

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 29 JULY 1943

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. E. J. Hanson, Buranda) took the chair at 11 a.m.

QUESTIONS.

NATIONAL WORKS COUNCIL.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) asked the Premier—

“What are the details of the set-up, powers, and functions of the National Works Council approved at the recent meeting of the Loan Council?”

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

“The National Works Council was constituted by agreement between the Commonwealth and State Governments at the recent Premiers’ Conference to determine post-war works policy. The Council comprises the Prime Minister as chairman, the State Premiers, and the Commonwealth Minister for Reconstruction.”

CONDITIONS IN SUGAR INDUSTRY.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“Will he make representations to the Commonwealth Government respecting the serious position in the sugar industry in regard to the present harvest and to future production?”

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK (Hon. T. L. Williams, Port Curtis) replied—

“Following the acceptance by the Commonwealth Government and the State Government of the recommendations of the royal commission appointed last year to investigate all phases of sugar production, the State Government has maintained the closest collaboration with the Commonwealth Government, and every effort has been made and will continue to be made to achieve the Commonwealth Government’s target production of 600,000 tons of sugar. The hon. member for Murrumba is no doubt aware that this matter was discussed at the pre-session meeting of the State Government Party on Tuesday last. At that meeting it was decided to urge upon the Prime Minister, during his visit to Brisbane, the immediate need for additional efficient labour in the sugar industry. I am assuming that the hon. gentleman refers to the serious labour position in the industry.”

LOANS TO PRIMARY PRODUCERS FOR EQUIPMENT.

Mr. EDWARDS (Nanango), for **Mr. PLUNKETT** (Albert), asked the Premier—

“1. What are the details of the plan recently adopted in New South Wales which provides for interest-free loans to primary producers for the purchase of machinery and equipment?”

“2. In view of the present and prospective shortages of foodstuffs, will he give favourable consideration to the making available of, say, £100,000 for the purposes of a similar scheme in this State?”

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

“1. I am aware only of what has been published in the Press.

“2. In view of the fact that the demand for all classes of agricultural machinery far exceeds the supply and that a system of control of distribution is at present operating, it would appear that little purpose could be served by special loans at the present juncture. The more important need at the moment is to ensure the best use of the machines available. A conference of District War Agricultural Committee Chairmen is being held next week by the Minister for Agriculture, when this phase of organisation will be discussed. This will be followed by a similar conference of Northern District War Agricultural Committee Chairmen at an early date.”

PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND COMMONWEALTH AID.

Mr. EDWARDS (Nanango) asked the Premier—

“In view of the grave deterioration, in some cases approaching a crisis, in most of our primary industries, due to man-power difficulties, drought, lack of fodder reserves, and inadequate prices, will he make urgent representations to the Commonwealth Government, pointing out the extreme seriousness of the present position and urging that there be no further delay in taking the steps necessary to safeguard the people against extremely severe shortages of essential foods in the very near future?”

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

“Labour’s policy speech recently delivered by the Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) adequately deals with the matters referred to by the hon. member and indicated that the Commonwealth Government was actively reviewing the whole situation in the light of the needs of military strategy and the requirements of the civilian population. The State Government has kept in close touch with the Commonwealth Government on all matters affecting the welfare of the State.”

EFFECT OF COMMONWEALTH POWERS ACT.

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton) asked the Premier—

“Will he inform the House whether the powers referred to the Parliament of the Commonwealth in the Commonwealth Powers Act passed through this Parliament in January last are operative in view of the fact that one State rejected the Bill and other States have passed amendments nullifying the important principles contained in this Act?”

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

“I refer the hon. member to the provisions contained in placitum 37 of section 51 of the Commonwealth Constitution under which this Queensland Act was passed.”

MARJORIE NORVAL CASE.

Mr. L. J. BARNES (Cairns), for **Mr. J. F. BARNES** (Bundaberg), asked the Attorney-General—

“In view of District Coroner Leahy’s finding, namely, that Miss Marjorie Norval went to the house of an abortionist and never returned, will he obtain from him the name and address of the abortionist and inform the House accordingly?”

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) replied—

“The name of the abortionist or the address is unknown to me or to Mr. Leahy. As far as I know it might be T. Smith or Citizen Jones.”

LABOUR AT DITTMER GOLD MINES.

Mr. LUCKINS (Maree) asked the Secretary for Mines—

“How many men are at present employed in connection with the goldmining operations near Proserpine on the properties of Dittmer Gold Mines Pty. Ltd?”

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. V. C. Gair, South Brisbane) replied—

“Forty (40).”

CLOSURE OF CHILLAGOE SMELTERS.

Mr. LUCKINS (Maree) asked the Secretary for Mines—

“1. How many (a) employees at the smelter, and (b) miners, were affected by the recent closing down of the Chillagoe State Smelter?”

“2. What arrangements have been made for employment of such men in other essential occupations and for the transfer of their homes and families?”

“3. Is it anticipated that the smelter will reopen at some future time? If so, when?”

“4. Has any scheme been evolved for compensating those who will have to leave their homes or other properties as a result of the closing of the smelter?”

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. V. C. Gair, South Brisbane) replied—

“(1) (a) 119. (b) No miners were employed by the Chillagoe State Smelters. The only miners affected were copper producers, chiefly gougers, mainly of the Cloncurry and Chillagoe districts, whose ore was treated at the Chillagoe State Smelters, and who are now being catered for by Mount Isa Mines Ltd. and Mount Morgan Limited. Arrangements have been made with the Railway Department for a concessional freight rate.

“(2) The man-power authorities have been fully informed of the position, and steps have been taken by them to absorb the men as far as possible in the mining industry on the production of strategic minerals. Provision has been made for the transfer free of cost of the employees and their families, as well as for the transport of their household furniture and effects, to any place in the State where they may find employment, or where they may desire to establish their homes.

“(3) The resumption of operations depends entirely on adequate and assured ore supplies, and full investigations will be made with a view of determining the mineral possibilities of the Chillagoe and Herberton fields.

“(4) No; and I am not aware that any Government or private enterprise has provided compensation in similar circumstances.”

RAILWAY REFRESHMENT SERVICES,
TOWNSVILLE.

Mr. L. J. BARNES (Cairns) asked the Minister for Transport—

“Knowing the staff and the management of the Railway Refreshment Rooms are doing a mighty job with their present staff, will he—

1. Have investigations made into the announcement made by the managers of the Townsville Railway Refreshment Rooms on the arrival of the northern bound mail on Tuesday, 1 June, that no meals would be served owing to a shortage of food, despite the fact that passengers had to travel a distance of 200 miles further north and only one meal was procurable in the 32 hours?

2. Take steps to prevent recurrence of this trouble?”

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

“The Commissioner has no knowledge of the alleged incident, but inquiries are being made.”

DUMPING OF RICE OR GRAIN, CAIRNS.

Mr. L. J. BARNES (Cairns) asked the Premier—

“Will he investigate, through the correct authorities, the alleged dumping of approximately 400 tons of rice or grain used for human consumption from the Cairns area?”

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

“It is difficult to reconcile how such a consignment could have been ‘used for human consumption’ and ‘dumped’ at the same time. However, if the hon. member will furnish me with some further particulars, I shall have inquiry made. No State department has any jurisdiction in regard to the release of rice, and no report has been received by the State Health Department having any bearing on the allegations.”

RAILWAY LOCOMOTIVES FROM UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA.

Mr. YEATES (East Toowoomba) asked the Minister for Transport—

“How many locomotives, manufactured in the United States of America, have been acquired by his department during the past 12 months?”

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

“Six of these locomotives are now in service. Further information will be supplied later in the session.”

ALLEGED SHIPMENTS OF SCRAP IRON TO
JAPAN.

Mr. JESSON (Kennedy), without notice, asked the Minister for Transport—

“1. Has his attention been called to the following excerpt from the ‘Courier-Mail’ of to-day’s date—

‘. . . Mr. Fadden’s speech was simultaneously booed and cheered by sections of the large audience. He raised loud cheers with a smart reply to an interjection about “Scrap-iron Bob.”

“‘Scrap-iron was sent from Australia at the same time as wool was sent to Japan—when machine tools and silk for parachutes were imported from Japan, and when the Queensland Labour Party sent scrap locomotives and iron to Japan,’ he said.”

“2. If so, will he make a statement on the matter?”

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

“I have read the excerpt that the hon. member has quoted. Mr. Fadden’s statement is a treacherous fabrication.

“It is a desperate and dishonourable attempt by him to ‘smoke-screen’ his own deplorable action and policy.

“It is astounding to read such a reckless and outrageous statement emanating from an ex-Prime Minister and the present leader of the Federal Opposition Party. The charge lacks dignity, decency, and truth.

“The Queensland Labour Government did not send any locomotives or scrap-iron to Japan. It did not have any communication whatever with Japan on the matter.

“Further, it has always been the policy of Labour Government in Queensland to insist that scrap-iron should be used in Australia.

“In 1939, before the outbreak of the present Great War, the Queensland Government further tightened its embargo against the possible use of scrap-iron by countries which might become the enemies of Australia.

“Tenderers who refused to give satisfactory undertakings were refused scrap-iron, notwithstanding that their tenders

were highest. I am pleased to say that I was associated with this action.

“About the middle of June, 1939, tenders were received for scrap-iron, and I discussed the matter with Cabinet and recommended that scrap-iron should be sold to tenderers who guaranteed to use the scrap-iron in Australia, notwithstanding that their tenders were not the highest.

“I submit a minute I made on the departmental papers after I had discussed the matter with my Cabinet colleagues. The minute is dated 6 June, 1939, and reads as follows:—

‘Cabinet approved of the sale to the highest tenderers who provide proper assurances that the steel scrap will be used in Australia.’

“This minute showed proper anticipation and sound national policy.

“After reading Mr. Fadden’s statement I well understand why Mr. Menzies has repudiated his policy speech.”

SITTING DAYS.

The PREMIER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer): I move—

“1. That, unless otherwise ordered, the House will meet for the despatch of business at 10.30 o’clock a.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in each week, and that on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and after 2 o’clock p.m. on Thursdays, Government business shall take precedence of all other business.

“2. That Standing Order No. 17—‘Debate on Address in Reply’—shall be construed as if ‘5.30 o’clock p.m.’ were substituted for ‘10.30 o’clock p.m.’ wherever it occurs in the Standing Order, and ‘12 o’clock noon’ for ‘4.30 o’clock p.m.’

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

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

“On the last day allotted for Supply, it shall be within the discretion of the Leader of the House to extend the sitting for the purpose of dealing with and bringing to a conclusion all the necessary proceedings for the founding and passing of the Appropriation Bill through all its stages. At 8 o’clock p.m., subject to the

following proviso, the question under consideration and every question necessary to bring to a conclusion the proceedings of the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means and the passing through all stages of the Bill shall be put by Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Committees, as the case may be, without amendment or debate:

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

“4. On the days allotted for Supply, Government business other than Supply may be proceeded with until 12 o'clock noon, at which hour the proceedings on such business shall be interrupted, and the business of Supply proceeded with.

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

“5. That, if occasion arises to put into operation Standing Order No. 249, the Standing Order shall be construed as if ‘11.30 o'clock a.m.’ were substituted for ‘4 o'clock p.m.’ and ‘5 o'clock p.m.’ were substituted for ‘10 o'clock p.m.’ in paragraph 2.”

Motion agreed to.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.

The PREMIER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer): I move—

“That the Standing Orders Committee for the present session consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Copley, Mr. Decker, Mr. Healy, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Nicklin, and the mover, and that the said Committee have leave to sit during any adjournment of the House.”

Motion agreed to.

LIBRARY, REFRESHMENT ROOMS, AND PARLIAMENTARY BUILDINGS COMMITTEES.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.

The PREMIER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer): I move—

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

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

Refreshment Rooms.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Dart, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Jesson, Mr. Luckins, Mr. Mann, and Mr. Power.

Parliamentary Buildings.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Brown, Mr. Conroy, Mr. Devries, Mr. Massey, Mr. Muller, and Mr. Yeates.”

Motion agreed to.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.

The PREMIER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer): I move—

“That a Select Committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the Printing to be executed by Order of the House, and for the purpose of selecting and arranging for printing Returns and Papers presented in pursuance of motions made by members. That such Committee consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Clark, Mr. Collins, Mr. Kerr, Mr. Plunkett, Mr. Sparkes, and Mr. Turner.”

Motion agreed to.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO MEMBERS.

CAPT. J. E. DUGGAN, CAPT. D. J. M. DANIEL, CORPORAL J. V. HAYES AND MR. W. A. DEACON.

The PREMIER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer): I move—

“That leave of absence for this session be granted to—

John Edmund Duggan, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Too-woomba;

David John Marlais Daniel, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Keppel;

John Vincent Hayes, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Nundah—while absent with the Australian Imperial Forces; and

William Arthur Deacon, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Cunningham, on account of illness.”

Motion agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.

TEMPORARY CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY AND WAYS AND MEANS.

APPROPRIATION BILL, NO. 1.

The PREMIER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer): I move—

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

Motion agreed to.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

ORDER FOR RETURN.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba): I move—

“That there be laid upon the table of the House a return, in the usual form, showing the number of Government employees at 30 June, 1943 (all departments), paid from consolidated revenue, Trust Fund, and Loan Fund, respectively.”

Motion agreed to.

HOSPITAL STATISTICS.

ORDER FOR RETURN.

Mr. CLAYTON (Wide Bay), for **Mr. WALKER** (Cooroola): I move—

“That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing the following information relating to hospitals:—(a) The total number of hospitals under boards and not under boards respectively, in 1942-43; (b) the amount of precept under the Hospitals Acts for each local authority in 1942-43, and the total of all such precepts; (c) the total Government contribution towards maintenance of (i.) hospitals under boards, (ii.) other hospitals, in 1942-43.”

Motion agreed to.

PETROL CONSUMPTION OF MINISTERIAL CARS.

ORDER FOR RETURN.

Mr. MACDONALD (Stanley): I move—

“That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing details of the petrol consumption by ministerial cars in 1942-43, stating the designation of Minister and petrol used respectively.”

Motion agreed to.

VOTING AT BY-ELECTIONS.

ORDER FOR RETURN.

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton): I move—

“That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing the detailed results of the voting at the various polling-booths at by-elections held in 1942-43.”

Motion agreed to.

FEES PAID BY CROWN TO BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS.

ORDER FOR RETURN.

Mr. DECKER (Sandgate): I move—

“That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing the payments made by the Government to barristers and solicitors in 1942-43, stating the names of recipients and the amount received, respectively.”

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL EXPENSES, 1942-43.

ORDER FOR RETURN.

Mr. YEATES (East Toowoomba): I move—

“That there be laid upon the table of the House a return, in the usual form, of expenses of Ministers for 1942-43.”

Motion agreed to.

SUPPLY.

VOTE ON ACCOUNT—£13,400,000.

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR.

Mr. SPEAKER announced the receipt from His Excellency the Governor of a

message recommending that the following provision be made on account of the services for the year ending 30 June, 1944:—

From the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland (exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account) the sum of £5,000,000;

From the Trust and Special Funds the sum of £8,000,000; and

From the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account the sum of £400,000.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, **Mr. Brassington**, Fortitude Valley, in the chair.)

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

“That there be granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1943-44, a further sum not exceeding £13,400,000 towards defraying the expenses of the various departments and services of the State.”

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) (11.28 a.m.): The Treasurer was not very informative about the proposed allocation of the moneys that he is asking Parliament to grant. This is one of the opportunities that Parliament has of discussing, studying, and criticising the finances of the State and I think Parliament is entitled at least to a little bit of information as to how the amounts asked for are to be allocated. Of course, I know it is not usual for the Treasurer to make a long speech at the outset, but at least he should have said a word or two about the disposal of these funds.

The Treasurer: I thought that was usually done at the next stage, and I am sorry if I have made an error.

