the workers.

The court is also empowered to exempt any employer who has a profit-sharing arrangement with his employees, thus giving him an advantage over another employer who prefers a straight award. That is so clever that it should be in that other monument of foolishness, the Industries Assistance Bill.

A special award of wages, hours, and conditions may be made to apply to special relief works—amounting to mere sustenance, and tending to bring other awards down.

The Governor in Council, in addition, may do anything, and his actions will have the same validity as if they were enacted in and formed part of this measure. So why trouble Parliament at all, or appoint boards or conciliation commissioners or an Industrial Court? Call it the "Concentrated Bosses' Act," and be done with it.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: What did you do under the Water Act?

Mr. BEDFORD: It was not in that Act.

Then the rules of industrial unions applying for registration must satisfy the registrar in many impossible particulars so where is the domestic government of the unionist organisation to go? They can cancel a registration, and yet insist that the union whose registration has been cancelled must obey awards even after it is deregistered.

Political affiliations are to be abolished and employers' unions not similarly bound. If the Employers' Federation is not allowed

to affiliate with the Nationalist Party—the Nationalist Party will have another alias by the next election, Nationalist being a bad name by this time—and, if the Employers' Federation is not permitted to affiliate with some political party, it will mean that the difficulty of bribing Labour members to cross the floor of the House in future will be enhanced. The Unemployed Workers Insurance Act apparently is to stand. A number of persons more facetious than myself call that piece of legislation the "Loafers' Paradise" Bill. Similarly, if I were rude enough, I would retort that this is the "Workers' Hell" Bill, but, not being permitted to say that, I cannot say it. The Bill contains startling penal clauses against strikers, and clauses providing that unions can be disbarred from preference for three years. An attempt to commit an offence against the Act is to be considered as an offence actually committed, which is equivalent to saying that, if a man tries to get drunk and fails, he should be put into an inebriate asylum. If a strike or lock-out occurs, the workers are to be starved back because the power to make levies to assist in the conduct of any strike or lock-out is taken from the workers.

A little joker has been inserted in the end of the Bill, but it has not been mentioned up to now. If an Employers' Federation owned a newspaper—which, of course, would deal in the usual misrepresenting way with Labour—that Employers' Federation newspaper will not be seizable for any offence under this Act. That is precisely what will be attempted with the "Worker" and the "Standard." Those newspapers are, until this Bill passes, exempt from any liability to pay fines under the law, which means that the property of newspapers which are the property of the workers will be liable to seizure. The Unemployed Workers Insurance Act is retained; but one wonders what they are going to do with that! This clause aims at the starvation of the Labour press. That makes the "Worker" and the "Standard" particularly liable for any alleged offence under the Bill. It is a certainty that this Bill cannot be obeyed, and that it can result only in chaos. It means only a state of general confusion, disruption, and destruction of all the conditions that have been put on the statute-book since 1915, and which to a large extent caused our defeat at the last election. In the fourteen years of Labour Government, a large number of voters had just reached the voting age, and did not know the difficulties of the people who preceded them. They believed that these ideal conditions had come down from Heaven, and could not be changed. They will find that these conditions are being changed, or that an attempt will be made to change them, with the recklessness which must mean defeat. Although the workers will refuse to do as this Bill asks them—that is, to go back fifteen years—they will at the next election go back for one day for seventeen years, and put this Government where they put the Denham-Barnes Government in 1915.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): The unions have done very good service in the past, but this Bill will enable them to do a very much better service for the community in the future. That will depend entirely upon the frame of mind of the union officials who control those organisations; and that, to my mind, is going to be a very big factor in the success or otherwise of the working of this Bill. Amendments may be necessary in the Committee stages of the Bill to make it more workable, but it is sound in principle. So far a defence has been put up for the union officials, who have been defended for some reason or other. But what is the position of the other party concerned? We have not heard during this debate one single word about the unfortunate worker who cannot get employment. He has been forgotten by hon. members on the other side when they have been talking about this Bill. To my mind, he is the most important factor in the whole of our consideration, because he represents the great mass of the people. The great mass of people are facing unemployment. The statistics supplied by the Labour Party show that there were 46,000 unemployed and 69,000 partly employed in Queensland before they left office; and the workers are faced with still more unemployment because production is falling off. We hear hon. members standing up to defend the union officials, whereas no one has stood up to defend the position of the unfortunate person who is unemployed, and who is suffering all the misery and distress which unemployment brings about. I say advisedly that a grave and great responsibility rests upon union officials in this connection, and it depends entirely upon how they set to work as to what the result will be. If they like to take a course dangerous to themselves and to the community generally, that is their business.

This Bill is correctly called "The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Bill." It is a proposal to the conscience and idealism of organised industry: it gives expression to the innermost desires of modern thought and broad-minded statesmanship, and should create a good foundation for the development of harmonious relationship and partnership between all factors in industry and better the conditions of life for all people. It should be the starting point from which the unemployment position can be approached. It should banish bitter animosity and the wasteful methods in industry; it should assist the Queensland community to become a State which will produce everything instead of being, as it is to-day, an importing community, producing practically nothing. This Bill desires to foster the spirit of enterprise and experiment by giving greater opportunity and equality of opportunity, so that we as a nation may secure economic mastery over the natural resources of the State, and find employment for the large army of unemployed.

There are two schools of extreme thought which regard mankind as subservient to their own particular selfish desires. There is also, however, the school of modern thought which would develop the gifts of Nature under harmonious relationship—and it is upon those lines that this Bill has been framed.

If we consider the main principles of this Bill, we must be forced to the conclusion that it will bring about a state of affairs beneficial to all sections of the community. Consider, for example, the conciliation boards which it is proposed to set up; these are the very essence of industrial relationship, in that they will bring about a better understanding between the opposing forces engaged in industry. Further, there appears to be

no reason why the court which has been effective in the past should be less effective under this measure. It can undoubtedly be more effective if the members of the court are desirous of achieving that desirable end. The conciliation boards can do excellent service by dealing promptly with disputes which arise in any industry, because by taking early measures it is possible to avoid an extension of industrial trouble, which may lead to the dislocation of industry throughout the State. No objection can be advanced against those boards, which will be composed of an equal number of representatives nominated by the industrial union or unions of the employers and by the industrial union or unions of the employees in the calling or callings concerned. Besides its chairman, each board may consist of two or four other members nominated as I have stated; and if the chairman—who will be a conciliation commissioner—is anxious to be of service to his country, and is actuated by a civic and patriotic spirit, and can see the modern trend of political and commercial thought and apply his mind accordingly—he can, by valuable service, build for himself a monument greater and more enduring by far than monuments made of material things. If he has in mind that he is going to make this Bill a success, then he is going to bring great credit to himself and a great blessing to the people of this State. So it applies right through the whole list of officials who will be associated with this matter.

The Leader of the Opposition and hon. members supporting him laid stress on three distinct points. They say, "Why change the present court? It is the best court in Australia. There is peace in industry." Those points are pertinent to the Bill; but we want to analyse a little farther, and see how far the suggestion contained in these points carries us. To every agreement there are three parties—the public, the employee, and the employer. What has the history of past years taught us? It has taught us that strikes and fights of that description do no good, but only damage those who take part in them. Even though they may win the fight, they do not achieve the object at which they aim. Peace in industry largely has been brought about because of exhaustion, and unemployment is the result of the political battles which brought about this exhaustion. Unemployment is a result, not a cause. The cause of it is the extensive fights which have taken place in the industrial fields over a period of years. It is a crime against democracy and against human nature.

Hon. members opposite stand up and defend the union organisers and the union officials, and say not one word about unemployment. Let them have their own way, but I cannot see eye to eye with them. Why is industry at a standstill to-day; and why are all these people unemployed? Is it not beause of the incomplete arbitration system? Of course it is.

Mr. PEASE: Because of the change of Government.

Mr. FRY: If you analyse it, you will find that the present position has been brought about because the arbitration system has not been fully applied. It has only been applied up to a point; and at the point where it required statesmanship it was dropped because it was not palatable. Palatable methods frequently are the ruination of a party. At any rate, they have brought about the downfall of the Labour Party. The unions will do good work if they accept the position to-day and help to make this Bill a success. If they do not, they will bring about more cleavage in their ranks, because the people are waking up to the fact that individual members of unions are browbeaten. We heard the hon. member for Rockhampton saying how they were browbeaten at union meetings. Other hon. members have said the same thing. When members of unions have come to me, I have said to them, "Why do you not take charge of your unions?" I said, "Why don't you express your opinions?" They have replied, "They won't let you. If you do take any part, you are victimised and bludgeoned for it afterwards." I am issuing a warning that the public are getting wise to these people, and will exercise the privileges of membership given to them under the law. We are told that the principle is wrong. Let me quote from Mr. Ben Turner, president of the National Union of Textile Workers, chairman of the Trades Union General Council, and president of the Labour Congress of 1928, who supports this principle—

> "Everyone desires to see less friction in the industrial world, and everyone of goodwill is worrying how to attain it.
>
> "Co-operation sounds easy, but it is difficult. It may be brought about through sectional understandings.
>
> "One essential factor is willingness to concede that the employee is not a mere machine or a labour expense, like running costs.
>
> "The brains of the employers and employees should be pooled for establishing works councils, which should not be dominated by office.
>
> "At the present time there is a desire among workpeople that a considerable number of trade disputes should be avoided."

Then I will give what was said by another very prominent union leader, who is a representative of the workers on the New Zealand Arbitration Court. These remarks were made only a few days after the introduction of this Bill—

> "Canberra, Sunday.
>
> "The New Zealand system of industrial arbitration was explained on Saturday by Mr. M. J. Reardon, of Wellington, who is on a visit to Canberra. Mr. Reardon was the workers' representative on the Arbitration Court, which consists of a justice of the Supreme Court, a representative of the workers, and a representative of the employers.
>
> "Mr. Reardon explained that when a dispute occurred in New Zealand it was first referred to a conciliation commissioner, who invited the parties to appoint representatives to meet him in an endeavour to adjust the differences. These conferences were known as conciliation councils. Settlements reached by the councils were mutual, and their decisions were filed as awards of the court. A dispute could not go before the court until a conciliation council had failed to reach a settlement.
>
> "A feature of the New Zealand system, added Mr. Reardon, was that settlements were reached far more quickly than in Australia. There were conciliation commissioners stationed in various

districts, and the court itself went on a regular circuit, visiting each centre three or four times a year. He had heard that in Australia disputes were sometimes outstanding for as long as two years. In New Zealand four months was the longest period for which a case could await hearing before the visit of the court to the centre concerned. Most cases received very prompt hearings, because the work of the conciliation commissioners prevented the necessity for very many cases going before the court. He had noticed that a system of councils had been introduced in Australia, but apparently little had been done with this method of settling disputes. It had been very successful in New Zealand, and had greatly facilitated the work of the Arbitration Court."

This gentleman is not an employer: he is the workers' accredited representative on the New Zealand Arbitration Court, and has spent his life in the industrial field and gone through all phases of the industrial development of the position which presents itself to the average worker. The workers of New Zealand have confidence in him, and have sent him as their representative to the Arbitration Court to look after their affairs; and he gives a blessing to this Bill. He says that the system has been very successful in New Zealand, and has greatly facilitated the working of the Arbitration Court there. The president of the Australian Trade Union Congress has said the same thing.

Let us go a little farther. We are faced in Queensland and Australia with a most serious and difficult position—perhaps the most serious position that has ever confronted us.

[12.30 p.m.]

We are faced with another set of circumstances. In spite of the fact that we are producing nothing, and importing everything, and in spite of the fact that we realise that importations do us no good, hon. members opposite stand firmly to that policy, knowing that it is wrong, and doing it merely to please the crowd. The late Premier said that the Labour Party had been forced to do uneconomic things, and that that was the cause of its downfall and its troubles. Every testimony given freely outside this Chamber has supported this Government and this Bill. Why then should we take notice of men who are political partisans, and who must have as their main object the gaining of some political capital?

Another factor which we must take into consideration is that machinery has caused a revolution in industry, and that machinery will either emancipate the worker or will starve him. This Bill will enable the worker to emancipate himself by encouraging him to become the owner of the machinery. Production and marketing, supply and demand, have a direct bearing on employment and on wages, and it is nonsense to talk about the distribution of wealth until that wealth has been created. To encourage the production of wealth is surely a very high and noble desire—a desire which every man, woman, and child living in this land must cherish It will benefit everyone if this Bill is put into operation and is made a success.

Another principle the Bill lays down is that the court shall investigate the question of wages and the cost of living, shall fix a standard of living, a minimum rate of wages, and standard hours. What is wrong with the principle of leaving the fixing of these things to the Industrial Court? Silence reigns supreme on the Labour side of the House to-day.

Mr. DASH: Nobody is listening to you.

Mr. FRY: The hon. member is listening, and his silence gives approval to the truth of what I am saying. I say that nothing in this part of the Bill is wrong, although hon. members opposite have been trying to prove to us that there is. To support my assertion that there is nothing wrong in the principles of this Bill, I propose to quote the Leader of the Opposition. His remarks show that the hon. member once supported another principle embodied in this Bill, which he and his colleagues now oppose. As recorded on page 159 of "Hansard" for 1924, he said—

> "I do not and never have favoured the policy that Parliament should endeavour to fix wages. I have always believed in the principle that an Arbitration Court is the proper body to do such things. That principle has been carried on, and very successfully carried on, in Queensland, and if those who are responsible for the present agitation were to gain an immediate advantage in the event of their being successful, I am satisfied that the employees of the State would rue the day when the principle was laid down that Parliament should control or fix wages."

I hope the unemployed are listening to that!—

> "That principle is unsound, and contrary to the Labour policy.
>
> "It has been suggested by our critics that this should be done, and that a failure to do so should be regarded as a breach of Labour principles. The issues that are being fought in the public press, at stopwork meetings, and elsewhere are issues that were fought at the last Labour Convention at Emu Park.
>
> "I was a delegate at that convention, and no less than five definite motions, having as their purpose the setting out of the policy of Parliament fixing the basic wage, were defeated by the convention."
>
> "Labour stands for an Arbitration Court which shall be the tribunal to fix wages, untrammelled and completely free."

