

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 1921**

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DEVELOPMENT OF AJAX COPPER MINE, NEAR  
BAJOOL.

Mr. BRAND asked the Minister representing the Secretary for Mines—

"1. Is it his intention to assist the development of the Ajax Copper Mine, near Bajool, the property of Messrs. Beach, Duncan, and Finlay?

"2. If so, what is the assistance he proposes to give?

"3. What was the nature of the assistance asked of him?"

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*), on behalf of the Secretary for Mines (Hon. A. J. Jones, M.L.C.), replied—

"1, 2, and 3. Application for assistance on the £1 for £1 basis has been made. The proposition has been reported on by the Government Geologist, Mr. Ball; and an estimate of the cost of the work recommended is now being prepared by the Inspector for Mines."

ARRANGEMENTS TO MEET INTEREST IN LONDON  
ON QUEENSLAND LOANS.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*) asked the Treasurer—

"By reason that the balances at 31st December, 1920, in the hands of the Agent-General, amount to only £1,427, which sum, when added to the balance of loan money receivable in London, inclusive of the £1,000,000 accommodation loan, as from that date, totals approximately £600,000, will he epitomise any arrangement made, or to be made, to meet the interest on Queensland bonds and inscribed stock and State's share of Commonwealth loans up to 31st December, 1921, amounting to over £2,000,000, as well as for payment in London for other services, such as, approximately, £300,000 for Government indents?"

The TREASURER (Hon. J. A. Fihelly, *Paddington*) replied—

"I thoroughly probed this question and the statement upon which it is based, and must candidly confess that the whole thing baffles me. I submitted the question then to the Treasury officials. They say it is quite unintelligible to them. However, if the hon. member is apprehensive regarding the Government's ability to arrange for meeting interest and other services to 31st December, 1921, due in London, I can allay his fears by stating that provision has already been made."

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER, 1921.

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

## QUESTIONS.

## MOTOR-CAR REGISTRATION FEES.

Mr. BRAND (*Burrum*) asked the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises—

"1. Is it a fact that fees being collected for the registration of motor-cars are being placed to the credit of State enterprises?

"2. If so, what is the object of this innovation?"

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

"1. No. This suggestion is as foolish as it is false. The hon. member should know that the Main Roads Act provides for all such fees being paid into the Main Roads Fund, and used by the board for the purposes set out in that Act.

"2. See answer to No. 1."

[*Hon. A. J. Jones.*]

RESULT OF ADMIRALTY TEST OF STYX RIVER  
COAL.

Mr. FORDE (*Rockhampton*) asked the Premier—

"1. Has he received from the Commonwealth Government the result of the test made of 200 tons of Styx River coal on H.M.A.S. 'Sydney' last month?

"2. If not, will he please communicate with the Acting Prime Minister, with a view to ascertaining the result of the test and having the Styx River coal used by the Australia Navy instead of the Welsh coal now being used?"

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

"1. No.

"2. Yes."

## INSPECTION OF BENZINE ON S.S. "CANASTOTA."

Mr KIRWAN (*Brisbane*) asked the Treasurer—

"1. Is it a fact that certain regulations of the Brisbane Harbour Board provide for the loading of explosives and oils of an inflammable nature only by the authority and permission of the board?"

"2. Did the local agents of the ill-fated s.s. 'Canastota' apply for a permit to load a cargo of benzine about May last?"

"3. Was the usual inspection made during the loading of this cargo, and prior to the departure of the steamer mentioned?"

"4. Will he cause investigations to be made to see that the regulations were fully complied with, and, in the event of any non-compliance therewith, institute proceedings for a prosecution?"

The TREASURER replied—

"1. Regulations under the Navigation Acts contain such a provision.

"2. No.

"3. No. The Shipping Inspector was not aware the vessel was loading inflammable oil.

"4. I have approved of a recommendation by the Marine Board that legal proceedings be instituted."

## CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN PREMIER AND BRITISH-AUSTRALASIAN SOCIETY IN RE LOANS, PASTORAL RENTS, AND LEASES.

Mr. FLETCHER (*Port Curtis*) asked the Premier—

"Will he lay upon the table of the House all correspondence, etc., passed between himself and the British-Australasian Society last year in connection with loans, pastoral rents, and leases, etc.?"

The PREMIER replied—

"Yes."

## REPORTS ON YAMPI SOUND IRON ORE DEPOSIT.

Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister representing the Secretary for Mines—

"1. Was the Yampi Sound iron ore deposit purchased by the Government for about £33,000 after receiving adverse reports upon the proposition from the majority of the Commission sent to investigate?"

"2. Will he table the majority and minority reports?"

The HOME SECRETARY, on behalf of the Secretary for Mines, replied—

"1 and 2. Adverse reports were not received."

## GOVERNMENT COLD STORES AT HAMILTON.

Mr. FLETCHER asked the Secretary for Public Works—

Re Hamilton Cold Stores—

"1. Is it a fact that the cost of completing the Hamilton Cold Stores is now expected to be considerably more than the estimate of £250,000?"

"2. What sum are the stores, wharf, and railway siding, separately, now expected to cost?"

"3. What sum has been expended on each to date?"

"4. Has some of the refrigerating machinery been re-offered for sale or is it to be re-offered?"

"5. Is it a fact that the cork board supplied by local manufacturers is of most inferior quality and likely to prove most inefficient for insulating purposes?"

"6. What did the cork board cost?"

"7. Could not the 'Nonpareil' brand, recognised as equal to the best in the world for the purpose, have been procured at only a fractional higher price?"

"8. (a) When was the construction work started; (b) when will it be completed?"

"9. Is there any truth in the rumour that the construction of the stores is to be abandoned?"

"10. If not, will the Government appoint a competent commission of inquiry to report upon the advisability and practicability of abandoning the work—cutting the loss as the best course in the interests of the community?"

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH replied—

"1. No.

"2. Stores, including cork board, but exclusive of machinery, £125,000; wharf, £34,000; railway siding, £21,500.

"3. Stores, including cork board, but exclusive of machinery, £70,097; wharf, £23,458; railway siding, £7,261.

"4. No. No offer has been received.

"5. No. The department had exhaustive tests made of this cork board by the engineering branch of the University, and it was found to be quite up to standard.

"6. Two shillings and twopence (2s. 2d.) per superficial foot.

"7. The price quoted for 'Nonpareil' was two shillings and five pence (2s. 5d.) per superficial foot. While this brand is of high quality, it is the policy of the Government to encourage local manufactures; and I point out to the hon. member that it is grossly unfair to attempt through Parliament to boost the company he is apparently interested in by defaming the product of a Queensland industrial concern employing citizens of our own State.

"8. (a) November, 1919; (b) cannot at present be definitely stated.

"9. No. I would remind the hon. gentleman that 'Rumour is a lying jade,' and advise him not to give too much credence to statements which may be made to him by men whose services have been dispensed with.

"10. No."

Mr. FLETCHER: I have no interest whatsoever in the company the hon. gentleman referred to.

## GOVERNMENT PURCHASE OF FROZEN BEEF.

Mr. FLETCHER (*Port Curtis*) asked the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises—

"1. Is it a fact that about 1,500 tons of frozen beef were purchased from a meat company in Queensland this year for sale in State shops?"

"2. Is it a fact that heavy storage has been incurred on this beef?"

"3. Why was such beef not sold through the shops?"

"4. Is it a fact that arrangements have or are being made to ship this beef for sale overseas?"

"5. Is it a fact that at present price of beef overseas the State will lose at least £20,000, and probably considerably more, on this transaction?"

"6. Is it a fact that purchase money was still owing the vendors for this beef on Friday last?"

"7. Is it not a fact that as the purchase money has not been paid the transaction will not come within the purview of the Auditor-General for last financial year, and, therefore, the information will not be contained in his report as inferred by him in his reply on Friday last?"

"8. In view of this fact, and the extraordinarily unsatisfactory nature of the transaction, will he answer these questions for the information of the owners—namely, the people?"

"9. In what way can the answering of these questions assist the State's competitors in trade as alleged by him?"

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH replied—

"1 to 9. The hon. member has already been informed that this and every other transaction is subject to review by the Auditor-General, and that in addition full information will be furnished in the report of the Trade Commissioner. The hon. member's endeavours to extract information from outside sources—including certain meat companies—about the business of the State Butchery Department, show that he is not acting in the public interest, but in the interests of private enterprise."

PRICES OF BEEF AND MUTTON, BRISBANE.

Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises—

"In view of cattle and sheep having fallen in price about 100 per cent. in the past twelve months, while retail prices for beef and mutton in Brisbane show only a slight decline in comparison—

1. Is it a fact that the retail market has been kept intentionally high by the Government (notwithstanding the operations of the Price Fixing Commissioner) in order to enable the Government to recover some of the enormous losses occasioned by the administration of their enterprises?"

2. Is it a fact that the people, especially the workers, are being imposed upon by this policy?"

3. In view of the above, will the Government take steps to sell or lease their State shops to private individuals, so that the people may get cheaper meat by natural enterprise and competition?"

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH replied—

"1 to 3. No. If cattle and sheep have fallen in value by 100 per cent. as suggested by the hon. gentleman, they can be of no value at all, which is absurd, and indicates the usual unreliability of the figures he quotes regarding the value of stock. The charges, however, contained in his questions are absolutely false and unwarranted. The hon. member knows full well that the Govern-

ment State meat policy has been of immeasurable benefit to the people of Queensland. He also knows that the State shops have sold 45,000 tons of beef to the people at an average price of from 4d. to 5½d. per lb. since their inception and, whilst doing so, have managed their business so efficiently that they have returned a certified net profit of approximately £140,000 during that period. The State shops are buying and selling fresh beef and mutton in open and successful competition with private enterprise, and the Government proposes to continue that policy in the interests of the people of Queensland."

STATE CATTLE AND STATE BUTCHERS' SHOPS.

Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises—

"Following the answers to my questions on Friday last re the 14,867 cattle, and in view of the irregular and far-reaching effect of the book transfer as made—

1. Will he, in the public interest, reconsider his decision re giving the information asked for in my questions on Friday?"

2. As the Auditor General deals with the accounts, and not with individual deliveries of cattle, is it not a fact that the information will not be given by the Auditor-General in his report, as inferred by him in his reply?"

3. In what way can the giving of the information assist the State's trade competitors as suggested by him in his reply?"

The SPEAKER: This question has already been asked this session. Questions asked or answered, or to which answers have been refused, cannot be renewed the same session; but, as this question appears on the business-paper, I have allowed it to be put.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH replied—

"1 to 3. The transfer of these cattle through the State Butchery Department was quite in order, and has been carried out satisfactorily. The hon. member, unfortunately, is lamentably deficient in a knowledge of accountancy by the way he refers to the transaction in question. In doing so, he also reflects on the Auditor-General, who certified to the correctness of the State meat supply balance-sheet last year, which included this transaction. The hon. member's questions have evidently been framed with a view to disturbing that public confidence in our business which is essential to the success of any competitive enterprise, whether State or private."

INSURANCE OF SUFFERERS IN MOUNT MULLIGAN DISASTER.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE asked the Attorney-General—

"Will the compensation payable under the Workers' Compensation Act in connection with the Mount Mulligan disaster fall entirely upon the Insurance Commissioner, or is any of it covered by re-insurance?"

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J. Mullan, *Flinders*) replied—

"The Insurance Commissioner is liable for the whole of the compensation in

connection with the Mount Mulligan disaster. The risk was not reinsured, and this policy has been amply justified by the results of the workers' compensation section of the State Insurance Office. For the information of the hon. member, I would point out that, had a policy of reinsurance been carried out, the reinsurance premiums would have exceeded in any one year the total compensation payable in connection with this great disaster."

#### LEGISLATION TO ABOLISH LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE asked the Premier—  
"When is it the intention of the Government to introduce legislation to abolish the Legislative Council?"

The PREMIER replied—

"Due notice will be given to the House at the proper time."

#### COMPENSATION TO DEPENDANTS OF SUFFERERS, MOUNT MULLIGAN DISASTER—INSURANCE OF RESCUE PARTIES.

Mr. RYAN (*Cook*), without notice, asked the Attorney-General—

"1. What steps, if any, have been taken by the Insurance Department to expedite the meeting of claims rendered necessary by the Mount Mulligan disaster, where immediate relief may be desirable?"

"2. What protection, if any, will be granted to the rescue parties working to effect the recovery of the bodies of the entombed miners?"

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL replied—

"1. The Commissioner of State Insurance is doing everything possible to facilitate the payment of claims, and, where necessary, to grant temporary financial assistance to those bereaved.

"2. I instructed the State Insurance Commissioner this morning that the Government were to guarantee compensation under the Act to those men engaged in rescue work without payment of any premiums."

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

##### COMPARATIVE STAFFS OF MENTAL HOSPITAL, GOODNA, 1915 AND 1921.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): With the permission of the House, I would like to make a personal explanation.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. member for Oxley be allowed to make a personal explanation?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It is reported that, in reply to my question addressed to the Home Secretary in regard to the number of attendants per shift employed at the Goodna Asylum, the Minister evaded same. In fairness to the Home Secretary, I think it right to say that he laid upon the table of the House a complete answer to my question and permitted me to take the papers away to allow of my making copies thereof.

#### PRIVILEGE.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*): I rise to speak on a question of "privilege." The explanation of the

hon. member for Oxley does not alter the situation at all. Yesterday the hon. gentleman asked me a question concerning the employees of the Goodna Asylum. That question was addressed to myself. All questions which are not political are answered by the head of the department concerned. The question is always sent along to the permanent head of the department, and the answer is supplied and it is given in this House. That is, if it is a question of administration. Yesterday, a question was asked by the hon. member for Oxley and answered by me. I will read to the House exactly what the "Courier" says, and exactly what happened. It is headed "More Evasion," and reads—

"Mr. Elphinstone asked the Home Secretary, in the Legislative Assembly yesterday, what was the number per shift of nurses and attendants respectively engaged on the staff of the Mental Hospital at Goodna at 30th June, 1915, and 15th September, 1921. Mr. McCormack evasively replied that owing to the change from a twelve-hour shift to the eight-hour shift it was impossible to make the comparison."

Now this is the reply that I gave in this House yesterday—

"Owing to the change from a twelve-hour to the eight-hour shift, it is impossible to make the comparison. The hon. member may peruse Dr. Elerton's letter on the matter, which I now lay on the table of the House."

The hon. member for Oxley secured that letter, which more fully gave him the information that he wanted, which could not possibly be given in an answer to a question in this House.

Mr. MORGAN: The answer which you just stated was given yesterday does not appear in the "Votes and Proceedings" for to-day. It says nothing here about you laying the letter on the table of the House.

The HOME SECRETARY: But I did lay it on the table of the House.

Mr. MORGAN: It does not say so in the business-paper for to-day.

The HOME SECRETARY: But I did say so, and everybody here heard me say so. It was laid on the table of the House. This is the point. Either we must get correct reports or we must refuse to answer questions at all. There can be no other course adopted. I certainly am not going to answer questions unless I am correctly reported.

Mr. CORSER: When did you start answering questions?

The HOME SECRETARY: I always answer questions. The procedure adopted by this Press report of the "Courier" can be followed by hon. members. Anyone in the House can refer to "Hansard," and they will see there is a breach of privilege so far as the newspaper report is concerned. I asked you before, Mr. Speaker, to see that reporter; and I ask you again to see him and see that he either gives correct reports or else he should not be permitted to report in this House at all. What is the procedure governing this question of reporting?

Mr. CORSER: Give us something from "Hansard."

The HOME SECRETARY: I will give you something from "Hansard" in a minute. "May," on page 75, has a lot to

*Hon. W. McCormack.]*

say about the privilege of the Press. As a matter of fact, the Press are only privileged to report the debates of the British Parliament, and other Parliaments under the British Constitution, when they give accurate reports; and that permission can be refused at any time. This is what "May" says— I am not going to read it all—

"So long as debates are correctly and faithfully reported, the privilege which prohibits the publication is waived, but, when the report is in bad faith, the publishers of newspapers are liable to censure by the House."

I will give hon. members some illustrations of the methods which are adopted by the reporters, showing how the report appears in the newspapers, and how inaccurate and how unfair it is to members of this House. On 19th August, during the debate on the want of confidence motion, the leader of the Opposition, while the hon. member for Mount Morgan was speaking, made the following interjection—

"Was not that the judge's suggestion?

He knows more than you do about it."

This is the "Courier" report of what Mr. Stopford said—

"It would be impossible for him to know more than I do."

The interjection and Mr. Stopford's reply appear, and that is the end of the report of Mr. Stopford's speech appearing in the "Courier" of 19th August.

Mr. VOWLES: I interjected something about the judge.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is right; your interjection is correct. In "Hansard" we see what did happen. Mr. Vowles made the interjection—

"Was not that the judge's suggestion?

He knows more about it than you do."

And this is what the hon. member for Mount Morgan said in reply—

"It would be impossible for him to know more about the matter than I do, because I worked there for fifteen years, and I know the conditions."

Will anyone in this House say that it was a fair report which appeared in the "Courier"? It simply makes a bald statement, and ends there, because the report of the speech of the hon. member for Oxley starts immediately after the words—

"It would be impossible for him to know more about it than I do."

The report is written in bad faith by this reporter, and I think some action should be taken. It is not the first occasion on which this paper has been hauled over the coals for a similar occurrence, and there was no Labour party in the House then. It was people who were opposed to the squatter party that the "Courier" was then misreporting. I am going to read what was said about the "Courier" in 1869. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The same reporter? (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is the same gutter journalism.

The HOME SECRETARY: In "Hansard" for 1869 it is stated that Mr. Lamb rose to a question of privilege, and moved—

"That the report of the 'Courier' of the debate of this House yesterday, on

{Hon. W. McCormack.

the Pastoral Leases Bill, is a breach of the privileges of this House."

Mr. MORGAN: Was Mr. Lamb not a squatters' representative?

The HOME SECRETARY: No, he was not; he was opposed to the "Courier" misreporting men who were opposed to squatterism.

Mr. VOWLES: I have never known the "Standard" to report what I have said yet.

The HOME SECRETARY: The report states—

"Mr. FRANCIS said that, perhaps, no member in the House had more reason to speak on the subject of misreporting than he had, the paper in question being read most extensively by his constituents; but he laid the chief part of the blame on the hon. member for South Brisbane. The paper being under his management—

"The COLONIAL TREASURER begged to state, for the information of the hon. member, that the direction of the paper had been out of his control for the last six months. He had not, during that time, in any way, interfered with it, nor had he the power to do so, and he expected the hon. member to accept his statement, and to take his word for it.

"Mr. FRANCIS said he accepted the explanation of the hon. member, and would endeavour to take his word for it. He was going to say that in this matter he blamed the hon. member for Port Curtis, the hon. member for Maryborough, the hon. member for Warrego, and some other hon. members, who were said to be a joint-stock company formed to keep up this wretched fountain of falsehood."

These words "this wretched fountain of falsehood" apply well to-day.

Mr. VOWLES: Do you suggest that the Country party are controlling the "Courier"?

The HOME SECRETARY: No, I do not. This quotation proceeds to say that Mr. Walsh, who was a shareholder, said he was quite ashamed of his connection with this paper. I do not know whether it is necessary to go over the whole matter again, but I think if hon. members of the Opposition want replies to questions it is only a fair thing that if the replies are reported at all, they should be reported truthfully. I have no complaint to make if they are not reported.

Mr. VOWLES: Were you the other day referring to the "Courier," the "Standard," or "Hansard"? They all have the same report of the interjection of the hon. member for Normanby.

The HOME SECRETARY: I did not refer to the interjection by the hon. member for Normanby.

Mr. VOWLES: What did you refer to?

The HOME SECRETARY: I can refer to half a dozen interjections which have been replied to by hon. members opposite. The Speaker can tell hon. members that I did not make a complaint and did not mention the interjection of the hon. member for Normanby. I do not know whether he interjected or not.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: You read it in the Press.

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not accept the Press.

Mr. CORSER: The interjection was applied to you.

The HOME SECRETARY: I never heard the interjection.

Mr. VOWLES: I did.

The HOME SECRETARY: I did not refer to the interjection.

Mr. VOWLES: The trouble is that your joke fell flat.

Mr. CORSER: You have seen it in "Hansard" since.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Press are given the questions by the Clerk of this House. Why was the latter part of that question omitted to-day? It appears here. I say it was omitted in bad faith, and, if a change does not take place in regard to reporting, the House should take the matter into consideration, and exclude from the gallery any reporter who reports in bad faith.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear! (Opposition interruption.)

Mr. VOWLES: You will have to do the same thing with the "Standard."

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not care what paper it is. The hon. gentleman says the "Standard" never reports him.

Mr. VOWLES: They twist everything we say.

The TREASURER: That is not the point.

The HOME SECRETARY: I have no fault to find with not being reported; it is the misreporting that I complain about. The only result that can come of the whole thing, if they continue doing this sort of thing, is either to exclude the offending pressman—

Mr. VOWLES: Hang them all.

The HOME SECRETARY: Or to refuse to give information at all.

Mr. MOORE: Exclude them.

The HOME SECRETARY: I would have no hesitation as to what I would do. (Opposition interruption.)

Mr. MOORE: Do it, instead of talking about it.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask hon. members to allow the Home Secretary to make his statement without interruption.

Mr. MOORE: He is annoyed with the Premier.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Home Secretary has the right to speak on a question of privilege if he so desires.

The HOME SECRETARY: Hon. members of the Country party have no conception of the privilege of Parliament. I am not pleading for any particular paper. I think it is due to hon. members on both sides of the House to see that the proceedings of this Parliament are reported correctly. I do not care what paper it is that misreports—action should be taken regarding it. Hon. members on the other side should immediately raise the question if they are affected. Throughout the country—and this affects the hon. members on both sides of the House—the newspapers are degrading Parliament.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Hear, hear! [4 p.m.]

Mr. WARREN: They could not do it.

The HOME SECRETARY: Hon. members may be pleased with that attitude at present. They may be satisfied to encourage throughout the length and breadth of the country contempt of Parliament. But the reaction will be on themselves, and not on this party.

Mr. WARREN: We will tackle it.

The HOME SECRETARY: And if newspapers are allowed to bring the proceedings of Parliament into contempt continually—again and again—every member of this House is neglecting his duty if he does not call attention to it.

The PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I rise to support the attitude adopted by the Home Secretary in rising in his place on a question of "privilege" and pointing out the injury to Parliament—the attack upon the foundations of Parliament that is made when newspapers maliciously garble the accounts of its proceedings.

Mr. CORSER: Are you referring to the "Standard"?

The PREMIER: I do not want to get into a wrangle with the hon. member, who apparently does not understand the nature of the question that is raised, or with either of the two members who have been so persistent in interrupting the Home Secretary and who apparently do not understand what is involved. It is not a question raised for party purposes. Hon. members on that side have the same privilege as members over here, and they will be supported by us if they can show that their attitude is grossly misrepresented in the public Press. Every member has a right to be protected—it does not matter from what newspaper. A member makes his speech and takes full responsibility for his attitude; but he has a perfect right to be defended from any wilful, malicious misconstruction of his views.

Mr. CORSER: Where is the wilful, malicious misconstruction?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: I do not propose to answer the hon. member. His shallowness is so well understood that I address my remarks more particularly to the more mature members of the Chamber. In my opinion, it is high time that hon. members insist, if we are to have reports in the daily newspapers of the proceedings of Parliament, that they report the proceedings in good faith, and set them fairly forth. If newspapers object to the views I enunciate, nobody is going to expect them to publish those views; but, if they do publish a report of my speech or of that of any other hon. member as an account of my or his views, I expect and demand that they shall report them in a way that fairly represents those views. Every hon. member has a right to demand that, and, therefore, I support the attitude adopted by the Home Secretary; and I would suggest that, unless the newspapers do make some reasonable effort to give a fair report of members' speeches, a fair account of the attitude adopted by members, a fair setting forth of the views enunciated, they should be excluded from the gallery.

Mr. CORSER: You would like to exclude them if you could. (Interruption.)

The SPEAKER: Order! If the hon. member will not obey my call to order, I must deal with him more drastically.

*Hon. E. G. Theodore!*

The PREMIER: There is no question of vindictiveness in the attitude adopted by the Home Secretary or myself, or by any other member on this side. The "Courier," the "Daily Mail," or "The Telegraph," or any other newspaper in Queensland can criticise us as severely as they like, as drastically as they like, so long as they are producing the views uttered by hon. members; but I certainly object—and any man with a spark of manhood would object—to any garbled report of a speech which misrepresents the views of a member, and which is followed up with an attack upon him in their editorial columns. If that kind of thing is continued, this House will have to take action to exclude the offenders from the gallery, and I, for one, will be prepared, unless some change for the better is adopted by those responsible, to initiate in this House a motion to the effect suggested.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): Apparently some of the newspapers have fallen foul of the most touchy man in the House, the Home Secretary. (Opposition laughter.) His dignity has been upset, and, when you upset the dignity of the Home Secretary, you have to suffer for it. A few days ago we had a similar matter before this Chamber. On that occasion an hon. member said that a certain newspaper had misrepresented what happened in this House. He tells us to-day that, when a certain reference was made to the matter, he was not in this Chamber.

The HOME SECRETARY: I did not hear it.

Mr. VOWLES: He was giving an answer to the question—the inspired question asked by the hon. member for Mundingburra—because it was done in order to have a dig at a member who had come from their side of the House to this side of the House, and, when the joke fell flat, in his confusion—because he did not make the hit he thought he would make—I give him, at any rate, the benefit of the doubt by believing that he did not hear what was said—if he did not hear the interjection—and every other hon. member did hear it—he has no right to come into this House and say that the newspaper was guilty of misrepresentation, especially as "Hansard" reports exactly what appeared in all the other papers.

The HOME SECRETARY: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member said that I came here and objected to certain interjections, and that the interjection of the hon. member for Normanby was one of them. As you know yourself, Mr. Speaker, I never mentioned that interjection to you, and I never mentioned it in this House.

Mr. VOWLES: If the hon. member did not speak of that directly, he spoke in riddles.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES: And I venture to say that everybody in this Chamber and the Press took it to be a reference to the interjection to which I am referring; and you will see in "Hansard" exactly the same interjection as in the "Courier," and you will find the same thing in the "Standard." If you look up the records of the House you will find, on page 188, an answer to a certain question asked by the hon. member for Oxley which is altogether different from what the hon. members says. This is how it appears in the business-paper—

"Owing to the change from a twelve-

hour to the eight-hour shift, it is impossible to make the comparison. The hon. member may peruse Dr. Ellerton's letter on the matter."

What happened was that he said he was going to place the letter on the table.

The HOME SECRETARY: Did I not?

Mr. VOWLES: Yes; but the annals of the House do not say so.

The TREASURER: Does not the reporter report that?

Mr. VOWLES: So far as a true report of the proceedings here is concerned, "Hansard" does not give us a true report. They take a true report, but by the time the proofs reach hon. members they are altered. You have only to look at my proof of what I said yesterday. In reply to an interjection I said that "once a man starts to twist he usually falls in." You will not find that in my proof. Probably somebody has altered it.

The PREMIER: Who do you suggest altered it?

Mr. VOWLES: I do not know.

The PREMIER: Do you suggest that I did?

Mr. VOWLES: No. I believe the Speaker did. I believe he supervises the proofs. I do not know who it is.

The SPEAKER: The Speaker does not supervise proofs.

Mr. VOWLES: I was under the impression that you supervised the proofs, because certain things were deleted; but I venture to say that, if you look at the reporters' notes, you will find they are very different from what is set down as having been said.

Mr. HARTLEY: Why did you not revise it yourself? (Interruption.)

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. VOWLES: So far as the members of the Opposition are concerned, it is more the rule than the exception to find remarks made by this side of the House—I would not say they are wilfully distorted or twisted—reported in a way that is not in accordance with what has been stated by hon. members.

Mr. KIRWAN: That is a cowardly attack on "Hansard." It is not fair.

Mr. VOWLES: I am not talking about "Hansard" now. I am talking about the "Standard" now. The reports are a condensed impression of what the reporter considered was said, and very often they are very far from the actual remarks; they are misleading in the sense of the Premier's remarks. But we take it like sports. We know it is part of the newspaper game.

The PREMIER: You have a mighty Press.

Mr. VOWLES: There have been occasions when it has been pointed out to me that I have been reported in the "Standard" as saying certain things that I did not say at all, and, if it comes to the "Worker," you will find that the same thing obtains; but we take the thing as sports. We do not cry over it, as do hon. members opposite. You cannot expect every hon. member to get a verbatim report of everything he says in this House, and where his remarks have been condensed you have merely the impression of the reporter. And they have to be very wonderful, in my mind, to get reports of speeches in this House at all, because at times there is such a hub-bub one can scarcely hear one's self speak. On the first two occasions on which I have spoken in



this House this session it was as much as I could do to hear my own voice, and how those gentlemen up above are able to do their duty and get anything near the remarks of hon. members is more than I can understand.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): There is no doubt that in the past the Press has had a free license. The gentlemen in charge of the censorship of the Press in Queensland have allowed the "Brisbane Courier" to say what it liked during the conscription campaign. For a long time during the war the Federal Government imposed a censorship, but that censorship has gone, and it is up to this House now to bring the paper back to something like normal. It was never fair. It did not know how to be fair. During the war, under the censorship, the "Daily Standard" and other papers were cut to pieces, whilst the "Courier" escaped, and I say that sort of thing spoils the "Courier." It has never given a fair report. The late Hon. T. J. Ryan had occasion to complain of the conduct of the "Courier." We as a party are to blame. We as a Government had the opportunity many a time to bring in a defamation law to deal with the newspapers—the "Courier," "Daily Mail," "Daily Standard," or any other paper. It is a simple matter. There is a law on the South Australian statute-book which compels newspapers to give a correct report, and provides that, if they do condense, they must condense fairly. They are not entitled to write a leading article on things a man never said. We are fighting for democracy; but what is the good of our fighting for democracy if these lying journals are allowed to misrepresent what we say? These newspapers are defaming Queensland with scare headlines, driving capital out of Queensland, just like the hon. member for Bulimba and others. (Opposition laughter.) The reason, I say, is that they do not want competition. But while they are driving capital out, they are erecting big buildings in the Valley. They do it because they are trying to get a monopoly of the business before other companies can come in here and share it. The newspapers are doing that also. They are coming into this House and misrepresenting every speaker on this side. When the hon. member for Mount Morgan made a speech on a very important subject, they gave him half a line, but they report the hon. member for Oxley to the extent of four or five columns. That is all right, but they should not misquote our side. If they do mention us, it should be in correct condensed reports; and I trust that this party, before it goes into recess at Christmas time, will find time to bring forward a Summary Defamation Act to deal with newspapers, allowing it to be done with a minimum of cost, and make them publish the speeches of people accurately, and make them tell the truth in their leading articles. If that is done, we then will have control of the newspapers, so that we may see at least something of the truth in them. The people will get a glimmer of the truth; they will get more information. It is a criminal matter to allow the people outside to be misled. This Government is doing a great deal for the majority of the people. Hon. members know that. We must have a defamation law brought in to deal with newspapers; then we will be able to deal with the "Courier" and other newspapers that are not playing the game.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): The hon. gentleman who introduced this matter this afternoon, as far as I heard him, went into it very fully. I would like to ask,—Is it not very largely what one might regard as a storm in a teacup? I want to find what really is behind it. I have had brought to me the report which has been referred to. What is there in the paragraph to cause the hon. gentleman to get up and practically imply that the "Courier" was seeking not to give fair information to the community through that publication? The Home Secretary's statement was altogether misleading.

Mr. HARTLEY: What rot.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am inclined to come to the conclusion that hon. gentlemen are not smarting about the report, but about something else that happened last night.

The HOME SECRETARY: Why did the hon. member for Oxley think it necessary to raise it?

HON. W. H. BARNES: This is the report—

"MORE EVASION.

"Mr. Elphinstone asked the Home Secretary, in the Legislative Assembly yesterday, what was the number per shift of nurses and attendants respectively engaged on the staff of the Mental Hospital at Goodna, at 30th June, 1915, and 15th September, 1921. Mr. McCormack evasively replied that owing to the change from a twelve-hour shift to the eight-hour shift it was impossible to make the comparison."

The position is perfectly clear. With the exception of the word "evasively," that has been put in, and the omission of something at the end, it is absolutely a fair report of what transpired. Let me take hon. members back to the answers which have been given to hon. members on this side of the House ever since the session commenced, and find out if there is not a great deal of truth in the statement made with regard to evasion. One would think that hon. members opposite were out to try and stifle public discussion.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Of course they are.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member for Toowoomba said the Government were out to fight for democracy; but the object of their kind of democracy apparently is to stifle publicity of matters of great importance to the community. Let me draw attention to something which occurred last week in connection with another paper. As the Premier says, these papers go for you frequently, but, generally speaking, their comments are fair. I want to refer to what occurred last week in connection with the Financial Statement, to which no reference has been made by hon. members on this side of the House. I have already thanked the Treasurer for his courtesy in sending me an advance copy of the Financial Statement, and I thank him again. It was marked "Confidential," but that very afternoon there was published in the "Daily Standard" practically the inwards of the Financial Statement before it was read in this Chamber, and hon. members on this side never said a word about it.

The TREASURER: I will correct you there. Every newspaper got a copy at the same time.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am not making any charge. I am dealing with facts. Here is the publication in the "Daily Standard"

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—"State Finances; Financial Statement, to-day." And it gives the contents of that Statement, and the other papers do not.

The TREASURER: It was done entirely by the department. The Press did not approach me, and I did not approach them.

HON. W. H. BARNES: My copy was marked "Confidential"; and, if the "Standard" copy was marked "Confidential," someone abused its privilege and published the Statement in the afternoon and not a solitary word was said about it. Here to-day we are confronted by the Home Secretary bringing out a matter which, after all, is trivial in the extreme. We owe a great deal to the newspapers. There has been a connection between the Government's defeat last night and this complaint about the paragraph in the "Courier" to which the hon. gentleman referred.

The HOME SECRETARY: Why did the hon. member for Oxley raise the question?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I believe that, when the Premier and the Home Secretary get down to cold blood, they will feel ashamed to themselves for introducing this matter into this Chamber.

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Bremer*): Discussing the question of "privilege," I think we ought to remember that the question which has been raised for the second time by the Home Secretary has been raised on each occasion in connection with a very definite answer given to questions asked in this House. On every occasion the answers are supplied by the Clerk of the House to the newspapers. The most important part of the answer to the Home Secretary's last question was omitted, and, to make matters worse, the word "evasively," was put in to build up a case. The worst feature of the question raised by the Home Secretary is that it is not the only occasion on which there has been an attempt to distort or omit information to give it an entirely different appearance. Hon. members, of course, differentiate between "Gallery Notes" and a Press report. "Gallery notes," as we all know, are the airy persiflage intended to "give verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative." A Press report should be a Press report. Last night there was a most important statement made in Committee by the Whip of the Government party. The statement was of very great importance to the people of the country at large, and was reported by the "Courier" in a special report, and was not left to "Gallery Notes." This is a report as given in the "Courier" of the important explanation made by the Whip of the party—

"Mr. Winstanley (Government Whip) said that Mr. Cooper told him that Mr. Edwards had promised to pair with him."

That is the whole of the report of Mr. Winstanley's explanation. That is not Mr. Winstanley's explanation as reported by the "Hansard" staff. An important feature of it was omitted. What Mr. Winstanley said according to "Hansard," was this—

"The hon. member for Nanango, Mr. Edwards, promised the hon. member for Rosewood, Mr. W. Cooper, before he went away, that he would pair with him."

"Opposition Members: No! That is not true."

"Mr. WINSTANLEY: The people who said 'No' did not know anything about it at all. He went to the leader of the

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Opposition yesterday afternoon and asked him if he (Mr. Winstanley) could allow the hon. member for Rosewood to go away in response to an urgent wire that he had received from Kingaroy to the effect that some of his friends had met with an accident, and the leader of the Opposition distinctly told him (Mr. Winstanley) that he could allow the hon. member for Rosewood to go, and that, if the hon. member for Nanango recorded his vote, he (Mr. Vowles) would not record his vote.

"Opposition Members: No! No!

"Mr. Vowles: That is not true."

"Mr. WINSTANLEY: That was the plain, distinct statement of the facts; otherwise the hon. member for Rosewood would never have gone away."

"Mr. Edwards: That is not true, and you know it is not."

"Mr. WINSTANLEY: The hon. member for Rosewood was actually induced to go."

The truth or otherwise of Mr. Winstanley's statement is not in question, but the Whip of the party made a statement that affected the whole issue, and that was not reported by the "Courier." One little bit was reported without giving any indication of the whole situation. That is the thing complained of. There is no complaint about any comment made in the "Gallery Notes." They who are forced to read them can value them for what they are worth, and those who do not read them are none the worse. In this particular report the explanation made by the Whip of the Government party was mutilated, and made to give an entirely different interpretation. As the Home Secretary says, there is a distinct determination on the part of the metropolitan Tory journals in all their reports to mislead the people outside this House. That is the thing complained of. It ought to be remembered that the Press has a lot of privileges which it ought to have, but on no occasion ought it to be allowed to abuse those privileges. Parliament is here not for the benefit of the Press, nor is the Press here for the benefit of Parliament. The Press should be forced to give accurate reports of what takes place in this Chamber. If it does not do that, and if it continues to act in bad faith, as it has done in this instance, then it is high time that this House took action.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): The Home Secretary generally succeeds in raising a storm in a teacup. There is no doubt that the hon. gentleman came prepared to speak on this matter of privilege, and, in doing so, mentioned one particular paragraph appearing in to-day's report in the "Courier." It was necessary for him to go back to 1869 in order to find another illustration where the "Courier" has misreported. On that occasion Mr. Lamb complained about being misreported. I am of the opinion, with others, that it is the duty of the Press, if it is going to report at all, to give what may be called a fair outline of what an hon. member says. I agree with that, no matter whether the papers support the Opposition or the Government. Before the debate closes, the Home Secretary should have something stronger to work on. His case is very weak.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Why did the hon. member for Oxley bring it up?

Mr. MORGAN: Evidently the Home Secretary was prepared to bring the matter up

on a question of "privilege" independently of what the hon. member for Oxley said.

The HOME SECRETARY: No.

Mr. MORGAN: The hon. gentleman will admit that he was going to complain about being misreported by the Press. What cause has he for complaining? First of all, he made an explanation, and stated in that explanation that he announced yesterday that he was laying the papers on the table of the House. That was not true. The "Votes and Proceedings" show that no such words were used by the hon. gentleman. The hon. member for Oxley might have been specially interested, and so he knew that the papers were going to be laid on the table of the House.

The HOME SECRETARY: Everyone outside this House will be misled by that paragraph in the "Courier."

Mr. MORGAN: Not at all. Supposing these words were added, "The hon. member may peruse Dr. Ellerton's letter on the matter," what information would that supply? Hon. members would not know what the letter contained, and the people outside would not know what the letter contained. It is silly. Evidently the "Courier" thought those words had no bearing on the case. The hon. member for Oxley might have known that the information was there, but I believe the people outside would not.

The HOME SECRETARY: The "Courier" had access to that letter.

Mr. MORGAN: While I am prepared at all times to support a member who is misreported, or who does not get a report which properly conveys his meaning. [4.30 p.m.] I recognise the importance of the Press, more especially in the country districts, where there are a great number of people who do not get two or three papers. They only get one paper in the country.

Mr. COLLINS: That is not true. We read the lot.

Mr. MORGAN: I am talking about the people who live in the bush. I am not talking about the hon. member, who has got a free library here, where he can go and read every paper for nothing. The people in the bush only get one paper as a rule.

Mr. COLLINS: They get more than one paper. There are a number of papers up North.

Mr. MORGAN: I say quite frankly that it would be better for a paper not to report a member at all if it does not give an idea of what he really meant to say. (Hear, hear!) If I so desired, I could quote half a dozen cases which have happened to myself this session. There have been interjections reported which placed me in the position of not conveying what I meant at all. Those interjections have appeared in the "Standard," but I took no notice of them. If there was ever a party paper, it is the "Standard." It exists for the purpose of putting something into its columns of the political complexion of hon. members opposite.

The HOME SECRETARY: What about the two questions addressed to me which were mutilated last week?

Mr. MORGAN: If I had been the Home Secretary, I would have waited until I got some really just cause for complaint. He has no just cause for complaint just because

a few words were omitted. The omission of those words did not place a different complexion on his answer at all. The hon. gentleman brings forward a complaint, and he had to go back over fifty years to get something to strengthen his case.

The TREASURER: The truth was just the same fifty years ago as it is to-day.

Mr. MORGAN: Just imagine that the "Courier" offended fifty years ago, and it offended again to-day! Those are the only two occasions in fifty years. If it only offended twice in fifty years, I think that is an exceptionally clean record. I think the hon. gentleman should not raise such a point as this until he has a better case.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I feel satisfied that everyone in the Chamber likes to be correctly reported, but whether there is any justification for the attitude that the Home Secretary has taken up this afternoon is very doubtful. He has taken exception to the word "evasion," contained in that particular report.

The HOME SECRETARY: No. Read the whole question and answer.

Mr. TAYLOR: Ever since this session started hon. members on this side have had occasion to say that Ministers have shown evasion in connection with answering questions. I can remember many questions which were evaded by Ministers, but Ministers say, "No," and add that they do not evade the questions at all. Well, there is difference of opinion as to who is right even in this House, but that sort of thing has taken place ever since we met this session.

The HOME SECRETARY: If they reported you as saying that and you did say it, then it is a correct report. That is all right.

Mr. TAYLOR: There is a difference of opinion in this Chamber in regard to answering questions. The Premier and the Home Secretary have been complaining about the attitude of the Press misreporting hon. members in this House. Why the champion defamation factory in Queensland is this Parliament. The Treasurer himself, only a few days ago, made a statement in regard to the hon. member for Oxley which was absolutely incorrect and wrong.

The TREASURER: That is not correct.

Mr. TAYLOR: The statement the hon. gentleman made about the hon. member for Oxley was absolutely incorrect and wrong. The hon. member for Herbert, when speaking last week, inferred by imputation that the hon. member for Normanby had received £2,000 to come over to this side of the House.

Mr. PEASE: That is untrue.

Mr. TAYLOR: Before we start complaining about the Press reports, let us start and clean up in this Chamber first.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. TAYLOR: This is where we want to start. It is simply disgraceful to hear the imputations and things said by hon. members opposite time and time again. I have been in this Parliament for four years, and I have never made an interjection, in any shape or form while an hon. member was speaking, during the whole time I have been in this House. I have made no interjection either favourably or unfavourably. If the dignity of Parliament is to be maintained as it should be, then Parliament should set the example itself. Until that example is set,

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we cannot find fault with the Press. We must set our own House in order first. Personally, I have nothing to complain about regarding the treatment meted out to me by the Press. I have been reported correctly and incorrectly, and a number of things that I spoke about have been left out, but I have always taken my gruel and never made a song about it. Ministers have talked this afternoon about excluding the Press. We know that the members of the Labour party claim absolute freedom for themselves in everything; in fact, they go further than freedom, and ask for license. I certainly think a good deal has been said over practically nothing. I think members of the Press should be correct in their reports, especially when they go out before the public, and they should see that members are not misunderstood and not misrepresented.

The TREASURER (Hon. J. A. Fihelly, *Paddington*): I am afraid that we are apt to drift into some irrelevancies on this question. The hon. member for Bulimba, for instance, mentioned the Financial Statement. That is a matter entirely in the hands of the Minister. If he wishes to give a forward copy to any newspaper, that is a matter for the Minister himself; and it has nothing to do with the privilege of Parliament. It is a matter on which the Minister can exercise his own discretion. It is a matter for the Minister and his colleagues if they agree on a certain custom, and it has nothing to do with Parliament. Then the hon. member for Windsor referred to the matter raised by the hon. member for Oxley. That has no concern with the privilege of Parliament at all. That is quite irrelevant to the issue to-day. I am sure the hon. member for Oxley is prepared to admit that some people did approach me and mentioned his name with regard to the situation which has been spoken of. That is his affair, and it is not the affair of the hon. member for Windsor at all. The hon. member for Windsor may think it a breach of the privileges of this House that the "Courier" and the "Daily Mail" published that famous circular which he signed. It has nothing to do with the House all the same. I refer to the circular asking the Secretary for Railways not to give any information to the public. The hon. member for Windsor went out of his way to refer to me, and I went out of my way to refer to him. I have no quarrel with the newspapers at all. I do not expect to get any report from the kept Press—the paid Press—the Press who are kept by the advertisements and finances of the other side.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What about the "Standard"?