Mr. NICKLIN: In a study of the finances of the State two things are outstanding, (1) the buoyant revenue the Government have enjoyed and (2) the fact that no consideration has been given by the Government to the taxpayers and the other persons who have contributed to that revenue. Despite the fact that the Government now have more money than they have ever had before in their existence as a Government of the State they have absolutely disregarded the interests of the people who have contributed towards their revenue. Beyond making one or two very small concessions to them, the Government have not returned one penny piece. They have stuck to every copper they got, notwithstanding the fact that at the present time the people who contribute these revenues are also being asked, rightly so, to contribute very considerably to Australia's war effort. The State Government are not playing their part in this war effort by giving these contributors to their funds—the taxpayers—some relief when they have the opportunity to do so by a grant from the revenue they have at their disposal.

The Treasurer has been very modest indeed in presenting his figures for the last financial

year, in that he claims a surplus of only £102,022. If one examines the amount that rightly should be considered as the surplus and that he has transferred to post-war reconstruction funds and to the replacement fund in the Railway Department, one finds that the real or actual surplus for the last financial year is not £102,022 but £5,352,022. We realise, of course, that both the receipts and expenditure were greatly affected by war conditions. These have not in any way hampered receipts. On the contrary, they have increased them, principally because the big revenue-producing department, the Railway Department, has had an abnormal revenue. I might mention in passing that in obtaining this revenue for the State it has given a wonderful service to the Commonwealth war effort, and the men and women employees of the department have undoubtedly done a great job. But that is apart from the financial aspect of the matter. If we examine the expenditure side, we find that the Government have not the same avenues of expenditure as in normal times because, firstly, there is no need for spending money on public works to give employment, and, secondly, neither manpower nor material is available for developmental or service works. That is a condition brought about by the war over which we have no control.

I do not think anyone expected when this country first entered the war, that it would have the effect of enriching State Governments as we find it has done. Let us look for a few minutes at the figures of estimated expenditure presented by the Treasurer in his last Budget speech and also the actual receipts. Again he erred on the conservative side. Although he estimated consolidated-revenue receipts at £23,313,000 the actual receipts were £29,284,000, an excess over the estimate of £5,971,000. The estimated receipts of the Railway Department were £11,000,000, but the actual receipts amounted to £16,918,000, an excess over the estimate of £5,926,000. Actually the Treasurer got over £11,000,000 more than he estimated he would receive when presenting his Budget last year. The Railway Department has certainly been a big money-making concern for the Government. The net return in excess of the estimate was £3,389,000, a very useful nest-egg that the Treasurer did not expect to get—or, if he did expect it, he did not take us into his confidence when he presented his Budget last year.

Mr. Theodore: You are not blaming the Government, are you?

Mr. NICKLIN: I am not blaming the Government, but it is only right that we should examine the finances of this State in such a way that we can accurately assess the position. To do that, we have to scrutinise the revenue the Treasurer has received and the way he spent it, as well as how he has used the large surplus that has come into his hands.

Let us try to get the facts in true perspective. Let us compare the revenue being received by the Government to-day with the

revenue received by the State in the year prior to Labour's coming into office.

In 1931-32 the revenue the Moore Government received from taxation, including unemployment-relief taxation, was £4,190,000. This year receipts from that source have grown to £7,680,000. It is interesting to note that the collection of unemployment relief or State development tax is included in that, because under the agreement made with the Commonwealth that tax, being an income tax, was allowed to the Government.

Now, let us look at the railway funds, In 1931-32, £5,937,000 was received, and this year the receipts amounted to £16,918,000—an enormous increase. The total consolidated revenue in 1932 was £12,994,000, and last year it amounted to £29,284,000. Those were the chief factors in the receipts side of the finances of the State.

Let us look now at the expenditure side. We find the biggest expenditure to which the Government are committed is that of interest on the public debt. In 1931-32 the State paid £5,005,000 in interest on the public debt, and last year, owing to reductions in interest rates, the Government paid only £5,024,000, notwithstanding the fact that for the past 11 years they have been adding to the borrowings of this State. One can see that the Government have been particularly fortunate on their expenditure side. There is an increase of only £19,000 in the interest on their public debt as compared with 1931-32, notwithstanding that interest on an additional 11 years' borrowings has to be added.

Nor did the Consolidated Revenue Fund receive last year the usual contribution the Government have received over the last 11 years of £250,000 from the Main Roads Fund. At last they have used the money as it should be used—for the purpose for which it was collected. They did not have the political hide to continue to transfer that money to revenue during the present year.

Mr. Macdonald: It is a very belated repentance.

Mr. NICKLIN: As the hon. member for Stanley says, it is a very belated repentance for their financial misdeeds of past years.

Unemployment has been reduced to virtually nil, although in the grant they receive from the Commonwealth Government the Government are still enjoying the benefit of the State development tax or the old unemployment relief tax.

Let us look at the position of the Government in regard to the transfers that have been made from consolidated revenue for railway and other purposes to the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Trust Fund. The Speech His Excellency was good enough to deliver to us yesterday stated that £5,250,000 was transferred from consolidated revenue to this reserve fund, leaving a surplus of only £102,022 of receipts over expenditure in this State. Of that £5,250,000, only £1,250,000 has been set aside for the railway renewals and replacements. I do not think anyone will cavil at all at setting aside £1,250,000 for the railways as we realise the great job the

department has done and is doing, and agree that owing to the exigencies of the times and the necessity for providing a continuous service it has not been able to give the attention to rolling stock and permanent way that it would do in normal times; consequently, when the war ends, heavy expenditure will be necessary to make good the wear and tear the department has suffered.

It is good business and only right that a sum such as that should be set aside, but let us look at the balance, £4,000,000, that has been set aside in the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Trust Fund. It is admittedly good business to set aside a certain sum for post-war development projects, but what is the position of this State in regard to the obligation it has to meet, the debit balance of £3,684,358 in the Consolidated Revenue Fund as the result of the accumulated debts over the years?

Mr. Power: Created during the lifetime of the Moore Government.

Mr. NICKLIN: I would remind the hon. member that in the first three years of the Forgan Smith Government the total deficits were greater than those of the three years of the Moore Government.

Government Members: That is not right.

Mr. NICKLIN: The Moore Government cannot be blamed for all the deficits of this State. Both Governments must accept that responsibility, the difference being that the Moore Government carried on during the most difficult period, whereas the present Government have enjoyed the return to prosperity. However, that is beside the point. We have to consider and the people of this State have to consider whether it is correct finance that no effort should be made by the Government to take care of some of those accumulated deficits. Surpluses should be applied to the wiping off of some of those. I do not say that it should be done immediately, but a part of the £4,000,000 revenue that the Government did not expect should have been set aside to meet the £3,684,000 of accumulated deficits built up over the years in this State by various Governments. It is good business and correct finance; it is only right that under all the circumstances the first thought should be towards the liquidation of those deficits. It is a very peculiar sort of finance that allows a Government, private institution, or person to put money away for future purposes and at the same time ignore existing debts, leaving them to be paid out of the income of future years. What would be the position of a private person, if, having accumulated surpluses as the Government have done, he did not take care of his liabilities? The first thing that would happen would be that the creditors would put him into the bankruptcy court. Unfortunately, the creditors of the Government of this State cannot put them into the bankruptcy court, but does that absolve the Government from the responsibilities they have of meeting these debts, which should be the first call on the surpluses created in recent years?

The method I suggest would be correct finance, but there is also another aspect of the question. After the war, post-war reconstruction problems will have to be faced, moneys will have to be expended by the State and Commonwealth Governments. A meeting of the Loan Council will consider the distribution of the available loan moneys among the States, and the question will arise whether we, in Queensland, who have large sums set aside for post-war purposes, shall get the same consideration as other States. Will this fund be taken into account as money held by Queensland, and as a result will Queensland receive a smaller share of the new loan money? That has occurred in the past when these matters have been considered, as the Treasurer well knows; funds held by Governments are taken into account, and this building up of the post-war funds may have a detrimental effect on the amount of loan moneys allocated to this State.

I do not wish to press that point, but I do wish to emphasise the fact that the Government have not financed the State correctly, that they have not played the game in that they have made no effort to reduce the accumulated deficits of £3,684,000, which should have first call on the surplus revenues of this State. Instead they have put the money on one side in a Post-War Reconstruction and Development Trust Fund, leaving poor old posterity to carry the baby for this £3,684,000. It is the responsibility of the present Government to start reducing the amount of those accumulated deficits this year and to reduce it progressively in years to come.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Government had enjoyed abnormal revenues that they did not expect, they had not given the slightest consideration to the taxpayers of Queensland.

Mr. Mann: Rot!

Mr. NICKLIN: Where have the taxpayers of this State received any consideration? We shall be interested to know and I am sure the taxpayers will be interested to know what relief they have had. Would it not have been good government and wise policy to give some relief from land tax in order to enable producers and others who now pay this tax to build up reserves that would enable them to swing into the job of producing when they get the opportunity? Super land tax, stamp duties, and many other taxes have been increased considerably while this Government have been in office, and not one penny has been given by way of reduction during the past year.

Then we have transport fees, which have not been reduced despite the fact that those who pay the fees have hardly used the roads because of shortage of petrol.

What about the tolls on bridges? The toll is still being collected on the Logan Bridge, and valuable man-power is being employed in its collection, man-power that could be used to advantage in other avenues for the good of the country's war effort.

Then, let the Government consider giving some real concessions to the local authorities, which, undoubtedly, have been hit hard by the present war. They have received a small and overdue concession in connection with contributions towards the upkeep of hospitals, but why not suspend all hospital contributions by local authorities for the period of the war, especially when the Government have their present buoyant revenue?

Again, why not give the local authorities relief from main roads contributions at the present time?

Coming to the workers of the State, why not give them some relief from the amounts they are paying into the Unemployment Insurance Fund? According to the last figures available the amount standing to the credit of this fund was £1,600,000. It will be higher now and that credit is growing every day, there being no calls on the fund because there is virtually no unemployment to-day. Why not suspend payments to the Unemployment Insurance Fund for the duration of the war?

Those are just some of the avenues through which the Government should and must consider giving relief to the taxpayers of this State now that they are in a financial position to do so. The Government stand condemned because, notwithstanding the fact that they have enjoyed bountiful revenue they have not given worthwhile relief to the taxpayers of Queensland.

Mr. COLLINS (Cook) (11.53 a.m.): I am surprised to hear the Leader of the Opposition accusing this Government of being unduly careful. It has always been his claim that we have been an extravagant Government who waste money belonging to the taxpayers. To-day he objects because, at a period when it is desirable to do so, we are endeavouring to husband our resources for the future. He complains that there has been no reduction in taxation, yet he knows full well that the Federal, not the State Government, control the amount of taxation that is paid at the present time.

This Parliament passed an Act ratifying the arrangement made by the Government with the Commonwealth Government, and the Leader of the Opposition was Leader of the Opposition at the time. Why does he veil his ignorance? He knows the position perfectly well, but anyone listening to his speech would conclude that he knew nothing whatever of that very important fact. There is no doubt, of course, that Queensland has benefited to some extent because of the guarantee by the Federal Government that the State would be reimbursed to the extent of its income-tax revenue based on the collections of the two years prior to the agreement. The remaining States of Australia were similarly treated. In husbanding their resources by transferring surplus revenue to trust funds the Government are wisely providing for the future. An amount of £1,250,000 has been set aside for railway replacements and renewals, but when one realises the tremendous strain that has been imposed upon our railway system in handling military and

other traffic, one very much doubts whether the amount will be adequate to make good the enormous wear and tear that has taken place on the rolling stock and permanent way. A tremendous burden has been imposed on our railway system, but it has withstood it magnificently, thanks to the unflagging efforts of the men who have had to attend to the repairs of railway engines, trucks, and coaches and the maintenance of the track. They have carried out their work under very great difficulties. When man-power and material are available again we hope to be able to use the money that is now being set aside to restore the system to its previous high standard as quickly as possible. Of course, there is nothing to prevent the Government from drawing on other funds for this expenditure, as they did in the past, but the Government have decided in their wisdom to set aside money now for that purpose. In addition, there is the development of this great State to be borne in mind after the war is over. Post-war development will have to be carried out on an enormous scale if we are to populate the country, and it cannot be done if the necessary funds are not set aside now.

We could give away some of the railway revenue by reducing fares and freights. Let me examine that proposal for a moment. Would it be wise to reduce fares and freights greatly at the present time? I do not think that there is any great demand for a reduction. It is well known that as the people are all fully employed they are better able to pay the present fares and freights than they were previously. That being so, is it not better to continue the existing fares and freights? Already they have been reduced by 5 per cent., and a further reduction of 5 per cent. is to take place shortly. I do not know that it was altogether necessary to do even that, but it was a fine gesture on the part of the Railway Department. It is good business to keep surplus funds in hand for repairs and renewals after the war is over. Then if it is possible any surplus in hand may be used to permit of a reduction in fares and freights because the people may not be in as good a position financially as they are in to-day. However, there is no great demand for such a reduction now; everybody is well able to pay the present rates.

Mr. Macdonald: The good old dairy cocky.

Mr. COLLINS: That is an unfortunate term to apply to a very honourable body of men. The dairy farmer is not a cocky, which sits on a tree and squawks. The average dairy farmer is a very fine stamp of man deserving of the highest respect by members of Parliament, including the hon. member for Stanley.

Mr. Macdonald: Then give him some consideration.

Mr. COLLINS: The dairy farmer is not complaining particularly of freights and fares, and the hon. member knows the reason why. He has received better prices for his products through the agency of the Federal Government. He has received a better price

for his warm milk, and he is in a position to sell a much greater quantity of it than he ever could before. He receives a better price for the cows he is compelled to fatten off to sell to the butcher. He receives the highest price he has ever got in his life for fat pigs. He is, therefore, in a better position to-day to pay, if necessary, higher fares and freights than those being charged him. To my mind that amply disposes of the argument that there should be a material reduction in fares and freights.

Mr. Macdonald: He is dissatisfied.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. COLLINS: As I have already emphasised, the people to-day are enjoying a prosperity due to the war. I know they have many difficulties to contend with, but nevertheless there is more money in the pockets of the people of Australia to-day than ever in history. If one requires verification of that statement one has only to look at the figures for investments in war loans, the figures concerning our savings and private banks, and the insurance companies. There is ample evidence to be found in them to support my statement. In fact, they form one of the best barometers to which one could possibly point as to the financial position of the individual.

No less a person than Sir Alfred Davidson, the general manager of the Bank of New South Wales, set out in some very well-prepared economic reports issued by his bank a few years ago that it was highly advisable that Governments—he spoke of no particular Government, but Governments in general throughout Australia—should not reduce taxation during times of prosperity, but on the other hand should, if necessary, increase taxation in such periods in order to build up reserves that could be used in times of depression or of lessened prosperity.

Mr. Dart: Do you think that is right?

Mr. COLLINS: I believe it to be a very sound principle. I do know that there is naturally a tendency for Governments who may not have the same sense of responsibility as Labour Governments to spend the funds of the people rashly. We can see to-day that there is no rashness on the part of this Government in spending those funds. They are conserving them in a proper way for future use on behalf of the people.

It has been contended by the Leader of the Opposition that shire councils should receive further rebates in the hospitals tax. I should be very happy myself to see the Government do so, but they are making a splendid gesture at the present time. They have reduced the local-authorities percentage of hospital taxation from 40 to 25 per cent. That in itself gives them a big relief. I have noted in many letters received from local authorities and hospital boards expressions of gratitude for the relief the Government have seen fit to afford them. The very conservative body known as the United Graziers' Association had the honesty to write to the Secretary

for Health and Home Affairs expressing appreciation of the great benefit conferred by the reduction. It would, of course, be reflected in the rates its members paid.