I have called to my aid the statement by the Leader of the Opposition, who now dares to criticise the Bill on this point. Surely the hon. gentleman who in his calmer moments, free from a party political atmosphere, would make a public statement to that effect cannot now lead his party in opposition to the Bill and remain true to himself! A person who cannot remain true to himself cannot remain true to anyone. We are not discussing legislation dictated by money considerations, but a Bill which contains very vital principles. If it was the principle of the Labour Party in 1924 that the Arbitration Court should be untrammelled, why should that not be their principle to-day? Is it because they are now in opposition that they speak in direct conflict with their previously considered opinions? If that be so, then the Labour

movement requires a thorough overhauling. I believe that the Bill will give to the wage-earner a wage in excess of the present basic wage. Ever since I have been in Parliament I have always opposed a reduction of wages because I realise that it would seriously affect the community. I have always opposed an increase in hours because I regarded such a step as being economically wrong, because it would result in the depletion of the strength of the worker and his consequent lack of efficiency.

During the Address in Reply debate in 1924 I stated—

> "If a man works honestly and his time is fully occupied from 8 o'clock in the morning till 5 o'clock in the afternoon, with an hour off during the day, and from 8 o'clock till 12 o'clock on Saturday (i.e., for forty-four hours), he does a very fair week's work. That is all that you can expect from the individual. Human beings have their limitations, and that must be considered. . . . With improved machinery, with better organisation, and with better conditions, we may be able to get the same output with a 44-hour week as we do with a 48-hour week."

I further stated—

> "May I ask the members of the Government or the party behind them whether they would support me if I moved a motion to increase the basic wage from £4 to £4 5s. . . . Wages are only to be judged by their purchasing power. A basic wage means a living wage. When we talk about not being able to give the wage-earner that living wage, we want to know why it cannot be done. Picture the wage-earner and his wife and family trying to make ends meet and save something on £4 per week."

Over a period of twenty years effective wages in Australia have increased by only 2s. 4d. per week. A wage is worth only its exchange value. We realise that, in Australia as a whole, the effective wage is less to-day than it was in 1911. The figures for the first quarter of 1929 indicate that it now requires 37s. 2d. to purchase the food and groceries that could be purchased in 1911 for £1. We must not regard the worker merely as an instrument of labour. Apart from physical strength, he has brain power capable of making him a more valuable unit in the community, if his brain power is wisely applied. He has intelligence. Some have more intelligence than others. Some have activity; some more activity than others. Some are more zealous in the use of their time. Some can avoid waste and injury to the tools they are using. There is something besides what is provided for by the basic wage. The basic wage is not the only thing with labour. It is only the starting point; and this Bill will give the workers an opportunity of co-partnership and profit-sharing in the industry that gives them employment. That is the position we want to reach. We say that the evolution of the human mind demands progress, but that progress must be guided along safe lines—which this Bill proposes to do. The Australian workers generally are not inclined to resort to force: but they do want an opportunity to share the means of wealth production; and a policy which will enable the Australian worker to own his share of the machinery that produces wealth is highly desirable. This Bill, I contend, presents such an opportunity. The greatest waste in industry to-day is the waste of mental power of the employee. While owners and managers are breaking down under the excessive strain of management, there is an asset available of which the State should make use, and that is the brain power of the employee engaged in industry. This Bill will help that power to be developed, and will bring about a policy of wealth production by which the State encourages labour and capital to work together to manufacture our raw materials so that we can provide work for the people and profitable investment for capital, and increase the scope for the employment of the mental powers of all sections engaged in the industry.

Some people maintain that the employees do not contract to give of their best service, but only to give service up to the usual accepted standard. If that is the case, it is the greatest possible condemnation of the basic wage system, and the greatest proof in support of this Bill that we have introduced, since it gives the employee an opportunity to get some reward for his higher moral and greater intellectual ability, but which is withheld from him because he is not allowed, as nature intended, to develop himself to the very best of his ability, and according to the blessings bestowed upon him.

There is another point that I would like to stress. It is not suggested that a worker engaged in the profit-sharing system necessarily works harder in the sense of tiring himself to a greater extent. It is a question of more intellect, intelligence, and care rather than more effort; and, owing to his interest in the work and its result, he will be less, rather than more, tired at the end of the day. Anyone who has studied human nature for any period of time must come to that conclusion from the facts placed before him.

Let us consider the position of a number of men, all engaged at the same class of work and under identical conditions, some of whom work hard and do comparatively little, whilst others can do the work in half the time, and do it much better, and with less effort. We must consider that aspect of the industrial question, which is vital to a full appreciation of what is required in industry. After all, overhead costs and allied things are only relative. When I hear people talking about wage-reduction as a means of bringing about decreased overhead costs, I come speedily to the conclusion that they know nothing of what they are talking about, and possess no knowledge of the fundamentals of economics. Surely these people must realise that the wage is only equivalent to its exchange value! It is the circulation of money that brings prosperity—not the mere accumulation of money. In that connection the banking institutions of the Commonwealth would do well to realise that sooner or later they will have to stand behind industry in Australia to a greater extent than they have done in the past, and will have to make money available in order that industry may be stimulated.

America to-day is probably paying the highest wages in the world, and is undoubtedly the wealthiest country in the world. In some respects we are akin to America, which, before the imposition of the McKinlay

tariff, was importing extensively from Great Britain and Europe. On the imposition of that tariff the business interests which had previously exported goods to America established branch industries within the American tariff wall, and, as a result, industries developed and employment was stimulated.

That brings me to a consideration of the wage question; and here I say emphatically that the question of production far transcends in importance any other question. If a man in receipt of £4 5s. per week in wages produces one article, the article has that value; but if, under a system of payment by results, he produces two or three articles in place of the one article, he receives greater wages, and at the same time enables the consumer to purchase the article at a cheaper rate. Production is, therefore, the all-important consideration; and, when I hear hon. members opposite talking about wage reduction, I feel that they want to take a course in the first principles of economics.

I agree most heartily with the provisions of the Bill regarding the issue of union tickets, because it is only just that a man should be permitted to continue in employment if he possesses one union ticket, irrespective of the union by which it is issued. Some hon. members of this Parliament know of many cases where, in the past, it has been necessary for men to hold up to six union tickets during one financial year in order that they might get temporary work in various callings. One particular case which I recall relates to a member of the Storemen and Packers' Union, who, in order to secure employment in another sphere, had to become a member of the Miscellaneous Workers' Union. When that temporary employment terminated, he was forced to become a member of the Australian Workers' Union before he could take the temporary work that was offering. He was a married man supporting a wife and four small children, and he could ill afford the cost of the several union tickets he was compelled to secure.

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

Mr. HILL (*Kelvin Grove*): The general basis of the Bill is conciliation; but it in no way defeats arbitration, which is distinctly provided for in clause 7. The court, for the purpose of fixing the basic wage and the regulation of hours, is constituted as at present. Conciliation boards also are provided for. These conciliation boards will deal with all other matters, provided always that any matter may still be referred to the higher authority—the Industrial Court. The Bill, as hon. members may notice on perusal, provides for the appointment of two assessors to assist the court as the court itself may decide—one representative of the employees and one of the employers—and, in addition, an actuary or statistician will assist the court or the board by supplying it with information. I am of the opinion that the Government are not departing from the principle of arbitration. We are simply stabilising it, and showing a general desire to preserve the interests of the workers as a whole, and to see that they get fair and equitable treatment. The basic wage under this Bill will provide for the upkeep of a man, his wife, and three children. The question arises as to whether the court, as at present constituted, should function, or whether party government should decide the conditions in relation to industry. The tendency of the present court is towards arbitration, and not conciliation. We claim that Parliament should provide the machinery and allow the experts to do the work. In the matter of conciliation, the Bill should prove of benefit by permitting any group or a section of workers in any workshop or factory to come together and frame working agreements. This is in accord with our policy as enunciated to the people.

In effect, the Bill gives every man the right to work. It provides for the interchange of union tickets, and requires all unions to keep their books open so that any individual worker upon making application and paying the initiation fee shall become a union member and thereby become eligible to engage in any class of employment for which he may be suitable.

The profit-sharing provisions in the Bill are something better than has ever been offered before. All agreements made must agree in all particulars with the rest of the award.

The hon. member for Gregory stated that, if any employee were called to a round-table conference, after the conference was over that employee would not remain a week in employment. That is not correct. I know of a case of union representatives, four years ago, meeting at a round-table conference with the employer, and the employees are still in their jobs, and have never been victimised. I also know of another union which has eight agreements, five of which were made at round-table conferences with the employer, and three were made by the Arbitration Court. There have been no evil after-effects to the employees' representatives in these cases, and this should prove that round-table conferences, if given a trial, should prove successful.

Mr. COOPER (*Bremer*): May I be allowed at the beginning of my remarks to supply a deficiency in the speech delivered by the Attorney-General last night? He was referring to clause 64 of the Bill, and, at the instigation of the Secretary for Labour and Industry, I understood the Attorney-General to say that clause 64 was in every way the same as a section in the Unemployed Workers Insurance Act; and within a minute or two he changed his position, and said it was not the same as a section in that Act.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is not so.

Mr. COOPER: I understood you to say so.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You misunderstood me. I never made such a statement. I never mentioned the Unemployed Workers Insurance Act.

Mr. COOPER: He promised very faithfully to read the clause of this Bill and the section of the Act which he mentioned. He failed to do so, and, so that it may be seen that there is a difference, I propose to read clause 64.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must accept the Attorney-General's statement that the statement he made is not correct.

Mr. COOPER: I will accept his statement. I said that I understood him to say that; but, if I misunderstood him, well and

good. The clause and the section may be placed side by side.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: You cannot read a section and a clause, and you know it.

Mr. COOPER: I claim the same right as the introducer of the measure, who read clause after clause of the Bill, and pointed out their specific application.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I did not quote them.

Mr. COOPER: Clause 64 reads—

> "In addition to and without in any way limiting the powers of the Governor in Council under this Act, the Governor in Council is hereby empowered from time to time by Order in Council to issue such orders and give such directions and prescribe such matters and things, whether in addition to or amendment of or in modification of this Act or any other Act, as will be calculated to give full effect to the objects and purposes of this Act."

And here is the most vital part—

> "or as will be calculated to safeguard the requirements and wellbeing of the people and secure peace in industry."

The principle is by no means the same as the section of the Unemployed Workers' Insurance Act quoted by the Attorney-General, which merely provides that an Order in Council may be made or issued under the Act and in accordance with the Act. An Order in Council under this Bill will be able not only to amend but to add not only to this Act but to any other Act. Up to the present, so far as I can see, the Secretary for Labour and Industry has shifted his position upon this clause at least four times. I do not propose to pursue the question further, so he will be able to avoid the trouble of shifting his position again. There is not the slightest doubt that, when the Minister suggested to the Attorney-General last night that clause 64 was the same as the section in the Unemployed Workers Insurance Act, he misled him.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: He did not.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*): I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in saying that I misled the Attorney-General?

Mr. COOPER: I did not say so. I said that I was of the opinion that he had misled his colleague, and surely I cannot be forced to withdraw my opinion, and, in my opinion, the Attorney-General was misled by the Secretary for Labour and Industry.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The law is the same, and any judge of the Supreme Court will tell you that it is the same.

[2 p.m.]

Mr. COOPER: Nobody can approach a consideration of the proposal now before the Chamber without a big feeling that a very heavy responsibility rests upon this House. Anybody who has been connected for years with the industrial movement must know that this is more than an ordinary Bill. The hon. member for Gympie, the hon. member for Bulimba, and, I believe, the hon. member for Maryborough, said that, if this measure is to wreck the Nationalist Party, as we believe it is, hon. members on this side should work for it; but I want to tell those hon. members and the other young members in this House that this party would rather remain in opposition for a decade than that this Bill should become law. I say that because within the short space of three years the damage that is likely to be done will be such that the workers of this State will be robbed of many of their rights, and the industrial organisations of this State will carry for many years the scar which will be the mark of the inflictions that have been put upon them by this Bill.

It is regrettable that so much ignorance exists as to the actual position. Hon. members on the other side have said that the Leader of the Opposition in his speech delivered a lecture in elementary economics; but those who listened to the Leader of the Opposition and observed the manner in which that lesson was received must have come to the conclusion that the lesson, even though an elementary one, was nevertheless needed, and that many hon. members on the Government side had no conception of the position as it was put to them by the Leader of the Opposition.

To show further the ignorance of hon. members opposite, let me remind the House that the hon. member for Bulimba quoted with a tremendous amount of satisfaction—in a tone which indicated to those who heard her that she regarded it as conclusive evidence of its justice and right—an excerpt from the report of the British Economic Commission. That paragraph was to the effect that arbitration had placed the employers and employees of Australia in two hostile camps. Having read that paragraph, one is justified in concluding that the picture which has arisen in the mind of the hon. member was that before the days of arbitration they were not in hostile camps. Where were they before they went into hostile camps? What was their position before the arbitration law was initiated? What state of affairs existed before 1890? Surely it was not that the employers and the employees were in one camp! They may have been in one camp at one time; but it is so long ago that we have forgotten it, nor could we easily bring it back to mind. It could only have been at a period when the workers were so ignorant that they had no conception whatever of the real position.

What was the position in 1890 which gave rise to the demand for a law on arbitration? That year was just an ordinary year. The miners of Broken Hill were on strike. The miners of Ballarat were on strike. All the big buildings in Sydney were held up by strikes in the building trade. The whole of the coastal trade of Queensland was held up by a strike on the waterfront. Shipping was held up by a seamen's strike. Adelaide was practically without bread because of a big strike in the baking trade. Altogether, in 1890, employers and employees were in two hostile camps; and it was because they were in hostile camps and had been for some time that there was this demand, first and foremost by the employees, for conciliation.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: The other side wanted conciliation.

Mr. COOPER: I shall be able to prove—and I hope successfully to the hon. member

who has just interjected, if he is fair-minded—that all the efforts of those days and even of to-day in the direction of round-table conferences have come from the worker.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: No.

Mr. COOPER: It has been said by workers who have worked in industry as secretaries, organisers, or officials—and this will be borne out by any who are spoken to on the question—that once they could get the employers to the table the end was not far off. Every organiser and every man who has had anything to do with big industrial troubles knows that the first job is to get the employers to the table.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: This Bill takes them there.