The TREASURER: The "Standard" is kept by the money of the working men. I take up a higher attitude upon this question. There are some traditions associated with the parliamentary institution. There are traditions associated with it, and I am a believer in the parliamentary institution, and not in revolution. It is a pity that these traditions are dragged into the mire by malicious misrepresentations. I noticed one misreport myself. The matter that arose between the hon. member for Oxley and myself was deliberately misreported, in my opinion. Hon. members heard the puerile argument of the hon. member for Bulimba. He said that the matter was raised by the Home Secretary and was carefully reported, except that the reporter left out that the paper was laid on the table of the House

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and mentioned that it was an evasive reply. That was a very important part of the proceedings. The letter was laid on the table of the House, and the Press could have seen it the same as anyone else. It was not printed because printing is expensive. The hon. member for Bulimba calmly, in his puerility, tells us that there is no misreport there. What is a misreport if that is not one? The parliamentary institution stands pretty high in my estimation. I think that this Parliament compares more than favourably with any Parliament that I have ever entered as a visitor, including the House of Commons. It would be a pity if the jaundice of any individual reporter—I am not making an attack on any one, as I get on pretty well with the reporters; but it would be a pity if the jaundice of any one individual is going to lower the traditions of Parliament. I know that there are a number of members who cherish the parliamentary institution, and I know that there are a number of people outside who respect Parliament. I say that, if the people outside lose respect for us, then we are done. The hon. member for Murilla said that we went back to 1869 for the truth. The truth was just the same in 1869 as it is to-day. Truth was just the same 2,000 years ago as it is to-day. Lying misrepresentation and malice are the same now as they were when Christ was born.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): That last statement of the Treasurer is quite true. This wail of the Home Secretary's has arisen from the fact that he resented an interjection by the hon. member for Normanby the other day.

The HOME SECRETARY: No.

Mr. CORSER: He claimed that that interjection was not made in the House, and the Treasurer supported him. The Home Secretary said it was invented for propaganda purposes when he made the statement on Friday last. Yet we find that interjection reported in "Hansard." That is evidence that the hon. member for Normanby made the interjection, because it appears in "Hansard" as well as in the Press. In his statement to-day the Home Secretary has got no evidence to back him up. He merely makes reference to a report in a morning paper about the procedure of yesterday. He does not refer to the misstatements which were in his mind when he made the statement on Friday.

The HOME SECRETARY: How can I have misstatements in my mind? (Government laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: They are certainly in your mind, because they are not in fact. I think that in future the Home Secretary should write out his speech and send it up to the Press gallery with a photograph of himself. (Laughter.) If the Press on all occasions would only print that photograph, it would be quite sufficient, and the hon. gentleman would not have any reason to complain. It would do justice to all he intended to say. (Laughter.) I was surprised to hear the Premier enter into this discussion. When he was in England, a British pressman reported that the hon. gentleman was going to visit Russia to see the conditions under which they worked there, so that he could improve matters in this country. The Premier might just as

well have blamed that pressman for misrepresentation; at any rate, he explained that he was not going to go to Russia. I hope hon. members opposite will think of the charges they have been making against the Press this afternoon when they print their next doggerel publication.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. CORSER: They should not act like the Home Secretary, who is responsible for the statement that, when certain matters of interest to cormorant institutions were debated in another place, the Chamber was filled to overflowing out to the street. (Government laughter.) We all agree that a fair report should appear in the Press of all speeches made, but there is no reason why this exceptional procedure should have been adopted this afternoon to scandalise the Press, except, perhaps, that the Government find that even their own papers are adversely criticising them.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I think it is perhaps necessary to assure the House that I had no knowledge of the Home Secretary intending to refer to this matter, and neither had he any knowledge that I intended to do so. The facts are that, when I read the "Courier" and saw the answer to that question, it struck me as being unfair, and, therefore, I took the opportunity of putting right that which was wrong. I do not think that the "Courier" had the slightest intention of misquoting the hon. gentleman's reply, and it is safe to assume that it is only one who was interested in the question who could have seen where the hon. gentleman's reply could have been misinterpreted. It is quite conceivable that the gentlemen in the gallery might not have heard the final words of the Home Secretary's answer to the question, when he said, "The hon. member may peruse Dr. Ellerton's letter on the matter." Without those words being heard, it is quite conceivable to put the word "evasive" to that reply; but, when these words are taken into consideration, the word "evasive" would be quite improperly applied to the Home Secretary's answer. The whole point is that there are many occasions on which there is complete justification for complaining of evasiveness on the part of the Government in answering questions, and, when our criticism of the Government in that regard is to be given any weight, we must also see that, when that accusation is wrongly made, we correct it; otherwise, if we are always criticising hon. gentlemen opposite for evasiveness whether rightly or wrongly, it stands to reason that our criticism will lose all weight. I am only asking for fairness to the Home Secretary, just as I am asking it for myself, and we shall be well advised in trying to adopt that principle in dealing with one another.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): I think it is just as well that this question of privilege has been raised by the Home Secretary, as this Parliament has put up too long with the treatment we have received from a certain section of the Press in Queensland. I say a certain section of the Press, because, fortunately, the venal influences are not bearing on all the Press, as they bear on the "Courier" and the "Daily Mail" in this city.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What about the "Standard"?

Mr. HARTLEY: I do not complain about those papers not giving us a report. The "Courier" is not run to give hon. members of this side a report. It is run in the interests of the squatters and the big business men. I do not ask them to report members on this side. I ask them to criticise us if they can; but, if they say a member says something which he has not said, or that something happened in the House which did not happen, that is a breach of the privileges of this House which amounts to contempt, and it should be dealt with by the Speaker as the head of Parliament. The privileges of Parliament have been too dearly bought and are too precious to be made the shuttlecock of any party, however influential the newspapers may be which they may have at their disposal. No one will deny that the "Courier" and the "Daily Mail" exercise a big influence; but, if they have such a poor conception of what is due to the State, and such a poor ideal in regard to journalism as to descend to this mongrel journalism, as has been instanced in the "Courier" report, this House must protect its rights and privileges as representative of the people. I am sorry that the hon. member for Bulimba should try to draw a red herring across the track by talking about a storm in a teacup. The hon. member knows that an infringement such as this is done for a specific purpose. He knows that the campaign of suppression, distortion, and interpolation which is going on is for the purpose of misrepresenting certain members of the House and the policy of a large section of the people. This campaign has been going on for a long period, and it is time that we took up the position that it should cease. If an undertaking is not given by the papers concerned, that they will discontinue these practices, I hope that you, Mr. Speaker, will see that the reporters of the papers concerned are not admitted to the gallery. I want to except the Brisbane "Telegraph." It is a Conservative paper, but it is about the fairest paper both from a literary and a political point of view of any in Queensland. It either gives a true report or does not report at all, and no hon. member on this side complains of not being reported in a capitalistic paper. Such papers are not run to bring us prominently before the public, and we are not so foolish as to expect it.

The hon. member for Dalby made a complaint to the effect that a certain speech of his in "Hansard" was garbled, but that is the hon. member's own fault; if he had read his proof, he could have corrected the report. He cannot impute motives or improper practices to anyone. It simply shows how inattentive he is to his own interests and duties.

In reply to the hon. member for Burnett, I wish to say that the Government are not smarting under a sense of their temporary defeat yesterday, because the Government showed hon. members opposite at once that they were quite able to take control of the business of this Chamber.

Mr. BULCOCK (*Barcoo*): The leader of the National section of the Opposition suggested that this talk of excluding the Press from the gallery would be the action of a Labour Government; and it would be the action of a Labour Government in this instance if it were done. The hon. member, while speaking on toleration, did not say

*Mr. Bulcock.]*

that Parliaments in other places—conservative Parliaments which have no tendency or aspirations towards Labour principles—have in the past excluded certain sections of the Press from their galleries under the Constitution, part of which was quoted by the Home Secretary. Mr. Lloyd George excluded the reporters of the London "Times" not so long ago from the gallery of the House of Commons, and there are other cases of exclusion. The question of privilege is very vital to Parliament, and, while every paper should regard truth as sacred, they should not, on the other hand, handle the truth with such carelessness as to leave any possible misconception regarding what they intended to convey. We know the different parties are supported by newspapers, and I do not cavil at that; but I protest against the Press deliberately misconstruing the statements of hon. members. I am pleased that the Home Secretary raised the question of privilege this afternoon. We know that there has been a certain amount of exclusion so far as the Labour Press is concerned. It was determined a few years ago to start a Labour paper in Sydney, and hon. members who have not had the opportunity of seeing the machinery which was brought to bear against that paper have not any idea of the incredible difficulties that it had to surmount and is successfully surmounting at the present time. There is one grave feature of the whole situation. A statement which is made in the House may be faithfully reported in a paper; but more frequently, perhaps, it is not faithfully reported, and the report conveys a wrong impression which the speaker never intended to convey. We turn, perhaps, to some other column in the same paper which is devoted to criticism and to discourses on speeches that are made. And it is the "Gallery Notes" in the case of the "Courier" that are frequently disseminated through the country and are

[5 p.m.] asked to bear the brand of truth, and I have seen instances of

other papers publishing the comments in the "Gallery Notes" without publishing the paragraph upon which the comment was based. If that is fair and honourable criticism, we and the community would be better without it. As a matter of fact, I think everybody in this House, more especially hon. members on this side, recognise that papers of the "Courier" or "Daily Mail" category are merely the tubes through which the capitalists spit their venom, and, having recognised that, we know that those papers perhaps do not carry as much weight as they might if they were a little more truthful, and that they have probably wrecked their reputations and certainly have forfeited any confidence that the big body of the people may have had in them. In proof of that, we see that the unionists, not only in one State, or country, or section, but the unionists of the whole of Australia, are engaged in establishing printing presses and newspaper services in the various capitals of the Commonwealth, besides strengthening our local paper. When we see those bodies throughout Australia prepared to give their money to a project of that nature, we must recognise that there is something inherently wrong with the Press we have at present. I hope this debate will be productive of nothing but good, and that those who have been culprits in the past will, so far as their bosses will allow them, follow a different line in the future. Truth

[Mr. Bulcock.

is sweet, and we have nothing to gain and nothing to lose by a fair report of our case. The hon. member for Oxley suggested that a mistake might have been made. I am quite prepared to admit that the reporters do not always quite hear what has been said, and I believe that hon. members frequently take the opportunity of correcting what they are reported to have said. As a case in point, I mention that, when the hon. member for Albert on Friday last was giving us a dissertation on John Stuart Mill's system of economics, he wound up by saying that taxation had increased in this State from £2 something per head to £4 something per head.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Correct!

Mr. BULCOCK: I remember his making that statement, but on perusing "Hansard" we see that he is reported as having said that taxation had increased from 2s. per head to £4 17s. per head.

Mr. FRY: That is not "Hansard." That is one of your linotype men. That is a quibble.

Mr. BULCOCK: It was not a quibble. It is an instance where I believe a mistake has legitimately occurred, and I believe the hon. member will rectify it.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: I went away to my homestead and did not see the proof.

Mr. BULCOCK: I hope that the conduct of certain sections of the Press will be better in the future than in the past, because the metropolitan Press colours the Press of the country areas, and, without a truthful Press here, we cannot expect the country Press, which to a great extent is a reflection of that Press, to be truthful or present a truthful case.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): Sometimes I wade through most of the daily newspapers published here in Brisbane, and I am very glad the Home Secretary has raised this question, because I am one of those who believe in the freedom of the Press so long as the Press speaks the truth. We who belong to the British race know the great fight put up by Milton over 200 years ago for the freedom of the Press, but nobody can claim that the Press to-day is free. It is controlled by the large financial institutions, who instruct the Press what they are to write. Anybody who has followed the reports in the "Courier" must admit that on the Banana Industry Preservation Bill—a question affecting the whole of North Queensland—there was no reference in the "Gallery Notes" to members on this side at all, whilst hon. members on the other side were "starred." Again, on the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act Amendment Bill, the "Courier" ignored the speeches delivered from this side of the House. We in the North suffer from the misrepresentation of the Press. Anyone who reads the Townsville "Bulletin" knows that in it my friend the hon. member for Townsville is "starred"—even "cheers" are put in that he did not receive. (Laughter.) Likewise in the "North Queensland Register." Then, again, I have noticed for a long time that, whilst hon. members may criticise the I.W.W.—which they have a perfect right to do—there is in Queensland another I.W.W. which is destroying the influence of this Parliament and the parliamentary system—they may not know it—by a continual reference to the "caucus system" of this party without any reference to the caucus system that exists on the other

side of the House. One would expect this to come about—I realised that long ago. During the war, under the censorship—

The SPEAKER: Order! I would point out to the hon. member that he is dealing now with the liberty of the Press generally. We are only dealing with the parliamentary Press.

Mr. COLLINS: While I admit we are dealing with the parliamentary Press, nevertheless, when I deal with the metropolitan Press, I am dealing with practically the whole Press of Queensland, because inspiration is sent from the Press of Brisbane to the Press of North Queensland, and very bad inspiration it is. This is nothing new in parliamentary Government. We all know that the representatives of Lord Northcliffe's journal, "The Times," were excluded from the House of Commons owing to something it had done which was not in accordance with what the Government and the Speaker thought to be right. I am going to stand for all the privileges that the representatives of the people possess.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Apart from party?

Mr. COLLINS: I am a party man; but, when it comes to a question of our privileges, I am as jealous of them as anybody, because I know that they come from the people. I may not know as much as some men who claim that they know all about it; but I know of the struggle that has taken place to give us these privileges as representatives of the people—privileges which, I am sorry to say, hon. members do not take seriously enough. I claim that the Press does not give us true reports. I would rather not be reported at all at any time than get a bad report. What I ask for at all times is a truthful report. I am quite prepared to stand up to anything I may say in this House, or outside of it, so long as I am reported truthfully, which I claim has not been done by the Press. Take as an illustration the action of the Press represented in the gallery in regard to the Land Acts Amendment Act. They have no right to refer to it as the repudiation Act. That in itself is an interference with Parliament. I have just been reading Upton Sinclair's book, "The Brass Check," which is an exposure of the Press, and what he says of the Press of the United States is true also of the Press of Brisbane, the Press of Queensland, and the Press of the Commonwealth, because here, too, men have prostituted themselves in writing what is not true.

The SPEAKER: Order! The discussion is one on privilege, and not on the actions of the Press generally.

Mr. COLLINS: I am here to claim the same rights and privileges as other hon. members, and I claim that I am not exceeding my rights.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in debating all the privileges of Parliament.

Mr. COLLINS: I do not care how much the Press condense the speeches of hon. members so long as there is truth in the condensation. I want the truth to come out. I am one of those who believe that "Hansard" should be sent out free to any man who makes application for it, for only thus can we get the truth to our constituents. We suffer, not from what we say in this Parliament, but from what we are made by the Press to say. Let the Press—and when I

refer to the Press I refer to the whole of the Press, whether the "Daily Standard," the "Daily Mail," the "Courier," or the "Telegraph," or any other paper—let them tell the truth in reporting the proceedings of this House. I think this debate has done good, and the Home Secretary is to be complimented by all the members of this Parliament who believe in their rights and privileges for raising this question.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): I regret that I cannot agree with the last remarks of the hon. member for Bowen. I was here on the occasion of the incident to the report of which the Home Secretary has taken exception, and I have gone very carefully into the paragraph upon which this debate has hinged. It is headed "More Evasion," and begins—

"Mr. Elphinstone asked the Home Secretary in the Legislative Assembly yesterday what was the number per shift of nurses and attendants respectively engaged on the staff of the Mental Hospital at Goodna at 30th June, 1915, and 15th September, 1921? Mr. McCormack evasively replied that, owing to the change from a twelve-hour shift to the eight-hour shift, it was impossible to make the comparison."

Mr. HARTLEY: What else did the Home Secretary reply?

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: That question could have been answered. Do hon. members mean to say that the Minister could not tell the hon. member how many people were employed on a twelve-hour shift on a certain date, and how many on an eight-hour shift on a certain date?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The report containing the information was tabled.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: The Home Secretary further stated that he would table a letter from Dr. Ellerton. I do not know, and the Press do not know, what was in that letter.

The HOME SECRETARY: You could have seen it.

Mr. HARTLEY: It would explain the whole position.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: If the Home Secretary had given what I take it was contained in that letter in answer to the question, there would have been no need to refer the hon. member for Oxley, or any other hon. member, to what was contained in that letter. The Home Secretary has brought this on himself. There is something else in this remark in the Press. They do not only say "evasion," but they say "more evasion." Will the Minister say that he has not evaded questions this session? I asked the Home Secretary a question, and he told me that the full information would be given—when?

The HOME SECRETARY: On the Estimates.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: Of course, on the Estimates! The Home Secretary is the last man who would have been satisfied with that reply when he was sitting in opposition. It is all moonshine for the Home Secretary to try to establish something this afternoon. It is all childish in the extreme. We might have been discussing important business and trying to do some good for the people outside. The Home Secretary has not only wasted the time of the House,

*Mr. T. R. Roberts.]*

but he has come here to debate the privilege of the House and waste time.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: That is not true.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): Had the Home Secretary not been so self-important, he would not have raised this matter, which is something like the other tale we had from him the other day when he really thought that that was quite all right. We have the sorry spectacle of a man of more than ordinary intelligence taking up the time of this House this afternoon over a mere quibble. The hon. gentleman does not intend to poleaxe the pressmen. He has no right to do so. I have risen to-day to put in a word for those hard-working men—not only for the pressmen, but for our “Hansard” reporters. If ever there was a body of men who deserve the respect of the people in this House, it is those gentlemen in the gallery. (Hear, hear!) I do not believe for one moment that the hon. gentleman has done this with any other intention but to put in a bit of propaganda work. It seems to me that the hon. gentleman sees the whirlpool he is getting into, and he is attacking inoffensive men who cannot strike back.

Mr. KIRWAN: They will strike back to-morrow. They have the last word every time.

Mr. WARREN: He is not attacking the “*Courier*” newspaper. The “*Courier*” never supported me in my election. Not one paper supported me. But, independent of that, I stand up for the Press, who are trying to do their best to record faithfully the speeches made in this House. Many times there is a great deal of row, and it has always been a puzzle to me how the gentlemen in the gallery report our speeches as accurately as they do.

Mr. KIRWAN: If they reported hon. members verbatim, that would be an end of some of them.

Mr. WARREN: Yes, the speeches are made very nice. If there was the slightest cause for all this “gas” to-day, I would not object; but there has not been a fraction of cause. The most that can be said is that the Press have made two mistakes. The “*Courier*” made a mistake in the time of Noah’s Ark—before the 1870 flood—and it has made another mistake now. It seems to me a most trivial mistake, and the hon. gentleman is doing propaganda work and trying to make a mountain out of a mole-hill. I want to point out some serious remarks made in this Chamber, and no hon. gentleman has taken any exception to them. I refer to the interjection by the hon. member for Herbert in which he inferred that the hon. member for Normanby took £2,000 to come over here. That was a most cowardly and mean attack.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. WARREN: It was done simply—

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. POLLOCK: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in imputing a statement to the hon. member for Herbert that he did not make?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Oh! Oh!

Mr. POLLOCK: The hon. member for Herbert asked a certain question. He did not make a direct statement.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: One is as bad as the other.

[*Mr. T. R. Roberts.*

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in imputing improper motives, nor is he in order in traversing the ground he is now traversing. I ask him to deal with the question of privilege before the House.

Mr. VOWLES: The interjection is in “Hansard,” all the same.

Mr. MORGAN: Will the hon. member for Herbert made the statement publicly?

Mr. WARREN: The Press made a mistake in the old hoary ages, and they have made another one now. It is a trivial mistake. I want to say, in the face of the wilful statement that was made in this Chamber, that it is only right to say that the Home Secretary is not very much troubled over truth and honesty. He is not very much troubled over what is reported.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. WARREN: This is the interjection made by the hon. member for Herbert—

“Did he get £2,000 to go over there?”

That is what we want to know.”

Mr. PEASE: Did he?

Mr. WARREN: There is the inference that an hon. member—a man of well-known integrity—got a certain amount of money to change sides.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. WARREN: I bow to your ruling, Mr. Speaker. I wish to do what is right in this Chamber, and I want to see that a fair deal is given. The Press has been altogether too lenient with hon. members opposite. Had the Press of Queensland done its duty, hon. members opposite would have been out of office long ago, and we would not have had the sorry spectacle of the present Government being there to-day.

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*): I am a country member whom the Press cannot injure, no matter how they try, because in most parts of my electorate the electors have not heard of the “*Courier*” or the “*Daily Mail*,” and it has occurred to me that I can be called really as an unbiased witness. I say without hesitation that there have been occasions here, apart altogether from the question of misrepresentation, when magnificent speeches have been delivered by hon. members on this side of the House.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Oh!

Mr. POLLOCK: I have also heard good speeches delivered by hon. members opposite—that is, from their own party point of view. The hon. member for Oxley delivered easily the best speech on his side during the no-confidence motion—I will pay him a compliment by saying that. On the other hand, the hon. member for Mount Morgan made out a case that no one could truthfully say was not a splendid case. Everybody admitted that it was one of the best speeches ever made in this House on a special subject. In the papers the hon. member for Mount Morgan was given about a-quarter or half a column, and in the “*Gallery Notes*” he was misreported and his effort belittled, while the hon. member for Oxley was given three or four columns. I am not complaining about that. It merely shows the tendency of the Press to do all in its power to fail to give credit to this side of the House for anything that it does. One can quite understand that, if that is their policy, they are quite justified in pursuing those tactics; but when it comes to deliberately misrepresenting the case put



forward by any hon. member on either side of this House, then it becomes a matter of privilege and a question for hon. members to deal with. Were I a metropolitan member whose views were being distorted I would certainly vote on every occasion for the exclusion of a Press that was guilty of that misrepresentation, and, as a country member whom the Press cannot injure, I would vote for the suppression of any such misrepresentation. I think it is incredible in this twentieth century that a body of men should be allowed to misrepresent and distort the views of anybody. Surely, if the case for the Government, or the case for the Opposition, is a good case, it needs no misrepresentation! Surely the public are best able to judge which is the best case put before them, and they ought to be allowed to have that information direct and not condensed, where it is possible to do that, and, where it is impossible to give a full report, then either reports should be given that do not misrepresent one's views or should be deleted entirely. I have seen, times out of number, hon. members in this Chamber make speeches that have been misreported, because a few lines were not added here and there to give the real meaning of what they intended to convey. If it were a speech of my own, if it were not correctly or fully reported, I would far rather see it entirely left out. I want to add my quota to the remarks of hon. members on this side in saying that there is abundant precedent for excluding any Press reporter or newspaper representative from the Press gallery if he does not carry out the traditions of newspaperdom in Parliament. It is only the other day that the House of Commons simply threw out the "London Times" representative and told him in no uncertain terms that, if he was again going to misrepresent the position so far as any member in that House was concerned, he could not come back there again. What is wrong with this Government doing that? If the House of Commons had not done it, there would not be anything wrong in this Government or this Parliament doing it if the Press overstep their functions. If the Press does not do the right thing, this Parliament is competent to deal with its own affairs, and is competent to deal with newspaper men for acting in an unfair and unjust way. I hope Parliament will not hesitate at any time to protect its privileges in that way. If hon. members desire an explanation of the methods of the Press, they can get it in far finer and better language than any hon. member is capable of expressing if they will look at Oscar Wilde's book "The Soul of Man." That is a better presentation of the case, as it applied then and as it applies now, than can be given by any hon. member in this Chamber. I commend it to the reporter who has been guilty of misrepresentation, and, perhaps, to prevent further difficulty in this way, I would recommend the whole of those in the metropolitan area who run newspapers and who report for them to read it and take some of it to heart. It will certainly do them good.