That alone shows that the Government are entirely in sympathy with those who are doing any work and are giving help to them as and when they can. It is remarkable, on the other hand, that the party to which the Leader of the Opposition belongs, when in power from 1929 to 1932, did not take any step to alleviate the burden on local government in this respect. We all know that it was one of the principal planks of its platform that the party would do away with the hospital tax on local authorities, but when elected to office it took not a single action to fulfil that promise. The Moore Government did appoint a royal commission to inquire into hospital taxation, but that commission advised them to do nothing about it as it could not see a fairer way of providing funds to maintain and equip hospitals. If the Leader of the Opposition is so anxious to afford relief to local authorities, why was not practical sympathy extended them by his Government during the period they were in power as the Government of this State and they had an opportunity of doing so. When addressing oneself to such a subject it is just as well to face the facts as they actually exist, and that is the position. It shows the lack of sympathy that was given to the people on the land by the very Government who claimed to be their guardian angels.

The only benefits of a material nature that the people on the land have received from Governments have been from Labour Governments. It is a Labour Government who have given them no less a subsidy than £6,500,000 in order to bring rural industry to a higher and better standard. Although the Commonwealth has been governed for 27 years past—with the exception of two years, 1929 and 1930—by Tory Governments, they never did one thing to help the dairying industry. All they did was to make specious promises to the industry that they would help it, but when they had the opportunity to honour those promises during 27 long years—a quarter of a century—they did not do one thing to honour their promises. Now they are out on the hustings in the Federal election Mr. Fadden is whining and whimpering about what the Labour Party has not done for the dairying industry. What did he ever do for it? He never did a thing except talk about it, and now he is still talking about it; and the evidence is that the country men in Queensland are fed up with the present Opposition in the Federal Parliament because they have no sympathy for the man on the land. The men on the land know, as we know, that they represent the interests of capital in the big cities, particularly Melbourne and Sydney, and any benefits that can be given will be given to the business interests in those centres at the expense of the man on the land.

Mr. Dart: Should the dairy farmer get a living wage?

Mr. COLLINS: The dairy farmer is getting the best spin he has had from any Government. The dairyman, generally speaking, realises the benefits he is getting. He is getting a good price for his livestock, which he always has to sell as he runs his dairy farm. He is getting good prices for his products. The work the Government are doing show that they have due regard to the need for safeguarding the finances of the State during a period of prosperity and in the spirit of good husbandry making proper provision for the rainy day. I commend them for what they are doing, and I trust they will continue to do it.

Mr. DECKER (Sandgate) (12.10 p.m.): I know that this Appropriation Bill must be passed to-day because the Government must have funds to carry on; but, like the Leader of the Opposition, I think we should hear from the Treasurer some outline of how the State's moneys are to be spent. The Government must realise that this financial year will be on a par with, perhaps better than, the last financial year, but we are kept entirely in the dark as regards the finances of the Government until we have the accounts rendered to us at a much later date showing the transactions for the year. Then it is too late to discuss them. We have to look to the Press for information.

The Treasurer: You have 17 days on it.

Mr. DECKER: We do not know the financial transactions of the Government until it is past the time when we can make use of it in debate. The Premier should give the House some indication of what has happened and what is expected. The only line we can get on the matter is what appears in the Press. Some time ago we read there a statement by the Treasurer, and His Excellency in his Speech intimated some of the proposed concessions that will be given to the people during the ensuing year. When we hear of such a concession to the people as £1 extra to a scholarship-holder whose family income is under a certain amount—

A Government Member: Do you object to that?

Mr. DECKER: I do not object to it at all, but I do say we are getting down to a very small item and it gives us some idea that the Government are out not to benefit the people any more more than they are forced to.

A Government Member: Of course they are.

Mr. DECKER: With such a wonderful profit for the financial year the Government must make some gesture to the people. But how have they done it? They have made concessions that are like chicken feed, such as the gesture to the local authorities of the reduction of the hospital precepts and the further reduction in railway freights and fares to operate as from 1 August—all little details to delude the people into thinking that they are getting something back. The

Government say they are assisting in an all-out war effort, and they praise our soldiers, but at a time like this, when we are in the throes of fighting a war for our very existence, they devote only one line in the Speech made by His Excellency to the assistance given to war loans through Government instrumentalities. Reading the Speech, I was surprised to find only one reference to any contribution to the war effort by way of subscriptions to war loans, and that was by the State Government Insurance Office. I have raised this subject in this Assembly previously. The Treasurer intimated some time ago that he expected to have a surplus of at least £4,000,000, and I urged that this money, or the greater part of it—the amount that could be spared—by investment in war loans should be given in a national spirit to the national Government as a contribution towards the war effort. I am sorry to say that the Government have made a great song about having invested some £800,000-odd in the last war loan. That is not the greatest effort that the Government could have made, and as the Government expect the people of this State to contribute to war loans to their utmost capacity to secure our safety they have not given a lead, or at most have given only a very poor lead to the people. I am awaiting the Treasurer's defence of his action, considering our financial position. Contributing to war loans to such a poor extent is giving a bad lead to the people of the State, and will cause ill-feeling with the Commonwealth.

A Government Member: What about the £1,250,000 subscribed by the State Government Insurance Office?

Mr. DECKER: The hon. member is referring to the amount of accumulated subscriptions to the war loans made by that office, but when profits are made it is only right that that should be done, and there is nothing to crow about; it is a simple national duty. Individuals are expected to contribute to these loans, and the Government should give a lead, but this Government have fallen down on their job. They have given all credit to those actually engaged in the fighting and allied services, but if they were genuine they would have given a proper lead to the people. That would have been of great assistance to the Commonwealth war effort. They have failed inasmuch as they have not supported the war loans to the fullest extent. I hope the Treasurer is listening, because I want to hear how the hon. gentleman will explain the contribution of only £800,000-odd to the war loans when Governmental cash services are so high. The finances of the State have shown a wonderful surplus for the year, and I should like to know why a proper gesture was not made at the right time. Of course, such things can be done later, but an effort is of no value unless it is made at the right moment, and the right time to give a lead was when the last war loan was called for.

The Treasurer: That loan was fully subscribed.

Mr. DECKER: That does not matter. It is not known whether a loan will be fully subscribed until the loan is closed and the amounts are totalled. It would be a good gesture by the people of Australia to other parts of the world to have a loan handsomely over-subscribed, and we in this State should have made the utmost effort for this purpose.

The Government should have given greater consideration to a further reduction of railway freights, particularly to farmers. The hon. member for Cook does not understand the position when he says that dairymen are in a better position to-day than ever because of the Commonwealth Government's subsidy of £6,250,000, and the subsidy of 2d. a gallon to the warm-milk producers. Dairymen, particularly those about the city area, for whom I speak, are facing a drought and a serious position, and it is the duty of the Department of Agriculture and Stock to take immediate steps to see that they are able to keep their stock alive. In the Roma street markets, on which most of the dairymen round the city depend, only three bags of chaff have been sold in the last two days. These men depend upon such chaff to keep the herds alive in order that they may supply Brisbane with milk and we as a Government must realise their position. If the shortage of fodder is due to transport difficulties then we should put all our energies into seeing that the necessary supplies arrive at the Roma street markets so that these men may keep their herds alive. If we do not do something they are faced with ruination. We might even reach the stage where we shall have to approach the military authorities and endeavour to draw from their reserves for a time in order to cope with the present situation. We may have to go over the border to bring fodder to this State.

The warm-milk suppliers of Brisbane are even now facing ruination through drought conditions and lack of fodder. It may be said that they have received an increase of 2d. a gallon in price, but that means almost nothing to them because they are compelled by an Act of Parliament to pay the basic wage and to observe certain conditions. The 2d. per gallon does not meet the extra wages granted to employees by the award. Again, they must obey certain restrictions as to hours worked. Dairying employees are limited to 56 hours in each week. As a result of adverse conditions, 21,000 dairy farmers have gone out of the industry throughout the Commonwealth. In the Brisbane area over 3,000 head of dairy cattle have been sold recently by men who have gone out of the industry. Whilst we are glowing with the idea that we are giving a subsidy on the one hand, we must also appreciate that that subsidy does not alleviate the condition of the dairy farmer in any way because it is more than counterbalanced by the extra cost of the labour conditions in the industry. We do not object to giving a proper reward for labour. I do not think the dairyman objects to paying the full award rate to his employees when he can afford it. I do not think he wants to make slaves of

his employees, nor do I think that he would object to improved conditions, or hourly rates, so long as he was in a position to pay for them. The position in the dairying industry to-day is simply that the farmer cannot pay for these things. At the present time, instead of increasing production, we are reducing it still further by our actions.

It may be said that this is a Commonwealth matter, but I remind hon. members that it is also a State matter, because dairying is one of our principal industries, and we should be nursing it, looking into its difficulties, and making some attempt to help those engaged in it out of their trouble. If we do not take some urgent steps to relieve the position, we shall be faced with the necessity of imposing a further rationing of butter upon our people, in order to meet overseas demands. It is a tragedy to think that in a country such as this, those engaged in one of our chief primary industries—butter production—are faced with ruination. Even though it may be suggested that there has been an influx of population from overseas, which has created a heavier demand on our productive capacity, the fact remains that our butter and cheese production is slipping. The Commonwealth Government have made available £6,250,000 in order to build the industry up to a state of prosperity, but at the same time they have imposed on the farmer conditions that he cannot meet, thus sending the industry further back instead of advancing it. All these things have to be considered, and the hon. member for Cook does not appreciate the position that some of these men are in.

I take advantage of this opportunity to bring under the notice of the Treasurer the fact that the position of the warm-milk supplier to Brisbane is so serious that the Government must take urgent action to save these men from being ruined through loss of stock caused by lack of fodder.

The Treasurer: Who is holding up the chaff?

Mr. DECKER: The question is not who is holding up the chaff, but where is the chaff, and whether transport difficulties are keeping it off the market. If we cannot get chaff we must try to get hay, or perhaps a substitute food that will enable the cattle to be kept alive. If the Government are not going to help in this direction, then the dairymen should be informed so that they may be able to get the full value for their stock by selling them instead of allowing them to die from starvation. I appeal very strongly to the Treasurer to do something in this connection, and I appeal also to the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock to regard the matter seriously.

I also feel that we have arrived at the stage when generous consideration should be given in the direction of easing the tax burden on unimproved land. The position to-day is such that the owner of unimproved property cannot improve it because he cannot obtain the necessary permission to build or otherwise increase its productiveness. Therefore, if a man is prevented by the National

Security regulations from improving his land he should be given some relief from land tax during the war period.

Mr. COLLINS: He usually holds the land for investment and he did not improve it before the war.

Mr. DECKER: That is only one aspect of the matter. There are some dairy farmers who are willing to improve their land, and, indeed, they have made the necessary applications and have been refused. In view of the Government's huge surplus, it is only right to suggest that the land tax should be reduced, especially because war restrictions make it impossible for the holders to improve their land.

Mr. COLLINS: Do you not think that it is a much better policy to husband the resources for more adverse days?

Mr. DECKER: I am not discussing that aspect of the problem. The principle underlying land taxation is to force the land into better use, but if the owners are not allowed to carry out improvements because of the exigencies of war, is it not only fair that they should be given some relief from land taxation, especially in view of the surplus funds in the hands of the Government?

Mr. COLLINS: Not while they are enjoying greater prosperity than they ever previously knew.

Mr. DECKER: A great number of farmers are being ruined and they are being forced off the land. A great many will be ruined unless some action is taken promptly to place them on a proper financial basis. I know there are some people who have never been better off in their lives before. The people generally are in a better position than before, because of the high wages ruling to-day, but that is the result of war expenditure. We must give fair consideration to all sections of the people and not legislate in the interests of only a few. The land tax is the most unfair form of taxation, in view of the surplus money at the disposal of the Government. In my view the land tax has always been unfair. In the first place, local authorities must rely on land taxation for their revenue, but the land is taxed to provide some of the Government's revenue also. There are too many land-taxing authorities, and I suggest that the Government should limit their field in this connection. The right to levy a tax on land should be given solely to local authorities. The landowners are the backbone of the country and they should be encouraged. Because one section of the people are unusually well able to meet all their financial commitments, it does not follow that all other sections are so favourably placed.

Mr. COLLINS: You cannot say that the holder of unimproved land is the backbone of the country.

Mr. DECKER: Generally speaking, the landholder uses his land where it is possible to do so, and it is only held out of production when he is unable to make the best possible use of it. I think this is the time to

consider a proposal to make local authorities the only instrumentalities with the right to levy a tax on land. The State should vacate that field of taxation. I make that suggestion to the Government for their earnest and favourable consideration.

I now come to the charges made on toll bridges on our State highways. It is high time a policy was initiated of free traffic on our roads. We must give heed to the fact that the Government impose certain taxes on road users for their use of State highways. When such taxes are imposed and collected the State should not then embark on a bridge-building policy and impose toll charges on road-users who are compelled to use them. We must admit that when a toll is imposed it, like other taxation, is rarely remitted. It is usually imposed in perpetuity. In fact, it is merely an additional tax on road-users. This is a subject we should tackle seriously. If I had my way I should abolish tolls in respect of all bridges on State highways. The cost of such bridges should be borne in the same way as the cost of the State highway itself. It is not fair that people whose business compels them to use these toll bridges should not have the right to do so without payment of an additional tax. To continue the tax is merely taxing a section of our people unfairly. If tolls are not abolished then the time will surely come when the people will insist on the abolition of all tolls on State highways. We can understand a toll charged by such a company that constructed the Hornibrook Highway, as that work would not have been undertaken by the State, and the toll in that case is limited by the term of the franchise, but where bridges are built for the convenience of traffic on our State highways the imposition of the toll is wrong. There is also the Story Bridge toll charge. The Treasurer looks at me as if to say "Where shall I get the money to pay the interest and redemption charges on the cost of that structure? Who is going to carry the interest burden that has accumulated? We must get something, and therefore we must keep a staff to collect tolls." The Story Bridge has served its purpose to a much greater degree and with more satisfaction to the travelling public than was at first thought. It should be considered as a bridge giving communication between two populous sections of the city. It is quite right that the people should expect it. It is a shame to pass over such a bridge and be charged a toll for doing so. I do not mind paying an occasional 6d. or 9d. for passing over it, but it hurts me to see the men collecting tolls in time of war when their services might be put to a more useful purpose.

The Treasurer: You know they are past war service.

Mr. DECKER: I should not say they were.

The Treasurer: You know they are.

Mr. DECKER: I do not say any man is past war service. I do not say that every man is fit for the active fighting services, but

there is hardly a war industry that cannot absorb men of the B or C class.

(Time expired.)

At 12.35 p.m.,

Mr. DUNSTAN (Gympie) relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. YEATES (East Toowoomba): Notwithstanding the fact that we are spending approximately one and a-half million a day throughout Australia on war services and notwithstanding the fact that a good part of that money is wasted, we have to be careful of the expenditure of State revenue.

The Treasurer: Did you say wasted? What a charge!

Mr. YEATES: A good proportion of money is wasted because of certain bad management due to inefficiency in the services. Yes, I stick to that, too.

We have to be careful of our spending in this State although we are such small fry as compared with the Commonwealth. We must not regard £13,400,000 asked for by the Treasurer as an insignificant sum merely because it is small compared with the expenditure of the Commonwealth. Times have changed. We have more money flying around than there are clothing and foodstuffs. Goods cannot be bought with the money available. We know that there is a fictitious circulation. We know, too, there is an orgy of spending in the cities. The people have the spending money. They want to spend their wages or earnings instead of saving or buying war bonds and seeing the war through first.

There has been a great increase in revenue from the railways. It is not true that their good management brought this about—I say this with every respect to the management—it was because the business was thrust upon the railways because of petrol rationing and because immense amounts of goods are being transported for war purposes. I realise that the United States of America is paying ever so much money to the Railway Department, but whether that has any bearing on the action of the Government in deferring the reduction of freights and fares I do not know, and I am not going to comment any further on it. I do know that this Government have raised freights and fares 20½ per cent. since they came into office in 1932, and during that time they have given a reduction of only 5 per cent. and a promise of a reduction of another 5 per cent. to operate shortly, so that we are still 10½ per cent. ahead of the rates charged at the end of 1931.