Mr. COOPER: The Industrial Arbitration Act, which is to be repealed, also got them there. Evidence has been given by hon. members on the other side who have spoken upon the question that that is so. The hon. member for Gympie told them how he, as the representative of a company, fixed up various agreements with a representative of a union. Year after year that has been done. The hon. member for Kelvin Grove said that agreement after agreement had been fixed up to his knowledge, not under this Bill, not under the Industrial Peace Act of 1912, but under the Industrial Arbitration Act passed by the Labour Government. That Bill was entitled a "Conciliation and Arbitration Act." Conciliation stood first and foremost, as it has always done. The hon. member for Townsville reminds me that 66 per cent. of the awards were first agreed to by conciliation. The judge always ordered the parties into conference; and only those matters upon which agreement could not be reached were referred into court. Many of the awards operating in this State were never seen by the judge except to ratify them. I speak subject to correction, but I believe that awards were made in respect of the industry in which the Butchers' Union is interested without any reference to the court, apart from requesting the judge to ratify the agreement arrived at between the employers and the employees.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: Under the Wages Boards Act.

Mr. COOPER: Not under the Wages Boards Act. I am speaking of the Industrial Arbitration Act, which is to be repealed by this Bill. What I have stated is common knowledge; and, if it is not common knowledge to hon. members on the other side, then all I can say is that their knowledge on these matters is not as wide as it ought to be.

The position became so strained in 1890 that it was absolutely necessary that something should be done. The employers and the employees were in two hostile camps. The employers were standing firmly for what they considered to be their rights.

Mr. KIRWAN: Freedom of contract.

Mr. COOPER: Expressed in the words of the hon. member for Brisbane, freedom of contract; and it was because they stood for freedom of contract that they declined, time and again, time and again, time and again, to meet the employees in conference. During these big upheavals such noted men as the Governor of New South Wales, Lord Carrington, the Anglican Archbishop of Sydney, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, Sir Sydney Burdekin, Mayor of Sydney, the Chief Justice, and other people, urged the employers to go into conference; but they stood all the time upon the question of freedom of contract. They said, "We stand for freedom of contract, and there can be no freedom of contract if we go into consultation with our employees." Let me read something which covered "freedom of contract" for which the employers stood in those days. The first thing was the right to discharge a man without being asked to give a reason; the second thing was the right to bring a man into a shop without being asked if he were a unionist or a non-unionist; the third thing was to employ whom they pleased. I ask you, Mr. Speaker: Have those three things varied in any great particular since that day? It is the basis upon which the present Bill is built. The Bill is built practically upon those three things; and, when hon. members on this side have stated that the Bill is a retrograde measure, and that it is putting back the clock of time, hon. members opposite excitedly say, "No, no! No, no! Nothing of the kind!" Here is the Bill with practically those three things in the very vanguard of freedom of contract. I must be fair and read the fourth thing, which says, "To pay what they choose without being questioned by anyone." I will admit, of course, that that is not actually in the Bill to-day. Although it may not be on the lips of hon. members opposite, I can say that it is firmly planted in their hearts.

We had the remarkable spectacle this morning of the hon. member for Kurilpa saying that at one time he besought Labour members to stand by him in asking that the basic wage should remain at £4 5s. per week. If that was mere lip service, we know what it is worth. If it was from the heart, there is nothing to prevent the hon. member for Kurilpa, when this Bill is in Committee, from moving an amendment to have the basic wage fixed at £4 5s. per week. He will then see what response he gets from the hon. members on this side.

In 1890 the Adelaide "Register" newspaper fixed up a thirty-six months' agreement with its employees, binding its employees during that period not to become members of the South Australian Typographical Association or any association of a similar nature. Flood and Company, the big shippers and woolbrokers, had this notice posted up in their premises—"Let it be understood that in future all men working for us will be expected to work on such terms and under such arrangements as required by us." There was the opportunity for the round-table conferences and the opportunity for conciliation. That was the attitude of the employers of those days. Mr. E. M. Young, president of the Employers' Association——

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: What year is that?

Mr. COOPER: It was 1890—thirty-nine years ago—but the employers are practically the same to-day. Every inch that has been gained has been gained by the desperate work of the industrial unions. Not at any time in the history of this State or any other State of the Commonwealth have the employers come forward of their own free will and said to the employees, "Take this," and given them something. But they have on many occasions come forward and said of their own free will, "Take this," in the way of a kick. The employees of this State

have never received any advantage from the employers without fighting for it. Mr. E. M. Young, president of the Employers' Federation, said this—

> "All that the employers insisted on was that they should be allowed to conduct their businesses as they pleased, and to employ whom they pleased, whether the men were in unions or not."

The Bill before us to-day contains a provision for that—that the employers may have the right to employ whom they like, whether such employees belong to a union or not.

Notwithstanding the conditions that obtained in 1890, and notwithstanding all those desperate notices, the union movement was not crushed It was hampered and impeded; but it had something in it that kept it going. Something that the oppression of this Government cannot keep down. Nothing that they might do in this Bill will be detrimental to the union movement or to the industrial movement in the long run, but for the time being it will prove a detriment to Queensland. As I have attempted to point out, one of the great difficulties experienced by the workers in 1890 was that they could not get methods of conciliation adopted.

If I remember rightly—and I am sure there must be hon. members in this House who remember it—the industrialists of that day were told to give up the strike weapon. They were told to use the ballot; use political action; get into the political movement; and get in a constitutional way the things that they desired. Yet there are hon. members on the other side of the House who have said—and I presume there may be one or two who will still say it—that those unions are purely political affairs. I want to know what the supporters of employerdom want. When it suits them, they say, "Get into the political movement! Form your own political unions, and get through political action the things you want." When the unions make their own political movement—and the Labour movement, grown from the unions, was nursed by the unions and is a strong, healthy child of the union movement—when this child wants to show some allegiance to its mother, they say, "Cut yourself adrift from your mother! Deny her!"—forgetting the commandment "Honour thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long in the land." There can be no objection to the unions having a political faith and standing to that faith when they were advised forty years ago by the political ancestors of hon. members opposite to get into the political movement in order to fight for what they wanted.

I am much concerned on the matter of conciliation, which I want to be the main factor, the chief factor, and the best factor of the Bill. For that reason I am keen to point out to the Minister and to hon. members who support him the defects that I think are in the Bill in the matter of conciliation. Conciliation has been pursued by organised Labour ever since it was organised Labour. It has always attempted to reduce a dispute to the narrowest limits. It has done everything it possibly could not to wreck efforts at conciliation, but has always recognised that conciliation could be no good unless both parties were honestly and thoroughly represented.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Have you read to-day's press on the matter of the coal strike in New South Wales?

Mr. COOPER: I only wish to point out that this State is particularly free from industrial trouble, but has been worried to death by the industrial troubles naturally brought about by the inefficiency of the late Federal Government—the timber workers' strike, the coal strike, and the waterside workers' strike.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: The less you say about the waterside workers' strike the better.

Mr. KENNY: Mr. Theodore said he would settle the coal strike in a fortnight, but he has not kept that promise.

Mr. COOPER: I do not know what Mr. Theodore promised to do in a fortnight; but I do know that hon. members opposite promised to find £2,000,000 for 10,000 jobs immediately.

I was pointing out what I considered to be essential factors in the matter of conciliation, and I desire to point out the things that may happen under the Bill which will not make for proper conciliation. The Bill provides that there may be two or four representatives on the board, other than the chairman—two representatives of the employers and two representatives of the employees. My opinion is that two representatives from the employees in many industries will not be and cannot be truly representative of those industries, and that they may bring about a condition of affairs in industry that is wholly undesirable. It appears to me that that provision has been included that it might help to disintegrate the union movement, and that it might assist in causing dissension and strife within the unions themselves.

The PREMIER: That is what the people voted for. They asked for it.

Mr. COOPER: I do not know whether the hon. gentleman said in his policy speech that the representatives of the employees on conciliation boards would only be bona fide employees in the particular industry.

The PREMIER: Absolutely. It is in my policy speech.

Mr. COOPER: Then the hon. gentleman must have reached that portion of his speech when the slush lamp wobbled! (Opposition laughter.)

The PREMIER: The statement was made and was circulated for five weeks before the election.

Mr. COOPER: I want to show what it is likely to lead to. When you reach the clauses which suggest that conciliation might continue for a period of three months, you get the true meaning. For three months representatives of the employers and employees must make honest, consistent, and continuous attempts to arrive at a proper decision. For three months a cause may drag on before it can get to the court and before it can get a settlement; and it is that period of three months wherein the danger lies. I want hon. members to think for a minute of the great transport industry of this State represented on a conciliation board by two representatives. There are many branches of the transport industry, and, as the Secretary for Labour and Industry knows, there are differences of opinion within the transport industry. There is the

section which considers itself somewhat skilled because it drives a machine; then there is the section which drives an animal. There is just the fear that the two representatives on that board may be representatives of the end of the industry that are machine drivers, and their conciliation may not be absolutely in the best interests of that section of the industry who are horse-drivers. The official of the union who is the representative of the man who drives a horse, as well as of the man who drives a motor vehicle, is not likely to allow one portion of his men to get an advantage over the other portion. One of the great difficulties in this Bill is that in big industries men may be tempted to do something for their own end of the industry, to the absolute detriment of some other section; and this is a good reason why bona fide employees should be excluded, and their paid officials be allowed to take their place on the board. It is because they are more thoroughly representative, for one thing; because they have a bigger grip of the whole industry for another; and because they are more likely to arrive at a fair and equitable decision for the whole of the industry than a couple of men representative of one section only. I want to cite the shearing industry as a case in point. Everyone who has any knowledge of the West knows that some shearers have not that big regard for the rouseabout that they might have, and it is possible that two shearers sitting on that conciliation board might not be as careful of the interests of the rouseabouts as the union organiser or union secretary might be. On the other hand, it is possible that two rouseabouts might not be as careful of the interests of the shearers as they might be, and, by cunningly playing upon that state of affairs, the employers' representatives may be so able to play upon the employees' representatives that the decision arrived at by the conciliation board will not be a just one.

Mr. KENNY: It might be vice versa.

Mr. COOPER: Of course it might; but the hon. member knows very well that there is much less likelihood of that happening in respect of the employers. Where there is one employer there may be 500 or 1,000 employees; and it is over the greater field that the greater damage may happen. I appeal to the Minister to give that phase of the matter consideration. If he is earnest in his desire for conciliation, he should make provision for men going on to that board who would represent the whole industry.

I want to refer the Secretary for Railways for a moment to the railway industry. Think of the 16,000 or 20,000 permanent employees in the Railway Department! There will be two men sitting there as their representatives on the conciliation board. Suppose they are a lengthsman and a clerk! Is it not likely that the skilled employees of the railway service may not get the consideration that they should get?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The board may be for an industry or part of an industry.

Mr. COOPER: I want to make that sure. The Minister may say so; but I want him to make that clear when we get into Committee, as it may not be so. I want to get these statements from him, if I can do so. I want him to consider what would happen if the two representatives on a railway conciliation board were a station-master and a locomotive driver. What is going to happen to the workshops section if the two employees representing the railway service are unskilled men, and inflammatory speeches are made, as is sometimes done, urging the unskilled men to get even with the skilled men to bring them nearer to one level? Cannot the Secretary for Railways see that in the railway service strife and turmoil may be introduced to the absolute detriment of the service?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: It is provided for. You are only side-tracking the matter.

Mr. COOPER: I am not side-tracking. There is only one line on this Bill, and, if anyone is attempting to operate the switches, it is the Secretary for Labour and Industry. He will have an opportunity of proving his contention in Committee. I want to guard against the possibility of internal strife in industry. I want to stop the hon. gentleman from splitting up big industrial organisations, which I sincerely believe is the policy of this Bill. Having pointed out to him those difficulties in the conciliation part of the Bill, I want him to give some consideration to that aspect of affairs when we get into Committee.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: That is already provided.

Mr. COOPER: I want him to give that assurance.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: There is no need for any assurance at all—it is in the Bill now.

Mr. COOPER: The hon. gentleman tells us it is provided in the Bill that representatives of industrial organisations will be admitted to these conciliation proceedings. They will only be admitted if the board so desires. If the Commissioner's representatives and the conciliation commissioner say they are not to come in, they cannot come in. That is in the Bill, without the slightest doubt.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: It does not say that. Tell me where it says that!

Mr. COOPER: I cannot quote it.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Of course you can't—it is not there.

Mr. COOPER: The Bill says this, and the Secretary for Labour and Industry seems to me to be mean enough—it may be mean on my part to say it—to shelter under the plea that I cannot quote a clause of the Bill to confound him. The Bill provides that these representatives "may be permitted," and I want him to give me his assurance that they shall be allowed. One might talk till the crack of doom, but the Minister would never give that assurance.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: You misrepresent anything.

Mr. COOPER: All I can say is that it is difficult to misrepresent the Minister, because he has so many different faces on this matter.

Another thing I want to speak about is the matter of industrial agreements—a very excellent provision of the Bill. Industrial agreements are good things if they are properly safeguarded; they make for smooth

working in particular instances. By industrial agreements many big difficulties may be overcome in regard to climate and local conditions, and they also make for economy, which is not a bad thing; but there are two things in connection with industrial agreements under the Bill which I want to see rectified. In the first place, the Bill makes provision for the breakaway of the dissatisfied sections of unions. A certain number of employees in a shop can link themselves together and enter into an industrial agreement, and the employer may force upon the rest of the employees in the shop
[2.30 p.m.] conditions to which they entirely object. I say that is absolutely provided for in the Bill. Not only can that be done, but the agreement arrived at between an employer and some of his employees will override a conciliation board agreement. It can override it for sixty days, because the agreement may not be registered for a period of sixty days. It goes further than that, because it may prevail against the will of the board if the employer and employee are engaged in a system of profit-sharing, or payment by results, or any other of those things that they may consider obnoxious. Not only are there these provisions, but there are some provisions about breakaway sections.

The PREMIER: They can be forced in against their will now.

Mr. COOPER: I am glad the Premier has interjected, because it shows me that he is acquainted with this very vital principle of the industrial agreement. It lets me know that the Premier knows the sections of the old Act—vital sections in the matter of industrial agreements—and I want to know why, in the registration of industrial associations, a breakaway section cannot be opposed in the matter of its registration, as it can under the existing Act. Why has this vital part of the Act been dropped—

> "No branch of a trade union shall be registered unless it is a bona fide branch of sufficient importance to be registered separately"?

Why has that been dropped in the present Bill? Only for this reason: that the Bill allows an industrial agreement to be made by a section of the workers, thereby overriding the decision of a board.