Mr. KIRWAN: It would do the editors good. They are the gentlemen who make the trouble.

[5.30 p.m.]

Mr. EDWARDS (*Nanango*): From my point of view I think the leader of the National party was right when he suggested that before we condemn the attitude the

Press has taken up in connection with this House, we should put this House in order. Statements have been made repeatedly in this Chamber which are not true. I was subject to such a thing yesterday, and, while this sort of thing is going on, it is hard for the Press to report correctly.

Mr. POLLOCK: You invited most of it yourself.

Mr. EDWARDS: If statements are made here and are allowed to go outside to the people as true, how on earth can the Press possibly get near what the truth should be? I think the leader of the National party is to be congratulated in taking up the stand he did that this House should be run with more dignity than it is at the present time. The statement made by the hon. member for Queenton the other night was an absolute untruth.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. gentleman cannot deal with that matter while discussing this question.

Mr. EDWARDS: After all the talk of the Home Secretary, I do not know why he made such a fuss in bringing this matter before the House.

The HOME SECRETARY: I am not the only one who made a fuss.

Mr. EDWARDS: We have wasted the whole afternoon in discussing this matter, and I do not think that is an attitude that should be taken up by the Minister. If we insisted on the Press giving a proper report of the proceedings of this House, then we would have to exclude the whole of the Press from the House, because, after all, this is a party House, and, while the "Courier" and the "Daily Mail" may report one side, the "Standard" will take up the other side. The Country party is placed in the unfortunate position that we have no Press to report for us at all. There is no Press behind the Country party. We have to battle along without any Press at all.

Mr. KIRWAN: What about "The Producers' Review"?

Mr. MORGAN: That is a Labour paper.

Mr. EDWARDS: When the "Standard" reports me, or when it reports the hon. member for Cunningham, it says "Tory Nanango" or "Tory Cunningham." (Laughter.) I say without hesitation that the Press should be at liberty to suggest or report what they think is fair in the interests of the public outside. I think it would be very hard indeed for the Press to report the statements and answers to questions that have come from the other side of the House during this session. It is plain that the matter that has cropped up this afternoon is the last kick of a dying Government. There is no getting away from that. The Minister has refused to answer questions.

The SPEAKER: Order! I must rule the hon. member out of order for discussing a matter that has nothing to do with the question before the House. The debate is getting right away from the question, and I ask hon. members to stick closer to the question before the House, which is the question of privilege raised by the Home Secretary.

Mr. EDWARDS: I think that the Home Secretary in bringing the question before the House this afternoon was purely and simply attempting to bluff the Press from reporting the true actions of the Government.

*Mr. Edwards.]*

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): We do not seem to have got very far this afternoon. The Home Secretary started by saying that the "Courier" did something that it ought not to have done. For my part, I think that the newspapers report what they hear. I think it is only right that they should report and print what they think.

The HOME SECRETARY: They should not be allowed to print something that I did not say. That is the point. They should not mislead.

Mr. DEACON: The reporters can only report what they think they hear, and they cannot be sure that it is absolutely correct, because there is so much interruption.

The HOME SECRETARY: There was no interruption when those questions were asked.

Mr. DEACON: I cannot always hear what is said, and I am sitting on the floor of the House.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Press always get copies of the questions and answers. They have no right to misrepresent my answers.

Mr. DEACON: We have wasted the whole afternoon, and the Home Secretary has not got any further forward.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): I would like to speak on this question.

The SPEAKER: Order! The debate has been somewhat irregular, and I hope the hon. member is not going to continue on the lines that have proceeded for some time.

Mr. FRY: I am going to follow on the lines of hon. members on the other side.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: That is a reflection on the Chair.

Mr. FRY: If all the members of this House had as much regard for the Speaker as I have, there would be better discipline. If the debate had been controlled and the members who have spoken had realised the seriousness of the discussion, they would have limited themselves to debating the question of privilege before the House, but they transgressed on every occasion. I think hon. members will agree with me that the Press generally give fair reports.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FRY: It must be remembered that the pressmen report for newspapers which are not kept for the special benefit of members of Parliament, but which have to convey to the people the general news of the day as well as the doings of Parliament. Speeches delivered by hon. members of this House are frequently covered with cobwebs—or, might I say, exotic foreign growth, and the Press cut this growth away and present to the people the facts of the case. I am not going to say that the Press never make a mistake. Every member of this House makes a mistake sometimes, but we do not hear them getting up and complaining. Surely we do not expect the Press to be perfect. Hon. members themselves are not perfect. We have a very good Press in Brisbane—a Press that we have very little to complain about. I can say that the "Daily Standard" in reporting me has repeatedly chopped off my speech right in the middle, and it has put a different complexion than what was intended and what was said, but I have not complained about it. I do not take any notice of the reports at all, even if I am not reported fully; but, if a

paper makes any serious statement about me I have another remedy, and a very effective remedy. I am sure that, if a referendum of the people of Brisbane were taken, they would support the Brisbane Press right up to the hilt. The Press have had a hard fight to get into the position they occupy to-day, and I am sure they will fight hard to retain that position. It looks as if hon. members want to follow precedent. They want to follow another Parliament sitting in Russia which said, "Abolish the Press!" That is the Bolshevik Parliament. We have got a Bolshevik Parliament here.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. FRY: The tendency is in that direction, at any rate. I have every confidence in the Press. I believe that, in spite of this discussion, the Press will do just the same as they have always done, because they have the power in their own hands. I do not think the Home Secretary was justified in raising this question at all.

The HOME SECRETARY: Show me where I was not justified.

Mr. FRY: I do not know if I would be in order if I complied with his request. The hon. member complained about the inaccuracy of the Press, but he did not say what papers misreported him when he mentioned that his questions the other day were misreported.

The HOME SECRETARY: I did. I gave you the two questions.

Mr. FRY: Here is the same thing coming up again. Where do we stand? We have not got a perfect man, and we have not got a perfect State. If this sort of thing is going on, where is it going to end? I take it that the Government are not game to turn the Press out.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. FRY: The country would be against any Parliament that turned the Press out of the House. If the Government went to the country on the question of excluding the Press from this House, where they are privileged to report the proceedings, the people would be unanimously in favour of the Press remaining. There would be fully 90 per cent. of the people in favour of the Press. Even the supporters of the Government are turning against them. If 90 per cent. of their actions are good, why resent criticism? We in opposition know that 90 per cent. of our actions are good, and that is why we do not complain. I am appealing to your honesty in the matter.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. FRY: Notwithstanding all these fireworks—because I look upon this as fireworks—I do not think that any member of the Government will accuse the Press of being unfair. It may dwindle down to this—that probably an error has been made, out of which the Government have been trying to build a mansion. (Laughter.) I am going to—

The HOME SECRETARY: Move an amendment.

Mr. FRY: The only amendment I could move would be that the Home Secretary's Government should come to this side and that an honest Government be given a chance.

The HOME SECRETARY: Would that honest Government be the Country party?

[*Mr. Deacon.*]

Mr. FRY: No, the Nationalist party, assisted by the Country party. (Government laughter.) The Government are like youngsters playing with a balloon, flying it high and admiring its pretty colours, and, while it is up in the air, something comes along and pricks it, and it goes off with a bang. The Government are crying over a broken balloon.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*): The Home Secretary is to be congratulated for initiating this debate. We know that hon. members opposite have taken up the stand that the Press reports of parliamentary proceedings, as they are carried on at present, are perfectly satisfactory. Everyone who realises the value of truth stands for a free and unfettered Press. No one stands for that more than I do, because I have studied the history of the fight for a free Press, and I understand something about the fight that has yet to be made. We know that the reports of parliamentary proceedings, which are the subject-matter of this debate, represent the policy of hon. members opposite, who stand to win by a policy of distortion and misrepresentation of fact.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: You are absolutely incorrect.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: Every anti-Labour newspaper article based on these parliamentary reports is a misrepresentation of fact. Hon. members opposite carry on that policy, and employ an army of whisperers to go round distorting facts and misrepresenting everything which the Labour party stands for. This is so well known to men of education and perception that the editorial leader has to-day become a by-word amongst intellectual people. No one pays any attention to the leading articles in the "Courier" and the "Daily Mail," and papers of that kind.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Why are you worrying?

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: Simply because they are distortions of fact, and sometimes public opinion is unfortunately based upon them. That is why hon. members opposite support that policy, and why the newspapers which support them carry on that form of propaganda. Upton Sinclair lays down what is a very good principle for everyone to follow when considering newspaper articles and Press reports of parliamentary proceedings. He says that they should ask themselves whether what they read is fact, or whether it is propaganda; and, if it is propaganda, who is responsible for it. Hon. members opposite have no regard for the traditions of Parliament, judging from their speeches this afternoon. Parliament is a place where the representatives of the people can voice the claims and needs of their constituents, and it is an institution which every democracy should cherish. Citizenship is something that we should all hold most dear. Yet hon. members opposite, and the Press which support them, carry on a policy which is dragging those high principles into the gutter, and bringing about the present regrettable state of affairs, under which Parliament is almost looked upon with contempt, and the term "member of Parliament" is sometimes used as a term of reproach. That is the state of affairs which hon. members opposite stand for.

Mr. FRY: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in criticising the Opposition as standing for certain supposed policies, and stating that the Press is sup-

porting them, in connection with this debate which is taking place upon the question of privilege?

The SPEAKER: I hope the hon. member for Mackay will direct his remarks to the question before the House.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: I am dealing with the question of Press reports of parliamentary proceedings, which, when they are distorted and misrepresented, give the general public a false idea of what is taking place in this Chamber and of what the Government are doing. We know that Parliament is looked upon as the bulwark of democracy. The representatives of the people can voice their claims here; but the policy which hon. members opposite by their speeches defend is dragging Parliament into contempt, and may bring about a state of affairs which they most of all would have cause to regret. No one who has studied the problems of society can afford to look lightly upon any breach of parliamentary privilege. I say that the Press is capable of doing a great deal of good in the community. The Press should stand for the truth. The reports of parliamentary proceedings should be a correct account of what is taking place, and there should be no distortion of any kind. This matter has always been looked upon very seriously by those who understand the value of parliamentary institutions. Sir Erskine May, in his "Parliamentary Practice," 12th edition, says—

"When a wilful misrepresentation of the debate arises, or if it may be necessary to enforce the restriction, the House censures or otherwise punishes the offender, whether he be a member of the House or a stranger admitted to its debates. But as orders prohibiting the publication of debates are still retained upon the journals, the action of the House, in dealing with the misrepresentation of its debates, is somewhat anomalous. The ground of complaint is the incorrect report of a speech; but the motion for the punishment of the printer assumes that the publication of the debate at all is a breach of privilege. The principle, however, by which both Houses are governed is now sufficiently acknowledged. So long as the debates are correctly and faithfully reported the privilege which prohibits their publication is waived; but when they are reported *mala fide*, the publishers of newspapers are liable to censure."

That sums up the position as it appears to those who have studied the question. I would be sorry to think that it was necessary, at this period, to take any drastic action dealing with the Press, but drastic action will be taken if it is necessary. (Opposition dissent.) I am always prepared to take drastic action when it is necessary. Anyone who has had any experience knows that reporters sometimes give a faithful record of the proceedings of Parliament, and of speeches generally; but those who sit in the office and control the policy of a newspaper often delete large portions of a speech with a blue pencil. They then, with a few words of their own, fill up the gaps they have made, distorting the meaning of the speaker and giving a false view of the position. I have outlined what I consider to be the correct principles which should govern the reports of proceedings in this Chamber. It

*Hon. W. Forgan Smith.*]

is necessary, in the interests of the people, that correct reports of parliamentary proceedings should be published. Parliamentary representation is far more important than the mere passing phase of a mushroom party such as that of hon. members opposite. Parliamentary institutions and parliamentary representation are something that we should hold dear, something that we should cherish and maintain.

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

#### PAPER.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Return to an order of the Legislative Assembly relative to an agreement between the Commissioner of State Enterprises and the Fishermen's Association.

#### SUPPLY.

##### FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

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

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

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*): Notwithstanding the fact that the House was adjourned on Tuesday because of the terrible tragedy which has occurred in North Queensland, I think I would be wanting in my duty as a member of a metropolitan constituency were I not to say how much I sympathise with the unfortunate people in the North who have lost their breadwinners in this terrible disaster. (Hear, hear!) To me it seems a dreadful calamity to have overtaken them, and it also brings home to a great number in our city life the terrible dangers which are faced by men in certain occupations.

Mr. COLLINS interjected.

Mr. MAXWELL: I am sorry that the hon. member for Bowen, at a time such as this, should interject. I am absolutely sincere in the sentiments I am uttering to-night, and I hope that the members of this Parliament will lead the way in responding to the request which has been made for financial assistance to these people.

I realise that a great number of the people of this community were looking for a lead from the Government which would give them confidence. But, when we analyse the Statement delivered by the Treasurer, which so many of his colleagues see such a lot of fruit in—barren fruit, I term it—

Mr. FLETCHER: Dead Sea fruit.

Mr. MAXWELL: That is a very good interjection. It only brings home to me the fact that, instead of there being something of a tangible character, there are in it only apologies, excuses, and abuse. An opportunity was given to the Government to create that confidence which was so essential to the advancement of this State. Business men, not only of this community but of the Commonwealth, were looking to see what the Government of Queensland were going to

do; but, when we analyse the whole question as submitted by the Government, we find there is very little encouragement given in it. As has been stated by hon. gentlemen on this side, it is a most disappointing Statement. In the first place, we find that three departments—Treasury, Public Instruction, and Railways—are responsible for more than the excess of expenditure over the appropriation; and we are told subsequently that that has been due to Arbitration Court awards. If such a statement had been made by business men, they would have been told they were profiteering. If business men, owing to the increases created by the Arbitration Court and to altered conditions, added the increased price to their goods, they would be told they were dishonest and were profiteering. Yet we find the Government making the excuse that the deficit in certain departments has been owing to certain increases made by the Arbitration Court. The abuse in connection with war gratuity bonds is the inference that private employers have not done their duty in the same manner as the Government. That has been fully debated by the hon. member for Burnett, and valuable information produced. The Treasurer, in his usual caustic manner, drew the attention of the Committee to the fact in connection with the State Advances Corporation that he only desired to emphasise a certain paragraph—

“For the benefit of country members, who at times display shocking ignorance upon our transactions in matters appertaining to the State Advances Corporation.”

If there is any ignorance displayed—which I deny—it is brought about by hon. gentlemen who sit on the front Treasury bench in refusing to give the information which members on this side of the House desire. On page 9 of the Statement we find these words—

“I would like, while on this topic, to offer a word of encouragement to genuine financial students in this and the other Chamber.”

Then he goes on to give this advice—

“This practice of the untutored opposite has become almost a vice. The more ignorant, the more dogmatic”—

Just imagine the Treasurer talking about anyone being dogmatic!—

“The more stupid, the more assertive! It is well known that the most eminent Banker would not be listened to on finance by experts who arrived in Parliament direct from the farm, or by those financial pundits who sit in a back room in Queen street writing leading articles.”

I would like to know where the hon. gentleman received his financial training?

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: In the Treasury.

Mr. MAXWELL: To me it is a lamentable state of affairs to find an hon. gentleman, such as the Treasurer, attempting to heap ridicule upon a body of men who possess, perhaps, more intelligence than the hon. gentleman and some of his supporters. I can quite understand honest and even caustic criticism, but it is reprehensible and low down for any gentleman occupying Cabinet rank to resort to tactics like that, more particularly when we find our State in the position in which it is to-day, and when it should be the sole aim of every member of

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this House to devote, to the best of his ability, the whole of his efforts to bring about a better state of affairs.

We also have a paragraph from the hon. gentleman in connection with the Loan Funds, in which he says—

“The loan was a complete success, and the result showed that the citizens of the State had every confidence in the Government.”

Nobody knows better than the Government that that is not true. They know that the reason why that loan was so fully subscribed was because the people of Queensland had confidence in their own State. It was not a question of having confidence in the Government. The hon. gentleman can laugh, but no one knows better than himself that the statement I am making is absolutely correct. The very men that the hon. gentleman traduces were the men who assisted him in financing that loan, and they gave one of the finest advertisements to the State of Queensland that it was possible to give, because they showed the people in the old land that Queensland citizens had sufficient faith in their own country to put their savings into it, and gave the lead to others to follow in their footsteps. In another paragraph dealing with the Loan Funds, the hon. gentleman states—

“In justice to those citizens who are loyal to their State, it is only right to add here that certain wealthy firms who make huge profits out of our people, and who subscribed in a niggardly fashion to the Commonwealth war and peace loans, were conspicuous by their unpatriotic consistency in so far as the State loan was concerned. Prosperous Southerners, too, having extensive investments in Queensland, who regularly beg for an extension of time for their income tax payments, also conveniently forgot their obligations to the State wherein their riches are harvested.”

Do you mean to say for one moment that a body of decent, respectable men, if they were in financial straits as the hon. gentleman points out—I believe they did wait upon him for an extension of time in which to pay their debts—do you mean to say they were in a position to invest in any loan in Queensland or anywhere else?

The TREASURER: Yes.

Mr. MAXWELL: I say absolutely “No,” and it only shows how little knowledge the hon. gentleman has of the ordinary everyday methods of business. You may see a fine palatial business, and to all intents and purposes it is worth a very great amount of money; but, if you go to the bank, you will find that there is very little money to the credit of the business. The whole of the capital is in the stock. I have already stated in connection with several loans that I have been mixed up with that a number of business men could not take any money out of their business to invest in the loans, but some of them went to banks and to the Australian Mutual Provident Society and took out life insurance policies so that they would be able to put some money into the loans.

Mr. BRENNAN: What did Barnes and Company do?

Mr. MAXWELL: I do not know what Barnes and Company did, nor do I know what the hon. member for Toowoomba did.

Is it at all likely that these gentlemen would make applications for loans if they could take money out of their businesses? Is it at all likely that any trader with any credit would go to the Treasurer—the man who has held some of our pioneers up to public ridicule—and ask for an extension of time? Is it at all likely that these gentlemen have any money to invest in loans, where, according to him, they have asked for an extension of time? I am holding no brief for these people.

The TREASURER: You know the banks guaranteed an advance up to 90 per cent.

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. gentleman knows that the banks advanced in a great many instances more than some people could stand.

The TREASURER: Not to these wealthy companies.

Mr. MAXWELL: I am very pleased to say that the loan was a great success, and it is a pity the Treasurer did not recognise that the assistance that was given to a number of contributors came from a certain section of the community.

There is another element in this Financial Statement that the Treasurer has presented to us. We have been told on various occasions that the employers have been holding up the business of the State with a view to smash unionism and with a view to create unemployment. I am going to prove that, according to the Financial Statement, the Government themselves have been holding up a number of buildings from being erected. The hon. gentleman says—

“In regard to workers’ dwellings, we suspended for a short period the granting of any new applications, but did so in the interests of the borrower, knowing thoroughly well that our action would not be quite popular. The simple truth is that, owing to the high prices prevailing for building, it was very undesirable to saddle borrowers with a liability much in excess of the normal value of a dwelling, more especially as there were prospects of a reduction in costs in the near future. Buildings can be erected at the present time about 20 per cent. cheaper than nine months ago, which is a tribute to the Government’s foresight.”

If that was a tribute to the Government’s foresight, I contend it was a bigger tribute to the foresight of the man who was investing money for either speculative purposes or in a home, because he felt that, if operations were postponed for a time, a certain percentage would be saved. The Government were the sinners in this respect. It was the duty of the Government to lead the way and to show other people that they had confidence in the country; but, instead of doing that, the Government, for a certain period, suspended operations so that they could say they saved 20 per cent. in connection with the erection of workers’ dwellings.

Then I want to draw attention to another boast by the Treasurer in the Financial Statement—as to an extension of time granted by the Bank of England for certain repayments. If the hon. member were a business man, he would know that, if he had to go for an extension to his banker, it would be an act of insolvency.

The TREASURER: Oh! Oh!

Mr. MAXWELL: I tell the hon. member that is a fact. The hon. member has never

*Mr. Maxwell.*

had any experience in business matters; but, if I have borrowed money from a banker, and I go for an extension because I cannot pay on the due date, that is recognised amongst business men as an act of insolvency.

We know that there is a great amount of unemployment in Queensland at present. When the Labour party tried to secure the reins of Government, they gave the people a lot of advice in a pamphlet they issued at election time.

Mr. COLLINS: This is about the fiftieth time you have read that pamphlet.

Mr. MAXWELL: It may be, but it is just as well to emphasise this point, to show the hypocrisy of hon. members opposite. Not for many years has unemployment been so rampant in Queensland as it is to-day, and yet we find that members of the present Government, when they were trying to secure the reins of office, said—

“The State Government has not lifted a hand to reduce unemployment, and no direct charge has fallen upon its shoulders through the European crisis.”

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Who prepared that?