The estimated income of the railways last year was £11,000,000, and actual receipts were £16,918,000, which gives an excess of income of £5,918,000. I realise, of course, that the expenditure was higher. I do not want this to be regarded as a parrot cry, but I do want to say that the men of the railway service have been diligently working at their job and I honestly believe almost all of them are imbued with the idea they are doing a war service, and therefore do not mind staying

on their job for long hours. Some of the locomotive drivers might also realise that overwork means unsafety for themselves and the people because a man cannot be expected to retain his efficiency after long hours especially when standing on a rough locomotive—and some of them are rough; I have tested them out but I am not going to tell the Minister just which road it was.

Mr. Power: You would not know a tender from a boiler, let alone test it out.

Mr. YEATES: I would ask the hon. member for Baroona if the U.S.A. locomotive has a hand brake. (Laughter.) I frankly admit the service from here to Cairns is troublesome. I do not mind if trains are from one to 24 hours late on that route in the circumstances, because I realise that special trains have to cross others and there are not many crossing stations. We were not expecting the war, and I do not suppose any Government would put in a number of extra crossings because of a mere possibility, but I do know that £118,000 of Federal money was spent on certain extra crossing stations. That was a good thing to do because as the population of this country increases—as I hope it will—our railway service will have to be increased and we shall want more crossing stations. I realise the difficulties from here to Cairns, and the railways are doing a good job, but when anything is wrong I do not suggest that it should be ignored. I want the Minister to see that the services from here to Quilpie and out to Injune, Tara, Bell, and Jandowae, to Dirranbandi, to Gayndah and Kingaroy, are run closer to time than in the past.

I have said that I sympathise with men who are working long hours, but on my travels I have noticed that at times there is not sufficient excuse for trains running late so frequently as they do, and I ask the Minister to check up the running of 26 Up from here to Toowoomba—and to Wallangarra. It is only a suburban run, 101 miles from Brisbane to Toowoomba. He has the benefit of experience of 75 years on this line. I am not blaming the locomotive men, but do blame the Government for not taking my advice years ago. In 1938 I said to the present Minister for Transport that he should spend a few million pounds on this job. You, Mr. Dunstan, as a retired business man, realise that if you had £63,000,000 invested in a business you would spend £5,000,000 at a time when it is necessary to obtain additional rolling stock and locomotives. I warned the Government years ago on this matter, but they continued in what might be termed the miserable way, building two or three B18½ engines at Ipswich and one or two at Maryborough—and the work almost fizzled out at Walkers Limited at Maryborough. The hon. member for Mackay knows very well what these engines can do. The Government should have constructed ever so many more of these engines.

I am aware of the difficulty the department has been in as regards locomotives during this war-time period. Many months ago it had to take off trains running between Toowoomba and Roma, including 30 Up and

9 Down. They were good, fast trains, but they were taken off because of the locomotive position. I was aware that this action was to be taken. I knew the Government were short of locomotives because of bad management in the past, and I realised the great emergency of the present. For that reason I said not one word. The people put up with this state of affairs, but I would inform the Minister that I am watching the position very carefully, and if I am present when peace occurs—of course, all being well, I shall be—I will see to it that these trains are reinstated. It may be that I myself shall be in the Government. Who knows?

Not so long ago one of the new engines that came from the United States of America when coming from Helidon crossed the bridge, but suddenly the tender ran off the line and along the sleepers for a couple of hundred yards. I desire to know more about these things. I desire to know more of the accident that is alleged to have occurred somewhere near Canungra. I want to know more about the circumstances of some of the trains that are alleged to have fallen through bridges on the Northern line last year. There is no reason for secrecy about these things. If a railway accident occurs we want to know all about it now. I should like to know if there is any real reason for hiding such occurrences.

The shortage of some of the railway services is unquestionably an inconvenience to the travelling public. Of course, I realise that some travellers will steal all the towels they can lay their hands on, but there are no towels in the lavatories in any of the trains except those of a few sleepers. Something should be done to provide better conveniences for the travelling public, particularly women and children. The Government have had all this money forced on them, and have not got it by any good management on their part.

Mr. Theodore: Nonsense!

Mr. YEATES: That is clear and definite. The money was forced on them, but there are persons such as the hon. member for Baroona who have the downright audacity to ask why the Moore Government who were in power during the strenuous period of 1929 to 1932 did not do this and that. Everybody knows perfectly well the reasons, but hon. members opposite will bring forward these ancient things for party reasons. That is what makes one feel that party politics is a curse.

I want to know why the Government have not used some of their extra money in reducing the accumulated deficits of £3,680,000. I do not expect them to pay off the whole amount in one year, but they could pay £200,000, £300,000, or even £500,000, and show that they do know how to finance the country, that they do know that there is a proper basis of accountancy as approved by qualified auditors. I have no objection to putting money in trust funds, but it should not be put there until at least some effort has been made to reduce the accumulated deficits of the past, irrespective of the Governments that made them.

Mr. Power: It was the Moore Government.

Mr. YEATES: Much of it was created by this Government. The hon. member for Baroona is the worst offender in this Chamber so far as party-political questions are concerned.

With all the persuasive powers I possess I urge the Government to reduce such irritating matters as a stamp duty of 2d. on every cheque that is issued. That tax should never have been introduced. It might at least be reduced to 1d. The Government could do this and so show that they are desirous of helping the people. Thousands of cheques are issued by co-operative bacon companies, co-operative butter factories, and others, and this 2d. on every cheque means the imposition of a heavy tax upon them. In the final analysis the primary producer pays for the lot.

Then, I say emphatically that it is only fair at this stage to cancel the super land tax. I press strongly for the abolition of that imposition. Motor-vehicle registration fees have been reduced by only 25 per cent., merely to be in keeping with what has happened all round Australia. Most owners of private cars now receive only 2 gallons of petrol a month, and cannot use them much, and it is only fair that their registration fees should be reduced still further.

The Government have other debit balances than the accumulated deficits of £3,680,000. Some that I have been able to trace are—

	Debit.
	£.
Stock Diseases Fund ..	173,176
Chillagoe Smelters ..	231,275
State enterprises ..	1,204,911

For the benefit of the hon. member for Baroona I emphasise that there is a State enterprises debit of £1,204,911.

Mr. Power: If the Moore Government had not attacked wages—

Mr. YEATES: The Moore Government had to clean up the dirty mess that the then associates of the hon. member for Baroona brought here. I dislike talking about these matters, but if the hon. member will persist in raising them, he deserves all he gets in reply.

Mr. Power: The hon. member for East Toowoomba will do me up?

Mr. YEATES: I will look after Toowoomba if the hon. member is very worried about it. As I told the former Premier, I am willing to find ever so many lorries, and provide them free of charge, if the hon. member for Baroona cares to use them to speak on the street corners.

The Government are really embarrassed with money to-day. Money is simply flowing into the Treasury, and through no particular management whatever. The Government just sit quietly by, taking all the money they can get and giving back virtually nothing to the taxpayer other than a paltry 5 per cent.

by way of a reduction in freights and fares. They have promised another 5 per cent. because the window-dressing day is getting very close. That still leaves the public with a charge that is 10½ per cent. more than it was some years ago. The attitude of the Government towards the matter is a wrong one. Perhaps the excuse for deferring further reductions is that another country is paying a considerable proportion of the aggregate revenue now. I leave the matter at that. However, I hope that the Treasurer will accede to my request to abolish the super land tax, to give a remission of stamp duties, and a remission of motor car registration fees.

Mr. Sparkes: Why have a land tax at all?

The Treasurer: I hear the voice of the squatter complaining.

Mr. YEATES: Why continue that toll on the Logan Bridge, the cost of which has been paid over and over again by the toll collections? I again ask the Government to study my requests very earnestly and agree to them. They have a tremendous credit balance in the railway accounts and I ask them to improve the travelling facilities between Brisbane and Dirranbandi and other western districts. There should be no excuse for the late running of trains and there should be no inconvenience in travelling on this line. I make those remarks with due respect for the efforts of the men engaged in providing the service.

Mr. THEODORE (Herbert) (12.57 p.m.): I think it is the duty of a Government in normal times to endeavour to arrange their Budget so as to have neither a large deficit nor a great surplus. The Opposition appear to be very perturbed because the Government have a tremendous surplus at the present time, but the times are abnormal. We are going through the greatest crisis in the history of this country. However, the care and foresight shown by successive Labour Governments in Queensland have enabled the Commonwealth to carry out its war programme with a high degree of efficiency and promptitude. Not the least important factor in enabling this to be done was the determination of a Labour Government not to tolerate the break in the railway line between southern and northern Queensland. The State Labour Government undertook the construction of that missing link as promptly as possible and I venture the opinion that if it had not been built by a Labour Government it would have been delayed for many years longer. Another fact that has played a very important part in contributing to the tremendous income earned by the Railway Department and in building up the State's resources was Labour's sugar policy. It placed the sugar industry on an eminently sound basis and it enabled the present facilities to be established, thereby contributing in a very large and useful measure towards the efficient conduct of the war.

At 2.15 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. THEODORE: Everyone realises that had the sugar industry not been in its present state of development and prosperity, which is due largely to the encouragement it received from this Government, its part in the war effort and the part that North Queensland has taken in the war effort would not have been done so readily. That is patent to all acquainted with conditions existing in North Queensland. They know full well the part that division of the State has played in the defence of this continent. The efficient organisation of the sugar industry and the consequential development that followed enabled North Queensland to play the prominent part it has done in the defence of this continent. Notwithstanding its development and efficiency it is going through a very parlous period. In fact, it is experiencing great stress and great difficulties. Sugar is one of the very few commodities, if there are any others, that are being placed on the war-time table at pre-war rates. In other words, there has been no increase in the cost of sugar to the consumer, and it is questionable whether that can be said of any other product. As a result of the reduced output and the consequent reduction of the income received by the growers, the industry is making a considerable sacrifice in the interests of the nation.

Mr. F. J. Barnes: You have both a State and Federal Labour Governments to do something for it.

Mr. THEODORE: As a result of the sympathetic treatment by the Federal Labour Government and this Government, the industry to-day is as efficient as it is. In fact, it could not have existed but for that policy and the co-operation of the two Governments.

One of the matters connected with this Appropriation Bill and the building up of reserve funds for post-war development works is the problems associated with the sugar industry. As I have said, the industry is experiencing difficulties and in considering those difficulties we must not overlook the important part that it plays in our national life. Therefore, it is worthy of consideration. At the present time the 1943 crop is being harvested. It is a considerably reduced crop. The Commonwealth Government set a target of 600,000 tons of sugar for the current year, but it is doubtful whether that target will be reached. Naturally, a reduced crop requires less labour for its harvesting, but the industry is unable to obtain even that reduced labour. The Commonwealth Government have sought to overcome the labour difficulty by sending a number of young militia men to North Queensland to help in harvesting the crop. Persons familiar with the industry are aware that one of the most important factors in the harvesting season is the availability of competent labour, and that the harvesting must be done at the proper period if the crushing is to be satisfactory and efficient.

We must realise we have to put up with difficulties and go short of things during this time of war, but at the same time I do think that question has been very badly handled. It is absolutely ridiculous to send a body of young men—mere boys—and ask them to cut

cane. One of the matters the sugar industry is very greatly concerned about to-day is whether it will be able to harvest the crop completely, even though it is willing—as it should be, in these times—to have the season extended a little more than it otherwise would be.

Bad as conditions are this year, I venture to prophesy that they will be much worse next year. I made a similar statement last year when I spoke of what was going to happen this season. The position this year, because of the lack of men to harvest the crop—although it is very much reduced—and the difficulty of obtaining labour to plant the next crop and cultivate the ratoons and fertilise and do other essential jobs necessary for the production of the next crop is such that I believe we shall have a considerably reduced output of sugar for next year. I think the Premier and Treasurer will have something to say about what the Commonwealth expects this year. I venture to say that the difficulties the industry is experiencing to-day will automatically reduce the crop very considerably, and I believe it will be considerably below the Commonwealth Government's requirements.

Much has been said about the dairying industry, but that industry has received real relief from the Commonwealth Government, notwithstanding the fact that they have been in office only 20 months. The anti-Labour forces, which were in power for at least 23 years out of the last 27, did nothing for the farmers, although they expressed much sympathy with the man on the land, particularly the dairy farmer.

Mr. Massey: Do you think they can make it up now?

Mr. THEODORE: I think they can. I have visited the parts of my electorate where dairying is carried on, and I recently met a large body of dairymen. They have many complaints, but not one of the men present made any complaint about the price when they knew a subsidy had been granted. They did not make much remark about it, but they made no complaint that the price was not all right. I believe they are satisfied that the Commonwealth Government have endeavoured to meet the position they were faced with, and they feel quite content that the price they will receive will be satisfactory.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: If you were still on a farm you would change your mind.

Mr. THEODORE: I have had more experience than the hon. member.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: You should still be on a farm and you would change your mind.

Mr. THEODORE: If the dairy farmer or any other farmer had to depend on such a type as some we have in Parliament, I should say, "God help them."

The Commonwealth Government realise that it is not only the low prices that affect the operations of the man on the land, but also the high prices that reduce consumption where there is exploitation by a certain section of

the community and when certain people get more than they are entitled to from the product of labour and the farmer. The Commonwealth Government are endeavouring to exercise some control over them; I believe that is right, and it is not before its time. I believe the Commonwealth Government will, as time goes on, particularly after Labour is returned—as I have no doubt it will be—pay due regard to these and other important matters that will affect the lives of the people, not only in the cities but on the land.

Last evening I had the pleasure of listening to the very fine speech made by the Prime Minister of Australia and I am quite satisfied that he is determined that the necessary action will be taken to enable people to settle on the land in such a way that they can make a living and thereby become assets to this nation. The Queensland Government also realise their responsibility and the problem that will face them at the end of the war. There are those, particularly members of the Opposition, who would wipe out the development tax.

Mr. Massey: You would not wipe out any tax.

Mr. THEODORE: The hon. member would wipe out all taxes and thus place the people in a difficulty greater than before. It has been stated in this Committee this morning that although the country is going through a period of great stress and crisis, there never was a time when all the people who are able to work were working and receiving a profitable return for their labour. Really they are receiving more money than they can spend. The Government are doing the right, and really the only sound thing, in building up a fund from which to enable them to meet a position that will inevitably arise at the end of the war. The Commonwealth Government will take a tremendous responsibility, but unlike those who talked a great deal about such things and did nothing, they have already begun investigations into the important matter of housing. As soon as the war is over a number of dwelling houses will be required. Thousands of young married couples will want to set up house in their own homes. The Commonwealth Government are taking the necessary initial steps to see that something tangible is done in this regard. I was in Melbourne in the last couple of months and took the opportunity of studying the scheme of the Victorian Housing Commission. It is something on such lines that will be required not only in one State but throughout the Commonwealth, not only in the cities but also in the country areas. The Commonwealth Government will be doing a tremendous service to Australia by laying the foundation of a proper scheme for housing.

The Commonwealth Government are also concerning themselves as to the settlement on the land of those who are suitable for such settlement. A Rural Reconstruction Commission has been journeying through this State taking evidence. I have appeared before that commission and am fully convinced, by the

methods used by that commission to obtain the necessary information, that it is working on the right lines. The Commonwealth Government, I am sure, will, if returned to power, lay down a definite policy of land settlement to be put into operation when it is required, and that will be immediately the war concludes. Of course, the State Government must play an important part in such a scheme, but without funds it would not be possible for it to do anything. The Queensland Government must have certain funds available to do the things that as a State Government they consider should be done or that the Commonwealth Government recommend shall be undertaken by the State Government. I am sure that with a sound, democratic, and sensible Government, such as is the Curtin Government, we can look for wonderful results from land settlement at the end of the war.