The PREMIER: Why should they not have freedom?

Mr. COOPER: That settles the whole argument! Why should they not have freedom? I want nothing further than that. I can drop my argument, having got that answer from the Premier—"Why should they not have freedom?"

The PREMIER: Why should they not have freedom?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: You are misrepresenting again.

Mr. COOPER: It is all very well for the Minister to keep on interjecting, but I would remind him that I am not misrepresenting him. I can ask him to accept my statement.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: No agreement can be entered into without the consent of the conciliation commissioner.

Mr. COOPER: After sixty days. Then he has a month, I suppose, to say whether it is better or worse than the board's agreement; so that it is a matter of three months—possibly four months—after the agreement came into operation, and all the while this internecine fight goes on in the union—section against section—the whole thing bursting up. That, I believe, is the desire of the Minister—to burst up industrial organisations by means of these industrial agreements. It is the most vicious principle in the Bill. It is the most remarkable thing I can find in the Bill.

Mr. MAXWELL: You cannot see anything good in it.

Mr. COOPER: There are some good things in it; but, as the Irishman would say, the good things are the things that have been left out. Why have the provisions of the present Industrial Arbitration Act been left out in regard to registration of unions?—

> "That the registration of the applicants will not unjustly affect any other industrial union.
>
> "That the application may be opposed.
>
> "That no branch of a trade union shall be registered unless it is a bona fide branch of sufficient importance to be registered separately."

Then there is this remarkable principle—that the agreement arrived at by a section of the employees and one employer may be registered as a common rule. That is another difference. Of course, notice has to be given of a proposal to make a common rule of an agreement arrived at between a handful of men and one employer; but they can smash the award of the conciliation board and the award of the Industrial Court. That is not possible now.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The court has to agree to its being a common rule.

Mr. COOPER: Of course, the court has to agree; but by that time the union movement has been practically smashed—has been torn asunder. Finally, if the court does not agree to the common rule, the Government can step in and do it by Order in Council under clause 64.

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

Mr. KIRWAN (*Brisbane*): I was rather pleased to have the admission from the Premier that a certain section of employees have the right to come to an agreement with or without the consent of the general body of unionists. The hon. gentleman did not believe in that principle quite recently. I have a recollection of his delivering a speech in Toowoomba in condemnation of the Nationalist Federal member who had exercised that principle. He made the rather startling statement that he would rather cut off his right hand than cast a vote for Sir Littleton Groom. Sir Littleton Groom was doing only what hon. members opposite now state a certain section of the unionists should have the right to do. Evidently the Premier is not prepared to extend that privilege to his own party. I do not agree with Sir Littleton Groom; but no one can say that he has not stood for the platform on which he was elected. Those who denounced him were the first to throw their platform overboard.

Not one hon. member opposite who has spoken has made any attempt to justify the introduction of the Bill. They have not been able to prove that industrial unrest has

existed in this State to justify the scrapping of the Industrial Arbitration Act of 1916, with its subsequent and necessary amendments. We know perfectly well that in every State in Australia, and in the Federal sphere, there has been an agitation for a considerable time by the Employers' Federation and others for the specific and deliberate purpose of smashing the Arbitration Court in both the Federal and State spheres. The Prime Minister of the Commonwealth went to the country about this time twelve months ago, and stated that his definite policy was to make arbitration effective. With that object in view he had previously amended the Act in the direction of introducing penal clauses. Shortly after the Federal Parliament met he made a statement to the same effect. I remember his words most distinctly, because he said it would be unthinkable to abolish the Federal Arbitration Court. Following the defeat of the Labour Government in Queensland, the then Prime Minister, Mr. Bruce, made a certain proposal at a Premiers' conference. He introduced into the Federal Parliament the Maritime Industries Bill. It was amended in a certain particular in Committee, and the Prime Minister went to the country—we know with what results That demonstrated that the people of Australia were not going to tolerate any Government that made any attempt to interfere with the standard of living and the general standard of comfort that they had secured in this Commonwealth of Australia after thirty-odd years of sacrifice and struggle.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The people of Queensland supported it.

Mr. KIRWAN: If the hon. gentleman thinks that that is any justification for going on with the Bill, then let the Government go on with it.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: We are going on with it.

Mr. KIRWAN: I hope they will go on with it, because I can see that, as a result of this measure, the Government will meet the fate that befell the Denham-Barnes Government in 1915, when six out of eight Ministers went into political oblivion, followed by a large number of their supporters.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: They will go so far that they will not come back.

Mr. KIRWAN: They will meet the same fate as their predecessors.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: You had better look out for yourself.

Mr. KIRWAN: I am here in spite of hon. members opposite. I am here in spite of the unholy combination of Communists and Nationalists. (Government laughter.) I am not ashamed to admit on the floor of this House that perhaps my majority is due to some of the old pioneers of Queensland. Why this sneer on the part of the hon. member for Toombul? I will leave it at that. Hon. members opposite claim that it is just as well that an employee actually engaged in an industry should be the representative on the board, instead of the employees being represented solely by an organiser, secretary, or a permanent official of the union. Everyone knows the reason for that. They are going to place on the board a man who will have to stand up to his employer. The employer will be in the position of being able to take the bread and butter from this employee. Hon. members opposite are the same people who say that the employees in industry are not game to stand up to the "union boss," as they call him—the organiser, the secretary, or the president of the union. In the next breath they declare that the employees have sufficient courage to stand up to their employers—the men who could deprive them of their bread and butter. The hon. member for Bulimba said that, if the unions were like the unions were in the good old days, "everything in the garden would be lovely."

Mrs. LONGMAN: I did not.

Mr. KIRWAN: From the rise of the Labour movement in this State and likewise the rise of the industrial movement, I know that right from the very start the men who had the courage to take up the fight on behalf of his fellow workers paid the penalty; and the only reason why men may not be victimised under this Bill which the Minister proposes to place on the statute-book will be because the power of industrial unionism will not permit it.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: You helped to victimise 18,000 Government employees.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member makes a stupid interjection, but, as it is disorderly, I will not reply to it. In order to give you some idea of the methods adopted in the early days to stamp out unionism, I propose to read a paragraph describing the good old days in a pamphlet written by Mr. Frank Anstey, who is now a member of the Federal Cabinet—

> "The men who pushed the work of working-class organisations were the victims of boycott and the black list. The press denounced them as 'asses, anarchists, and parasites.' The Government used every coercive Act, and the majority of judges in all States were the servile instruments of capitalist vengeance. In Victoria, Judge Higginbotham was deprived of the honours of the Deputy Governorship because he contributed to a strike fund. Chief Justice Lilley, Queensland, was driven from his position, to make room for Griffith. On the other hand, Judge Darley, New South Wales, was congratulated by the press because, from the judgment seat, he denounced the members of trades unions as a 'closely knit band of criminals.' Judge Innes, summing up against some unionist workmen, told them they were 'misled by unscrupulous leaders, who, by pretending sympathy with the poor and suffering, fanned the flames of discontent.' He then sent the misled men to gaol for seven years.
>
> "Judge Windeyer told the jury that a union camp was an 'unlawful assembly,' and that if the accused (W. W. Head) was only in the camp ten minutes, he was guilty. Judge Darley went further. In the case of a man brought before him, it was proved that the accused was 100 miles away from the union camp at the time of the alleged offence. The judge said, 'That does not matter.' He (the accused) had previously been in the camp, and, as such camps were 'unlawful assemblies,' the accused was guilty. The jury followed Darley's direction, and the judge at once passed a sentence of two years.

> "In Queensland, police magistrates were promised promotions if they were 'vigorous' in securing victims. At Barcaldine the Employers' Committee held their meetings in the house of the magistrate. In the instructions disclosed by the discovery of the Ranking-Morris correspondence, the administrators of the law were told to 'exercise vigour, even if it causes bloodshed.' In Victoria, soldiers were served with forty rounds of ammunition, were paraded for divine service, and the blessings of God invoked, and Commanding Officer Price said, 'Don't let me see one rifle pointed in the air. When you get the order, fire low, and lay the b——s out.' That was the treatment to be meted out to a public meeting (thousands of women present) if only a pretence came to fire upon it."

That was the treatment meted out in 1891. While I recognise the responsible position I am in, I say they would do the same thing to-day if they dared, or if they had the power. They even batoned women and children in the streets of the city a few years ago—the same Government of 1912 which the members on the Treasury bench supported. (Interruption.)

The Minister has been at considerable pains during the discussion on this Bill, both in his address and by way of interjection, to prove the benefits that will arise from this Bill. I want to point out that the benefits that might accrue from the Bill can all be suspended under clause 64, where power is given to the Governor in Council to issue Orders in Council.

The same position obtained under the old Wages Board Act, when, if a round-table conference resulted in a suitable agreement being arrived at, giving the workers some little improvement in their general conditions, the Secretary for Public Works for the time being cancelled that agreement. There was no necessity to compel the registration of that. It all goes to prove that no benefit at all is conferred by the Bill except at the will of the Cabinet of the day. It might be just as well to quote a particular extract——

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: If you have any more extracts, you will be turned into Bovril! (Government laughter.)

Mr. KIRWAN: This extract shows the idea that is really behind round-table conferences. Mr. J. G. Thompson, a member of the council of the Victorian Chamber of Commerce, opposing the present industrial conditions in Australia, said—

> "The only remedy I can see is a give-and-take conference between employers and employees on the lines of less wages, more hours, and greater production."

At the opening of my remarks I mentioned that there had been a general agitation extending over a number of years for the express purpose of wiping out the Arbitration Courts in Australia. Let us see what Sir Henry Barwell, just before his defeat as Premier of South Australia, had to say when speaking on the Bill to abolish industrial arbitration. Sir Henry—who at least had the courage to come out openly and advocate black labour—said—

> "I move that the Bill be now read a second time. It is undoubtedly the most important measure we have had before Parliament for many years. Its object is to abolish the Industrial Court, the Board of Industry, and the industrial boards. . . . We believe that the whole system of compulsory arbitration is fundamentally unsound. . . . The Bill makes no provision for a minimum wage. . . . The living-wage principle is faulty and fundamentally wrong."

Those are the real views of the Nationalist Party; and, when we come to examine the views of persons who support the Government—those people whom the Secretary for Labour and Industry met in camera, and no doubt discussed matters affecting this Bill—we find that Mr. Brooks, president of the Central Council of the Employers' Federation, who speaks with the full weight of capitalism behind him, said—

> "There is a growing feeling right through Australia that compulsory arbitration should be abolished."

The "Pastoral Review"—an organ that represents the views of the wealthiest and most reactionary amongst Australian employers, and which on occasions has actually advocated black labour for Queensland—said—

> "We consider the first plank of the anti-Labour Party should be to burn our Arbitration Acts."

Mr. Langford, president of the Master Builders' Association, speaking at a recent interstate convention dealing with arbitration, said—

> "Australia has done the workers a magnificent service by proving that compulsory arbitration is bankrupt of a single virtue, and should be avoided by labour as a pestilence. I urge you to bring about the end of this accursed system before it desolates our established industries and brings ruin and want into every Australian home."

To assist in the direction of creating that spirit which would be favourable to an acceptance of the same conditions which it is proposed to enact in this Bill, the Brisbane press of last year stated—

> *Brisbane "Daily Mail," 10th October,* 1928.
>
> "The bane of our industrial life is the background of our industrial courts as at present constituted under State laws.
>
> "*Brisbane Courier,*" *10th October,* 1928.
>
> "There is a growing feeling that our State Arbitration Court has not only conspicuously failed, but is largely, if not entirely, responsible for the serious economic position."

We can understand why hon. members opposite and the Cabinet were so anxious to abolish the rural workers' award when we read what Mr. A. J. Cotton, a well-known pastoralist, has to say. In an interview with the "Brisbane Courier" he said—

> "Cut out the Arbitration Court and wages boards so far as the primary industries are concerned, and there will be room for hundreds of thousands of immigrants at £1 to £1 10s. per week and found."

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Why, he is one of the straightest Labour men in Queensland!

Mr. KIRWAN: I am not going to say anything about Mr. Cotton personally. He is just as much entitled to his opinion as

I am to mine; but I am pointing out the difference between Mr. Cotton and Sir Henry Barwell, who had the courage to say what he wanted. We had a visit quite recently from the ex-Minister of Customs, Mr. Gullett.

Mr. KENNY: Give us some of your own opinions—not theirs.

Mr. KIRWAN: I shall make my speech in my own way. As I stated before, when I make statements in this House I am prepared to prove them, and that is more than the hon. member has ever done. Mr. Gullett, speaking on the occasion of his visit to Brisbane, said—

> "The Commonwealth Government accordingly desired to put in the evacuation of the arbitration field as its first contribution in the great campaign of reducing costs in Australian industry. . .
>
> "Until they got back to a 48-hour week they would not prosper as they should do. If the policy of a little more overtime and a little more nightwork were adopted in a national way, it would work miracles."

These people do let out the truth occasionally. A meeting of prominent supporters of the Nationalist Party was held in Hobart some time ago, and it is interesting to note the attitude taken up there. The motion which they passed is no doubt the justification for the Secretary for Labour and Industry inserting clause 64 in the Bill, because it gives him and his colleagues, through the Governor in Council, power to do just what these gentlemen said should be done. This is the motion—

> "That a deputation approach Mr. Hughes to bring in legislation to override decisions of the Arbitration Court if he thought the decision unfair. After discussion the motion was agreed to."

At a meeting of manufacturers of Australia, held at Hobart in April, 1921, S. F. Newlands, New South Wales, moved—

> "That the Manufacturers' Association subsidise anti-Labour propaganda, and that such propaganda should consist of suitable cinema pictures, exhibitions, pamphlets, and cartoons."

This motion was carried. When the question is raised about one big union of employers, there is no objection to it. We never hear it castigated in the public press or criticised by hon. members opposite; but, if any attempt is made on the part of the workers to form one big organisation, we have the whole attempt criticised. Discussing a proposition for an all-Australian employers' federation, Mr. Kennedy, Tasmania, said—

> "The proposed federation should act, and not speak. The German employers organised 70,000 strike-breakers, and the German Government subsidised them. That was what they wanted in Australia—German methods."