Mr. MAXWELL: This was prepared by the financial experts of the Labour party—“Compiled by E. G. Theodore and J. Fihelly for the Campaign Committee.” (Opposition laughter.) If our friends on the other side had any sympathy for the unfortunate unemployed, they would realise their responsibility. All they need do to appreciate the position is to take up the “Queensland Industrial Gazette.” It discloses a most lamentable state of affairs. From start to finish in the reports of the union secretaries we find that the prospects in the boot-making industry only are good. There is a slump in the bricklayers’ industry, and the general remarks are to the effect that “Several large buildings are being erected with concrete, which is probably due to the high cost of bricks.” The prospects of the carpenters and joiners are “bad”; those of the clerks “not good”; of the clothing trade “poor, general depression”; of the coopers, “fair”; of the electricians, “slack”; of the liquor trade, “general depression.” (Opposition laughter.) That reminds me of a very funny little passage I heard one day on the back of one of our trams. We were discussing one of our shipping strikes, and a gentleman said to me, “Things are rather serious, are they not?” “Yes.” I said, “they are.” There was a waterside man on the back of the car, and he butted in, and said, “Well, blimey, I don’t see much the matter. The breweries are still going.” (Laughter.) And so this list goes on—“Depression,” “lack of work,” “slackness,” “shipping slack,” “depression in trade,” “lack of cargo,” “no work.” I do not like to read this. I made a suggestion to hon. members on the other side not long ago that, if it were at all possible, a number of us should reason together and devise the best way to prevent this unemployment. How is it possible to get these men back into their every-day employment—not to put them on the bread line or reduce them to going down to the relief depôts for doles to the extent of £120 500 per annum? And a Labour Government in power! It is a standing disgrace to any British Government.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAXWELL: We have heard from the Labour Government what they were going

[Mr. Maxwell.]

to do for the working man. They say, “We have got you high wages and good conditions.” They have not got anything of the kind—if they had, it is an admission that they have interfered with the Arbitration Court—the Arbitration Court have got them their high wages and good conditions. But what is the good of having them if they have not any work to do? They are no good when people are in a state of starvation. (Government laughter.) It is all very well for members opposite to laugh. When the Philp Administration were in power, when the Denham-Barnes Administration were in power, there was a lot of squealing and talk about what the Labour party could do. What did they do? They have made a holy mess of the State, but, thank God, the time is not far distant when they are going to be relegated to political oblivion, and, when that time comes, they are gone for ever. The eyes of the worker are opened.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: That is why they are hanging on.

Mr. MAXWELL: They are hanging on because they realise what the position is. We were told that if this Government were returned to power they would show us something in finance. They have done so, with a vengeance. In this election pamphlet they tell us—

“How your money goes—a few simple lessons on a very mysterious subject.”

On red paper—that is the colour they always use—

“Finance is a subject that is approached by the uninitiated with awe and reverence. It is enshrouded in darkness and mystery, and none dare try and penetrate the maze unless it be the Banker, the Big Business Man, or the Politician.”

That is what the Theodore-Fihelly circular says. When they were seeking the suffrages of the electors of Queensland, they pointed out to them—

“Loans may be very necessary for reproductive works,”

not for wild-cat schemes in the shape of fish shops and butchers’ shops, State stations, and cold stores, and interference with private enterprise in things they did not understand. In the same pamphlet they pointed out that “Our debt amounts to £52,000,000,” but on 30th June last, according to Table E5 of the Treasurer’s financial tables, it was £80,744,559.

[7.30 p.m.]

The PREMIER: Do you question those figures?

Mr. MAXWELL: No. That is the way hon. gentlemen opposite were going to put Queensland on a very high pedestal of finance.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: So we did.

Mr. MAXWELL: The Government have put Queensland on a pedestal and have made the State the laughing-stock of the whole world. How could any Government or any individual who could not run a fish shop run a Government? We can quite understand the position that obtains in this State of ours. Why? Simply because hon. members opposite are not a body of free men. They are practically shackled. There are times when one can admire the sentiments that come from the Premier, but then, somehow or other, he does the “crab act.” I have admired the Premier on various occasions for the way in which he has spoken to

certain sections of the community, and I have said, "Well, thank God, he sees the light." I hope he will see the light. An eminent writer states—

"Of what use is a Parliament of free men if they are not free? Indeed, I doubt if it is a Parliament—an assembly of the wise—at all. If men can by law become members of Parliament, bound before they enter it, and limited in judgment while they are in it, and can be honest advisers of the Crown, then the theory and practice of Parliament—that hitherto free, noble institution of our race—has become subject to a strange perversion."

You can understand the position that has been created in Queensland to-day. It was simply because hon. gentlemen who came on to the Treasury benches honestly expressed the views they held at that time, thinking they were in a position to put what they thought was to be right certain wrongs that existed. We find to-day that Queensland is in a bad state financially, and because I have the temerity to say that, I am told by hon. members opposite that I am defaming the fair name of Queensland.

Mr. BRENNAN: You sent Robert Philp home.

Mr. MAXWELL: I am defaming the Government, who have ruined one of the finest States in the Commonwealth. This pamphlet goes on to state—

"Finance is the basis of government. It is also the test of government. Apply it to the financial records of the two parties who are now before you."

We are told by hon. members opposite that, if they are given an opportunity, they will be able to place Queensland on a sound financial basis. It is foreshadowed by the Treasurer that it is the intention of the Government to apply for a loan. I tell the hon. gentleman that, if they attempt to go for a loan in Queensland, they are not going to get the money unless they ruin the industries of this State. There are a great number of industries of this State ruined at the present time, and no one knows better than hon. members opposite. If we are to judge by the Labour dailies, it is part of the policy of Labour to wipe out the boss; it is their intention to control the means of production and wealth, and this is how they are doing it. I was glad to hear the Premier say that it was utter nonsense for a section of the community to say that they were going to wipe out the capitalists. He said that the capitalist was essential. I am sorry that he cannot assist in conveying those sentiments to some of the hon. gentlemen who sit behind him. In connection with the proposal by the Treasurer to go to the country for another loan, I suppose he thinks that, because the Commonwealth loan was a success, his loan will be a success.

Mr. BRENNAN: The banks will lend us £3,000,000.

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. member has put the whole show away. He knows what it means and at what expense it is going to be done. It is going to be done at the sacrifice of the businesses and industries of Queensland. The Labour party have prevented business men from carrying on the business. I am sure that hon. members opposite will see the light and see where

they have made a mistake. There are a number of men who have seen the light. Any hon. member with Liberal or National ideals who goes over to the Labour side is considered one of the finest men possible.

Mr. BRENNAN: They are converted.

Mr. MAXWELL: They are converted; and when an hon. member from the Labour side comes over to this side—

Mr. BRENNAN: He rats.

Mr. MAXWELL: Of course—"he rats." We have heard such expressions used in connection with the great leader of a great party in Australia. On the other hand, we have heard the eulogies paid to a distinguished gentleman recently deceased. He learned his politics in a Liberal school. Did any of those gentlemen attribute such opprobrious names to him? Not they. They are too gentlemanly. They give to every man the same privilege that they want for themselves—to think for themselves and to act for themselves—but some of them, like the hon. member for Toowoomba, are shackled hand and foot. The hon. member for Toowoomba knows he is doomed now. He knows very well that he could never have landed here if he had not signed away the freedom he had. I want to deal with one aspect of the question through one of our financial institutions which the hon. member for Toowoomba spoke about as helping the Government in connection with their loan money. It is essential that we should have money to carry on the business of this country, and I hope that the Government are going to get the money in a legitimate way; but the way they are going about it is a wrong way. They should create the confidence which is so essential by showing that this is a great State, and by showing people that it pays to invest their money here. I wish to quote from the "Trustees' Quarterly Review," which the hon. member for Bowen has so often quoted.

Mr. COLLINS: They have taken some of my figures.

Mr. MAXWELL: I suppose the figures quoted by the hon. member for Bowen were correct, or they would not have used them. This is what the "Review" has to say—

"So far as Queensland is concerned, the suggestion of another State loan, though not unexpected, is viewed with anything but complacency, for, as was recently expressed by the editor of the "White Mercantile Gazette," mercantile firms have no money to invest. They are hard put to it to pay their way and support their country clients, who, in turn, carry their customers. The mining interests, the pastoral investors, and the sugar planters are no better off just now. They are all hard up. The only considerable credit balances are those of the insurance companies, and their total is not much, because they supported the last loan to a considerable extent. As to the fixed deposits in the banks, these are not cash, but are all lent out, and are not available. The writer expresses the view that the loan cannot be floated without compulsion, and it is feared that a forced loan would cause a disastrous crisis."

That is a strong financial journal. This particular institution has loyally contributed to loans.

Mr. COLLINS: Sir Robert Philp is one of the directors.

*Mr. Maxwell.]*

Mr. MAXWELL: Yes, and he was one of the first men in Queensland to contribute to the loan, and the Treasurer knows it.

The TREASURER: That is not correct.

Mr. MAXWELL: I am in a position to say that he did contribute to the loan.

The TREASURER: He contributed, but he was not among the first.

Mr. MAXWELL: Certain remarks have fallen from Ministers opposite pointing out that the questions asked on this side were only for propaganda purposes. It looks as if there were an election coming on, as hon. members opposite are putting up a good electioneering stunt. The questions asked from this side were not for political purposes at all. I wanted the information for my electors, and for the electors of Queensland, and I have a right to that information. I did not ask for it as a compliment at all. What has been the position in regard to the State Enterprises Department. The other night I mentioned a matter in connection with a little bit of business for a returned soldier. I do not blame the man who got that particular stall, because he got it quite legitimately as a business proposition, but I blame the Minister for State Enterprises for giving it to him. I shall be able to produce sufficient evidence to prove that what I say is perfectly right. I asked a question the other day as to whether a protest was made about this stall being given to a certain gentleman.

Mr. POLLOCK: Come forward with a direct charge and I will deal with it. You have been dealing with innuendoes, long enough.

Mr. MAXWELL: I am quite prepared to listen to anything the hon. gentleman has to say. I asked the question about the stall the first time it was brought under my notice by a returned soldier, and I accepted the statement made by the Home Secretary that no man of that name had made an application. To my surprise I found there were other men who had made applications to the Minister, and we were told that it was not the intention of the department to reveal those names.

Mr. POLLOCK: You defeated a returned soldier in your own plebiscite.

Mr. MAXWELL: There was a returned soldier against me in the plebiscite, and he got up and told the electors of Toowong to vote for me. I refer the hon. gentleman to Colonel Moon, and he will prove that what I say is correct. It ill becomes any member of this House to hurl accusations across the Chamber as to the amount of money that passed between certain people. That was done the other night by an hon. member opposite. Regarding this stall at the Normal School, I asked if an objection was made by the head master of the school. I am informed that the head master drew the attention of the Department of Public Instruction to it, and protested against the stall being established near the school. I am also told that the caretaker went to stop the erection of the stall, but was shown a document from the State Enterprises Department, which stated that the stall was being erected to cope with an anticipated glut of strawberries. I have got a letter from the man in my hand.

Mr. RYAN: You have also got a cheque.

Mr. MAXWELL: Yes. I have got a cheque here, too. The cheque is signed by

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"C. H. Arkell and A. W. Carseldine." It is for £24, and is made payable to the State Enterprises Department. The letter accompanying the cheque reads—

"RE STALL IN NORMAL SCHOOL GATEWAY,  
EDWARD STREET.

"8th September, 1921.

"J. F. Maxwell, Esq.,

"Brisbane.

"Dear Sir,—

"I was the occupier of the gateway in conjunction with a returned soldier for a short period.

"While there, Mr. O'Driscoll, of State Enterprise Department, asked for a quote from me for the whole of gateway, leaving a 3-feet opening as passageway.

"Offered £6 per week, payment in advance, and enclosed with offer cheque signed A. W. Carseldine, C. H. Arkell, proprietor, for £24.

"Mr. Arkell is a well-known merchant in Turbot Street markets.

"I enclose the same cheque in this letter for your perusal.

"On my application being refused I then sent a returned soldier with the same cheque to apply, but they turned Mr. Jones down as well.

"I then interviewed Mr. Forgan Smith, making same offer to him; he offered to reply by letter.

"I have already handed you his reply.

"Seeing gateway occupied, and hearing from various people that a member of Parliament had the stall, I interviewed a Mr. Pollock, M.L.A., offering to work on halves.

"Mr. Pollock to receive the money every night at his suggestion.

"The lad who holds the permit was to receive from me, out of the business, 7s. 6d. a day, at Mr. Pollock's suggestion, but lad to have sole rights of sale of strawberries. Also, Mr. Pollock to pay £2 a week out of business to State Enterprise Department, for rent.

"Agreed between us to start. Mr. Pollock to finance, but broken by him on morning agreed by us to start.

"I am a married man, with a wife and four children to keep.

"But my offer still holds good—that is, £6 per week, and a returned soldier to be employed.

"I declare the contents to be true.

"GEORGE CASSERLY.

"Thos. A. Davies, a Justice of the Peace.

"8th September, 1921."

Mr. POLLOCK: The statements in that letter are not true.

Mr. MAXWELL: I am only reading what he has written.

Mr. POLLOCK: I will tell you something about the way the Dagoes pulled your leg.

The HOME SECRETARY: Why didn't you quote that letter when you asked the question the other day?

Mr. MAXWELL: I did not get that letter until afterwards.

Mr. VOWLES: What is the good of asking questions—you won't answer them?

The HOME SECRETARY: I would not make accusations like you did about Wando Vale.



Mr. MAXWELL: I might also read a letter which was sent by the Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Minister for State Enterprises, to Mr. Casserly. It reads—

“Queensland State Trade Office,  
“Brisbane, 30th December, 1920.

“Dear Sir,—

“With reference to your recent interview with me relative to the fruit stand at the old Normal School, Edward street, I have to advise you that the action taken in withdrawing permission from you to use that site was on the instructions of my predecessor.

“It is not considered desirable that permission should be given for the erection of fruit stands at any of the Government buildings.

“Yours faithfully,

“W. FORGAN SMITH.

“Mr. G. W. Casserly,  
Abbotsford road, Mayne Junction.”

If it was not right to have that stall erected for this man, how does it come about that somebody else has “buted in”? The hon. member for Gregory made a statement that my friends the “Dagoes” are trying to “pull my leg.” I do not know “Dagoes,” and I am not paying any attention to what they say. I was man enough to accept the statement which the Home Secretary made. I asked the hon. gentleman—

“Was any offer made by a certain man of £10 a week?”

The hon. member for Enoggera was present at the time this man made the statement that he had offered the Home Secretary, on behalf of the Brisbane Retail Fruitsellers' Association, £10 a week for the stall. The Home Secretary said that he had had no such offer.

The HOME SECRETARY: I had nothing to do with it.

Mr. MAXWELL: The Home Secretary was acting for the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises.

The HOME SECRETARY: Whom was I acting for?

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. gentleman acted for the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises during his absence.

The HOME SECRETARY: I have never acted in the State Enterprises Department.

Mr. MAXWELL: I beg pardon. The hon. gentleman was trying to assist me to secure information.

The HOME SECRETARY: I told you exactly the position.

Mr. MAXWELL: I have now given the position. How does it come about that such a condition of things obtains? This man produces his cheque. He says that there was a guarantee given to the State Enterprises Department of £6 a week for a certain stall in front of one of the Government buildings. It was turned down because, as the Minister says in his letter, it is not considered desirable by the department that permission should be given for the erection of fruit stands in front of Government buildings.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: There are other things in question. It is not desirable.

Mr. MAXWELL: I quite agree with the hon. gentleman. I do not think it is desirable. There is another aspect of the question. There are a number of shopkeepers

who are trying to live in our city to-day. The hawkers have no rates or taxes to pay. All they do is, perhaps, to pay a little towards the cost of running a barrow, but nothing like what is paid by the shopkeepers. Are not the people who are paying rates and taxes, and keeping the Government going, entitled to consideration?

The HOME SECRETARY: Do you not think the people are entitled to get cheap fruit?

Mr. MAXWELL: Yes, I do.

The HOME SECRETARY: They are allowed in every city in the Commonwealth.

Mr. POLLOCK: The “Dagoes,” when you were on the city council, prevented anyone from getting stalls.

Mr. MAXWELL: The city council, when I was on it, never allowed a fruitstall in the street.

Mr. POLLOCK: You would not allow barrows—you would not stand for cheap fruit.

Mr. MAXWELL: It is not a fair deal to the man who has to make a living in a shop and pay municipal and other rates to the Government. If some hon. members opposite owned a little shop they would be the first to squeak. If an election was on next week, the Government would be trying to placate some of these unfortunate people who have been deprived of their little businesses. It is not a fair deal to them.

The HOME SECRETARY: You allow every theatre in Brisbane to break every regulation you have made.

Mr. MAXWELL: If that was the case, then the hon. gentleman knows that he has neglected his duty.

The HOME SECRETARY: I had to make you provide seats for the public in the theatres.

Mr. MAXWELL: It is no good the hon. gentleman being wise after the event. I am not approaching this matter in a bitter spirit, but as a business proposition. It is not a fair deal to turn a man down who is prepared to pay £24 a month if the Government are going to let the space in question in front of a Government building. At the same time I say that it is most unjust to the business community if they are to be hampered with such ramshackle affairs. I would like the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises to tell us how much rent he is getting for it.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Give notice of the question to-morrow, and I will give you full information. You have never asked me a question about it yet.

Mr. MAXWELL: Very well, I will do so. I have a sworn statement here. I do not know the gentleman who makes it, but it has been given to me. I have many more documents here, which I will not read, because I think they are too abusive. I am man enough to read only what is a fair statement of the case. During the municipal elections, we found an hon. member on the other side standing upon the hustings and saying what a ramshackle place Brisbane was. The Government are attempting to perpetuate this condition—if such a condition obtains, which I deny—by permitting such ramshackle places to be erected in the street.

Mr. WILSON: You know perfectly well that the present Government gave you the regulations to do away with these things.

Mr. MAXWELL: When we asked for them. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley

*Mr. Maxwell.]*

and myself worked together in connection with that matter, and the request was made by the Local Authorities Association. But there were a lot of other things which hon. gentlemen opposite gave us that were no good to us as a local authority. I hope hon. gentlemen opposite will rise to the occasion, and not become landlords of fruit-stalls; and that they will try to do away with the condition of things brought about by allowing a fruitstall to be jammed in front of the Normal School, with a little 3-foot gangway, to the detriment of shop-keepers who are trying to make an honest living.

[8 p.m.]

Mr. BRENNAN: We are getting down to very small statesmanlike ideas.

Mr. MAXWELL: When the Government were courting the electors they told them that, if they were placed in power, they would show the proper method of doing financial business. Instead of dealing with the finances, they have "done" the citizens of the community. In an electioneering pamphlet they said—

"But finance in the home is different from national finance only, in the magnitude of the latter.

"If a man borrows £5, pays back £7 to the moneylender in interest, and still owes £3 for the original £5 borrowed, he is a fool. Every man and woman will admit so much.

"When the principle is applied to public borrowing no one seems to notice that the same rule should hold good."

Yet, what do we find? We find a rotten condition of affairs so far as the finances of the State are concerned at the present time. When hon. gentlemen opposite took over the reins of government, according to their own showing they had debts amounting to £52,000,000. From 1915 to 1921 they have incurred debts amounting to over £80,000,000. These are the gentlemen who are asking to be given control of the destinies of this community. In this pamphlet they also said—

"That is Liberal finance. What do you think about it? Could you conduct your own private affairs on such a ridiculous basis and have any respect left?"

I ask the same question of them. What do they think of the condition of affairs existing in Queensland to-day. Do they think it is such as to warrant their occupying the Treasury benches? Does it not behove every man who has the interests of the community at heart to put forward every effort to have them removed from the Treasury benches immediately?

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

The PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): The hon. member for Toowoong for the last hour has been dealing with innumerable trivialities, hardly touching the Government's financial policy in any sense. He opened his remarks by casting rather an obscure reflection upon the ability of the Government to manage the Treasury affairs of this State. I do not know whether his own record as administrator of the city would bear very close investigation.

Mr. MAXWELL: I challenge you to show otherwise.

[Mr. Maxwell.]

The PREMIER: Perhaps the hon. member might have an opportunity of challenging one of his own conferees at present in the council, who has been criticising him. One of the daily newspapers a couple of days ago said—

"Alderman Gelston also emphatically condemned the action of those responsible for the unenviable state of affairs. Less than half of the financial year was gone, but more than nine months of their income had been expended."

The hon. member conveniently turns his attention in another direction, after challenging me to bring to light something reflecting upon his own financial administration. I have quoted Alderman Gelston, one of the shining lights of the Nationalists of Brisbane, who was recently elected to the council, and who emphatically condemns the administration of the hon. member. The whole of the criticism from that side of the House has been of about the same calibre. It all boils down to petty faultfinding on trivial matters which are not worthy the attention of Parliament, or else charges, based upon erroneous information, which are easily exploded, and which have been or will be shown to be false. I intend to expose to-night some of the fallacious statements made by hon. members to show how little there is in their criticism, and how destitute they are of argument when they are attacking the Government's finances.

During the course of this debate the Government have been blamed for a condition of things which is common to all countries in the world at the present time. Hon. gentlemen on that side seem to be living in an era of the past. They have failed to recognise, to admit, or to realise, that conditions have changed during the last six years. Consequently, we have tedious repetitions of comparisons of the expenditure of this year with that of 1914-1915, and the taxation of this year is compared with the taxation of pre-war days, and so on. The whole of their criticism is based upon that kind of fallacy. If they had for a moment turned their attention to the conditions existing in the other States or in other countries—go where you will—they would have found that Government expenditure has increased inevitably and that further taxation has had to be imposed. They think this condition of things is singular to Queensland.

Mr. VOWLES: I think Victoria was quoted, was it not?

The PREMIER: I intend to show how the hon. gentleman and others have distorted the facts in referring to Victoria. They have not in any sense recognised the difficulties with which the Government have been faced ever since we have been in office. They do not realise the difficulties with which we are faced now, and they have not made a solitary useful suggestion upon which the Government could act.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Get out—that is the best suggestion.

The PREMIER: Hon. members on that side take up the extraordinary attitude that they are not there to propound any constructive policy. The hon. member for Bulimba, who for years was a Minister, says they are not there for that purpose; they are there only for destructive criticism. What kind of hope will there be for this State, if by any

misfortune this Government went out of office, if it is to be administered by hon. gentlemen who have no constructive policy and not a solitary constructive idea? Hon. members a couple of sessions ago were demanding reduced expenditure—they were demanding a deflation in expenditure.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: A very nice term—"deflation."