There is no-one who will deny that this country must be populated. No-one will deny that during the last two or three years the whole of this State, from north to south, has been advertised in a way that would not have been possible had there been no war. Thousands of young men who come from the other States to Queensland and see what we have here are determined to return and settle on the land here. I believe that those remarks apply to members of the Allied Forces from other countries also, because I have heard them express in no uncertain terms their admiration for this great country and their belief in the possibilities that we may expect to be developed as soon as the opportunity permits. The State Government realise all this and they would be lacking in their duty to the country if they did not take every precaution and care to see that they are in a position to give immediate attention, for instance, to effecting repairs to the rolling stock and permanent way of the Queensland railways. The demand on our State railways will continue to be heavy although, of course, it will not be as heavy as it is to-day. It is my belief that we shall continue to build up our forces in order to be in a position to do everything necessary to protect this country in the future. No-one can tell me that the Japanese are going to lie down and go to sleep after we are finished with them this time. No matter what we do with them now I believe that they will continue to desire to own this country, and they will endeavour to strengthen their forces by some means of which we shall not be aware. They might attempt some such step as uniting all the coloured nations against us. We must take all steps necessary to put us in the position of being able to defend ourselves without being entirely dependent on some other nation, as we are now. At some future time we might find that that other nation had other ideas and did not desire to work with us as well as it does now. We have been extremely fortunate in being able to call such a tremendously powerful nation to our aid at this time, but we should realise our responsibilities and not cavil at any expenditure that is aimed at the preservation, safety, and future of this country.

Mr. L. J. BARNES (Cairns) (2.37 p.m.): Much has been said this morning about subsidies to primary production and about production in general. I am interested not only in the producer, but also in the consumer. I am interested in the soldier who is fighting our battle on 6s. a day and in the man on the basic wage of £5 a week who can get no overtime, also in our invalid and old-age pensioners, who I think are getting the rawest deal of all.

Last session certain powers were handed over to the Central Food Control Committee that is now established under Mr. Scully in the Federal Parliament. I am pleased to be able to say that I opposed that measure, as I have opposed all forms of centralisation. If we are to be directed from Canberra as to what to sow and when to reap, then we shall soon be wanting bread. We have only to cast our minds back a couple of years to the time when the Labour Government decided to use up our surplus wheat. In the Independent hon. member for the Wimmera's electorate we now have a distillery producing petrol at a cost of about 6s. a gallon from wheat.

A Government Member: Where did you get your figures?

Mr. L. J. BARNES: My figures are correct, or near enough to being correct. This Government have established the fact that petrol can be extracted from coal at 1s. 4d. a gallon or molasses at 1s. 9d. a gallon. The Federal Government already have that information.

But I do not intend to deal at length with petrol or with the mistakes of past Governments; I intend to discuss the future. First of all, the ultimate end of production is consumption. That is why we produce. There is not much use in making a shoe unless you can find a foot to go into it; there is not much use in building a house unless you can find someone to live in it; and there is very little use in producing food to rot. No, the ultimate end of production is consumption. We seem to have the idea in our heads that we must have a Works State like that of Germany, Russia, Italy, and Japan, but a Works State is not essential. We have the Beveridge plan, which says that freedom from idleness is more important than freedom from want, but freedom from want is more important than freedom from idleness. It is necessary that we should destroy freedom from want first. Under the Scullin regime we had want and yet a surplus of consumable goods. Although we had production in abundance people were still starving throughout the Empire. I make that point to prove that freedom from idleness does not come before freedom from want.

A great deal has been said about the dairy farmer. I am in favour of his being paid a fair and reasonable price for his product. In his policy speech the Prime Minister, Mr. Curtin, tried to convey to the people of Australia that the price to the consumer had not risen and that the cost of the subsidy to the dairying industry would not be passed on to the consumer. His statement was a sham fight of empty eloquence. He may be able to convince a few that he is right, but the many,

no. I pay Mr. Curtin the compliment of saying that he knows more about finance than I do. He knows that the subsidy to the dairying industry is being paid by the workers, the consumers of Australia. Where is the subsidy coming from? Whether it comes out of general revenue, or bank credit—call it what you will—it is still a debt on the community. That debt is being paid by the consumer indirectly through loan moneys, taxation, or bank credit. Therefore, the increase of 2d. a lb. that the dairy farmer receives by virtue of the subsidy comes indirectly from the consumer, and so the worker to-day is paying that extra 2d. a lb. to the dairy farmer. The dairy farmer is more than justly entitled to the 2d., but it is coming from the wrong quarter.

The Secretary for Labour and Employment: What would happen if prices were allowed to run away?

Mr. L. J. BARNES: I do not want to see an inflation of prices and I have been fighting against high prices for a long time. Mr. Curtin, who I have admitted knows more about finance than I do, is reported in the "Locomotive Journal" as saying that the war would be financed by the use of the nation's credit, but he knows full well that that is not being done. I am not advocating that anybody should get something for nothing. Not at all. I am of the opinion that this so-called subsidy to the dairying industry is being passed on to the consumer and that when Mr. Curtin told the public of Australia that it was not he told them a deliberate lie, because he knows that it is coming out of general revenue.

The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs: The general revenue does not come out of the consumer, it comes out of income.

Mr. L. J. BARNES: It is exactly the same thing. Income comes from the consumer. However, Mr. Curtin went further than that. He told us that approximately 1,200,000 people were now engaged in the war industry. Now, if, on Mr. Curtin's own admission, we have 1,200,000 people engaged in the war industry, I am of the opinion that there are approximately another 300,000 Mr. Curtin has not counted. I honestly believe that there are at least 1,500,000 people directly or indirectly connected with war industry. When peace comes, Mr. Brassington—

Mr. J. F. Barnes: If it ever comes.

Mr. L. J. BARNES: Well, let us pray that it does. When peace comes, we have to convert our economy from a war economy into a peace economy and place these 1,500,000 people into peace-time industries. Unless they can be transferred from one industry to the other there is going to be starvation, or malnutrition, the flash name for starvation. Surely that is not saying that people have to work long hours indefinitely. To-day, railwaymen are working 14 hours a day, and timbermen are working long hours. Waterside workers are working 12 to 14 hours a day and also primary producers. The fighting men

never stop working. Do they want to continue working those long hours in peace-time? No, that is not what they want. They want a little bit of leisure. We tremble at the thought of leisure. These people can be given a certain amount of leisure. We have not arrived at the stage when we must work for work's sake. We must remember that the product of leisure is culture. If we had no leisure we should have no culture. I am not suggesting for one moment that I should be ordered not to work an equal number of hours as my neighbour or more; but, Mr. Brassington, you can believe me it will be a physical impossibility when disarmament takes place throughout the world to put every man and woman now engaged in keeping the war machine going back into producing for human needs on the same day. We must not forget that the destiny of production is consumption. We have throughout the Empire to-day approximately 40 per cent of its population either directly or indirectly working in the war effort; the remaining 60 per cent. are producing partly for destruction. Yet we say that we can put all these people back into work! If we are able to do so, they still will not be contented, because we have not realised the means for them to consume. That is the first and foremost thought.

But we have a greater ambition than a full stomach and a warm back. At any rate, I imagine that we have, because that is the standard that exists in our prisons. What we do want is freedom, which our Governments have passed away. At present we are being governed by regulation. When the people of Cairns elected me as their representative they, in effect, said, "You are to be our representative," yet hon. members opposite hold the opinion that they can permit government by regulation. Do all the boards and committees that have been set up during the last two or three years go before the people, to be voted upon every three years? No. It is undemocratic to pass away the sovereign prerogative the rights of the people, yet that is what has been done. The Government members have passed over the power to govern by regulation.

Mr. Collins: You do not know there is a war on.

Mr. L. J. BARNES: Mr. Ward does. That reminds me of something. I was in Cairns recently and an old man came along to me. He said, "I have been asked to do a war job." I said, "How old are you?" He said, "I am three months off 80." I said, "What?" He said, "I am three months off 80." I said, "Oh, surely you cannot be serious in saying they are asking you to do a war job?" It was not long before the position was cleared up. He said to me, "You know, I think Mr. Ward is one of the best men in the Federal House." I said, "Do you know Mr. Ward put through this regulation and it reads, 'Any person,' so that my son of two years or my father of 80 can be thrown into the war effort. You can believe me, it is there for a purpose, and Mr. Ward knows it is there for a purpose. If not why has it not been amended?"

This morning I gave notice to the Premier of a question relating to the War Damage Commission. They have revenue to the extent of £13,000,000. An honest worker in Cairns—one of the supposed Labour Party's friends, one it represents—gets five guineas a week. An aeroplane drops on his home and burns it to the ground when he is in hospital and, fortunately, his wife and child are up town. They are left without any spare clothing or furniture and an overdraft of approximately £100. Yet the finding of this War Damage Commission was that the plane was practicing and no compensation was payable. They have had an Act amended, and made it retrospective, in regard to B.P.'s, and I hope they have it made retrospective in this case. I say it is a shocking state of affairs. If the people of Cairns knew that if these planes that are flying over the top of their papaw trees happen to drop on their house they will receive no compensation, I think that fact alone would put the Labour Party out. But you cannot get it published in the Press these hush-hush days.

A Government Member: If the facts are as stated by you it would prove the thing wrong.

Mr. L. J. BARNES: The facts as stated by me are true, and I shall appreciate it if the hon. member will fight to see it is put right.

I should like to deal with another matter, in reference to freedom of the Press. You will remember, Mr. Brassington, that during last session there was something in the Press about the Protocols. A few days later somebody—Mr. Rowlands I think his name was—had an article in the "Telegraph" of approximately 600, 800, or 1,000 words, saying that the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion was a cruel forgery. I rang the "Telegraph" and asked them if they would allow us a certain space to reply, and they said, "Yes, 500 or 600 words," something to that effect. I said, "OK." I compiled a letter and sent it to the "Telegraph" and three days later I received a reply from the "Telegraph" stating that no good purpose would be served by publishing it. I do believe in freedom of the Press, and seeing that they had the last say in reference to the Protocols, I should like to read this letter that I sent to the "Telegraph." It is as follows:—

"Mr. R. F. Rowlands stated in the 'Telegraph' of Monday, 3rd instant, that the 'Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion,' which were discussed in the Queensland Parliament recently, are a cruel forgery, but he brought forth no concrete evidence to prove his statement. His only evidence is that the 'London Times' proved the Protocols a forgery.

"Is the 'London Times' decision in 1921 more official than a higher Court of Appeal decision in 1937? In 1935 presiding Judge Mayers of the Berne Judicial Canton in Switzerland branded the Protocols as forgery, plagiarism, and trashy literature. There was a successful appeal to the Higher Court of Berne, Switzerland, in 1937. Judge Mayers decision of 1935 was

upset, the president of the court said that the judge (Jewish) in the instance of the first trial (Judge Mayers) had no right to set on foot inquiries as to the authenticity or non-authenticity of the Protocols, for the reason that the matter was irrelevant to the consideration as to the immorality of the publication involved. Thus the facts are these—in the court of appeal the judgment of the first court was quashed; the considerations upon which the first judge based his faulty judgment were deprived of all weight. Mr. Rowlands states that evidence proved that an ex-member of the Russian Secret Police wrote the Protocols. It was published in the 'Dernieres Nouvelles' that the Comte de Chayla maintained the same thing, and added that a Russian Cossack officer named Nilus (original publisher) has said this. Nilus labelled de Chayla as a perfidious liar and a slanderer. The fact is that de Chayla took the charge and insult with a smile, and never brought court action against Nilus.

"Furthermore, the spoken word of some courageous Jews may help. In 1924 Dr. Chrenpreis, at one time Chief Rabbi of Sweden, said, 'Long have I been well acquainted with the contents of the Protocols, indeed, for many years before they were ever published in the Christian Press. The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion were in point of fact not the original Protocols at all, but a compressed extract of the same. Of the 70 Elders of Zion, in the matter of the origin, and of the existence of the original Protocols there are only 10 men in the entire world who know.' He also stated 'I participated with Dr. Herze at the Zionist Congress in Basle, 1897.' In 1928 a Rumanian Jew, Marcus Eli Ravage, a member of the staff of the 'New York Tribune,' wrote in the 'Century Magazine,' 'You (non-Jews) have not begun to appreciate the real depth of our (Jewish) guilt; we are intruders; we are subverters; we have taken your natural world, your ideals, your destiny, and played havoc with them. We have been at the bottom not merely of the latest great war, but of nearly all your wars, not only of the Russian, but of every other revolution in your history.'

"Now some wise words of that courageous Jew, Dr. Oscar Levy, of London, 'The question of the Jews and their influence on the world past and present cuts to the root of all things and should be discussed by every honest thinker. We who posed as the saviours of the world, we who boasted of having given it the Saviour, we are to-day nothing else but the world's seducers, its destroyers, its incendiaries, its executioners.

"'I look at this world and I shudder at its ghastliness, I shudder all the more as I know the spiritual authors of all this ghastliness. If you are anti-Semite, I the Semite am anti-Semite, too, and a more fervent one than you are. Hatred is never overcome by hatred, it is only overcome by love.'"

That is the letter that was refused by the "Telegraph." I can quite understand why years ago when Marconi and Bell came forth, they were persecuted. I know that of those in this Assembly 80 per cent. have never read the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion and 90 per cent. who would not understand them if they did read them. However, I am not interested in hatred nor in the persecution of the Jews. That will get us nowhere. To-day we have proof of that. Hitler is chasing the Jews all over the country; in other words, he is letting them loose on the gentiles of the world. In the past three years approximately 70,000 Jews arrived in Shanghai alone, and hon. members can take it that one day—and there are not too many hours left—we shall have to realise that we shall have to wipe the cobwebs from our eyes and face facts.

(Time expired.)

Mr. J. F. BARNES (Bundaberg) (3.2 p.m.): There was a very long time ago, and until approximately one hour before I went to court on the Marjorie Norval case on the second occasion, a thing styled the privilege of Parliament. But there is no privilege of Parliament in Queensland to-day, so I have to be very careful in what I say, because the Government would make anything they chose to do retrospective. I have to be very careful of what I say but this I do say now, that those members of the Government who were behind that engineered Marjorie Norval law, are low, are rotten. That is how careful I am. Now the Government can make it retrospective.

The TREASURER: I rise to a point of order. I ask that the statement, being offensive to me, the hon. member withdraw it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to withdraw that statement.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: The Premier admits he organised that, so I withdraw it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask for a withdrawal and an apology.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I withdraw it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am asking the hon. member to withdraw and apologise in a dignified way and in keeping with the dignity of this Chamber.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: Mr. Chairman, I humbly apologise to those whom I have insulted.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. J. F. BARNES: That is dignified, is it not?

Just prior to this Act's being brought to Parliament the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs advised me that I had to be careful, or words to that effect, because there might be something done about it later. In other words, he forewarned me, and I thanked him at the time and I told him I should be forearmed. The result was that in due course

the Coroners Act Amendment Bill came before this Assembly. Everybody in the Opposition said, "This is specially made for you, so you had better look into it." I read it a first time, I read it a second time, and I read it a third time, and after reading it the third time I saw the big point in it. I saw the point that I could be convicted of the same offence twice—something that is contrary to Magna Charta and subsequent British law. I said to my brother, on seeing this point, "Don't mention a word to any of the Opposition about this; this has got to go through." I might add that before we saw the Bill I said that I welcomed it because I thought it was honest, but when I saw the Bill and read it, especially after I had studied it the third time, I discovered that the whole thing was set up to get me and not to find out where Marjorie Norval was. So I thought to myself, "These galoots! What chance have they got of getting me? I am seven thinks ahead of them all the way through, and I shall be 13 this time." The result was that I went to court. After going to court the first time I knew I had to go back to court a second time to prove my case. I also knew that one very important person said, "As far as I am concerned Barnes will not go to gaol, the people of Queensland will be against it." I also knew that another party had said, "You are only a Sunday school teacher; you have got him where you want him, keep him there," and I was frightened that I should not go back to court. I knew that that statement was made by the Premier of Queensland, and I thought that the Premier might have some influence and I should not go back. The first time I was at the court I made the statement, without qualifying it, that the whole thing was designed to get me and not Marjorie Norval. I spoke about it in court, but I should have lost my stocks if I could not have gone back a second time to prove my point, and I was very afraid that I was not going back to court.

The Attorney-General: How was the breakfast?