There you have an illustration of the methods suggested. During the war, strong denunciations were voiced by these very same people against German methods. Now we have one of them advocating the introduction of German methods to settle industrial disputes in Australia. It was said that we should organise an army of 70,000 "scabs"—strike-breakers—and that either the State or Commonwealth Government should subsidise this army so that, when a strike took place, they would be available. Hon. members opposite are providing means in this Bill to hamstring the operations of the industrial unions so far as political action is concerned. As the hon. member for Mundingburra said, they are going to "ringbark" their operations.

The hon. member for Bremer, in dealing with this matter, made reference to the advice tendered to the men who were unsuccessful in the maritime strike and the industrial upheaval in the West in '91. They were advised to select their representatives and send them to Parliament for the purpose of voicing their opinions on the floor of this House—to come with the definite and deliberate purpose of endeavouring to influence the passage of legislation which would protect their particular interests. Our friends opposite do not seem to be able to get out of their heads the old idea that labour is a commodity subject to be sold like a bale of wool or a bag of potatoes, and that the worker is not entitled to that standard of comfort and living to which the allegedly superior class in the community are entitled. Those days have gone. We know that the advent of Labour in the political arena was looked upon with a great amount of disfavour by a large section of the community.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: More so now than ever.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. gentleman is entitled to his opinion, but, when the next election comes round, we shall see how far he is justified in uttering that prophecy. If the members of the unions desire to insure themselves in regard to their industrial and working conditions, have they not a right to contribute towards a fighting fund for the purpose of having their candidates selected and elected?

Mr. MAXWELL: They have no right to compel a man who does not believe in their politics to contribute.

Mr. KIRWAN: Why does the hon. member not take the platform with his colleagues against that same principle in his own party? Why did he support his leader in the Federal arena when he took a move in the direction of dismissing W. M. Hughes and other hon. members from the party? Had they not a right to exercise their opinion? Are they to be bound by the caucus, which hon. members opposite denounce? Hon. members opposite do not believe in applying these principles to themselves and their own party. When Mr. Hughes said that he was going to apply that principle, we know what hon. members opposite said about him. We know that, when Mr. Hughes and other members of that party in the Federal arena decided to exercise their right to vote according to their conscience, the rest of the party set after them like a pack of dingoes. That is the principle which the Secretary for Labour and Industry seeks to apply in this Bill. Why was it not right for hon. members to exercise that right in regard to their own party? I hope that the attempt of hon. members opposite to hamstring the political activities of the industrialists will meet with the fate it deserves. At any rate, it will stir the workers of the State to a realisation of the principle for which hon. members opposite stand.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Tell us what Johansen said.

[3 p.m.]

Mr. KIRWAN: All I know about Johnson is that he and another man named Walsh were tried by a specially appointed

tribunal of public servants, were denied the rights of Magna Charta and the fundamental principles on which British justice has been built right down the centuries, and were sentenced to be deported; but a successful appeal was made to the High Court, and what was known as the Deportation Act was declared null and void. I am very glad of that interjection. It is an illustration of the attitude of hon. members opposite towards these prominent union leaders. If they had committed any crime against any statute of the Commonwealth or State, they would have the same right as the biggest scoundrel in the land to be tried by a jury of twelve in open court, with every opportunity to defend themselves; but the Bruce Government, knowing that they could not get those two men convicted before a judge and ordinary jury of twelve men, appointed a special tribunal, and, on the recommendation of that tribunal, had the brazen effrontery to issue a deportation order. Fortunately the High Court stepped in and stopped the business. There was never such a travesty of justice in Australia as in that case. And then hon. members say that they have altered their attitude toward unionists! The interjection gives me the opportunity to prove that they would do now what they did in 1891, and what they attempted to do in the case of Walsh and Johnson. First of all, they deprived them of their rights as citizens.

Mr. MAXWELL: Your history is a bit out.

Mr. KIRWAN: My history is absolutely correct. I know what they did here in 1891. As there was no Act on the statute-book of this State on which they could gaol the strikers, they dug up an Act of William IV. which had been repealed in England in spite of the well-known traditional conservatism of the British people. The British House of Commons and the British House of Lords passed the British Trade Union Act; yet, when it was brought into this House, it was fired out by the Legislative Council—a fact which shows that even the British House of Lords, with all its hereditary traditions and Toryism, is more progressive than hon. members opposite.

Mr. EDWARDS: Tell us about the proxy vote.

Mr. KIRWAN: I am not ashamed to have been associated with a party that passed the proxy vote; but I would not be proud to be associated with a party some of whose supporters endeavoured to bribe members of Parliament to leave the Labour Party.

Let us take the statement of these gentlemen that arbitration is responsible for the present economic position in Australia. Did you ever hear such unadulterated nonsense? The countries where there are no Arbitration Courts, no wages boards, no political Labour movement, are in a much worse position than Australia. I am sick and tired of listening to these people who slander their Commonwealth and their State. We know the old saying, "It is a dirty bird that fouls its own nest." (Laughter.)

Let us, on the other hand, take the opinions of some men who have visited the Commonwealth—gentlemen who do not hold Labour views, and whose opinion may, therefore, be worth quoting on this point in reply to those gentlemen who are never tired of telling you that the Commonwealth is ruined. I notice, however, that, if anybody wants to take a trip to America, Great Britain, or some other part of Europe, he has to book up a month or so beforehand, if he wants to get a berth on some of the well-known liners trading to the other side of the world. There are quite a number of ocean liners proceeding to the other side of the world at the present time. That goes to prove that those people are enjoying prosperity which enables them to travel round the world. Lord Burnham, Chairman of the Empire Delegation, which consisted of a very large and representative body of pressmen and well-known journalists, on his return to London stated in a lecture before the Royal Colonial Institute of London—

> "Very few people who are not Australian-born know how good a place Australia is . . . . on the whole, it is the best country that I have seen for its size, climate, and for its immunity from most of the ills to which humanity is heir."

The Sydney "Bulletin," which cannot in any way be described as a Labour paper, stated—

> "The wealth production in Australia per head of population exceeded that of all other countries,"

and that—

> "it was a story of hard work, clean living, and honest effort, unequalled by any other people anywhere at any time during this civilisation."

Mr. MAXWELL: You cannot take credit for that.

Mr. KIRWAN: I am pointing out that Arbitration Courts have not ruined Australia. Every time an effort is made to improve the conditions of the workers in this State, in the Commonwealth, or in any other country in the world, those interested are told that industries will be ruined. Following the publication of that touching poem by Mrs. Elizabeth Barrett Browning, "The Cry of the Children," as we were reminded by the Leader of the Opposition, when children were taken from the factories the cry was raised that the cotton industry would go to the wall. The same remarks have been made in Australia. Here in Australia, not many years ago, children of very tender years went into the factories. I have here the recommendations of a Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the general state of factories in Victoria in 1884. If there has been any improvement in those conditions, it has not been due to hon. members opposite. I remember the late Hon. Frank McDonnell introducing the first Factories and Shops Bill into this Parliament with the object of alleviating the position of shop assistants. The conditions under which women and young girls—the future mothers of the race—worked in this city were such that even the "Brisbane Courier" was not game to publish the particulars, as they were so revolting. Four or five years elapsed before the Bill was passed, due entirely to the fact that a party holding somewhat similar views to hon. members opposite then commanded the Treasury benches. They always demanded that property interests should come first. The Royal Commission appointed to inquire into factory conditions in Victoria in 1884 reported—

> "(1) Children of eight and nine years of age are employed in our factories.
>
> "(2) Many have never seen the inside of a school.

"(3) These children are worked ten and twelve hours per day.

"(4) Hundreds of young girls are worked ten to fifteen hours per day.

"(5) In many places young girls are kept working all night without extra pay.

"(6) Eighteen children were found working in one room 11 feet square.

"(7) Tailoresses work fourteen and sixteen hours per day for a bare livelihood.

"(8) In many places employees are obliged to work for periods beyond the limits of human endurance.

"(9) Labour is carried on under physical and moral disadvantages, resulting in premature debility and disease.

"(10) There are 20,000 persons now working in Victoria subjected to grievous hardships, working under a system of forced labour repugnant to every sense of justice and humanity."

The then Chief Secretary of Victoria, Mr. Alfred Deakin, admitted in Parliament that—

"Factory hands of Victoria are getting hardly sufficient remuneration to keep body and soul together."

The young girls of this State and the Commonwealth who are earning good wages to-day and enjoying comfortable conditions are able to do so because of the power, force, and influence of the great Labour movement industrially and politically. Those conditions have been made possible by the great Labour movement, and by nobody else. The records of "Hansard" will prove the truth of my statement. I clearly recollect the fight waged in Queensland for the establishment of decent factory conditions in this State. Why should the workers of to-day be deprived of those conditions, secured after years of agitation, sacrifice, and monetary loss by subscribing to the industrial movement that advocated their cause? Why should they have to submit to the conditions laid down in the Bill? I have no hesitation in saying that hon. members opposite have no intention whatever of improving the conditions of the workers by conciliation boards or by any other method. The operations of this Bill will prove the truth of statements made by me on the floor of this House. We shall see before the next election the result of the operations of this Bill. Everyone knows what the general attitude of hon. members opposite has been. It has been against the general interests of the workers. Every time men have made an attempt to obtain better conditions, they have been bitterly opposed; and every hon. member on the other side of the House stood behind the late Federal Government when they went to the country to abolish the Arbitration Court, although there were 750,000 workers in the Commonwealth who were protected and sheltered by that court. The Federal Government on that occasion had behind them some of the most influential employers' organisations in Australia in that attempt to abolish the Federal Arbitration Court. They were told that, if the Federal Arbitration Court were abolished, matters in Queensland could be dealt with by the State. I can just imagine what would have happened had the Bruce-Page Government been returned to power. This Bill is more calculated to do damage to the interests of the State than anything else. It is of a most coercive nature. We shall see how it will operate. One would imagine that there was no such thing as conciliation in operation, and that no one knew anything about conciliation boards in this or any other State in the Commonwealth. Conciliation, as provided for in the 1916 Act, has been brought about by various conferences between employers' representatives and representatives of the various union officials, who make it a definite business to become qualified to fill the position of advocates. The hon. member for Maryborough had much to say about agitators. If he had lived in the days of American slavery, I suppose he would have stood up and decried the advocates of freedom; or, if he had lived in the days of the Earl of Shaftesbury, he would have stood up in his place in the House of Commons and denounced him for introducing a humanitarian measure to give the children of the workers some slight degree of comfort. We know the conditions which existed in the cotton-mills of England, when young children were employed, and, as soon as one child dropped out, another one was taken in. We also know the condition of the women engaged in the chain-making industry of Britain, and also in connection with the mines. The hon. members sitting opposite to-day are no different from their progenitors. They are the same old crowd, the only difference being that they have not the honesty and the strength of the men of those old days. Mr. John Bright, one of the great men of Britain, speaking of those times, said—

"And yet it is very odd that the very same men at this moment set up to be authorities in politics. . . . opposed every one of those changes; they obstructed every one to the extent of their power. . . ."

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

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL (*Toombul*): We have listened to a very remarkable speech by the hon. member for Brisbane, who, like his colleagues, delights to revel in the past. In common with the hon. members for Ithaca, Bremer, and Warrego, the hon. member for Brisbane tries to make this House believe that his party were the originators of arbitration and conciliation. I admit that 1890 was a very memorable year in regard to the initiation of arbitration and conciliation; but I claim that the credit for the initiation of that legislation was entirely due to men who were not associated with the Labour movement.

As early as 1884 a Royal Commission sat in Victoria to deal with the sweating evils then existent, and Mr. Alfred Deakin was a prominent member of that commission. In the year 1890, which was a year of great depression in trade and conflict in industrial conditions in Australia, the trade unions claimed what is known to-day as "preference to unionists," whereas the employers claimed "freedom of contract." It is very debatable to-day which side was right. We know that preference to unionists has been conceded, perhaps as a matter of expediency rather than as a matter of natural right. Be that as it may, preference to unionists forms one of the cardinal principles of the system of compulsory arbitration of Queensland. In

1890—and my authority for this statement is the late Chief Justice McCawley, who issued a fine brochure on industrial arbitration—the author of the present system of arbitration and conciliation was the late Charles Kingston, who in that year endeavoured to put through the South Australian Parliament a Bill to deal with industrial disputes. He said at that time—

> "It would be a good thing indeed if the House took proper steps for the purpose of compelling parties to industrial disputes to refer their differences to a tribunal in whom the public had confidence."

Later on Mr. Kingston introduced his Industrial Disputes Settlement Bill. The Bill did not become law, but it was the basis of all subsequent legislation upon compulsory arbitration. As the late Chief Justice McCawley said—

> "Whatever credit is due, entirely belongs to the originator of the idea of compulsory arbitration—Charles Kingston."

In drawing up his measure, as he afterwards admitted, he consulted the late Alfred Deakin, who, as I have already mentioned, was a member of the Victorian Royal Commission which sat in regard to the sweating evil that was then prevalent in Victoria.

In 1891 the New South Wales Royal Commission on strikes and arbitration brought in its report, and affirmed the principle that the State had the right, in the public interests, to call upon all who are protected by the laws to conform to any provision the law may establish for settling quarrels dangerous to the public peace.

We have another notable example in New Zealand with the late Mr. Pember Reeves, who was a member of the Seddon Government. Mr. Reeves drafted his measure in 1891, using Mr. Kingston's Bill as his basis. From 1894 compulsory arbitration and conciliation has remained in operation in New Zealand; and the extension of the system throughout Australasia can be largely attributed to the measure of success attained in New Zealand.

In Australia in 1890 and 1891, when Mr. Kingston put forward his proposal for compulsory arbitration, the unions did not receive the proposal with enthusiasm. The unions desired to retain the right to strike, and looked askance at any proposal that would have the effect of taking from them the power to strike; so that the greatest opponents at that time of compulsory arbitration were the unions themselves. In 1903, Mr. Chris. Watson, the then Leader of the Labour Party in the Federal Parliament, supported compulsory arbitration, but admitted that twelve years before that date he had had a different opinion in regard to the matter; so that the credit for the introduction of compulsory arbitration is due entirely to people who were not associated with the Labour movement. It was due to the intellectual giants of the past, who realised that it was the duty of Parliament to see that the public was not injured by strikes, which caused suffering to innocent people. It was due to their influence that the public began to regard industrial disputes as a national matter, and steps were taken to put an end to the barbarous system of strikes, and establish in its stead some system whereby the parties to a dispute could get together and settle their differences under the presidency of an impartial chairman. To-day compulsory arbitration is one of the cardinal features of the legislation of every State of the Commonwealth. I do not think any decent man to-day wishes to go back to the old order of things. We do not want to go back to the law of the jungle; and, as an educated community, it is our desire to see that these disputes between parties engaged in industry should be settled, if possible, by conciliation; and, if these disputes are not possible of settlement by conciliatory methods, then we should fall back on a court so that the parties can be called together and compelled to obey the award that is imposed upon them by the court, and so that we may have peace in industry, and those people who advocate strikes and who desire to settle these disputes by the arbitrament of force shall not receive any support or countenance in an enlightened community such as we are to-day.