The PREMIER: Last year, because of happenings which are familiar to every member in the Chamber, the Government curtailed in a drastic manner loan expenditure. They are this year economising in every possible direction in connection with the Consolidated Revenue Fund, and are endeavouring to keep expenditure down to the minimum limits. Do hon. members give the Government any credit for this attempt to keep within bounds and to square the finances? No, they have shifted their ground. Not long ago they wanted deflation of expenditure. Now they take up the cry of "retrenchment," and blame the Government because men are cast out of work as a result of the financial stringency and the world-wide economic disturbance. One has only to read the daily newspapers to see from what source hon. members opposite get their ideas. It is not from any original research on their part. Hon. members have shown a woeful lack of ability to apply themselves to the figures which are presented to them and to make a case out of them. They fly to the daily newspapers—the "Brisbane Courier" and the "Daily Mail"—where they read financial articles and criticisms propounded by callow young journalists who probably never had the experience or the responsibility involved in handling or managing transactions amounting even to £1,000; and from them they derive inspiration for the criticism and arguments they launch in this Chamber. They go to these sources of misrepresentation and misunderstanding—these newspapers which lie like gas meters when they are criticising the Government—and then retail the information here. (Opposition laughter and dissent.) If they find my statements so trying to them that they cannot bear with patience what I am saying, perhaps they will absent themselves from the Chamber and allow me to proceed without interruption. What does one find as to the policy of either the Country party or of the Nationalists with regard to the financial outlook? They trot out what Mr. Barwell, the Premier of South Australia, has said. They say, "There is statesmanship." Mr. Barwell, when he made his speech to a deputation that waited upon him, said there was one thing—

Mr. VOWLES: Who said that?

The PREMIER: I will tell you who said it. I do not think I interrupted the hon. gentleman when he was speaking.

Mr. VOWLES: Members of the Country party never said anything about Mr. Barwell.

The PREMIER: Members of the Country party have endorsed Mr. Barwell's policy. Mr. Barwell initiated a very plain policy, and one that no one can misunderstand—one that has been endorsed on the opposite side of the House, particularly by the Nationalists, and also by the Country party—and that was a policy of reduction of wages, increase of hours of service, and wholesale sacking of members of the public service. (Opposition dissent.) That is the policy

enunciated by Mr. Barwell in South Australia, and the gentleman who enunciated that policy is held up as the very ideal of a statesman, and his policy is looked upon by the Nationalists on the Opposition side as the acme of perfection.

Mr. VOWLES: The Country party did not support that.

The PREMIER: I listened very carefully to the speech of the hon. gentleman and did not interrupt him. I listened to him to find out what kind of a policy he would enunciate for the control of the finances of Queensland, but there was not a solitary idea or opinion enunciated by him to guide us in controlling the destinies of this State. His speech was absolutely naked of ideas so far as a constructive policy was concerned. He made this statement in the very early part of his speech, and cast some reflection upon the honesty of the Treasurer in formulating his Statement. The hon. member said £245,000 was expended from another fund in paying wages and salaries in the Railway Department, and that the Treasurer was covering up a liability of £245,000 which should have been shown in his transactions. That is a quotation from the hon. gentleman's speech.

Mr. VOWLES: That is correct.

The PREMIER: I do not know whether the hon. member himself knew what he intended to convey by that statement. I confess that I cannot gather any meaning from it, except this—that the Treasurer, by some kind of dishonourable practice, had charged to some fund, other than the Consolidated Revenue Fund, a sum of £245,000 that should have been charged last year to the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Is that a correct assumption?

Mr. VOWLES: I will reply to you later on.

The PREMIER: I am trying to elucidate the hon. gentleman's charge and will be glad to reply if he will tell me what he meant. He said the Treasurer was covering up a liability of £245,000. Where was that liability? The hon. member made some reference to the Railway Department. Apparently someone told the hon. gentleman something that he did not understand.

Mr. VOWLES: I will give you the whole thing. There is another item for stores.

The PREMIER: What is the suggestion about stores? That some expenditure that should be charged to Consolidated Revenue went into Stores Suspense Account, and, therefore, was not debited to the Consolidated Revenue Account for the year. That, apparently, is what the hon. member is driving at. That is a fact, and every year, not only during the period of the Labour Administration, but possibly for fifty years past, there has been a Stores Suspense Account, to which, when large purchases of stores are made, the cost of those stores is debited; and then when the stores are issued the Stores Suspense Account is credited with their cost. That fund every year is meticulously and carefully examined by the Auditor-General and referred to separately by the Auditor-General. Does the hon. gentleman suggest that there has been some kind of hiding up of legitimate expenditure in order to show a false surplus? That is the charge that is made. He said that we had faked a surplus, and this is how we did it. The hon. gentleman evidently did not understand the information that was given to him. £245,000, he said, was charged to another fund. There was no such transaction. The hon. gentleman

*Hon. E. G. Theodore.*

apparently was informed that a portion of the railway men's wages and salaries paid towards the end of June was not taken into account by the Treasurer. The fact is that the acquitted vouchers did not reach the Treasury until July.

Mr. VOWLES: That is the old game.

The PREMIER: That is the case every year.

Mr. VOWLES: That is what the Auditor-General pointed out in the first year of your Administration.

The PREMIER: Be honest! Either this transaction, to which the hon. gentleman called attention, is a straight one or it is a crooked one. If it is a straight one, why does he mention it? If it is a crooked one, why does he not say so? The fact is that every year the Treasurer must close his accounts on a definite date under the Audit Act, and he can only legitimately take in as expenditure the expenditure which is covered by acquitted vouchers that reach the Treasury by that date, and expenditure which we know was incurred during the month, but for which vouchers do not reach the Treasury until the following month, is shown in the succeeding year, and one year balances the other. There has been a full twelve months' expenditure charged against this year, the same as in every other year.

Mr. VOWLES: Did not the Auditor-General draw your attention to that practice in your first year of office?

The PREMIER: The Auditor-General, in 1910 or 1909, called attention in very pointed language to the action of the Kidston Government in sending wires all over the country to get information regarding their expenditure, and then passing it through as actually acquitted expenditure in order to dissipate a large surplus that was expected. This Government, in 1915, reverted to the practice that had been followed in Queensland for over forty-five years.

Mr. VOWLES again interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I appeal to the hon. gentleman to allow the Premier to make his speech without interruption. I think hon. members will realise its importance, and I would ask hon. members to refrain from interjecting.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman raised another question. This is another quotation from his speech. He asked this query with an air of mystery: "What did it cost the people of Queensland to make arrangements with the Bank of England for accommodation in London?" Then the hon. gentleman went on to suggest that the people of Queensland were paying a very high rate of interest, and that the transaction was a costly one; and then he went on to refer to the allegation that the Government must have been perilously near the verge of insolvency, and had to go cap in hand to the Bank of England. The hon. member for Toowong had the temerity to deal with the same subject to-night, and, not knowing anything about it, he suggested that the securing of an extension of the loan from the Bank of England was tantamount to a declaration of insolvency on the part of the Government. Could anything be more puerile? Could you imagine anything more fatuous coming from an alleged business man? The hon. member says we went there and paid through the nose for the accommodation. What we are paying for that £1,000,000 is 5½ per cent. without

any expenses of issue, or flotation, or any other costs in connection with it.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES: That is all we wish to know.

The PREMIER: That information could have been given without the hon. gentleman making any innuendo against the Government, or without making any false charge.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Tell us what interest you are getting from the bank on moneys held on your behalf?

The PREMIER: What bearing has that on the question?

Hon. W. H. BARNES: A very intimate bearing.

The PREMIER: The hon. member suggests that we are paying an exorbitant rate of interest for the extension we are getting from the bank; that not only had we to go cap in hand, but we have had to agree to the almost impossible terms which the Bank of England imposed on us. The Bank of England is charging at present only 5½ per cent. for that money, and the due date has been extended until September, 1922, with the intimation that a further extension may be arranged, if necessary.

The hon. member for Oxley has been acquiring a reputation in this Chamber as an authority on financial matters and the more important subjects discussed here. He has put himself on a pedestal, judging by the way in which he patronises other hon. members and the air of intolerance with which he meets any interjection or suggestion that is made by another hon. member. The hon. member for Oxley may have a sufficient amount of knowledge, experience, and ability to justify the air of importance that he assumes. I do not want to say that he has not—I do not know anything at all about it. I merely say that I have noticed this wonderful air of assurance, and one approaches subjects he deals with with some amount of timidity, lest one should in turn be patronised by the hon. member. I hope I may be spared the hon. member's patronage when he rises on some future occasion. The hon. member, however, is one of those who live in bygone times.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Then I live in times of better government.

The PREMIER: The hon. member talks of millions with the air of a man who has made wonderful discoveries. He is a type of financial Columbus. (Government laughter.) I listened most interestedly to his last speech, which, I am sure, reminded hon. members opposite, as well as hon. members on this side, of a famous member for Murrumbidgee who was here in previous Parliaments, and who quoted millions and hundreds of millions with an air of a great discoverer, but who drew no deduction or inference from them.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Get on with the argument! Don't prolong the agony!

The PREMIER: I hope the hon. member will not be offended by my referring to his manner.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Not in the least.

The PREMIER: I do not intend it in any unkindly spirit. The hon. member went back to 1914-1915, and quoted the expenditure each year from then to 1920-1921, showing that it had increased. That was the important discovery the hon. member made.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Is that true?

[Hon. E. G. Theodore.]

The PREMIER: It is true, as is known to the youngest school child in the land. (Government laughter.)

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You do not appear to like it.

The PREMIER: It is true not only of Queensland, but also of every State in the Commonwealth; and it is true that the increase in the expenditure has been in a greater ratio in some of the other States than in Queensland. That is what the hon. member overlooks. He draws the deduction that the expenditure has increased because of the mismanagement of the Labour Government.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The hon. member asked me to quote Victoria for purposes of comparison. In 1919-1920 their expenditure was £3,000,000 higher than in the previous year.

Mr. FLETCHER: How did they get the revenue?

The PREMIER: And in the following year their expenditure again was nearly £3,000,000 more than in the year preceding that. So that for two years in succession their expenditure in each year increased by about £3,000,000. Moreover, in the first year I have quoted their expenditure was £1,370,000 more than their estimate, and in 1920-1921 just on £1,000,000 more than their estimate.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Will you answer one question?

The PREMIER: At the conclusion of my speech I will answer questions. The hon. member apparently, because of his obsession in regard to the finances of Queensland, has not seen fit to look at the methods of finance adopted in Victoria or any other Tory-governed State.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Give me a chance of one interjection, and I will be satisfied. How was that increased revenue in Victoria obtained—from increased taxation or from the prosperity of the State?

The PREMIER: I was referring to expenditure.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: And revenue, too.

The PREMIER: I do not know what the hon. member seeks to gain by that. I referred to the hon. member's detailed account of Queensland's increased expenditure.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I know all about that. I was referring to your remarks as I understood them.

The PREMIER: I am showing the hon. member that, so far from that being a proof that the Government have mismanaged the affairs of the State, the same argument can be brought forward with respect to the Tory-governed States of Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, and Western Australia.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I say, "Rubbish!" with that same patronising air. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: To show how carelessly the hon. member handles the data in his possession, let me quote what he said about taxation in Queensland. He said that the per capita taxation was £141 per taxpayer. He is wrong.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: How is that wrong?

The PREMIER: There are 26,000 income tax payers, and that number divided into the sum total of the direct taxation gives us the figure mentioned by the hon. member,

but those 26,000 persons only contribute income tax. The balance was produced by those who paid for licenses, stamp duty, and so on.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Still they are taxpayers.

The PREMIER: Still there are more than 26,000. The hon. member puts them all down as income tax payers.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Those men all pay the taxation.

The PREMIER: It is very hard to get correct figures as to the number of those who contribute stamp duty, totalisator tax, license fees, and things of that sort. Yet all such duties and imposts are included in the figures relating to direct taxation.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: They are taxpayers.

The PREMIER: The hon. member will find that the amount per taxpayer is very much smaller than he stated it to be, and that the average amount is about £80. The hon. member said that the people of Queensland were labouring under a crushing burden of taxation.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: One would suppose that Queensland had been ground down under some enormous, unbearable burden. That is the kind of misrepresentation hon. members opposite put forward as facts.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You will know what the misrepresentation is when they pay income tax next year.

The PREMIER: I have here data collected by the Taxation Department at my request, showing the amounts of tax paid by the taxpayers in Queensland, and comparing them with the amounts paid in the Tory-governed States of Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania. It makes a most illuminating comparison. Although the argument of the Opposition has always been that the taxation per capita is high, nevertheless we have always held that, although that may be so, the incidence has been so graded that the burden falls, not upon the people of Queensland, as the hon. member suggested, but upon the wealthy classes of Queensland, so that the wage-earners and the primary producers who are struggling for a living and the poorer classes practically escape taxation. (Opposition interruption.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The PREMIER: It is false for anyone to say that the people of Queensland are groaning under taxation. There are 26,000 income tax payers in Queensland out of 740,000 persons, and of the 26,000 the bulk of the taxation is contributed by a small percentage, as I shall show later. It is upon a mere handful of the people who have been prospering and making large profits in this State out of the toil and industry of the people that we have imposed the heaviest burden of taxation. I ask the permission of the Committee to have this table embodied in "Hansard." I think it will be useful to all members, because it is officially compiled and furnishes a very fair comparison.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it the pleasure of the Committee that the Premier have leave to insert the table in "Hansard"?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES: Prove that the worker does not pay those taxes.

[8.30 p.m.]

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

*Hon. E. G. Theodore.]*

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF INCOME TAX RATES IN AUSTRALIAN STATES AND THE COMMONWEALTH—PERSONAL EXERTION.

Net Income.	QUEENSLAND.			NEW SOUTH WALES.			VICTORIA.			SOUTH AUSTRALIA.			WESTERN AUSTRALIA.			TASMANIA.			COMMONWEALTH.		
	Exemption.	Total Tax.	Rate on Net Income.	Exemption.	Total Tax.	Rate on Net Income.	Exemption.	Total Tax.	Rate on Net Income.	Exemption.	Total Tax.	Rate on Net Income.	Exemption.	Total Tax.	Rate on Net Income.	Exemption.	Total Tax.	Rate on Net Income.	Exemption.	Total Tax.	Rate on Net Income.
	£	£ s. d.	Pence in £	£	£ s. d.	Pence in £	£	£ s. d.	Pence in £	£	£ s. d.	Pence in £	£	£ s. d.	Pence in £	£	£ s. d.	Pence in £	£	£ s. d.	Pence in £
£ 182	2 0	...	...	250	...	...	200	...	...	150	0 16 8	1 1	*	1 17 9	2 4	1 19 0	2 5	1 18	0 15 1	1 5	
(£3 10s. per week.)	200	...	...	250	...	...	200	...	...	150	1 6 0	1 5	...	2 3 4	2 6	2 18 8	3 5	1 42	1 6 6	1 5	
208 (£4 per week.)	98	0 5 0	2	250	...	...	150	0 14 6	8	150	1 10 2	1 7	...	2 5 10	2 6	3 1 7	3 5	1 139	1 11 11	1 8	
234 (£4 10s. per week.)	1 2	1 1 10	11	2 0	...	...	150	1 1 0	1 0	150	2 3 9	2 2	...	2 14 8	2 8	3 11 1	3 6	1 130	2 10 1	2 5	
250 (£5 per week.)	188	1 12 11	1 5	250	...	...	15	1 5 0	1 2	150	2 12 1	2 5	...	3 0 5	2 9	4 0 8	3 8	1 125	3 1 8	2 9	
260 (£5 per week.)	185	2 0 3	18	250	0 12 6	5	150	1 7 6	1 2	150	2 17 3	2 6	...	3 4 1	2 9	4 4 4	3 8	1 122	3 9 0	3 1	
284 (£5 10s. per week.)	179	2 19 2	2 4	250	2 5 0	1 8	150	1 14 0	1 4	150	3 10 10	2 9	...	4 5 4	3 5	5 11 5	4 6	1 113	4 9 9	3 7	
300 (£6 per week.)	173	3 10 3	2 8	250	3 2 6	2 5	150	1 17 6	1 5	150	3 18 1	3 1	...	4 12 0	3 6	5 17 6	4 6	1 109	5 1 7	4 0	
500 (£7 10s. per week.)	125	14 12 1	7 0	250	15 12 6	7 5	150	4 7 6	2 1	150	9 2 3	4 3	...	12 18 9	6 2	13 1 3	6 2	42	15 7 2	7 3	
1,000 (£14 per week.)	...	60 0 0	4 4	250	47 1 8	11 3	...	18 15 0	4 5	150	39 16 10	9 5	...	35 9 2	8 5	31 12 6	7 5	...	47 9 9	11 5	
2,000 (£28 per week.)	...	180 0 0	21 6	250	114 3 4	13 7	...	45 16 8	5 5	150	134 17 11	16 1	...	128 8 4	15 4	105	87 15 5	10 5	149 5 11	17 5	
3,000 (£42 per week.)	...	360 0 0	28 8	250	189 11 8	15 1	...	75 0 0	6 1	150	207 16 3	16 6	...	278 17 6	22 3	156 10 6	12 5	...	303 14 6	24 5	
4,000 (£56 per week.)	...	600 0 0	36 0	250	272 18 4	16 3	...	104 3 4	6 2 5	150	280 14 7	16 8	...	484 16 8	29 2	225 5 6	13 1	...	511 17 6	30 1	
5,000 (£70 per week.)	...	780 0 0	37 4	250	3 6 17 6	17 1	...	133 6 8	6 4	150	353 12 11	16 9	...	752 5 10	36 1	294 0 5	14 1	...	773 2 8	37 4	
10,000 (£140 per week.)	...	1,680 0 0	40 3	250	88 10 0	2 3	...	279 3 4	6 7	150	9 14 9	23 3	...	2,300 0 0	55 2	637 15 5	15 3	...	2,725 14 8	65 4	
20,000 (£280 per week.)	...	3,480 0 0	41 7	250	2 137 10 0	25 6	...	570 16 8	6 9 5	150	2,271 9 7	27 2	...	4,600 0 0	55 2	1,325 5 5	15 9	...	4,991 7 8	83 6	
30,000 (£420 per week.)	...	5,280 0 0	42 2	250	3 3 7 1 0	27 1	...	862 10 0	9 1 0	150	3,420 6 3	27 1	...	6,900 0 0	55 2	2,012 15 5	16 1	...	11,250 19 8	91 0	
40,000 (£560 per week.)	...	7,080 0 0	42 4	250	4 637 10 0	27 8	...	1 154 3 4	8 9 25	150	4,596 2 11	27 3	...	9,200 0 0	55 2	2 700 5 5	16 2	...	15,522 12 2	93 1	
100,000 (£1,400 per week.)	...	17,880 0 0	42 9	2 0	12 137 1 0	29 1	...	2 9 1 3 4	8 9 7	150	11,441 2 11	27 4	...	23,000 0 0	5 2	6,825 5 5	16 3	...	41 1 6 7 2	98 6	
200,000 (£2,800 per week.)	...	35,880 0 0	43 0	250	24,637 10 0	29 5	...	5,820 16 8	6 9 5	150	22,499 9 7	27 4	...	46,000 0 0	55 2	13,700 5 5	16 4	...	83,772 12 2	100 5	

Note.—Rate of tax on net income shown in pence per £.

\* Western Australia.—If net income of married person or one with dependant does not exceed £156, or if net income of married person or one without dependant does not exceed £100, such income is exempt from taxation.

† Tasmania.—(a) A married person whose net income does not exceed £20; if such person is a returned soldier, or £156 if such person is not a returned soldier, is exempt from taxation. (b) An unmarried person whose net income does not exceed £16 if such person is a returned soldier, or £125 if such person is not a returned soldier, is exempt from taxation.

‡ Commonwealth.—Taxpayers who are married or who have dependants are allowed £156 less £1 for every £3 by which income exceeds £156; single persons or those without dependants are allowed £100 less £1 for every £5 that the income exceeds £100.

I want to quote one or two items from the Statement in support of the argument I am putting forward. A worker in Queensland on £3 10s. a week is not liable to taxation, but in South Australia he pays 16s. 8d. per year, £1 17s. 9d. in Western Australia. and £1 19s. in Tasmania. A man on £200 a year, which is not £4 a week, pays nothing in Queensland, but such a man pays £1 6s. in South Australia, £2 3s. 4d. in Western Australia, and £2 18s. in Tasmania. A man on £4 a week pays 5s. a year in taxation in Queensland; 14s. 6d. in Victoria; in South Australia £1 10s.; in Western Australia £2 5s.; in Tasmania £3 1s.; and in the Commonwealth £1 11s. A man on £4 10s. pays £1 1s. in Queensland, and up to £3 11s. in Tasmania. A man on £250 a year (these are all workers, and embrace a great number of primary producers whose net income does not exceed £250) pays £1 12s. in Queensland, and up to £4 in Tasmania. A man on £4 a week in Victoria pays 14s. 6d. a year, whereas in Queensland he pays 5s. a year. When you get to the man on £1,000 a year, who can and should contribute towards the taxes, in Queensland he pays £60, while in Tasmania—that has been so severe in taxing the wages of the workers—he pays only £31. If you take a man with £3,000 a year, in Queensland he pays £360 a year, whereas in Tasmania, where they have been so severe in applying the incidence of taxation to people with small incomes, he pays only £156 per year. So it is throughout the whole table. If you take into account the primary exemption and the deductions made for children, insurance, and that kind of thing, it shows that the bulk of the population in Queensland, who have to toil and moil for a living, either on wages or on a farm, virtually escape taxation altogether, and the tax falls not upon the people of the State but upon the wealthy people in Queensland.

Mr. DEACON: What about land tax?

The PREMIER: I will come to that later on. Another argument emanating from hon. members opposite was in reference to the alleged railway mismanagement.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: "Alleged!" and laughter.

The PREMIER: We have the loud guffaw of hon. members opposite who would clean up this alleged mismanagement. Here we have the superior, laughing, supercilious business men who have the fond hope that the Labour Government will go out of office and that they will be called in to clear up the mess they allege the Labour Government have created in the Railway Department. I have listened carefully to the hon. member for Bulimba, the leader of the Opposition, and the hon. member for Oxley, and other financial speakers from the other side, to find out what they propose in regard to the railways, and what they would do to meet this deficiency of £1,500,000 that exists each year in the Railway Department.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Remove political interference.