Mr. J. F. BARNES: It was very good. When I went back to court I summed up my case to the district coroner and I told him all the reasons why he should not put me into gaol. One of those reasons was the privilege of Parliament. A glaring case has happened since then. When Eddie Ward goes to a royal commission he claims privilege and he gets it. What is wrong with our Civil Service Department? Why was I not given privilege?

Mr. Massey interjected.

The Secretary for Public Lands: You are reflecting on the judge of the case.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I am entitled to reflect on the police magistrate. It was not a judge at all.

The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs: You told your story in Cairns.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: The Minister had what I said about the Marjorie Norval case taken down in Cairns and sent to him, and he can lay it on the table of the House. When

I made that statement the Minister could see that I read out what I said in this House, which was privileged. In my evidence I said that rumour had told me that she is now in England, and I said that in Mackay and in Cairns. I did not state any names. I said, "Rumour." I do not know, I forget whom.

Mr. Collins: You said Detective Smith afterwards.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: Not at that stage. I am talking about something else now. The hon. member is finding it hard to catch on. At that stage I said rumour had it that she was in England, and the Crown Prosecutor or, I should call him the Crown Persecutor, in cross-examining me later—

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I rise to a point of order. I ask that the hon. member withdraw that reflection on our Crown Prosecutor. I ask that he withdraw the words "Crown Prosecutor." They are offensive to an honoured public servant who does his work well, and who did his work well at the time.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I'll say he does his work well.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have already ruled in a previous session that I have no power to extend any protection to anyone not subject to the Standing Orders. I can only ask the hon. member, and for that matter, all hon. members, to be decent in their dealings in this Chamber, and to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles and the desires of the people who elect them. I hope the hon. member will take notice of what I say and do justice to this hon. Chamber of which he is a member.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: Yes, I have never reflected on anybody wrongfully in my life. The Attorney-General asks me to apologise to-day, but I have no intention of doing so, and this Parliament cannot force me to do it. That is where he finishes up.

Let me take the matter a little further. The Crown Prosecutor tried to trap me into saying "In London." He knew that Gibbs's evidence was to follow, but I knew nothing at all about Gibbs. I never said anything about her being in London. In Mackay and Cairns I spoke of her being in England, but I did not say "London." He wanted to make it appear that I had been talking to Gibbs, which I had not. However, I have since spoken to him in Sydney, after my return from that mysterious trip referred to by "Truth." Gibbs told me that he had not the slightest doubt that he saw Marjorie Norval in London, and knowing Gibbs as I know him, I have no doubt either. In the billiard room of this Parliament, just prior to the Monday of my going back to court, the Secretary for Public Lands said to me, "I know something about you." I replied, "Then do not tell anybody, because everybody will know." He went on to say, "You sold forestry shares once." I replied, "Bai jove, Ned, I did. I worked with them for a week. I forgot I was ever on that job." It had gone completely out of my mind, and

now the hon. gentleman reminds me of it again. He wanted me to make an admission. He knows that I had forgotten that Gibbs ever existed. The Minister will admit that. He asked me that question so that I could be cross-examined about it.

The Secretary for Public Lands: How many people did you take down in that time in selling those shares?

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I was a bad salesman; I never sold any. The position is that when I claimed privilege in the coroners court I did not get it, and I am sent to prison for something in respect of which I had already paid a fine of £10. I am sent back to gaol, I am hanged and brought back again, and afterwards shot. (Laughter.) Well, it was just as sensible. When I came back from gaol next day the police magistrate said to me, "The superintendent of the gaol says that you are willing to tell the names." I said, "Yes, that is so." He said, "What are the names?" I said, "Smith and Jones." (Laughter.) Everybody else laughed, too, but that does not matter. I said, "Detective Smith and Citizen Jones." In saying that the persons were Smith and Jones, I raised this matter of law that the Crown Prosecutor had to bring evidence before the court to prove that both Smith and Jones were wrong. Did he bring any such evidence before the court? The coroner went on to say, "Do you not think that it is a remarkable coincidence that the names should be Smith and Jones?" To which I replied, "Do you not think it is ten million times more a remarkable coincidence that I am the first member of Parliament in the British Empire ever sent out without pay, and the first person in the world to be convicted for the same offence twice, including being sent to gaol?"

The Secretary for Labour and Employment: Why don't you sue the Government?

Mr. J. F. BARNES: Do not force it on yourself. My point is that the Crown Prosecutor had to bring evidence to show that Smith and Jones were wrong. It did not matter whether the names were Brown and White. The fact is that these names were before the court. He knew that there was no evidence to the contrary, and the district coroner should have released me from the court. He did not release me, but he sent me back to gaol. Not only did he imprison me wrongfully once, but he imprisoned me wrongfully a second time, and he did it because he had to ask somebody what he was to do with Barnes next.

He had to go back and consult someone, either the Commissioner of Police or Cabinet, perhaps, so that Cabinet could tell him what to do with me next. I rang up my solicitor on the lock-up phone. I said, "If I am not released to-morrow I want you to issue a writ of habeas corpus so that I shall be out of gaol to-morrow." That was said in the hearing of every policeman in the watchhouse. Next day I was released from gaol. If not, I should have issued the writ of habeas corpus myself. I knew that the district coroner had

only sent me back to gaol with the object of asking somebody what to do with me now, as my revelation that Detective Smith and Mr. Jones had informed me had made a complete fool of the authorities. The position arose next day that he let me out of gaol. No further evidence was brought to the coronial inquiry to prove that it was not Detective Smith or Mr. Jones who had given me my information.

The Attorney-General: You are the only one who knew anything about Smith and Jones.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: Smith and Jones are a pain in the neck to you. The Attorney-General is very annoyed because the Coroners Act Amendment Act was designed to destroy the hon. member for Bundaberg for all time by bringing him into a court of law, but his revelation concerning Detective Smith and Mr. Jones destroyed all his Government's engineering. That is what is annoying the Attorney-General. The fact of the matter is that the Attorney-General is neither an attorney nor a general, yet he is allowed to bring down legislation to make these laws! I would make it a law that the first reading of every Bill should be advertised. That would enable solicitors in the various electorates to examine the Bills and say, "Don't put that Bill through, as it will convict a person twice for the same offence." If that fact was made known to members of the Opposition they would flog the Bill to prevent its becoming law. Of course, this particular provision was wedged in one of the clauses for an evil purpose, but this evil purpose went astray and the Government as a result made a complete fool of themselves.

The Attorney-General: Not as big a fool as you did.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: The Attorney-General need not make any mistake on that point.

Now, the coronial court was rotten. I was examined and re-examined and examined again and re-examined again. So was Mr. Gibbs. Then on the following morning the district coroner would examine me again, and then re-examine me, but only succeeded in making a fool of himself. They could not do what they intended. The district coroner set himself up as a psycho-analyst. He was appointed to the court as a district coroner, not a psycho-analyst. Nevertheless, he set himself up as a psycho-analyst and wiped Gibb's story out because it did not suit him. Knowing the thing to be a racket from start to finish, I told the coroner what he was going to find. He said, "Shut up." I said, "Neither you nor anyone else can shut me up." The Crown Prosecutor said, "Your Honour, he is defying you." I said, "Shut up, and give your nose a chance." Here was a court of law and here was I committing contempt by defying the court. I told the district coroner that he would find that she was aborted and that she went to an abortionist. Why did the district coroner take that from me? He turned round to the deposition clerk and said, "Don't put that

down." He also turned round to the newspaper representatives and forbid them to print my remark, but one paper did so, or I am told it did. Why did I make a fool of the court? Because I knew the district coroner would find that way, hence the reason why he did not want to commit me for contempt to prolong it.

The district coroner at another stage refused to put the depositions down. I argued that he would have to do so and he threatened to put me back into gaol. I said I did not want to go to gaol, and so behaved myself for five minutes. I then went back to the point after which he adjourned the court until half past 2. He said this as he was going out of the court door, and to this I replied, "I will have to talk to myself now; this is one way of winning an argument." At that time I was committing contempt of court, and had been doing so from time to time. This is the point: It is rotten if the Government can bring in a law to get one man in Queensland and make the people of Queensland spend thousands of pounds to get at one of their political opponents. What is this country coming to? It is a disgrace to democracy, or I should say, if we take the middle syllable of democracy, it is merely a mockery. There was not one decent thing about the whole court. If you, Mr. Brassington, table the depositions you will see what I am saying is true about Gibbs and myself being examined and re-examined and re-examined if the evidence was other than what the court or police wanted. Gibbs was examined all afternoon and next morning just to tell the court he saw her walk down the Strand in London. In the light of this experience, what is to prevent the Government to-morrow from making another law retrospective in order to get at someone else? Evidently the Government will stop at nothing. Any Government that would do a thing like that are decidedly low. Something has to be done about it, and believe me something will be done about it later.

Now, Mr. Brassington, I come to the Mackay by-election. I created history again. It is a remarkable thing that I created history again because I forced the Labour Party and the Communist Party to come together. When I went to Mackay the police went round to every bookmaker and told them not to operate, that I was in town. I said, "You can do what you always do; the fact I am here does not matter tuppence." Two police followed me down to Eimeo one Sunday to see if I was drinking, but I only had a cup of tea, and disappointed them. If I had known they were following me I should have had one. The third thing to happen, the police forged a permit. I have asked for that permit to be tabled, and they have never done so. They forged a permit in order to try to beat us. They went further, and on the night of the election there was a whispering campaign, and they told the publicans and bookmakers that if my man got in they would pinch the lot of them. One publican backed us for £30 and he told my brother, "Yesterday you were a

certainty, but to-day you are not." He backed us and he and his staff voted against us as they had to live in the town when we left. They also went round and chalked the gutters, "Frank Barnes, sodomist," "Frank Barnes rode a boy," and all over the shop fronts, and on the footpaths. That is how low they got. Inspector Osborne, the rotter, was standing in the open with some other policemen. One said, "You bloody bastard so-and-so"—shouted out several times to me.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to apologise to the Committee for that unseemly language. Might I also add that if the hon. member does not conduct himself in a proper manner I shall deal with him? I ask the hon. member to apologise.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I apologise to the Committee. The point is the party concerned inferred I was an illegitimate child. The party concerned inferred it in the language I used and for which I was pulled up, but I know you cannot do it, as I was merely stating what was said, but that is by the way. I said, "You can call me that all night, because the police won't arrest you." They could have arrested him for using obscene language in the street, but they would not. I said, "You can continue calling it all night, but don't call it to me personally, as I will knock your block off." That is the reason we lost Mackay—the dirty whispering campaign and the pinching of every hotel. It became a standing joke. Then one unsophisticated clean-living girl who worked in T. C. Beirne's shop said, "What does that mean, that Frank Barnes rode a boy?"

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Please resume your seat.

Mr. L. J. Barnes: I will have to differ with your ruling.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Please resume your seat.

Mr. L. J. Barnes: I move "That the Chairman's ruling be disagreed to." I will bring evidence to prove it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am not accepting the motion. Under the Standing Orders the responsibility is on the hon. member to proceed further.

Mr. L. J. Barnes: Mr. Brassington—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Resume your seat.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I desire to know what you ruled me out on.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Resume your seat.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I want to know why you ruled me out. Was it the word "rode" that you ruled me out on?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

NAMING OF MEMBER.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I name the hon. member for Bundaberg, Mr. J. F. Barnes, for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

The PREMIER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer): I regret the hon. member for Bundaberg will persist in creating scenes in this Chamber, consequently I have no alternative but to ask you to send for Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Maher: Give him a chance to withdraw and tender an apology to the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

A Government Member: Do you not think there is a limit?

Mr. J. F. BARNES: You have no decency at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. J. F. BARNES: You cannot take it. I will make you take it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. L. J. Barnes: You use the language yourself sometimes.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Mr. Speaker, I have to name the hon. member for Bundaberg for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Chairman reports he has named the hon. member for Bundaberg.

The PREMIER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer): I move—

"That the hon. member for Bundaberg, Mr. J. F. Barnes, be suspended from the service of the House for a fortnight without pay."

Mr. J. F. Barnes: Good on you, you mug!

The PREMIER: Don't you call me a mug.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: You are.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Question—that the motion (Mr. Cooper) be agreed to—put; and the House divided.

AYES, 30.

Mr. Brassington	Mr. Keyatta
" Brown	" Larcombe
" Collins	" Mann
" Cooper	" Moore
" Copley	" O'Shea
" Davis	" Power
" Devries	" Riordan
" Duggan	" Smith
" Dunstan	" Theodore
" Foley	" Turner
" Gair	" Walsh
" Gledson	" Williams
" Graham	
" Hanlon	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Healy	" Clark
" Jones	" Jesson

NOES, 10.

Mr. Barnes, J. F.	Mr. Massey
" Barnes, L. J.	" Nicklin
" Clayton	
" Dart	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Kerr	" Luckins
" Maher	" Yeates

Resolved in the affirmative.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

The TREASURER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) (3.34 p.m.): Parliament has a number of functions, one of which is to appropriate moneys for the services of His Majesty. Another of its functions is to uphold its own dignity, and to see that the rules, regulations, and Standing Orders of the House are observed. If hon. members are willing to see Parliament degenerate into a rabble and a farce, then we must tolerate scenes such as the one we have just witnessed, but I can assure you, Mr. Brassington, that this side of the Chamber has no desire to lessen in any way the dignity of Parliament, or to lessen its privileges.

One of the privileges of Parliament is that its dignity, its uprightness, and its sobriety shall be maintained, and when I say "sobriety," I mean sobriety in conduct and in language. Surely we cannot allow impish conduct, nor can we allow apologies that are made with the tongue in the cheek. Anything that will be accepted in this Chamber in future, I can assure you, Mr. Chairman, will be sincere and absolute apologies. Anything that savours of insincerity will not be countenanced, and if this Government have to see continually that hon. members are placed outside the House so that the dignity of the House shall be maintained, they will be placed outside the House.

At the beginning of this debate, I should have made an explanation to the Committee, but I make it now, and desire to say that we are following the usual practice in making an appropriation at this particular time, so that the services of the government of the country may be carried on. The amounts applied for make provision to meet the estimated requirements of the State to about the end of November, and are based on expenditure for the last financial year. On these figures, the amounts required for consolidated revenue and trust and special funds have been increased, whereas the amount required for loan funds has been reduced. The increased amount for consolidated revenue is necessary to meet the additional charges imposed on the Railway Department, and the increased provision in trust and special funds is required for the heavy expenditure of defence works and works for the Allied Works Council.

Hon. members will notice that the amounts are higher than the amounts asked for at this time of the session last year, and they have been asked for because of the additional services that are required.

I should like to take this opportunity of making a proper reply to the question asked by the hon. member for West Moreton yesterday without notice. He did not give me any inkling of the question that he was about to ask, and I did not catch the full import of the question that he asked. I took him to say that we were appropriating money from the trust fund without the sanction of Parliament, whereas I now give him the credit of saying that we were putting money into the trust fund without the permission of Parliament.

If that was the hon. member's intention, then I can answer his question fully now, and I shall be glad to do so.

Mr. Maher: You were taking the credit in your statement that the money had been transferred to the credit of the trust fund when it actually had not been appropriated by Parliament.

The TREASURER: Parliament had not agreed to put it into the trust fund?

Mr. Maher: No.

The TREASURER: That is perfectly true. Parliament had not actually sanctioned the passing of the money from consolidated revenue to trust fund, and the reason for that was that we had no estimates of expenditure before us whereby we could do it. That amount will appear in the Supplementary Estimates to be presented to Parliament later on in the session. The relevant section says—

"The following moneys may be paid to the credit of the Trust Fund for the purposes of this Act, namely:—

"(a) Such amounts from the Consolidated Revenue Fund as shall be from time to time approved by the Governor in Council by Order in Council and appropriated by Parliament."

These amounts have been placed in the trust funds by Order in Council approved by the Governor in Council and they will be appropriated by this Parliament at the proper time when the Estimates are before the House. I can assure the hon. member that that will be done.

Mr. Maher: But you have already done it.