Our friends on the other side seem to have confined themselves exclusively to a tedious discourse on the various clauses of the Bill. They have not said definitely whether they are opposed to the Bill in its entirety, and I contend that much of the debate from that side has really related to particular clauses of the Bill. While the Industrial Arbitration Act of 1916 has worked fairly satisfactorily, there are many defects that should be remedied. I do not think any one of us is too old to learn, and every piece of legislation should be subject to review and brought up to date. While, in the main, the Industrial Arbitration Act has worked very well, we believe that it is deserving of very serious amendment. If, by the operation of that Act, Queensland has become so prosperous and so contented, how is it that Queensland is the worst State in the Commonwealth in so far as the progress of secondary industries is concerned? We are told by our friends opposite that Queensland has become a veritable Eldorado for the working man; yet our secondary industries are in anything but a prosperous state.

After all, the principle of arbitration and conciliation pertains more to workers engaged in secondary industries than to those engaged in primary industries. Despite that fact, we find Queensland is at the bottom of the list, compared with all the other States of Australia, in regard to the welfare of her secondary industries. Let me give a few figures to illustrate my point. The proportion per 10,000 inhabitants in factory industries in Australia from 1915 to 1927 worked out in this way—

State.	Increase.	Decrease.
New South Wales	154	..
Victoria	146	..
Tasmania	123	..
South Australia	107	..
Western Australia	85	..
Queensland	..	66

Whereas all the other States show a substantial increase, Queensland alone shows a big decrease. In regard to the increase in the number of factories for the same period, the figures are—

State.	Increase.
New South Wales	2,593
Victoria	2,277
South Australia	541
Western Australia	436
Tasmania	178
Queensland	107

Taking the same period, the increased production per capita is—

	£	s.	d.
New South Wales	42	14	0
Victoria	38	6	7
South Australia	33	6	7
Western Australia	23	13	2
Tasmania	16	12	0
Queensland	9	16	2

I merely quote those figures to show that Queensland has not progressed in regard to secondary industries, despite the contention of hon. members opposite that she has been so peaceful and contented under this arbitration law under the aegis of the Labour Government.

If the present Act contains any abuses, we should endeavour to set them right. I do not intend to deal seriatum with the clauses of the Bill, like hon. members opposite, but to refer to the main principles of the Bill. It will be found that the Government have endeavoured to remedy some of the abuses under the present legislation. I consider that it is a travesty on our boasted progress in this matter that we still have considerable overlapping between Federal and State awards. Clause 13 of the Bill clearly provides that there shall be no overlapping in regard to awards that are controlled by the Commonwealth Court. This is a very wise provision; and in the long run it must mean the saving of the endless confusion which exists to-day and a tremendous lot of litigation; so in that regard the Bill will contain very salutary simplifications of Federal and State awards, and remove a lot of the overlapping that exists to-day. This overlapping is allowing unions to play battledore and shuttlecock with the two courts, going first to one court, and seeing what they can get, and then going to the other court to get better conditions. That has to be stopped. If the Commonwealth Court is going to deal with the conditions in any one industry, then the Queensland Court must say definitely that it is not going to be made a tool of.

Then we have the tremendous perplexity and ofttimes a great deal of ambiguity of the various awards. We have a great number of awards which apply to the same industry. The awards which to-day apply to the whole of the Australian courts are multitudinous. In fact, in some of the capitals the employees in an industry are governed by thirty or forty, or perhaps more awards, when by a simple process it could be arranged that the employees in such industry could all be covered by one award. It will be the aim of this Bill to provide that the employees in a given industry, in co-operation with the employers, can arrange for one award to govern the whole of the employees in that industry. Thus [3.30 p.m.] it will not be necessary for employers to have clerks merely for the purpose of interpreting a multiplicity of awards. In that regard the Bill deserves the support of every hon. member, because it will bring about simplicity and a much easier interpretation of awards.

There is no doubt also that under present conditions, whilst the employers are compelled to obey the conditions which the court lays down, there is a great laxity in regard to the employees. What is sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander, and both parties should be compelled to give obedience to all awards; and persons who do not should be placed beyond the pale of the court and beyond the law.

At 3.31 p.m.,

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Speaker in the chair.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: We have had examples in the past where employees who were dissatisfied with awards deliberately flouted the court, and thus frustrated attempts to bring about peace in a given industry. I hope that those conditions will be a thing of the past. An employer is not allowed to lock out his employees. If he does, he is liable to be heavily fined. On the other hand, times out of number strikes have been declared even against an award of the court, and there has been no redress, whilst in other cases fines have been inflicted which have never been recovered.

Despite all the claims that have been made for the present system, there is no doubt that it has built up an army of parasites. We have the spectacle of men such as secretaries and assistant secretaries, vigilance officers, inspectors, shop stewards—all men living on the game. We want to simplify the process so that men engaged in industry, both employers and employees, shall, as a first resource, go to a conciliation board without the interference of a whole army of "hangers-on," thus reducing the enormous expense that centres round arbitration to-day.

With regard to requiring both parties to abide by awards, we find to-day that whilst employers, who may be considered to be in a stronger financial position than the employees, are prosecuted to a great extent, on the other hand the Crown is very reluctant to take action against employees' organisations. Despite our desire to see even-handed justice dispensed to both parties, those in authority are not very eager to take action against employees. I suppose because they are supposed to be the "underdog"; nevertheless, by allowing that state of affairs to continue we are really stultifying the good work that may be done by any arbitration court or conciliation board.

To my mind, the fact that we are endeavouring to incorporate in the new system methods of conciliation to a greater degree than hitherto indicates that this Bill is the best attempt made to date to preserve peace in industry. Although we have in the present law provisions for the use of conciliation methods, the fact remains that in almost every instance the two parties to the dispute eventually make their way to the final court of appeal—that is, the Arbitration Court, where the case is fought out with the aid of advocates by the spending of a good deal of money, thus actually driving the parties into hostile camps. The aim of this Bill is to see that, as far as possible, these disputes do not reach that stage, but that the parties are brought together under a commissioner, who will exert every effort to bring about a settlement.

The first essential in all the legislation that has been initiated in Australia since 1890 is that the parties to the dispute get together in an endeavour to settle their differences without resorting to a system of compulsory abitration, whereby they are forced to accept an award of the court. This Bill makes for a greater use of the methods of conciliation, which I believe, if

faithfully administered, will remove many of the present abuses. It will certainly reduce expenses, and will prevent both parties from being enmeshed in a mass of legal entanglements. I have a great admiration for the old wages board system, which was the forerunner of our present legislation. When an hon. member opposite was speaking, I made an interjection about the butchers' award. The present conditions that the butchers enjoy are founded on the old wages board system. That award was brought about by the two parties getting together under an impartial chairman; and the award was issued with little expense, and proved very satisfactory. If we were to observe more closely the methods of conciliation, we would save a lot of delay and expense, and it would bring about a greater degree of contentment between the parties. If we force both parties into the court, there will be a tendency to drive them into two hostile camps, where both sides will do their best to bluff the judge and put up impossible cases. I think the Bill will obviate that abuse, and if it does that, for that reason alone it should be supported by every hon. member.

I was pleased to note one of the main features of the Bill, which provides that the court can call in the assistance of two assessors, one representing the employers, and the other representing the employees. That is a very noticeable departure from our present methods of conciliation and arbitration. There is no doubt that many cases that come before the judge of the court are of a very intricate and technical nature. I need only instance the metal manufacturing trade to show how impossible it is for a judge adjudicating in a dispute between the parties to get a thorough grasp of the conditions governing that industry. It is impossible for any man to be conversant with every industry in this country. Consequently, it is for the judge's own benefit to have assessors, whose assistance will enable him to deliver a better verdict than would otherwise be the case. The two assessors, representing the parties to the dispute, will be able to bring to the assistance of the judge their technical knowledge of the subject adjudicated upon. On this particular matter the president of the Metal Employees' Association of New South Wales made some remarks in 1928 which are very apropos of the situation. Referring to the present system of compulsory arbitration, he said—

> "The system has hindered the progress and development of the metal trades industry, as the courts are not familiar with the industry and do not understand the process and methods of manufacturing which could be utilised. Lack of engineering knowledge makes it difficult for the judge to appreciate the revolutionary changes that have taken place the last ten or twelve years in methods, owing to the increased use of automatic or semi-automatic machinery. They are obsessed with the idea that to produce metal manufactures the workmen must necessarily be skilled.
>
> "This idea, of course, is carefully fostered by the union representatives. The result is that the judges give awards laying down conditions that are absolutely obsolete, for whilst Australian manufacturers are forced to pay skilled labour rates, their competitors abroad are paying only labourers' wages for exactly the same sort of work. The engineering unions sedulously oppose modern manufacturing processes, and are also just as vehemently opposed to payment by results. Their outlook is not broad enough to grasp the fact that with the increase in manufacturing there would be greater opportunities for tradesmen to make, instal, and maintain machinery and equipment. The Higgins award killed the machine tool industry, which, at one time, had a splendid future before it."

The idea is that they will have the assistance of assessors versed in matters that will come before the court for review, and their knowledge will be of great assistance to the judge, and we shall get awards that will be more satisfactory and more in accord with modern conditions. Under this system the judge will have associated with him two men, one representing the employers and one representing the employees. They will be sitting alongside him during the course of the hearing, and he may refer to them for information, which will enable him to form a correct judgment. In another part of the Bill there is provision that the workers in an industry will be able to enter into co-operation with the employer, and to register agreements that will have the force of law. It is also provided in the Bill that the conditions contained in such agreement must be such and such, and that the wages must not be less than the rate ruling in that particular industry. There is no reason why a body of employees should not get together with their employers and enter into agreements, which would then become law. That is the object we have in view—the fullest encouragement of co-operation of both parties in enterprise.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: How would you apply that principle?

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: It may be difficult to apply the principle to every industry; but there is nothing like making a start. In this Bill there is provided power to assist co-operative enterprise and profit-sharing among employers and employees. A National Council was formed in England in 1928 to enable attention to be given to important industrial organisations. Lord Melchett took a very prominent part in the movement.

We are up against wooden-headed ideas presented by both parties, and there is no doubt that both parties are governed by a great number of fallacies. I suppose there is an idea among the workers that they have nothing in common with the employer. Their idea is to down capitalism with the idea that they, per medium of State control, will be able to take control of these industries or to bring about socialisation of enterprises; so that we have a continual tug-of-war between the employer and the employee for the purpose of deciding who shall get the bigger share.

The truth is that the amount available depends on how much can be drawn out of the well; so that if, instead of pulling one against the other, all hands are pulling on the rope together, the amount available may be almost indefinitely increased. We have people who think that their interests would be better served if prices were fixed as high as possible, and wages as low as possible; but, in reply to that, it must be agreed that,

since the wage-earners form the great part of the purchasing power in the home market, the higher the wages and the more the people have to spend, the better it is for trade, and, therefore, for the employer. Consequently our objective should not be to pay low wages, but to increase productivity. Let us decrease our cost of production but keep up wages at as high a level as possible, so as to increase the spending power of the workers, who form the great bulk of the people. If we get co-operation to bring that about, it is going to make for peace in industry; and the barbarous weapon of the strike will be a thing of the past. That is a thing for which we should all devoutly hope.

As the Leader of the Opposition said, there are two elements that enter into the case in regard to the workers, those elements being the "minimum wage" and the "basic wage." They must be considered in dealing with a sound basis of remuneration for the worker; but, apart from that, I think that most up-to-date thinkers are prepared to give greater recognition than hitherto to the rights of the workers. We do not want to live in the past. We know that centuries ago the country was ruled by the richest class; but now one man is as good as another. With the great improvement in our educational facilities, we are gradually dispelling the old order of things; and I hope that our friends on the other side will be broadminded enough to admit that we are as desirous as they are of alleviating the lot of the "underdog."

All the reforms that hon. members opposite have spoken about to-day were actually brought about by men who were not associated with the Labour Party, but were men on our side, who recognised the wrongs of the workers, and did their level best to rectify them.

There should be a recognition of the human needs of the worker by providing that no worker shall be paid less than will suffice to keep himself and his family in decency and comfort. Apart from that, there should be recognition of the worker's effort and capacity by providing that the wages above the minimum shall be graded according to the effort and skill required. Then there should be some recognition of the worker's interest in the concern for which he works, by providing that he can in his degree materially contribute. I do not hold with some of the profit-sharing schemes that have been evolved, under which the worker only gets an infinitesimal interest in the earnings of the concern, and has only a life interest at that. I think it is in accord with present-day British sentiment that, if we desire to preserve an industry, we have to offer some incentive to the worker in that industry to improve his position by getting him away from the shibboleths of the party opposite, and by recognising that his safety and welfare depend on his own exertion—provided that the employer, on the other hand, is prepared to give him that interest in his occupation to which he is entitled. After providing for a fair return on the capital invested, and for management expenses—the return to be proportionate to the risk entailed, and in order that capital may be encouraged to embark in enterprises—any residual profit should be divided in fair proportions amongst all those concerned. That is a fair policy that we might all enunciate.