The PREMIER: Under the Railways Act the Commissioner has virtual freedom so far as the management of the railways is concerned.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It is honoured in the breach at all time.

The PREMIER: There are several ways in which this gap between revenue and expenditure in the railways can be met. I put it to hon. members opposite which of those courses would they adopt? Would they increase the fares and freights on the railways? If they will not do that, are they going to reduce the wages of the men employed on the railways, or do they endorse the policy suggested by the hon. member for Oxley, of having an increase of hours of all the workers in the Railway Department.

Mr. VOWLES: Does not the Arbitration Court govern the wages?

The PREMIER: The hon. member suggested that you could get greater efficiency by making the men work longer hours. That is to say, he would require less men.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Nothing of the sort. There would be less expenditure if you increased the hours.

The PREMIER: The increasing of the hours necessarily involves the sacking of a large number of men. Let me ask the hon. gentleman does he intend to keep the present staff of men, or does he intend to sack them?

Mr. FLETCHER: Cannot you find work for them in another direction?

The PREMIER: Now, we are getting the real truth. If you extend the hours and retain the present staff, you do not save anything. Increasing the hours would not increase the volume of traffic. If the hon. gentleman is going to save expenditure by sacking 1,000 or 2,000 men from the railways—

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What are you doing now?

The PREMIER: And compel those who remain to work longer hours for the present rates of pay, he may in that way reduce expenditure. Apparently that is his only solution of the difficulty, and is the only solution emanating from the hon. members opposite.

Mr. KERR: Why make it necessary to sack them?

The PREMIER: When I ask hon. members what they are going to do, they say, "Bring about greater efficiency."

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Would not the increased traffic and trade save the necessity of sacking men?

The PREMIER: The extending of the hours in the railway would not bring about more trade.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Admittedly.

The PREMIER: The hon. member wants to bring about an extension of the hours, but that would not bring about more trade to the railways.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It will bring more trade to the railway, and will mean less cost of production.

The PREMIER: Would the hon. gentleman extend the hours of the whole industrial community?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Yes.

The PREMIER: That is a little more honest than what we have had heretofore. The hon. member suggests an extension of hours in order to meet the industrial depression; and, to meet this difficulty, he suggests a further enslavement of the industrial worker. (Opposition dissent.) He is putting the whole of the burden of the financial

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depression upon the shoulders of the unfortunate worker. He says, "Take it out of the workers; they cannot hit back!" When I put the question to the Country party they are silent. When I ask them would they increase the freights, or reduce the wages, or extend the hours, they are silent!

Hon. J. G. APPEL: When the physician is called in he will prescribe.

The PREMIER: They have not the courage to answer those straight questions. When I put the question by way of interjection to hon. members opposite as to how they would bring about a solution, they reply, "By greater efficiency." Just imagine that from hon. members who so far have not shown the necessary efficiency in their own business as politicians to be able to bring about unity and harmony in their own ranks! These hon. members have no reputation for efficiency. As a matter of fact, the "Brisbane Courier," their party organ, a few months ago was trying to find them a leader. These hon. members talk about better efficiency on the part of the Government! They are so little efficient in their own business that one of their promising young members offered to resign his seat in order to get a more efficient leader, who would make a better showing for their party than they have managed to do in the past. They are the hon. members who are making strenuous efforts to come over to this side of the House and show the Government how to bring about efficiency! There is another subject which is very dear to hon. members opposite, especially the hon. member for Bulimba. He is very fond of harping about deficits which have happened in Queensland since the Labour Administration came into office.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: It is perfectly correct.

The PREMIER: Yes; I hope there is nothing I have said to-night that is not perfectly correct. He indicated that we were showing a woful lack of knowledge and ability in administering the financial affairs of the State, and, according to the hon. member's doctrine, successful financial administration means the bringing in of a small surplus every year. I would like to call the hon. member's attention to this—that, if deficits are the test of good government, then there can't be as much danger in keeping this Government in office as there is in keeping a Nationalist Government in office in Western Australia, or the Nationalist Governments in office in South Australia, or Victoria. Let me give the result of five years of Nationalism in Western Australia.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Give us Queensland.

The PREMIER: Is Nationalism any different in Western Australia from Nationalism in Queensland? I do not think so. In 1914-15 the deficit in Western Australia was slightly over £500,000.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What deficit did the Labour Government in Western Australia leave behind?

The PREMIER: I am going to give the figures for the National Government in Western Australia, not the Labour Government. In 1916-17 the National Government in Western Australia had a deficit of £699,000. In the following year the deficit was £705,000; in the next year, £652,000; in the following year, £668,000; and last year there was another deficit of £686,000; making a total deficit for the five years under Nationalism

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in Western Australia of £3,412,000, or an average of about £682,000 per year. If we had the same average in Queensland on a population basis we would have an accumulated deficit of £12,000,000.

Mr. VOWLES: Don't forget that they have a sinking fund in Western Australia.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Give us the taxation per head in Western Australia.

The PREMIER: It is much higher than it is in Queensland.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: That is not correct.

The PREMIER: It is quite correct. The hon. member for Oxley is concerned about the incidence of taxation, and asks me what was the taxation per head of the population in Western Australia. A man getting £4 per week in Western Australia has to pay £2 5s. 10d. income tax.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I mean per head generally.

The PREMIER: I am giving you per worker generally and per primary producer generally. Notwithstanding the large deficits under a National Government in Western Australia, they make a poor, unfortunate worker getting £3 10s. per week pay £1 17s. 9d. per year income tax, as against nothing in Queensland. A man getting £4 per week in Western Australia has to pay £2 5s. 10d. income tax, while a man getting £4,000 per year in Western Australia has to pay £486 as against £600 charged in Queensland against a man getting that big income. I do not want to hold up the horrible example of the National Government in Western Australia as the only justification for Queensland finance. I should be sorry to have to justify the finances of Queensland by the disreputable record of the National Government in Western Australia. Let me quote some other National Governments and compare them with Queensland. Since the present Government have been in power in Queensland, we have had an accumulated deficit of £426,000. During the same period Victoria has had an accumulated deficit of £1,039,000, while South Australia had an accumulated deficit of £1,700,000 in the same period, and Western Australia, as I have already explained, had an accumulated deficit of £3,412,000. I do not know whether hon. members can get any solace from a contemplation of those figures. Year by year they talk about the calamity which has overtaken Queensland, because we have an accumulated deficit of £426,000.

Mr. FLETCHER: Your arguments are misleading.

Mr. KING: The Scaddan Labour Government left a deficit of £3,000,000 in Western Australia.

The PREMIER: The hon. member is wrong. Hon. members opposite accuse me of misrepresentation, but the hon. member for Logan makes a deliberate misstatement when he says that.

Mr. KING: Tell us the deficit left by the Scaddan Labour Government.

The PREMIER: I have got the figures here for the last two years of the Scaddan Labour Government. I have not got the figures for 1913-14. The Labour Government was in office in Western Australia for three years. In 1914-15 the deficit was £560,000, and in 1915-16 it amounted to £348,000, and in every succeeding year, with a National party in power they have had deficits exceeding £600,000 per year.



Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You have only given us the figures for two years.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Logan said the Scaddan Labour Government left them an accumulated deficit of £3,000,000, but I will show him where he is wrong. The total accumulated deficit in Western Australia is approximately £4,700,000. Of that amount the National party accumulated deficits amounting to £3,400,000, so that the Scaddan Government could not have left a deficit of £3,000,000.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Hon. members opposite have been busy during this session attacking the Government on their alleged ruthless retrenchment policy. I do not know whether their memories are very short. I am sure that the hon. member for Bulimba can recollect what happened when the National party were in power, and when they retrenched the public servants.

Mr. CLAYTON: What did you promise?

The PREMIER: Hear the voice of the new member, whose memory goes back only a few months!

Mr. VOWLES: You promised there would be no retrenchment.

The PREMIER: Mark the significant silence of the hon. member for Bulimba!

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Retrenchment only took place under the Liberal Government when there was a falling off of revenue.

The PREMIER: The Special Retrenchment Act was passed in 1902, when the hon. member for Bulimba was a supporter of the Administration.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: A jolly good one, too.

The PREMIER: The hon. member supported that Ministry wholeheartedly, without considering the effect of their retrenchment policy on the unfortunate workers. He says that it was a good Ministry; but, owing to their maladministration, they had to bring in retrenchment. If the workers of Queensland want to know what retrenchment is, let them put the National party into office, and they will soon learn what real retrenchment is. This is the kind of retrenchment legislation the Liberal party passed in 1902: Any salary exceeding £450 was retrenched 15 per cent. All salaries from £301 to £450 were reduced 12½ per cent.; salaries of £150 and upwards were reduced 10 per cent.; and the unfortunate worker getting £100 per year had 7½ per cent. taken off his salary.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Shame!

The PREMIER: Some hon. members opposite talk about reducing the salaries of hon. members, but if I remember rightly the 1893 Act did not apply to Ministers or members of Parliament. The 1902 Act did not apply to the judges, members of the Land Court, or the Auditor-General, but it did apply to the unfortunate workers. The hon. member for Toowong had tears in his eyes when he was speaking to-night.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: He made you weep.

The PREMIER: It would take a lot of the hon. member's "guff" to make me weep. In 1902, when the Special Retrenchment Bill was introduced, there were 20,000 unemployed in Brisbane alone.

Mr. MAXWELL: Two wrongs don't make a right.

The PREMIER: What did the Government propose in 1902 to make up the finances? They did not put a heavy tax on

the men getting £3,000 per year, but they brought in a poll tax of 10s. for every male adult in the land whether he was working or not.

Mr. VOWLES: The unions have a poll tax, too; but they collect £1 instead.

The PREMIER: In 1902 every man who had an income of £100 had to contribute £1 to the Treasury. I remember that the Government started relief works for the unemployed in those days. What wages did they pay to the men they put on the relief works? They paid them a daily wage averaging from 3s 6d. to 5s. per day of ten hours. If we go back to the preceding period when the Nationalists were in office during that long term referred to as the "Continucus Government," we find that they had a financial depression every ten years, and they had retrenchment every ten years. They also introduced proposals such as the poll tax every ten years. In 1893, when the Nationalists were in office, they introduced retrenchment amounting to a reduction of 10 per cent. in the salaries of all members of the public service receiving £100 per year and upwards. The Act came into operation, and this is the point—I want the hon. member for Logan, who is so conscientious about repudiation, to listen; and the hon. member for Oxley, too, because he is somewhat tender upon the same point.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Very tender, indeed.

The PREMIER: I want to tell the hon. member that he is associated with a party that in 1893 brought in retrenchment, making it retrospective, and taking away some of the wages that had already been paid under the Public Service Act to members of the public service. The hon. member for Cunningham was good enough to ask me to state the effect of the land tax. I am sure that he—simple-minded soul as he is—(Opposition laughter)—good-hearted soul as he is—has been wofully misled by his associates in regard to the facts and the incidence of the land tax. There are many farmers who believe that they contribute the whole of the land tax in Queensland because they have been told so often by the hon. member for Drayton and other hon. members who are very careless in speaking the truth on this subject. They have been told so often that the farmers contribute the land tax, and that the land tax was brought in as some kind of ingenious device on the part of the Labour party to crush the farmers and drive them off the land, that I want to state what the effect of the land tax is. On the figures available from the last report of the Land Tax Commissioner, farmers owning land of an unimproved value of not more than £12.00—and that represents a fair-sized farm in Queensland—and having, according to the statistics of the Commissioner, an actual value, with improvements, of about £2,500, to the number of about 11,338, contributed £20,993 in land tax. That is to say, the whole of the farmers in Queensland owning farms of an unimproved value of not more than £1,280 paid 4.6 per cent., or about one-twentieth only, of the total land tax, and on an average only £1 17s. per year; and from the money they paid in income tax they were entitled to deduct the full amount of the land tax paid in that year. The working farmer who owns and works his farm paid in the aggregate less than one-twentieth of the total land tax in Queensland. The people who pay the land tax

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are the land monopolists—those who own large estates in freehold in Queensland. There are 1,139 persons, according to the land tax returns, owning unimproved land valued at £13,500,000.

Mr. VOWLES: It may be held in quarter or half acre blocks.

The PREMIER: Some may be small, but they are all valuable, and these 1,139 people paid £289,000 in land tax, or ten times as much land tax as all the farmers put together. Take a smaller number of 374 persons, who own between them unimproved freehold land of the value of £8,700,000, or £24,000 each: they paid amongst them more than ten times the amount of land tax paid by the farmers.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: That includes companies, and you know it.

The PREMIER: How does that detract from the statement?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: A company may have 100 members.

The PREMIER: The return is given by the Land Tax Commissioner as 374 taxpayers; it does not matter whether they are companies. Some may be companies, but they are not farmers—that is the point. They paid £200,000 in land tax. The new members of the Country party have come in listening to the tarradiddles of hon. members opposite, and believing that the farmers have been paying the land tax, and I am sure these figures must be a revelation to them. (Opposition interjections.) My time is rapidly going, and I do not desire an extension of time, but I want to point out the financial prospects.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Tell us about the State's credit.

The PREMIER: I will deal with that. Hon. members opposite have been persistent, in spite of my statements and those of the Treasurer, in making out that the credit of Queensland is a poor thing in London—that the credit of Queensland is gone—when, as a matter of fact, they ought to know—and possibly some of them do know, although they do not admit it—that the financial boycott in London is not against Queensland, but against the Queensland Government. So far as the credit of Queensland is concerned, it stands out.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: That is right. We know that.

The PREMIER: So far as the bulk of the investors are concerned, they would invest in Queensland to-morrow if the financiers in the city of London would allow them to do so. What happened in regard to the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Board loan? The Queensland Government arranged with the Commonwealth Bank to place on the London market a loan of £1,000,000. The financial men decided not to boycott it, because it was not a Queensland Government loan. The investors in London were prepared to take up that stock, and no doubt it will be fully subscribed. Does not that prove that the statement that the credit of Queensland has been shattered is false? What Queensland is suffering from is the gloomy, irresponsible, unfortunate propaganda of the Opposition and the Opposition Press. (Opposition dissent.)

Mr. G. P. BARNES: You are wrong.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Toowong, and other hon. members, have been

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demanding the resignation of the Government. They say that this Government have no right to any further tenure of the Treasury benches.

Mr. KING: They are discredited.

The PREMIER: They say that the Government are discredited and ought to hand over their responsibilities to one of the multifarious parties opposite. A somewhat similar situation has occurred in Victoria in regard to the Government's position there. Perhaps hon. members will bear with me, in view of their constant reiteration of the demand that we should give up the Treasury benches, and listen to this extract from the Melbourne "Age," published only a few days ago—

"The constitution of parties in the new House is as follows:—

Nationalist	...	...	...	32
Labour	...	...	...	21
Farmers' Union	...	...	...	12

In the face of that result it would be absurd to argue that the electors have expressed a desire for a change of Government. On the contrary, they have firmly refused to grant the opponents of the Ministry a mandate to turn it out of office. In these circumstances Mr. Lawson could make no other assumption than that he has been instructed to remain in office. The advice of his political opponents 'to resign immediately' is the sly counsel of cowardice. Mr. Lawson leads the largest party in Parliament, a party that numbers only one less than the two other parties combined."

We are in the superior position of leading a party which has two more than the combined parties opposite. The extract goes on—

"To talk of the Ministry clinging to office until it has to be 'scraped off the front benches like barnacles' is merely the cheap gibe of disappointed opponents. Mr. Lawson will retain office because he is the leader of by far the largest party in the Legislative Assembly, and because when the electors return one party in an overwhelming majority over each of the others they have plainly made their choice of the party they desire to govern."

Whether we are in agreement with that or not, it points out the adventitious nature of the political principles of the Nationalists and Country party members. Here the

Nationalists adopt one attitude: [9 p.m.] in Victoria they adopt a different attitude. Here in regard to finance they plead for a certain policy; in Victoria they carry out an entirely different practice. Here they have certain doctrines: there they repudiate those doctrines. The fact is that the Nationalists, the Country party, the Independent Country party, and the nondescript party in Queensland are actuated by one desire—a desire only to turn out of office the Labour party. They are not so much concerned about serving the good interests of the State as they are about serving their own selfish interests. What hope have they during the course of this Parliament—we have two years to run—of amalgamating their heterogeneous forces? What chance have they of getting together those people who, prior to the last election, were indulging in anything but complimentary references to each other? What chance has the leader of the Opposition of reconciling himself with the party he deserted? On the

other hand, what chance have the Nationalists of getting the support of anyone when they admit they have not in Parliament a member fit for leadership; when they were casting round the country virtually calling for applications for that important post? No; the Labour Government are not in any danger in this House. This Parliament will run its course, for we intend to stick to our guns; because we consider that, more than any individual party in this Chamber, we have had a mandate to carry out a definite policy which has been enunciated, and to which we shall etick.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*): I am very sorry that an Opposition member has seen fit to attack me to-night. I would not have spoken had it not been for the fact that some rumours have been current for some time to the effect that I had a fruitstall or a fruitbarrow. Inquiry from the proper department will elicit the fact that I do not own any fruitstall, that I am not interested in any fruitstall, and that I am not interested in any man who so far forgets the dignity that ought to attach to membership of Parliament as to wrangle about fruitbarrows and fruitstalls in this Chamber. I am sorry the hon. member for Toowong is not in the Chamber, when he ought to be.

Mr. KERR: You were not here last night.

Mr. POLLOCK: The hon. member knows I was here, and was one of those who defeated him last night. Here is the hon. member for Toowong now. I am glad he has come in, because I intend dealing with him in the same way that he dealt with me; and the closer he is to me the better I will like it. I merely want to reiterate that, in spite of the affidavits which the hon. member may have from some broken-down "Dago" or fruit barrowman, I certainly am not interested in any fruitstall. Probably the hon. member will find that out to his own satisfaction later on. I am only surprised that an hon. member, such as he is, who is continually saying to members of this Chamber, "You ought to show a good example and see that in every way everybody upholds the dignity of Parliament," should come along with a cock-and-bull story about me for which there is no foundation. It is a ridiculous thing, and the hon. member ought to be ashamed of himself for stooping to such a level. I personally am not surprised when I remember that the hon. gentleman, when he was mayor of Brisbane, left Brisbane with his mayoral rabbit-skin robes flapping, chasing the Prince to Sydney to get a title, and came back with a photograph instead. (Government laughter.) Probably the Prince said that the hon. gentleman, with his housemaid's knee, would not look very well in court dress, particularly with silk stockings on, and so he gave him his photograph and told him to run along home. Any hon. member who sets out to attack me must be prepared for all that comes to him. I never stoop to personalities unless they are first of all used on me; and the more they are used the more I will have to retaliate. When it comes to this sort of fight, with me it is "all in." I know something about fruit, although I am not interested in a stall. I know more about the hon. member for Toowong than I know about fruit, though. (Laughter.)

Mr. MAXWELL: That is all right. I do not mind, so long as you keep to the truth.

Mr. POLLOCK: I have done that so far, thank goodness, even to the title. When the hon. member for Toowong was mayor of the city council he deliberately refused to allow any fruitstalls to be erected in the city. Various men have come to me and said, "This gentleman who is attacking you would not allow any white man, any Australian, to keep a fruitstall in any part of the city." The city council would not allow barrowmen to go round hawking fruit. If there is one thing this Government have done it is that they have allowed the public to secure cheap fruit per medium of the barrowmen. The section of the people I claim to represent—the workers—has been able to buy cheap fruit from those barrows and fruitstalls.

The HOME SECRETARY: And the fruitgrower is selling twice as much fruit.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: And getting a better deal.

Mr. POLLOCK: That is so. The hon. member for Bulimba and the hon. member for Windsor both are market agents, middlemen in the concern, and they will tell you that prior to the advent of the barrowmen in this city most of the fruit which was not high class went to waste. Every hon. member who goes round the city knows that that is so. These barrowmen clean the fruit up in big lines, take it out, and put it on the market. They have no big overhead expenses, and they supply cheap fruit to the public, and the grower is able to sell all his fruit. That is the trouble with the hon. member for Toowong and all other hon. members who have tackled this question, and who have been guilty of connecting my name with fruitstalls. To-day the men who are squealing most loudly about this policy of allowing the barrowman and fruitstall to sell cheap fruit are those who are in the "Dago" ring—a group of Greeks, most of whom live on olive oil, whom the hon. member for Toowong protected when he was in the city council, because no white man was allowed to enter into competition with them. He cannot deny that. I do not know what influence was brought to bear by these "Dagoes" upon the city council and upon the hon. member, but no one ever got a license or was allowed to sell fruit round the town. It is that ring, which calls itself the Retail Fruiterers' Association, and which is composed wholly of Italians and Greeks, which has dictated to the hon. member what he should do in this Chamber. The hon. member has been sufficiently foolish to take notice of them, and to come here with any story they might rig up and present it to this Committee as being the truth.

Mr. MAXWELL: It is a sworn statement.

Mr. POLLOCK: Then all I can say is that the gentleman who swore it is about on a par with the hon. gentleman who used it. Parliamentary procedure prevents me saying anything more pointed. Parliamentary procedure prevents me from calling any hon. member a liar, and therefore I would not do it. Apart altogether from the merits or demerits of any individual fruit stall, the sooner the general public wake up to the fact that they ought to boycott this Dago ring then the better it will be for the public itself; and at all times in this Chamber I will give my support to the Home Secretary in any endeavour he may make to secure business and trade for white men as against greasy Dagoes who can, at will, use hon. members of the Opposition.

*Mr. Pollock.]*

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Bremer*): One of the things that we could well consider on this Financial Statement would be one of the phrases that occurred in that remarkable speech which the hon. member for Toowong quoted to-night.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the hon. member has spoken before.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Not in this debate.

The CHAIRMAN: I have the hon. member down as having spoken during this debate.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Not on Supply. I spoke on the question of privilege this afternoon.

The CHAIRMAN: I would ask the hon. member to resume his seat while I look the matter up to make certain.