The TREASURER: We have already made the allocation to the trust funds by Order in Council approved by the Governor in Council but that action will be brought before Parliament for approval when the Estimates are being considered. I can assure the hon. member that that will be fully carried out.

I desire to refer to one or two matters that have been raised in the course of this discussion. At the outset I should like to congratulate the Leader of the Opposition on his great simplicity in financial matters. He said, in the course of his remarks, that the Railway Department showed a profit of £6,000,000, that consolidated revenue showed a surplus of £5,000,000 and so the Government had £11,000,000 to play with.

Mr. Nicklin: No, I did not say that. I said that the railways made a profit of £3,500,000.

The TREASURER: And that consolidated revenue showed a surplus of £5,000,000, and therefore the Government had the two amounts to play with. The hon. gentleman ought to know that the money from the railways goes into consolidated revenue and that if there is a profit in the railways and it helps to increase the surplus in consolidated revenue then that account shows a profit, too, but if there is a deficit in the

railways greater than the surplus of the balance of consolidated revenue than the Consolidated Revenue Account must show a deficit. The hon. gentleman's method of finance appears to have something of the aboriginal tinge. We know the story of the blackfellow who said to the boss, "You owe me a quid, Boss." The boss said "I gave you 5s. on Sunday week, did I not?" and he said, "Yes, that's right, boss." The boss then said, "And I promised you 10s. last Saturday and did not give it to you," and he said, "Yes, that's right, boss." Then the boss said, "Well, 5s. and 10s. make 15s. and I owe you 5s.," and the blackfellow said, "Yes, that's right, boss." (Laughter.) The remarkable way in which the Leader of the Opposition arrived at the amount of £11,000,000 that he contended was available for the Government to play with rather reminded me of that type of finance.

Then the hon. gentleman made reference to deficits and pointed out that we had not funded a single one of the deficits that were incurred by the Moore Government. Those deficits amounted to £3,806,000. Since then we have had a number of surpluses over five years in succession and those surpluses have gone towards balancing the Moore Government's deficits. It is true that after the advent of the Labour Government in 1932 we had a number of deficits over a period of five years, as against £4,000,000 in three years by the Moore Government. Hon members must remember that we had the legacy of the Moore Government to contend with, too. I am not disputing the figures, but I want to point out that those deficits incurred by the Labour Government were funded. They were provided for, but the Moore Government did not fund their deficits. They carried them by the cash in the Treasury and they have been carried in that way ever since. Why are we to be blamed for something that the Moore Government did? They decided that their deficits were to be carried by Treasury cash. That being so decided, who are we that we should object to that masterly piece of financing by the Moore Government? The hon. gentleman omitted to mention that fact and it is well that I should remind him that the Moore Government carried their deficits through the Treasury cash and that they have been carried in that way ever since.

Then the Leader of the Opposition suggested that we might abolish the unemployment insurance scheme.

Mr. Nicklin: No, not the scheme; but the payments into it should be suspended at present.

The TREASURER: The hon. gentleman lives in a district particularly free from fires. I wonder if he would suggest to the people living about him that having been free from fires for 12 months they should not take out any further fire insurance cover. One has only to look at his proposal in that light in order to blow it right out.

Mr. Nicklin: The private fire-insurance companies have given a reduction in premiums

and so has the State Government Insurance Office.

The TREASURER: Year by year the State Government Insurance Office has reduced its fire premiums because it could carry the risk and by so doing has forced private insurance companies to follow suit on a number of occasions. I make bold to say that the State Government Insurance Office has saved the people of this State something like £3,000,000 in fire-insurance premiums by so doing. The Unemployment Insurance Fund is built up by three contributions, a contribution by the employees, a contribution by the employers, and a contribution by the State. The State's contribution is one-third of the total amount; the employers' is one-third, and the employees' is one-third, and any appeal for the suspension of this fund, or for the cessation of this fund, is not made on behalf of the Government or on behalf of the employee who pays his modest 6d. a week so that he might have some basis of security in the event of unemployment, but is made on behalf of the employer. Quite frankly I ask: how would an employer—the hon. member spoke of the small employer—of 15 men, and paying 7s. 6d. a week into the Unemployment Insurance Fund for these men, employ that 7s. 6d. a week in the building up of his business? These appeals for the small man in these matters are so absurd that one wonders whether they are not fully investigated before they are made.

Mr. Yeates: Some of them employ 500 men.

The TREASURER: Make it 1,000 men. Then the employer finds 500 sixpences a week, which is 250 shillings or £12 10s. a week. How is this employer who employs 1,000 men going to do something with £12 10s. a week to increase his business?

Mr. Sparkes: Sometimes employers lose money.

The TREASURER: All these appeals are made on account of big business.

Mr. Yeates: How about the employee himself?

The TREASURER: The employee who contributes 6d. a week is glad to do so so that he may make some provision for those employees who may be less fortunate than himself. There is a kind of co-operation in this Unemployment Insurance Fund that we should encourage. I marvel that members of the Opposition who have done so well by fostering the co-operative movement in their own industries, who incidentally have been helped also by this Government, should clamp down their feet on another scheme that shows anything in the nature of co-operation.

Mr. Yeates: You could put an amount into the reserve fund until after the war, that is, if there is any. There are no unemployed now.

The TREASURER: That is all the more reason why the fund should go on being built up to meet the day when there may be

unemployment. There is a provision in that Act providing that out of that fund works may be started to give work to unemployed.

The Minister for Transport: Post-war security.

The TREASURER: That is so; post-war security.

Mr. L. J. Barnes: It is an encouragement of unemployment.

The TREASURER: The hon. member knows nothing about it. It has done much to encourage employment.

I now want to reply to some remarks made by the hon. member for Sandgate concerning investments by this Government in war loans. He became quite pathetic because he said this Government had delayed their investments. He said there was an excellent opportunity for this Government to put their surplus money into the last war loan, thereby encouraging other people to invest. This Government observed the law. A law was passed by this Parliament authorising the Government to invest certain moneys in the way they desired they should be invested. That Act was passed during the last session of this Parliament, which concluded towards the end of April. The Bill was assented to on 29 April, and became an Act on 29 April. Consequently, nothing could be done until 29 April. The loan closed on 20 April, nine days before the Bill became an Act. It was impossible for this Government to put any of the money into the last war loan. We were not entitled to do so because there was no Act authorising us to do it. That, therefore, could not possibly be done. The hon. member for Sandgate could have found these particulars had he liked to do so, but he preferred to make this crocodile-tearful appeal that this Government had done something wrong or had missed an opportunity of doing something. Since the opportunity has come to us we have invested money in the next Commonwealth loan. We have set an example to the rest of the States and we have set an example to many people in putting money in straight-away so that the Commonwealth Government might have the use of it.

The hon. member for Sandgate had another wail. He had a long wail because of war restrictions. He lamented this and that. He had one complete wail because we had to stint ourselves from day to day and do without this and do without that because there was a war.

The hon. member for Sandgate happens to have the opinion everybody ought to do something on behalf of the war effort except him, that other people ought to suffer and make sacrifices. He has that selfishness which is known by another name, and that is complacency. I am surprised an hon. member of this Committee should bewail the things that are necessary in war-time. We have to be thankful that the war has barely touched us in the way it has touched other sections of the world. We are not suffering as the people of England are, and if I am to believe the paper this morning we are not suffering

as the people in New York are suffering: two meatless days a week, steak 11s. a lb., a snack lunch (tea and a biscuit) a dollar, an ordinary meal 2 dollars. We talk about restrictions we have to put up with and bewail them—

Mr. Yeates: Who said that? We are not complaining.

The TREASURER: If the hon. member is dissociating himself from the statement of the hon. member for Sandgate then I am delighted to know it. I am pleased he is not associating with the hon. member in the wail or the squeal he put up this morning.

One passing remark I have to offer in regard to criticism by the hon. member for East Toowoomba. He spoke of the big sums of money flowing into the Treasury, no effort having been made by the Government to get it in.

Mr. Yeates: It is rolling in.

The TREASURER: Just rolling in! I wonder if the hon. member knows from what source the money rolls in. From the Railway Department? Who operates the railways and who has kept the railways going but this State? I ask the hon. member for East Toowoomba to remember this: had we not had the railway system we had in this State the work would not have been done. Had we not had 1,000 miles of railway to Cairns the job that has been done could not have been done. Had we not had the railway line to Mount Isa the job that has been done could not have been done. I know the hon. member for East Toowoomba one week took into his office £9 6s. for commission for the renting of houses. He had houses to let, otherwise he could not have got the commission; that is the position, he had houses to let. On another occasion he made a fair amount of money by selling land because he had the land to sell. And this State of Queensland has railways that can be used for traffic, and having railways that can be used for traffic it has the income. What a puerile thing on the part of the hon. member for East Toowoomba to say—that it rolls in!

Mr. L. J. Barnes: The taxpayers pay £40 a ton for haulage from here to Cairns.

The TREASURER: Whatever the taxpayers are paying they pay as a result of an agreement which the several States and the Commonwealth arrived at regarding a common rate for goods. A common rate for goods was arrived at between all the States of the Commonwealth. This State has already made a reduction of 5 per cent. in that charge without being asked to do so by the Commonwealth, and it has promised another 5 per cent. reduction that will operate in three days' time without being asked to do so, and that concession is not given by any other State.

Mr. Yeates: You raised it 20 per cent.

The TREASURER: We did not. I am talking about the common rate that was agreed upon between the Commonwealth and

all the States. A common rate was agreed to, and notwithstanding that we have reduced that rate by 5 per cent. and have promised a further reduction of 5 per cent. from 1 August.

An Opposition Member: Look at the volume of trade.

The TREASURER: Are we to be blamed for that? Are we to stand at the border and say, "No, no, we cannot take your traffic because we do not want to make any more money." Are we to do that? Let me put it another way. We have up this coast a number of harbours, and as I pointed out before, all those harbours have been a source of income to the State of Queensland. Are we to be blamed because they are there? Are we to be upset because trade has come to Queensland through those harbours? And I want to tell this Committee that no charges are made to the Allied Forces or the Commonwealth Government for pilotage along the coast of Queensland. That is a concession for which we get no credit, because we have not made the announcement.

An Opposition Member: Do you charge them for railrage?

The TREASURER: Ten per cent. less than the other States charge.

An Opposition Member: You charge?

The TREASURER: Yes, because we have amounts to pay. In the matter of pilotage, it has been the custom that war vessels shall be piloted free. Although we may have had, say, three war vessels a year prior to the war—when they found it necessary to come up at Show time to Brisbane—I think it is more than three a day now.

There is another matter that the hon. member overlooks. We have been able to do a splendid job for the Commonwealth in the matter of defence by reason of the fact that we have many main roads in Queensland. All of these main roads are at the service of the Commonwealth and our Allies, absolutely free of cost—without charge. We make no charge for them. They are pounding our roads to pieces, but what of it? We have to meet that cost when the war is over.

Mr. Luckins: Local authorities have to meet it, too, in many cases.

The TREASURER: In some cases they meet a proportion, but the great bulk of the cost of main roads and State highways of Queensland is borne by this Government.

Mr. Macdonald: By the people of this State.

The TREASURER: The people of this State have given us the job to do, and we are the people of this State, and that is all there is about it.

I cannot understand this idea that we have done nothing in this matter. As a matter of fact, I make bold to say that the State of Queensland has made a greater contribution to the war effort than any other State in the

Commonwealth, and I may tell hon. members that over the days that are to come we shall have a greater opportunity of doing that. For years we pointed out that this was the danger State, that this was the State where defence should be concentrated, that this was the place where something should be done because we felt that an attack might come from the north.

Mr. Yeates: Do you mean years before the war started?

The TREASURER: Yes.

Mr. Yeates: Why did you not build a number of locomotives when I warned you?

The TREASURER: We did.

Mr. Yeates: I warned you.

The TREASURER: Does the hon. member know that when war broke out we lent locomotives to other States?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The TREASURER: We had our railways in such an efficient condition that virtually without additional repair they have kept going at a tremendous rate for nearly two years. That could not have been done by a service that was not in thorough repair. The bare fact that they have done the job so well is evidence of the efficiency of the railways, that they were in a first-class condition when they were called upon to do the job.

Mr. Dart: The rolling stock was not.

The TREASURER: The hon. member knows that the Tin Lizzie he drives needs tightening up the moment he has finished with it. He also knows that his boots after he walks a mile or two need re-soling. He also knows that if he wears his hat too frequently he must use a little something or another to revive it, so that the scalp under the hat will have a proper covering for it. Wear and tear occurs in everything, and that has happened to a tremendous extent in the railways because of the additional traffic. I am reminded of the foolishness of people who do not look to the future. Some nine or 10 months before Japan came into the war Mr. Menzies said that the man who said that Japan was coming into the war was a fool or a knave. Japan came into the war.

Mr. Luckins: I remember Mr. Curtin's saying that.

The TREASURER: No, he did not say that.

Mr. Luckins: He did.

The TREASURER: He did not. Mr. Curtin was afraid of it, and pointed out his fear time and again, and it was in answer to one of the things he said that Mr. Menzies made that statement.

Mr. Maher: But is not there such a thing as political diplomacy under certain circumstances?

The TREASURER: Very good. If political diplomacy is good enough for Mr.

Menzies, I hope that hon. members on the other side will remember that it is good enough for Mr. Curtin also. One cannot have one law for the goose and another for the gander. If one makes a law for Mr. Menzies, the goose, one will have to make it for everybody.

Mr. Luckins: That would be fair enough.

The TREASURER: It would be fair, except that there is no reason to make a law for both of them; it is only necessary to "square off" for one.

I am quite satisfied that the Committee will agree to the vote. It is necessary to carry on the services of the State.

Mr. Yeates: As to these reductions, might I ask you very nicely—

The TREASURER: What reductions?

Mr. Luckins: In railway freights.

The TREASURER: We are making a reduction.

Mr. Yeates: Not so much that just now, but stamp duties and super land tax.

The TREASURER: Oh, I would advise the hon. member, if he desires to do things, to become Leader of the Government; then he may do what he desires done. I can set up a little objective in front of him: to keep one thing in mind, to have one purpose. May I advise the hon. member for East Toowoomba to be the leader of his party, to see he sweeps the country before him and becomes in complete charge? It will be no new thing for the hon. members on the other side or the parties to which they belong. Heaven knows, they are particularly fond of changing their leaders, as fond of changing their leaders as they are of changing their name.

They have absolute freedom of action, absolute freedom of decision, as we saw a little while ago, when they did not know whether to back up a desire for the upholding of the decency and dignity of this Chamber or not.

This money is necessary so that we may carry on the government of the State and provide for the various services, and I feel sure that the Committee will not deny the Government these amounts at this stage.

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton) (4.4 p.m.): I join with the Treasurer in deploring unruly scenes in the Chamber, but I felt justified in opposing the suspension of the hon. member for Bundaberg, because I thought it was unduly penalising him to deprive him of his salary. In the eyes of members of the Government the hon. member for Bundaberg might have made statements that are not warranted, but one has to take into account the circumstances in which he finds himself. I like to be impartial, judicial, and fair to all hon. members and to allow the utmost freedom to hon. members to express themselves, although I do object to licence. At the same time the hon. member no doubt entertains a

grievance against members of the Government in the sense that he was, without doubt, punished twice for the same offence by the amending Coroners Act.

The Attorney-General: That does not justify obscene language.

Mr. MAHER: At the time the Bill was passed, I thought it was a distinct infringement of British law. It is not right to punish a man twice for the one offence. The Coroners Act Amendment Act provided that a person who failed to disclose the whereabouts of a missing friend about whom he was alleged to have information could be fined £10, and then on a subsequent day he could be brought before the court and be committed to prison. If that is not punishing a man twice for the same offence, then I do not understand the term. I might say, too, that it is an important departure from the ancient Roman law from which our British law is derived. Three thousand years ago the Romans had this principle of law—

"Nemo debet bis puniri pro uno delicto."

Which, translated, means—

"No one should be punished twice for one fault."