If our friends on the other side were to drop their antagonism, their stupid prejudices, and their "soap-box" oratory—which only appeals to the uneducated—and would go out as evangelists and talk co-operation; if they would throw aside the stupid and vicious doctrines of socialism and sovietism, they would be doing good service to the workers of Queensland. Under the principle underlying this Bill the workers themselves could eventually lead up to a position whereby the ownership of capital would be in their own hands. We do not believe in the control of enterprise by the State. We do not believe in socialism, because it means the dragging down of every man and woman to the one dead level. We say that, rather than abolish individualism, we should be prepared to further the principles of individualism by creating more owners—by a greater diffusion of ownership and capital in industry. We do not believe in public ownership. We rather believe in the ownership of industry and capital by all engaged in industry. That is our answer to the Socialist. By that means we hope to make the lot of the worker better than it is to-day. Socialism has been proved a dismal failure. It has led to serious discontent amongst the workers, who have been taught to believe that their greatest enemy is the capitalist. Our objective should be to harness capital and labour together, so that both parties shall participate in the profits accruing from industry.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Queenton*): I have listened with a good deal of interest to the debate up to the present time, and particularly to the remarks of the hon. member for Toombul. That hon. member charged hon. members on this side of the House with being stupid, with being prejudiced, and with being advocates of sovietism, which his own common sense should tell him is not true. Whatever may be said about the Labour movement, it certainly has rendered very conspicuous service to the workers of this and other countries. Whoever may claim credit for introducing arbitration, there is no doubt that the Labour movement was the originator of quite a number of things on the statute-book that it does not get credit for. I listened to the Secretary for Labour and Industry with a good deal of interest, when he made his second-reading speech. I also listened with interest to his historical sketch. Hon. members on this side have been charged with going back to past ages for arguments and illustrations; but in doing that they were following the example set by the Minister, who went a long way back for illustrations in regard to the principle of conciliation.

Then he became quite enthusiastic and rhapsodical about what he expected this Bill was going to do. I hope that his expectations are realised; but I am afraid they will not be realised. He was up in the clouds for some time, talking about big men and breadth of vision, which are all very fine things and good pictures in their way; but it is as well to remember that, when we get down to hard facts, those who administer this measure will find that they are dealing with ordinary average individuals, the great majority of whom are not above the average—as Lincoln said, "Not too wise or good for human nature's daily tasks." When this Bill becomes law, it will be administered for the benefit of the ordinary average individuals in the community, and

those who expect people to be perfect are looking for something which they will not find.

It has been said that the outlook of the workers is circumscribed, and to a certain extent that may be true. The outlook of the ordinary worker is circumscribed by responsibilities. It takes a worker all his time to provide for his family and do all he can to maintain their health and comfort.

The hon. member for Bulimba ridiculed to some extent the idea that the basic wage is fixed on the basis that it is for a man with a wife and three children. Everybody knows that the anomaly exists, and that some better provision ought to be made and might be made. It is rather remarkable that the Government whom the hon. member supports are introducing this measure, which will wipe the existing Act off the statute-book. They are starting off with a clean slate; yet they find it impossible to improve on the present system—to do anything different from what has been done in the past. There is no doubt that changes will come, and that some better method will be devised for the fixation of the basic wage, so as to make provision for those who have half-a-dozen children. "Hope springs eternal in the human breast," and in that connection something will in all probability be done in the future. The point is that this was the opportunity—the Government have the opportunity, but they have not done it.

There have been some cheap sneers thrown across the Chamber about the lecture by the Leader of the Opposition on economics. Judging from some of the speeches of hon. members opposite on this and other Bills during the session, such a lecture was very much needed. It has done good service, and will be of assistance to hon. members opposite.

The idea that children in past days were badly treated under the conditions which then obtained has been scoffed at by hon. members opposite, and they seem to think that nothing of the kind takes place at the present day.

[4 p.m.]

Immature girls have still to work in cotton factories in England, and boys who are nothing like grown up still have to labour in the mines; and anyone who thinks that such things as these were confined to times thirty or forty years ago is sadly out of date. That is another proof of the old saying that "half the world does not know how the other half lives." These things do exist in the other countries of the world; and they exist not because the boys and girls want to work, but because of economic necessity. The wage which a man with four or five children can earn makes it impossible for him to support them all; and they naturally have to go out even before the age of fourteen years, and help to keep themselves, even though they work only half-time and go to school during the rest of the day. It is rather a disagreeable reflection that such things still exist; but facts cannot be gainsaid; and it helps us to realise the fact that there are some people who need a better share of the good things that are produced than they get.

Mr. EDWARDS: What are you "stonewalling" for?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: If any "stonewalling" has been done on this Bill, it has been done by hon. members on the opposite side. Yesterday we saw half a dozen of them get up, and, whilst they said they were supporting the measure, they never touched the provisions of the Bill, or said a word about it. If that was not "stonewalling," I do not know what was. Anyone who has read the speeches of hon. members opposite who have touched on the Bill must agree that they were compelled to admit that, unless there is co-operation, sympathy, and conciliation the Bill will not succeed—an admission which helps to convince me that they are satisfied that the Bill is not going to make its way on its merits, and that it will require to have sympathy and assistance from everybody on both sides, whereas I take it that, if any measure has any claim to succeed, it should base that claim on something that is in it, something that will recommend it, something that will convince this House in the first place that it is, at any rate, well worth a trial.

The problem of problems facing not only this State but other States in the Commonwealth and other countries in the world is the distribution of wealth; and arbitration courts, wages boards, and other things of that kind are established to try to get such a distribution of the wealth of any country that all will have a reasonable quantum, and that things will work smoothly and the workers will have something to put aside as well as spend. Hon. members on this side have repeatedly said that low wages mean a low spending power, and also a low saving power. Many hon. members opposite do not recognise that. That is why many of them believe that the only way to bring about a reduction in the cost of production is by a lowering of wages. There is no getting away from the fact that hon. members opposite have distinctly stated that men would be better off at the present time if they were working for £3 per week than if they were working for the wages they get now or even higher wages; but there is no doubt that, if we did away with Arbitration Court awards, they would not get even £3 per week; and their wages would simply fall to a figure which would provide them with a subsistence; and that is not good for the worker or anybody else.

The idea prevalent in the minds of a great number of persons is that the distribution of wealth does not count at all. Quite recently the Premier said this on that very subject—

> "The objective of the Government is to make it possible for those developing the land to get a better return. We have been told that the distribution of wealth is so unequal that it can only be made right by nationalisation. In my opinion, the distribution of wealth is nothing. It is the acquisition of wealth that counts, and it is that that the Government is going to encourage."

I do not subscribe to that doctrine, for, while I admit that the production of wealth is a factor in national prosperity, nevertheless it is not the only factor. It does not necessarily follow that, because there is a big production of wealth, everybody benefits, as the hon. member for Toombul suggests by his analogy that, when plenty of water is drawn from the well, there is plenty for everybody. The wealth that is produced must be distributed on an equitable, just, and fair basis. An increase in the production of wealth is one thing; but, if that wealth is not equitably distributed, somebody suffers. On this point I desire to quote an authority greater than

any hon. member opposite, who, when dealing with labour, land, and capital, said—

> "Unlike land and capital, labour cannot be detached from the person of its owner. When its productive power is used this power requires the presence of the owner on the spot, and commonly entails certain effects on his liberty and life, which are not easily or adequately counted in the cost. Risk to life and limb incident upon employment seldom figures in the wages' bargain, while dirt, disease, or the degraded character of the employment have little influence on the rate of pay."

The point there is that, when the labourer has lost a day's work, a week's work, or a month's work, it is gone for ever, and there is no getting it back. The owner who is possessed of capital in land can recoup himself by an extraordinary fluctuation in the price of goods produced.

At 4.7 p.m.,

The SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The labourer has only his labour to sell; and, if he is not able to sell it then and there, day by day, he loses the value of his labour that might otherwise have been secured.

The prevalent idea that the production of wealth is all that counts is not correct. There must be an equitable distribution of wealth, otherwise someone suffers; and the people who suffer for the most part are the people who have the least power and the least influence—and they are the workers. They have only their labour to sell. The system of conciliation and arbitration has been responsible for at least one benefit. It has educated the workers to some extent to stand by each other, to help each other to assert their right—not their privilege—to a better share of the good things that are produced. There is no doubt that in Queensland and Australia generally they have shared better on that account than have workers in most of the other countries of the world. It is wrong to assume that because a country is prosperous everybody in it is prosperous. I desire at this stage to quote this report, which appeared in a newspaper quite recently—

> "Unpleasant as it may be to admit it, it is at last becoming evident that the enormous increase in productive power which has marked the present century, and is still going on with accelerating ratio, has no tendency to extirpate poverty or to lighten the burdens of those compelled to toil. It simply widens the gulf between Dives and Lazarus, and makes the struggle for existence more intense. The march of invention has clothed mankind with powers of which a century ago the boldest imagination could not have dreamed. But in factories where labour-saving machinery has reached its most wonderful development, little children are at work; wherever the new forces are anything like fully utilised, large classes are maintained by charity or live on the verge of resource to it; amid the greatest accumulations of wealth, men die of starvation, and puny infants suckle dry breasts; while everywhere the greed of gain, the worship of wealth, shows the force of the fear of want. The Promised Land flies before us like the mirage. The fruits of the tree of knowledge turn, as we grasp them, to apples of Sodom that crumble at the touch."

That is an absolute fact that cannot be gainsaid.

Look at the conditions that prevailed fifty years ago, and compare those conditions with the conditions that obtain at present, and you will find that the conditions of the working people have not improved to anything like the extent they should have done. The workers at the present are not getting a fair share of the good things that they are entitled to, and that is what has made arbitration and conciliation what they are. There are people who do not know or do not care what the conditions of others are so long as they are flourishing themselves. They are not concerned about those people who are not benefited.

A good deal has been said about conciliation, and I am one of those who believe in conciliation. I think it is a good thing to endeavour to conciliate, and then arbitrate, before you fight. The application of arbitration and conciliation to industrial affairs was operating in international affairs long before anything was done elsewhere. When I first came to this House, a Wages Board Act was one of the first measures passed, and there were great expectations from those boards. When they were established they did some good, because the idea was conciliation—to get people together so that the parties could see things from the viewpoint of each other. In my opinion, there is nothing more instructive than seeing the other fellow's standpoint, and so getting at both sides of the case. But, if wages boards were such wonderful things, how did it come about that the people who instituted such boards were the people who cut them out after four years? The wages boards were a failure simply for the reason that they consisted of two or three representatives of the employees and two or three representatives of the employers, who were elected to sit on the wages board with a so-called impartial chairman, who practically decided everything. That impartial chairman invariably was a police magistrate, and almost invariably he took the side of the employers instead of that of the employees, probably due to environment, and probably because he thought that the employees were asking for something to which they were not entitled. For some reason or other, the Government of the day abolished the wages boards, and introduced the Industrial Peace Act, in which a form of conciliation was provided under which the parties would meet and discuss matters before going into court. There was ample opportunity provided in that measure for conciliation and for the board discussing matters from every angle, when, if the parties agreed—and they very often did agree—all that was necessary was that their agreement should be registered in the court. If they were unable to agree, the matter was taken into the court, where it was decided by a judge. There is a thing that might be called conciliation without being possessed of the spirit of conciliation; and, after all, it is the spirit that particularly matters. The thing might be called conciliation; but, if the spirit of conciliation is absent, it is useless. I think the Minister and some of his colleagues have had a splendid opportunity during the discussion on this matter to display a conciliatory spirit; but they have not taken advantage of the opportunity—in fact,

in some cases they have not themselves made for conciliation, but rather have endeavoured to prevent hatred dying. I take more notice of a man's actions and conduct than I do of his words.

The question naturally arises as to whether this is a conciliatory Bill. The test would be to give it to an intelligent working man who has a knowledge of industrial conditions during the last ten or twelve years, and ask him what he thinks about it. Of course, the Bill is not easy of understanding, because, even after reading it once, one has to confess that one does not know its full effect. There are, however, some clauses about which there can be no doubt; and it is in connection with those that I should be very much surprised if the working man to whom I have referred expressed the opinion that it is a conciliatory measure. It is so little conciliatory that it robs the worker of practically a week's holiday. The saints' days are abolished; and, whilst I have not at any time been very much concerned about the saints' days, we do know that, instead of claiming those days, under most industrial awards, the worker could receive a week's holiday at, say, Christmas time. To the extent, therefore, that the saints' days are cut out, that is a loss to the worker.

Further, we have the alarming provision for the payment of time and a-half instead of double time for certain holidays, if worked. If anyone thinks that those provisions will help the worker to look upon this Bill in a spirit of sympathy and respect, he is very much mistaken. When you find that one of the very first things proposed is to wipe out conditions which have been enjoyed for some considerable time, it must be apparent that antagonism will be engendered——

Mr. EDWARDS: That is not true.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I do not think that the hon. member who interjected knows anything about the Bill.

Mr. EDWARDS: I do know that it is going to provide employment for many people who are now destitute.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: It is all very well to talk about conciliation; but it is hardly conciliation when a man knocks you on the head and robs you of your watch, for him to say later, "I didn't want to hurt you then. I want to make peace with you now." Those drastic provisions in the Bill will do more than anything else to prejudice the workers.

Mr. EDWARDS: That is what you are trying to do.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I do not propose to answer that inane and idiotic interjection, except to say that, if the Bill cannot stand intelligent criticism, it does not deserve to succeed.

Mr. EDWARDS: But is this intelligent criticism?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The Bill provides for the "open-shop" methods in industry. That has been the position in America, where a man going for a job is asked no questions as to whether he belongs to a union or not. It must be remembered, however, that there are people not only in union circles but in other spheres who are quite prepared to take all the privileges and advantages that come their way, but are not prepared to make any sacrifices to secure those privileges. There are people who do not desire to join a union and identify themselves in any way with union matters, but are quite ready to take advantage of all the benefits.

One of the worst things that could be done in any workshop or organisation where a number of men are congregated who believe in union principles, and who try to render service to their fellow-men, is to have that class of individual coming to the shop or organisation and claiming the same rights as the unionists. That does not make for conciliation, peace, or quietness. It makes for disintegration, and in that direction I am confident that trouble will ensue in the very near future if this is attempted. The man who is not a unionist, and who will not take out a union ticket, has other failings. He is regarded as the boss's friend, and is ofttimes a pimp or tale-bearer. It is one of the drawbacks to the Bill that such a principle should be recognised.

While it has been stated over and over again that the Government have no desire to see wages reduced or hours extended, this matter is left to the board, and everybody knows what is intended. When the Premier reduced the salaries of members of Parliament, he stated that that was a gesture to other people as to what they should do. While it is stated that the Government have no desire to see wages reduced or hours extended, there can be no question that that is what is going to take place.

Provision is made in regard to the standard of living; but there is also a provision that the board, in dealing with an industry not of average prosperity, may rescind or cancel an award or agreement, and the workers must accept whatever is offered. That is a wrong principle, for the simple reason that quite a number of employers try to convey the idea that the industry in which they are engaged is not of average prosperity, whereas sometimes it is. Of course, the books have to be submitted, and all that kind of thing; but, as pointed out in the Economic Commission's report, an industry may not be of average prosperity because it is over-capitalised, because the machinery is obsolete, or because the overhead charges are too high. We had a glaring example of that in New South Wales, where an industry again and again appealed to the Tariff Board in order to get a higher tariff on their goods. It was said that, if the tariff was not increased, they could not carry on, as the industry was not of average prosperity. Eventually one of the directors had to disgorge £80,000 that he got out of the industry, and which he had practically taken out of the country. When we have examples like that, it does seem to me that very often, if an industry is not of average prosperity, it is the fault of those controlling the industry, although in nine cases out of ten the workers are compelled to accept something less than a fair average rate of pay. When once we get away from a fixed wage, where is it to stop? It simply means that it will not stop until you get down to a bare subsistence level.

There is power under the Unemployed Workers Insurance Act to fix wages, hours, and conditions with regard to relief work. It has been stated in this Chamber on more than one occasion that people who are out of

work ought to work merely for their sustenance. I am not a believer in that principle; yet there is a provision in this Bill for that kind of thing. No doubt that will meet with the approval of some hon. members opposite. It shows that workers will have to accept what is offered to them or lose their work. If they do not accept work at the rates offering, they will not be able to draw sustenance under the Unemployed Workers Insurance Act.

A great deal has been said about political control, which has been decried; and it has been urged that political control should not be allowed to enter into the management of the departments of the State. One of the remarkable things in connection with this Bill is that, after all the provision that has been made for conciliation boards and other paraphernalia, the Governor in Council is empowered to issue orders, rules, and directions which shall be as valid as if they were enactments contained in the Act. Looking at the whole position, one wonders what necessity there was to introduce this Bill at all. The Governor in Council is practically made a bureaucracy, and can say what must be done, in spite of the Act. The Government have the authority to say and do what they like

A great deal has been said to the effect that the employers and employees meet on a level round the table at the Conciliation Board. I contend that they do not meet on a level. The very fact that they meet as masters and men—to borrow a term used by hon. members opposite—shows that they do not meet on an equality. The employer is the master, and he has always a summary way of dealing with anybody who does not comply with his conditions or meet with his approval. We have sufficient experience to know that it is not in the interests of the men for employees to meet at the table with the employers. That is one of the reasons why the union organiser has become an expert in industrial affairs, and, as acknowledged by the judges, has stated the men's case from their own point of view as well as, if not better than, the employers have stated their case. It is provided in the Bill that no employer shall dismiss a workman because he belongs to an industrial organisation; but surely no one is so simple as to imagine that any employer would dismiss him for that kind of thing! He would find some other ground of complaint; and he would not have much difficulty in dispensing with the services of a man whom he did not want. Anyone who knows anything about industrial affairs knows what has taken place in the past. I know scores of instances where employees who have met in conference with employers have afterwards received a notification in their pay envelope that their services were no longer required; and there was no explanation as to why they were dismissed, except that the employer might say that it was simply because they were not further required for the work they were doing.

No doubt the clauses which I have mentioned in connection with this Bill will require a great deal of consideration. [4.30 p.m.] These are a few of the things that have struck me about the measure; but I am sure that the average individual, when he knows the contents of the Bill, will come to the conclusion that it is not conciliation at all. A Bill which takes away some of the privileges for which he has fought and worked, and which for some time he has enjoyed—most of which were gained under the Industrial Arbitration Act of 1916—does not make for conciliation, and does not show a very conciliatory spirit, but rather the reverse. I think that the workers will conclude that this Bill does not make for the improvement of their conditions or the good of the State as a whole. I feel sure that when it is placed on the statute-book and we see the results of this kind of legislation, we shall all come to that conclusion; but the responsibility will rest on the shoulders of those who fathered it and put it through this House. I am confident that, before many months are passed, even they will realise that the results achieved by it are not what they expected, for the simple reason that it is not conciliation, but the very reverse.

Mr. BOW (*Mitchell*): I have listened with interest to the speeches of hon. members on both sides of the Chamber, and I must say that the strongest argument against such a Bill as this has been brought forward by an hon. member sitting opposite. If any hon. member gave us a reason why the Bill should not be passed, it was the hon. member for Kurilpa. He distinctly laid it down that the battle was to be between men who are unemployed and men who are in work. He plainly said that he was standing for the unemployed, and we know very well that the Bill is introduced for no other purpose than to bring about a reduction in wages. We have heard a great deal about peace in industry, and it has been said that that is the purpose of this measure; but we know very well that, whereas the Secretary for Labour and Industry met the officials of the workers' organisations in public and that a report of those proceedings was published in the press, he conferred with the employers in camera. It is easy, then, to see where this Bill originated. It cannot be claimed that the Minister is responsible for it. It was compiled outside this House by the Employers' Federation. It is obvious from the meetings of the Minister with the employers that the latter supplied the foundations of the Bill, otherwise I could not understand the purpose for which it is brought forward, in view of the fact that we already have an Industrial Court which has answered the purpose for years.

Since 1907 there has been only one small industrial dispute in the pastoral industry—one of the biggest industries in Queensland—up to the present time. The industry has proceeded smoothly since 1907; but the same cannot be said of the industry prior to that date. Hon. members have referred to the years 1890 and 1891, when we were seven months on strike without any chance of meeting the employers. They absolutely refused to meet us in conference unless we accepted the principle of freedom of contract. Repeatedly we endeavoured to meet the employers in conference; but repeatedly they refused. At that time union officials were supervising big camps of men who had no idea of creating any disturbance, but the Government of the day saw fit to send Nordenfeldt guns to Barcaldine, and followed up their action by sending soldiers and police.

Mr. BRAND: Didn't your Government send the police to Townsville?

Mr. BOW: Eventually leg-irons were used on the officials of the union. I was amongst the workers who were on strike. We were

referred to by members of Parliament of those days as "the howling dingoes of the West."

The Bill has been introduced for some ulterior purpose. It has not been introduced to benefit the workers, nor have the workers asked for it. It has been introduced at the dictation of the employers, who really believe that our arbitration system should be abolished. The late president of the United Graziers' Association, Mr. Whittingham, in one of his presidential addresses distinctly said that, if there was no arbitration court, there would be no unemployment. The significance of that statement was that they desired such conditions as would permit them to engage labour at any wage they desired. I am convinced that, if they were able to secure labour at £1 per week, they would not employ one additional hand. Their whole outlook would be—as it is now—profits. The whole argument of hon. members opposite has been that conciliation boards are essential, and that the present Act should be repealed. The present Act provides for conciliation. In almost every case the judge orders the parties into conference with a view to settling all differences, if possible. Only those matters upon which agreement cannot be secured are referred into court.

The hon. member for Toombul stated that the judge had not sufficient brains to take the evidence. He pointed out that it was necessary for a judge to be assisted by a representative of the employers and a representative of the employees. Under the present Act the employers and the employees can have their representatives in the court, and if the employers are unable to state a satisfactory case to the judge, who is able to sift and weigh the evidence, then it is the funeral of the employers, and is no concern of the employees. The desire of hon. members opposite is to constitute the court only for the purpose of watching the interests of the employers, and with the object of giving nothing to the employees. The whole thing hinges on the belief that this Bill is going to bring us right back to 1891. If the intention is not to take the workers back to those dark ages, what is the reason for repealing certain sections of the Criminal Code? Anything contained in the Criminal Code that is in any way fair and reasonable, so far as the worker is concerned, is cut out by this Bill. If turmoil were to break out to-morrow, or immediately this Bill is brought into operation, it would not be possible for an official or anyone else to interview another person in connection with a strike, because a charge of intimidation would immediately be brought against that person. The same thing would apply here as operated in 1891, when men were legironed and gaoled for no other reason than that they had met men who were going out West in trainloads not knowing what they were going there for, or what conditions they were going to work under. They did not get that information from the press in Brisbane, and many of those men were interned and went into camp during the 1891 strike. The employers of those days were never better represented than are the employers of to-day, notwithstanding the fact that they had amongst them a good lot of crusty old Tories.

The members of the Government to-day are too apt to be whipped up by outside influences; and I am quite satisfied that this Bill, if passed, will not bring peace into industry. On the other hand, I am prepared to guarantee that it will bring more turmoil into Queensland within the next three years than any Act or breach of any Act has ever done. Under the industrial system as it stands at the present time there is very little chance of an outbreak of turmoil; but the object of employers appears to be to get the men fighting one against the other for no reason whatever, and then they will employ either unemployed on the verge of starvation or the men on strike, and they will get them at their own price. The object of this Bill is nothing less. The arguments have been used on the other side that the workers of the State put the present Government into power. Well, if they claim that, I am quite satisfied that, after doing what they are doing here—looking after the interests of the worker to the extent of bringing down wages to a starvation rate and altering the conditions of life—they will not have the support of those people very long.

It has also been argued here that the Government are not interfering with wages or the working hours of the men. Well, all I can say is that it is a very fine smother-up when you find the Government repealing the Acts of Parliament dealing with both these matters and leaving it to the Arbitration Court to decide what the basic wage shall be and what hours shall be worked per week. We know that the decision of the court now is in favour of a 44-hour week, and that the basic wage is fixed at £4 5s. per week; but I am quite satisfied that once this Bill is brought into operation there will not be any £4 5s. per week as a basic wage or 44-hour working period for a week.

The conditions in the West during the old Tory reign were £1 per week on a station and £1 per 100 for shearing sheep. The rates are considerably better to-day; and the improvement is due to the legislation which was enacted by the Labour Government. It would appear, however, that the present Government, by this measure, are intent upon altering those conditions and reverting to a state of affairs which will be most disastrous from a working-class point of view. How many hon. members opposite will be able to face their constituents after supporting such a reactionary measure is beyond me. The Government claim to be looking for peace in industry; but by a Bill of this description they will reap no other harvest than one of trouble and turmoil. It would appear that the Government are looking for that trouble at the behest of outside influences.

The Attorney-General stated last night that Mr. Theodore was in favour of conciliation. That cannot be denied; but the type of conciliation which has the support of Mr. Theodore is entirely different from the conciliation that the worker will get under this Bill. It is provided that in proceedings before a Conciliation Board a union representative shall not be permitted to appear for the employees, and similarly the employers will only be represented by bona fide employers. There is no justification for refusing the workers the right to have their union representative present to put their case before the tribunal that will decide the important matter of an award governing wages and conditions. Under the Bill it will

be found that the provisions are such that no employee will care to take the risk of becoming a member of a Conciliation Board. The employee who does assert the justice of the demands of the worker will find himself in the ranks of the unemployed in quick time. What is the use of hon. members opposite saying that victimisation is not indulged in by employers? Why, many hon. members on this side of the Chamber have been victims of that evil influence! I can remember the time when a man who showed any political spirit or took a prominent part in union affairs was hunted from the district in which he was working; no employer would give him work. Under this measure the same conditions will prevail.

The Government intend to stop public servants from affiliating with political organisations. Surely they do not think that public servants will not express their opinions just the same! Why should not the Government extend to the public servants that freedom of thought of which they prattle so much? We hear much of freedom of speech, freedom of contract, and many other types of freedom; but here the Government are interfering in a most unjust way with the rights of Government employees.

Another startling feature of the Bill is the provision excluding certain people from the operation of awards. I refer to jackeroos, scrub-cutters, and other persons engaged in allied industries; also nurses and domestic servants. It would appear that the Government once again have taken their orders from people outside, and are intent upon a reversion to conditions that proved so unsatisfactory in years gone past.

In the light of all these things, it is easy to see that the Bill is not at all meant to bring about peace in industry. It is brought in to cause as much turmoil as possible. An effort will be made to get those out of work to accept a low rate of wage and any old hours so as to bring the profits of the bosses up as high as possible. That is the only possible chance they have of reducing the cost of production. I am quite satisfied that once this Bill is brought into force there is going to be turmoil.

Mr. EDWARDS: You are hoping there will be.

Mr. BOW: Yes; and I am taking a hand to-morrow if we have it.

Mr. EDWARDS: You carried the red flag.

Mr. BOW: I would carry the red flag, and I would not be ashamed of it. I am satisfied that when the conditions imposed in this Bill are known in the shearing industry you are going to have turmoil. Neither the employer nor the employee in that industry desires trouble. There are thousands of employers in Queensland to-day who would prefer to work under the present Act and go to the court when they want an alteration in any award. Instead of giving these people a chance of doing that, this Bill is introduced —absolutely "flogged" in—and it is going through, no matter what happens. The Government will force it through. If it is put through under present circumstances, in its present form and with its present penal provisions, it will interfere with a man, no matter what he does. It is going back to the "leg-iron" days of '91, for which people of the same views as hon. members opposite were responsible. I am quite satisfied that, when the Bill is put into operation, it is going to cause trouble.

Question—"That the Bill be now read a second time" (*Mr. Sizer's motion*)—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 34.

Mr.	Atherton	Mr.	Kerr
,,	Barnes, G. P.	Dr.	Kerwin
,,	Barnes, W. H.	Mr.	King
,,	Bell	Mrs.	Longman
,,	Blackley	Mr.	Macgroarty
,,	Brand	,,	Maher
,,	Carter	,,	Maxwell
,,	Costello	,,	Moore
,,	Deacon	,,	Morgan
,,	Duffy	,,	Nimmo
,,	Dunlop	,,	Peterson
,,	Edwards	,,	Russell, H. M.
,,	Fry	,,	Russell, W. A.
,,	Grimstone	,,	Sizer
,,	Hill	,,	Tedman
,,	Kelso	,,	Walker, J. E.
,,	Kenny	,,	Warren

Tellers: Mr. Fry and Mr. Kelso.

NOES, 21.

Mr.	Barber	Mr.	Hynes
,,	Bedford	,,	Jones
,,	Bow	,,	Kirwan
,,	Brassington	,,	Pease
,,	Bruce	,,	Pollock
,,	Bulcock	,,	Smith
,,	Conroy	,,	Stopford
,,	Cooper	,,	Wellington
,,	Dash	,,	Wilson
,,	Foley	,,	Winstanley
,,	Hanlon		

Tellers: Mr. Bulcock and Mr. Conroy.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Consideration of the Bill in Committee made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

The House adjourned at 5 p.m.