As our justice is derived from the Emperor Justinian and the great principles of British law are based on the ancient Roman legal practice, that is something that no Parliament should depart from. It is unfair to have submitted the hon. member for Bundaberg to two penalties, to fine him £10 in the first instance, then to call him up again on a subsequent day and commit him to prison. That provision will remain a blot on the Queensland law and I hope the time will come when some Government will see their way clear to remove it and to adhere to sound British principles in this respect.

When the hon. member for Bundaberg was speaking this afternoon it was obvious that he spoke with some emotional strain in the sense that he had not been dealt with quite fairly according to the British conception of justice, and again he also had a grievance in the sense that some outrageous statement against his character was painted up on streets and windows in the city of Mackay during the by-election. It is fair enough for him to assume that whoever put it there certainly did not belong to his supporters, and possibly he entertained the idea that some agent of the Government Party had been responsible for that slander.

I want to mention these things in fairness to the hon. member. Every man, rich or poor, high or low, is entitled to basic justice, and, therefore, I felt this afternoon that whatever indiscretions he committed in the Chamber, whatever scene he was a party to, at least he was speaking under that personal sense of injustice that gets down very deeply in the heart of any man. In the circumstances I thought it was not right, even if the Committee felt that he should have been suspended, to deprive him of his salary, and that is the reason why I remained in the Chamber and opposed the Government's move for his suspension.

The Treasurer: His statement was premeditated by reason of the fact that we had a session of Parliament after the Mackay by-election, and if he had been suffering under a sense of injustice he would have brought it up during that session. The whole thing was premeditated, calmly premeditated.

Mr. MAHER: No. I like to see the good in every man, and I like to be fair. Yesterday I raised a matter by way of a question and the Treasurer was good enough to refer to it when he spoke to-day. It relates to a reference in the Brisbane "Telegraph" of the 5th of this month in which it published a statement bearing the imprint of an official Treasury announcement in which these words are used—

"Thus had there not been a transfer of five and a-quarter millions the Treasury would have shown a surplus unprecedented in the history of the State."

That is followed up by the Speech from the Throne yesterday in which His Excellency is made to say—

"Already an amount of £5,250,000 has been allocated from consolidated revenue to the credit of the reserve fund."

It will be noted that the official statement says that at 30 June the sum of £5,250,000 had already been placed to the credit of the reserve fund.

At 4.10 p.m.,

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. MAHER: Of course, it is very clear to me that Orders in Council would have been issued covering this transfer of funds, but what I want to submit is that this does not fairly state the position. In fact, it is misleading in that there was actually a surplus of £5,352,000 at 30 June last—in other words, the surplus of £102,000, which the Government admit is not the true surplus because a further sum of £5,250,000 had not been legally credited to the reserve fund. I am suggesting to the Committee that the sum of £5,250,000, although approved by Order in Council for transfer to the credit of the reserve fund, has not been truly so credited and cannot be until Parliament has appropriated that sum. Therefore, the truth of the matter is that there was a surplus of £5,352,000 at 30 June last. If the Government had been concerned to set out the correct position they should have said that Orders in Council had been approved covering the sum of £5,250,000, which amount would in accordance with the Act be appropriated in the coming session of Parliament. That is the correct version and that is how it should have been presented.

The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs: All the money set out in Supplementary Estimates represents amounts spent in the previous financial year.

Mr. MAHER: But this sum has not been spent at all. It is money that, according to the Treasurer's statement, is credited to the reserve fund. It is not an expenditure at all,

it is funds that are in hand. Therefore, I say that the facts have been concealed. The facts are that there was actually a surplus of £5,352,000 at 30 June last, and that should have been indicated. We are not entitled to say that there was a surplus of only £102,000, when there was not a completed legal transfer of £5,250,000 to the reserve fund. I just offer that mild protest against what I hold to be an attempt by the Government to mislead the public in regard to the true position of the State's finances as at 30 June last. There is not a great deal in it because I realise that the Government will provide for the necessary appropriation when the Supplementary Estimates are brought down, but there is an attempt to conceal the true position of the State's finances as at 30 June last.

There is no doubt that the Government have had an extraordinarily prosperous year with all their undertakings. That is all to the good.

Mr. Jesson: That is the part you are wild about.

Mr. MAHER: On the contrary, I am very pleased to see the State's finances so buoyant. The revenue for the year was £29,200,000, as against £23,662,000 for the previous financial year. There was a remarkable increase in revenue. However, the Government have run true to form in the sense that no matter how buoyant the revenue, the expenditure always seems to rise in the same proportion. The figures give the expenditure as £29,182,000. Admittedly £5,250,000 was appropriated for the post-war reserve fund.

The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs: The expenditure in the Railway Department has to keep in relation to the revenue.

Mr. MAHER: I am not dealing with the Railway Department's accounts; I am dealing with the general revenue account. Its expenditure figures are in very close relation to revenue. However, the Government have been fortunate in experiencing all the prosperous circumstances that have come about since the war, and principally on account of the improved earning capacity of the railways. That is a very great change for us all. We used to see heavy railway deficits from year to year. It is very fortunate that the railways have been capable of maintaining and giving the fine results they have had in recent years. We know that has been brought about by the extraordinary conditions that obtain in this State to-day.

Although the revenue is so buoyant I should like to emphasise once again the point made in this Committee to-day, which was also brought up during the last session, namely, the possibility of the Government's investing a greater sum of money now in the post-war reserve fund in Commonwealth War Loan. There is no point in having £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 lying idle at credit in the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Trust Fund when it could be used in the way suggested and the interest drawn upon. On a previous occasion I suggested that the State should

make available its surplus revenues to the Commonwealth so as to ease the drain on the public who are called upon to subscribe to the maximum amount from their earnings to help the various appeals for money to finance the war.

The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs: All surplus revenue is at the service of the Commonwealth in the way of bank deposits.

Mr. MAHER: That is very specious. The Minister does not suggest that the Commonwealth is likely to draw a cheque for £3,000,000 on the Post-War Reconstruction and Development Trust Fund.

The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs: The more the States have at credit the more the Commonwealth has for its use.

Mr. MAHER: No Commonwealth Government would attempt to interfere with the funds of a State in the way the Minister so plausibly suggests. I am going to suggest that it is an obligation on the Government to make money available from this reserve fund to the Commonwealth in the next war loan.

I am glad to see from the Governor's Speech that provision has already been made by the Government to subscribe to the war loans, that £1,500,000 was subscribed to the war loan during the past year from the Post-War Reconstruction and Development Trust Fund and in addition £630,000 from the State Government Insurance Office, and £774,000 from other funds. That is a step in the right direction. I hope the Government in the coming year will see that some of the surpluses now lying idle in this fund will be made available to the Commonwealth for its urgent requirements. The more money the States can supply in that direction the less the call on the people to subscribe to the mighty war effort of the Commonwealth Government.

There is another aspect of the matter, too. If the Government do not propose an active policy to make these sums available to the war loans in accordance with our suggestion, there is an obligation upon them to consider the case of the taxpayer. Surely the taxpayer is entitled to some consideration, for he is carrying very great burdens under present-day conditions. That is true of all taxpayers, from those in the lower scale of taxable incomes to those in the higher range. A very great burden is borne by the people in financing the war. Surely there is room for a remission in taxation in some direction or other from these buoyant revenues. That is a matter that might engage the attention of the Treasurer and his Ministers when considering their fiscal policy for the ensuing year.

Admittedly, there has been a rebate of 5 per cent. in railway fares and freights, but 5 per cent. is a mere flea-bite against the heavy increase in railway fares and freights imposed by the Government since they assumed office under Hon. W. Forgan Smith in 1932. The recent 5-per-cent. reduction,

taken into account with other remissions that have been made by the Government, does not in any way total the amount by which they have increased the fares and freights since 1932.

The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs: During the year there was a wage increase that in the normal course of events should have sent freights and fares up.

Mr. MAHER: Despite the wage increase, the railway revenue was never more buoyant, therefore it is only fair that those who patronised the railways should get a better reduction than the 5 per cent. that was made recently. Many of the freights payable on the railways are exceedingly heavy, and the people who provide the sinews of government are entitled to some consideration when times are good. It has been previously laid down by sound economists, and it was supported by Sir Alfred Davidson, the general manager of the Bank of New South Wales, that it is sound economics for Governments to make remissions of tax when times are good and impose them when times are bad and there is call to help those who are in need. These are good times. I suppose once this war has passed and the U.S. Army leaves the country and we settle down to peace-time conditions we shall look back to this period as a golden age so far as Government revenue and railway revenue is concerned. At a time like this the taxpayer is entitled to hold up his hand and ask for some consideration from the Government in the matter of remissions.

The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs: To-day's editorial in the "Telegraph" commends the Government for keeping money for inevitable post-war work.

Mr. MAHER: There should be some remission, and I suggest there should be a greater remission from the railway receipts. I have no doubt the Government are working with a double-headed penny in this question of taxation because they are not only holding all the buoyant revenue derived from tax sources and put in the post-war reserve fund, but I note that the Income (State Development) Tax Act has not been repealed. I listened with some interest to the Speech by His Excellency for some reference to a repeal of the Income (State Development) Tax Act, but none was forthcoming.

The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs: It is not in operation.

Mr. MAHER: It is not in operation, but it is in suspense—it has not been repealed. As the Treasurer has just come back into the Chamber, I ask him what he means by this set of conditions: that the Income (State Development) Tax Act, which is no longer operating, is not repealed? Why is not a Bill brought down to repeal that Act? What is the use of cluttering the statutes with a Bill that is not operating.

The Treasurer: The Income Tax Act is not functioning either.

Mr. MAHER: There is a difference between the Income Tax Act and the Income

(State Development) Tax Act, so it must be that the Treasurer has high hopes that once again he will be able to utilise the powers in that statute to dig deeper into the pockets of the taxpayers of the State. In the terms of the Income (State Development) Tax Act he might have it both ways. He might remit all the tax revenues to the credit of the post-war reserve fund and at the same time when the Commonwealth Government bring the Income (State Development) Tax Act back to life he will be able to draw more funds out of the pockets of the suffering taxpayers of the State. Why not abolish the Income (State Development) Tax Act?

The Treasurer: Let me mention why. You know what Cicero said, "Let to-morrow bring forth its measure."

Mr. MAHER: "Never put off till to-morrow that which can be done to-day." There is an opportunity for the Treasurer to show his bona fides, to show he has some consideration for the taxpayers, and that he does not intend to take it all now while the going is good and put the tax revenues in a post-war reserve fund and at the same time hope to go on in the post-war period with the Income (State Development) Tax Act again. Those of us here who have had some experience of the operations of that Act would be very glad to see it repealed.

There is just another point in connection with that Act to which I wish to draw the attention of the Committee. Whilst this Act remains, unless it is repealed, abolished, or cancelled, whatever one may prefer to say, the Taxation Department owes the taxpayers the amount of their original tentative assessments and they are entitled to have that money refunded. That money does not belong to the State, but to the individual taxpayers. By what right does the Treasurer abrogate to himself the right to hold that money belonging to each individual taxpayer of this State?

Mr. Yeates: Shame on them!

Mr. MAHER: Shame on him, when his coffers are bursting because of the buoyancy of the times. There is an obligation on the Treasurer to repeal that Act, abolish it, and thus enable the Commissioner for Taxes to refund the amounts of the tentative assessments that were paid when the Act was originally introduced, so that justice can be done.

The Treasurer: Perhaps the difference between your assessment and the tentative assessment might be that you would pay more taxes.

Mr. MAHER: The hon. gentleman cannot escape in that way.

The Treasurer: It is a tentative assessment pending the receipt of your full statement.

Mr. MAHER: If the Act was repealed we could have the whole matter straightened out.

Mr. Luckins: And a refund made.

Mr. MAHER: The taxpayer is entitled to that.

There is little more that I can say in the time allotted me, but I was rather interested in the reference the Treasurer made to the Unemployment Insurance Fund, which has an aggregate credit of £1,600,000, when he refused to meet the suggestion of the Leader of the Opposition that contributions should cease for the period of the war on account of the buoyancy of that fund. Apparently the Treasurer, at any rate by implication, says that he has no confidence himself in the suggested new order.

The Treasurer: I want to know who is going to control it first.

Mr. MAHER: There are all the free hand-outs of the Curtin Government. He stated all men would be employed when the war ceased.

(Time expired.)

Mr. L. J. BARNES (Cairns) (4.30 p.m.):
Mr. Mann—

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

Mr. LUCKINS (Maree) (4.30 p.m.): I can see this £5,000,000 set aside for the reconstructing period causing confliction in the future with the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth Government are making provision for the reconstruction period that is to come after the war and apparently it is a matter of the States and the Commonwealth Government vying with each other for favour by giving the best consideration to the electors. That matter should be cleared up in the interests of Australia generally. Is the State going to accept all the responsibilities of rehabilitating the soldiers, or is the Commonwealth going to accept full responsibility? I should like the Treasurer to enlighten the Committee on that question, the dual control that we find to-day. I speak as a taxpayer to the State and the Commonwealth, and it is difficult for the general public to know which Government are accepting the responsibility for the reconstruction period. If there is to be conflicting legislation by the State and Federal Governments confusion will result.

I ask the Treasurer to give serious consideration to a reduction in what may be termed the smaller matters, matters nevertheless that are worth considering. For instance, stamp duties could now be reduced to a reasonable sum. At present it costs 25s. for a new title deed. A pound would be enough for this. These little things mean much to the worker trying to make his home his own. There could be an elimination of stamp duties on receipts for amounts under £5. It would be reasonable now to collect 1d. stamp duty on receipts for amounts between £5 and £50. This reduction would be a gesture of good will on the part of the Government.

There is the most important question of milk zoning in the city of Brisbane. To-day we see an unfortunate set of circumstances

that are causing much concern to the citizens. Confusion reigns supreme in the department in control. I have yet to understand why the Government charges each milk vendor three guineas on his application for his district. If the zoning of milk runs in Brisbane is not to be proceeded with will the Government refund the three guineas paid on the application?

That is all I have to say, and I am sorry that the Treasurer, in the heat of argument, tackled my friend, the hon. member for Sandgate. I remind the Treasurer that he has a wonderful war record, and is heart and soul in the winning of this war.

The Treasurer: I did not say anything against that.

Motion (Mr. Cooper) agreed to.

Resolution reported, received, and agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS.

COMMITTEE.

VOTE ON ACCOUNT, £13,400,000.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Brassington, Fortitude Valley, in the chair.)

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

“(a) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1943-1944, a further sum not exceeding £5,000,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland, exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.

“(b) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1943-1944, a further sum not exceeding £8,000,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

“(c) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1943-1944, a further sum not exceeding £400,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.”

Motion agreed to.

Resolutions reported, received, and agreed to.

APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 1.

FIRST READING.

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

SECOND READING.

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

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

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) (4.41 p.m.): I do not propose to discuss the Bill. I rise solely to explain the attitude of the Opposition towards an incident that occurred in the

Committee to-day. I do not wish it to be thought that the attitude of the Opposition in supporting the hon. member for Bundaberg in connection with his suspension means that the Opposition would uphold unseemly scenes and approve of lack of dignity in this Chamber. Nothing of the sort. We are just as keen in upholding dignity in this House as any other hon. member and the only reason why we voted as we did was—as explained by the hon. member for West Moreton—that we thought the sentence imposed was too severe. I should like to take this opportunity of assuring the Treasurer that the Opposition join with him at all times in endeavouring to uphold the dignity and prestige of this Assembly.

The TREASURER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) (4.43 p.m.): There is the possibility that some hon. members may view the matter in a different way from others. The hon. member for West Moreton quoted Latin in the course of his remarks, but I can quote Latin, too, with equal applicability. I should like to quote this—

“Habet aliquid ex iniquo omne magnum exemplum, quod contra singulos utilitate publica rependitur.”

That really means that every great example of punishment has in it some injustice, but the suffering of the individual is compensated by the public good.

Motion (Mr. Cooper) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Brassington, Fortitude Valley, in the chair)

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

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

The House adjourned at 4.47 p.m.