Mr. FERRICKS (*South Brisbane*): I listened very carefully to the speech delivered by the Premier to-night, and one would wonder how there could be any misunderstanding in this Chamber as to the financial position of Queensland after such an address. Every hon. member of this Chamber realises the appalling nature of the disaster that occurred at the Mount Mulligan Coal Mine. Queensland has been rather free from such visitations. Such a sad happening is unparalleled previously in Queensland, and, with one exception, unparalleled in Australia, and it proves to us—to some more than to others—the great risk attaching to a miner's calling when we realise that a miner, every time he goes under ground, takes his life in his hands. The risks are very great—greater than are realised by some people—and we endorse to the full all the expressions of regret which were voiced in this Chamber, and generally throughout the Commonwealth, on the news of that occurrence being made known. Hon. members on the opposite side, and members of public bodies who joined in those expressions of grief, were quite sincere, I think they felt every word they said, but I would remind them that it is a pity that they wait for the workers to be dead before they ladle out a meed of generous praise. That brings us to a recollection of what hon. gentlemen opposite have said, and are continually saying, about miners and other bodies of men engaged in these hazardous occupations, having the audacity, as they term it, to ask for 6d. or 1s. a day increase in wages. If they do that they are called traitors, disloyalists, Bolsheviks, anarchists, and what not, and then, when they are dead, they are heroes for the wealth they have produced. It is a pity that this generosity does not find some expression while the workers as a class are alive. I regret very much—it pained me for one—to hear last night an argument put forward in this Chamber in favour of the miners going back to Mount Morgan under a reduction of wages while the rescue operations in connection with the Mount Mulligan tragedy were being carried out. While the charred bodies of the miners were being brought to light, an hon. member got up in this Chamber and advocated the miners at Mount Morgan returning to work under reduced wages. I forgive the hon. gentleman on the grounds of inexperience, but on those grounds only. I hope it will be the last time we shall hear in this Chamber any advocacy for a reduction in miners' wages.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

[*Mr. W. Cooper.*]

Mr. FERRICKS: Closely allied to the dangerous occupation of mining is the occupation of seamen, and we are aware that during the last few months a tragedy occurred off the coast of Australia almost equalling in loss of life that which has taken place in North Queensland, and there has been hardly a word said about that occurrence because commercialism, in the endeavour to obtain its usual profits, virtually sent those men to their deaths. I refer to the loss of the ship "Canastota," which you, Mr. Chairman, are aware was berthed at Dalgety's wharf a few months ago, after having brought a cargo of benzine from America. The benzine was unloaded in Brisbane, but some of the containers were so weak, or the benzine so crude, that 23,000 tins which were not up to quality were reloaded into the hold of the "Canastota" at Dalgety's wharf, and, when the wharf labourers of Brisbane were engaged in the hold of that vessel trying to get out some piping which was brought out to Australia, five members of the local Waterside Workers' Union were overcome by the fumes and had to be carried on deck into the open air. The representatives of the union then interviewed the representatives of the shipowners, and they together visited the hold of this ship to see if the conditions were fit to work under, and the inspectors—not official inspectors—who went to make the inspection were themselves overcome by the fumes and had to make a bolt for the fresh air. They found that they had a burning in the nostrils, flushed cheeks, failing vision, and in the end they were gasping for breath because of the fumes from the leaky benzine permeating the hold of the vessel, and it is alleged—you, Mr. Chairman, endeavoured to obtain information to-day, and I regret that I did not hear the answer—that that vessel, with its cargo in that condition, was allowed to leave the port of Brisbane without a permit, and without any inspection having been made by a marine officer. We understand there are regulations issued by the Harbour Board making it imperative, before any vessel leaves in what is considered an unfit condition that pratique or a permit shall be granted to her.

We are told that no application for such a permit was made. If it were made and granted, then there is something departmentally at fault. If it were not made, and the boat left in spite of that cargo of dangerous and inflammable material, the owners or the representatives of the owners are, in my opinion, responsible for a very grave misdemeanour. The vessel proceeded to Newcastle and loaded another 5,000 tins of crude oil or benzine, to be taken home to America for retreatment, and an endeavour was made there to unload the pipes which they had unsuccessfully tried to get out of the hold here, but again they were driven back by the fumes, and the vessel went to Sydney with the piping which was brought out to Australia still in her hold. On the 30th June of this year she sailed from Port Jackson, and no tidings of her have since been received. She carried a crew of forty-nine, and the assumption is—it is almost a certainty—that there was an explosion at sea due to the accumulation of fumes from the benzine to such an extent that they eventually came into contact, perhaps, with the fires of the boilers. The theory of an explosion is based on the fact that the "Canastota" was equipped with a most powerful wireless set,

and that no attempted message has been detected. The inescapable theory seems to be that there was a sudden-death explosion, causing her to become a death-trap, and destroying forty-nine people. The "Canastota" was an American vessel, and it appears that foreign-owned ships, not being subject to Board of Trade regulations, may not be compelled to provide proper safeguards and carrying capacity for dangerous cargo, as British-owned ships must. That common safeguard of human life, therefore, does not apply to American-owned vessels, which consequently may come to Australia in any condition of disrepair or unsuitability for the purpose of loading or unloading dangerous or inflammable or explosive cargoes, and the only safeguard is contained in the regulations of the Harbour Board making it essential that a permit to leave must be granted before the boat's departure.

Mr. FLETCHER: Hear, hear!

Mr. FERRICKS: But that has not been done in this case. The vessel went to her doom, and forty-nine persons with her. I used the words "grave misdemeanour" on the part of the agents or shipowners' representatives. In my opinion, the position is much more than a misdemeanour. If the Government are going to inquire into this matter, as I assume you would be assured in the answers to your questions, no doubt the responsibility will be determined. It appears to me that whoever is responsible for the departure of that boat in that condition is responsible for the lives of those men. (Hear, hear!) I sincerely trust that the blame will be sheeted home. There has been something like a conspiracy of silence on the part of the Press throughout Australia in respect to the occurrence. Only in two publications, "Smith's Weekly" and the local "Daily Mail," have I found publicity given the case at any length, and then a mere inference as to what had occurred, and no power to place the responsibility on the guilty shoulders. It is a grave situation when large bodies of men can be sent to their doom in that careless and inhuman fashion, and I say that some care needs to be shown for the hazards of their occupations.

During the excellent speech of the Premier I am quite sure hon. members opposite felt within themselves, although they would not confess it, that they had not a leg to stand on regarding their accusations of the financially wrong administration of the Government.

Mr. FLETCHER: Don't talk nonsense.

Mr. FERRICKS: If hon. members do not confess that now, I say they are hopeless and impenetrable by argument. He gave facts which could not be refuted or denied. During the course of his excellent and informative address, he gave facts which I saw by the expression on the faces of some of the members of the Country party were in the nature of an absolute revelation to them regarding the incidence of taxation. Quite, surely, they have not been seized before of the beneficial operation of the land taxation policy of this party in the interests of the genuine worker on the land, as contrasted with the non-user of the land, the speculator in the land, or the land monopolist. In these days of keen, hard political warfare, it is very difficult for hon. members on the other side to see any good thing at all emanating from Labour. I had, fortunately for the purposes of this illustration, looked up the

report of the Commissioner of Taxes in Queensland for 1919-20, the latest available, and it appeared to me that, although the Government by their excellent policy of land value taxation have been able to get people who can afford it to pay their just dues, nevertheless very often to-day there are still exceptions—of persons who are not paying a fair thing in land taxation to the Consolidated Revenue, even by the application of the primary tax, the super-tax, and the tax on undeveloped land. In Table A of that report I find the following figures showing the distribution of land tax amongst the taxpayers in various classes—

From—	Number	Amount Paid.
		£
£1 to £499 . . . . .	14 850	13 073
£500 to £999 . . . . .	4 711	20 570
£1,000 to £1,999 . . . . .	2 986	30 297

For the purpose of my illustration I temporarily cease there to recall to hon. members' attention the fact that the Premier stated that estates of an unimproved value of £1,280 and under paid one-twentieth of the land tax of Queensland. Hon. members will realise in the next line of the table what a serious sum there is in the contribution of land taxation—

From—	Number.	Amount Paid.
		£
£2,000 to £2 499 . . . . .	534	9 37
£2,500 to £2 999 . . . . .	391	9 9-8
£3,000 to £3 999 . . . . .	443	15 63
£4,000 to £4 999 . . . . .	295	15 138

At 9.30 p.m.,

Mr. POLLOCK, one of the Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. FERRICKS: Owners of estates of unimproved value between £1,500 and £5,000 are not paying their fair due to the revenue of Queensland. When the value gets to £5,000 I suppose it reaches a rate of about 3d. in the £1. It is all right from 3d. upwards, because the Federal tax there applies, and the impost is much heavier than it is upon the people between £1,500 and £5,000. To do justice in comparison with the other taxpayers of equal land value, these people who own estates of an unimproved value between £1,500 and £5,000 should contribute more than they are contributing to the consolidated revenue. I mention that aspect of the question in the hope that the Government will take some action in the future with a view to rectifying that anomaly. It is an anomaly in my opinion. Hon. members opposite have continually harped on the question of taxation, and I feel quite sure that the Premier to-night blew to atoms the contention about the per capita payment, because the per capita payment of taxation, as given in these tables, is most misleading and is one of the greatest delusions going, because, as was pointed out, the tax falls upon those people who can best afford to contribute towards the taxes, and who are compelled to do so under this Government's policy, which is quite right. As the Premier made comparisons between Queensland and other States, I wish to refer those who are complaining

*Mr. Ferricks.]*

about the incidence of taxation in Queensland to the position in England. When they speak of capital not coming to Queensland for fear of taxation burdens, we can well ask them where it will go. Will it go to England? It had better not if they want a lighter taxation than is in operation in Queensland. During the currency of the war in England out of every £100 profit made after the payment of 9 per cent. on the capital invested, £40 was taken in excess profits taxation, which left £60. Then there was an income tax of 6s. in the £1 and a super-tax of 4s. 6d. in the £1 on that £60, amounting to £31 10s., which, after being deducted from the £60, left £28 10s., and, if the estate duty is deducted from that, it would amount to £11 8s., which would leave, out of the £100, a remainder of £17 2s. That illustrates that in England during the war when the Excess Profits Act was in operation £83 was taken out of every £100 profit. The position in England to-day is that a man earning £4 a week (which is a parallel case to the anomalous incidences which the Premier mentioned to-night between Queensland and other States) would pay the sum of 9s., not in the year, but every week. Out of every £1 earned in England at the present time there is a deduction made of 2s. 3d., which is made on a flat rate, and on a wage of £5 a week the wage-earner would have to contribute to the revenue 11s. 3d. in taxation—not each year, but each week. In Queensland he would not have to contribute anything in income tax on any salary up to £200 per annum. When hon. gentlemen talk about taxation in Queensland they must know that conditions are immensely worse from a taxation point of view in other places. They are awfully unfair or uninformed on this aspect of the question when they seek to make so much capital out of their misrepresentations. Quite recently I came across this paragraph in the Brisbane "Daily Mail." It is a telegram dated from Perth under date 2nd April, 1921—

"ENGLISH CAPITALISMS COMING TO  
AUSTRALIA.

"Perth, Friday.—Among the passengers by the Orient liner Orvieto are several capitalists who are intending to stay in Australia if they can find suitable employment for their capital. They have been forced out of England by taxation. The total amount represented by them is believed to be considerable."

English capitalists coming to Australia forced out of England by taxation!

Mr. FLETCHER: Are you not forcing capital out of Queensland by taxation?

Mr. FERRICKS: We are forcing it into Queensland. Hon. members opposite talk about capitalists being driven away from Queensland. Any hon. gentlemen who take that view are palpably insincere, and they must know that the incidence of taxation here, as explained by the Premier, is the most fair and evenly operative in any State of the Commonwealth or in any part of the world.

There is one other matter I desire to bring before this Committee which has an allied connection, at least, with the conditions which I have stated operated in connection with the loss of the seamen on the steamship "Canastota," and that is that a repetition of that terrible marine disaster may take place on our Queensland coast at any time.

[Mr. Ferricks.

Unfortunately, as is only too well known, it has been the position in the past. These men who are engaged in this occupation will be, until action is taken to remedy it, at a distinct disadvantage. So far back as 1912 the Commonwealth Government passed a Navigation Act in the interests of those engaged in seafaring occupations, providing for the comfort of passengers, a betterment in the conditions of the workers in regard to accommodation, scale of provisions for meals, method of recovering wages, medical attendance to seamen and other marine workers during their illness in hospital, and transfers to their homes if they became ill or met with an accident while away from their home port. These humane but long-delayed reforms were, of course, brought in by the Federal Labour Government in 1912. They were long overdue, as those who travelled up and down the coast know that the conditions obtaining in regard to accommodation for seamen, and other marine workers were anything but good. I remember in 1918, before sections of the Navigation Act were proclaimed, I made a trip round the Gulf as far as Normanton in the old s.s. "Musgrave." It was in summer time—in February and March. One night I went down the fo'castle, and I saw twelve or fourteen men lying in bunks, tier upon tier, and in one sleeping apartment. In the centre of that apartment there was a large table used as a dining-table, so that these twelve or fourteen men slept and ate and dressed in the one room. So you see the reforms in regard to the Navigation Act were long delayed, and should have been introduced years ago. Although that Navigation Act was passed by the Commonwealth Government, there was a change of Government, and an anti-Labour Government came into power. They did not repeal that Act, because it would have been too unpopular for them to do so, just as it was found unpopular for the anti-Labour Government in the Commonwealth Parliament to repeal the Commonwealth land tax. If by any mischance members on the other side got control of the Government of Queensland, they would not attempt to remove the land tax instituted by this Government, much as they are against it now. So the anti-Labour Governments in the Federal sphere dared not repeal the Navigation Act, but they did the next best thing to fall in with the desires of one of their controlling bodies—the Steamship Owners' Federation. They did not bring the Act into operation by proclamation. They delayed it first on account of the outbreak of the war. They sidestepped the Act during the whole course of the war by saying it was impossible to proclaim it until things became normal. When the war ceased, still there was no proclamation of the Act, although a representation had been made on that behalf by those engaged in the marine industry to have those sections proclaimed to improve the conditions of the men engaged in the industry. They were long delayed. In July of this year some of the sections embracing all the improvements and conditions I have mentioned were proclaimed and became Commonwealth law. As soon as they became law the Hunter River Steam Navigation Company, in Sydney, saw a palpable opening in the Act, and, of course, realising that Federal legislation applied only to trade between the different States, went to the High Court, with the result that the Navigation Act was rendered ultra vires so far as

any of the individual States were concerned. The result of that was that the eighty-one sections embracing the conditions of the seamen in interstate boats have no application to boats trading within one particular State. If it is good enough legislation for such boats as the "Wyandra," "Aramac," "Wyreema," and "Canberra," which travel from Melbourne to Townsville, surely it is equally meritorious to be in operation on boats that operate only in Queensland. The "Bingera" is one in point. The injustice of the position is brought about, and we realise that, out of the seamen on the whole of the Australian coast, 60 per cent. of them are working intrastate, while 40 per cent. of them trade between the different States. I am quite safe in saying that the proportion of Queensland, New South Wales, and Western Australia would be considerably higher than 60 per cent. of the seamen and marine workers. There would probably be nearer 70 per cent., because we have coastal boats in Queensland. Until some action is taken in Queensland there is a likelihood of the conditions on the Queensland coast continuing to be an absolute danger to life. I trust that the Government will give this matter their earnest consideration, because, until the Constitution of Australia is broadened sufficiently, the men engaged in marine occupation will not be able to take advantage of the beneficial provisions of the Navigation Act, which was passed in the interests of common humanity and fairness.

I wish now to make reference to a matter which the leader of the Opposition referred to ten days ago. He made the statement in one of his speeches that I advocated the repudiation of the national debt and interest. He said that ten days ago, and he said that it was in Federal "Hansard." I asked the hon. gentleman if he would quote the Federal "Hansard" if he saw it there. I felt sure it was not there, because I never said such a thing. I pointed out that, if he could not quote it, he should do the manly thing politically and withdraw that statement.

Mr. VOWLES: I will give it to you in due course.

Mr. FERRICKS: Will you quote it?

Mr. VOWLES: Yes. You were talking about conscription in the Federal House.

Mr. FERRICKS: You said that I advocated the repudiation of the national debt.

Mr. VOWLES: I said interest.

Mr. FERRICKS: The hon. gentleman said that I advocated it, and in common decency he should have quoted it. He has no right to hide behind the guise of misrepresentation. One of the hon. gentleman's own organs, the "Western Champion," has pointed out his uselessness as a leader, and states that he made a mess of the want of confidence motion.

Mr. VOWLES: I never see the paper.

Mr. FERRICKS: The hon. member has no right to hide behind the guise of misrepresentation. I asked him to quote the Federal "Hansard" which he referred to. The hon. gentleman has not done so yet. He has relied upon what somebody else has told him. He is going on second-hand information.

Mr. PEASE: Whisperers.

Mr. FERRICKS: It would have been much better if the leader of the Opposition had not made such a foolish statement, and I ask him either to quote what he alleges I

said, in support of his accusation, or do the manly and politically decent thing by withdrawing it.

Mr. JONES (*Kennedy*): In rising to say a few words, I might mention that I do not pose as a financial expert. There is no need for me to be one, because the criticism has been done very ably by many members on this side of the House. I wish to call attention to the mismanagement and waste of the Government, which have caused a lot of the trouble we have to-day in regard to unemployment.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. JONES: I do not say that the Government are responsible for all the unemployment which exists, because we all know that the sudden collapse of the markets has been responsible for part of it; but the unemployment in the primary industries started before the collapse of the markets; it began on the day the Government passed the repudiation Bill. I want the small holder of land to be treated on the same lines as the pastoralist. When the small holders took up their leases there was no limitation as to increase of rent at the end of seven years, and the Government took advantage of them and raised their rents by 200 per cent. and 300 per cent. I want to show what the position of some of these small holders is. In Northern Queensland—and I suppose the same thing applies all over Queensland—there are hundreds of small holders with areas of country, 10, 15, or 20 miles in extent. We will take the case of the men who sell thirty bullocks a year. In the good times those men were getting £12 per head for those bullocks, which was a very fair price, and for thirty bullocks that would amount to £360. Hon. members opposite say that those men were making at that rate between £7 and £8 per week. When prices were high they were getting, say, £12 per head, or £360 per annum—roughly, £7 per week. That was not extraordinary when they had to employ a lot of labour to keep their holdings in repair and maintain their families; and yet they have their rents increased up to 300 per cent. Then the Government increases the rent on the top of that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They get a deduction for children going to school.

Mr. JONES: You do not deduct much, I will warrant. (Opposition laughter.) Take the position of the same men to-day. I suppose that £5 or £6 is the best price they can get for a bullock now, at which rate thirty bullocks would sell for, say, £180, or less than £4 per week for the year. That is less than many of the boys are getting in industries in the cities. The Government take £1 per week from the man on the land in rent and taxes, and they wonder why there is no settlement on the land and why the people are going into the cities. I think the Government will admit that, owing to the conditions under which the settlers are placed, they are entitled to more than £4 per week to keep their selections going and maintain their families. The Government take from them a fourth of the £200 per year which they make for rent and rates. If you want to settle people on the land, why not give them the land at a nominal rent, because no matter what they make they will have to pay the income tax? The Premier may sneer at that idea, but it is much sounder than a lot of the rubbish that I have heard talked on the Government

*Mr. Jones.]*

benches for the last couple of years. They talk about their State stations, in connection with which only 170,000 head of cattle are carried on 31,000 miles of country, which, if cut up into selections, would carry twelve head per mile, or over 300,000 cattle altogether. The Government have no consideration for the man on the land. I asked for an extension of time for payment of rent by a man who has a piece of country a few miles north of where I am, and the answer I got from the department was that he could have sixty days' grace, but that he must pay 10 per cent. for the accommodation.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is a statutory condition.

Mr. JONES: There was a statutory condition preventing the rent of the pastoralist from being increased more than a certain amount, but the Government did not mind repudiating that condition. The working men themselves are beginning to realise that, when the primary producers are prosperous, the country generally will be prosperous. If the Government treat the men on the land as they are doing now, and block settlement, who are they going to hamper most?

Mr. WEIR: What are you squealing about?

Mr. JONES: I am not squealing. I have always been able to earn my bread, because I have kept my credit good. The Government took care when prices went up to raise rents by 200 per cent. or 300 per cent. Are they going to relieve these men now that prices are going down?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The Government have not raised the rents.

Mr. JONES: What was the amendment of the Land Act brought in for? Only to empower them to raise rents. Did not the Government instruct the assessors to make the assessment high? In Hughenden the rent was fixed at a much higher rate than what the Assessing Commissioner fixed it at, and the Government appealed against that assessment.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The Land Court fixed it.

Mr. JONES: I have no time for the Land Court. I take no notice of land courts, for they take no notice of evidence. (Laughter.) I am here in the interests of the man on the land, and to see that the country goes ahead. We have got a good country, with thousands of miles of unoccupied land, and what we want is settlement. If this Shylock Government think they are going to populate this country with the rack-renting system in operation now, they make a mistake. As I said before, why should we not give the land to these men at a low rental? Every time there is a rise in prices the rent goes up, but, when the market comes down, the Government do not reduce the rent. I always

like to make amends when I make a mistake. When I was speaking on the last occasion, the Chairman called me to order for comparing the Government with the Kelly Gang. I recognise that the Chairman (Mr. Kirwan) has great experience, and, knowing the hon. members better than I do, he immediately called me to order and said, "You must not be unfair." I quite agree with him that I was unfair—to the Kelly Gang. (Loud Opposition laughter.)

Question put and passed.

[Mr. Jones.

The House resumed. The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN reported progress.

The Committee obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

## ANZAC DAY BILL.

### SECOND READING.

The PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): This Bill embodies a very small principle and one which, I am sure, will not evoke any controversy or criticism. It is carrying out a request of the bodies represented in connection with Anzac Day commemoration throughout the State, that this day be made by statute a public holiday. It has been observed as a public holiday, in effect, during the last few years, and it has been proclaimed a public holiday. On the last occasion—April of this year—the various racing clubs were asked not to hold race meetings on that day, and practically unanimously they agreed to honour that request. Except in one or two centres where, through some misunderstanding, the meeting was held, racing was postponed on that day. This Bill will have the effect of constituting as a permanent public holiday the particular day commemorating the landing on Gallipoli, which marked the event leading to the unfortunate death of a great many Australians who participated in the Great War. At the same time, the Bill requires licensed victuallers' premises to be closed, in the same manner as Good Friday is observed, and prohibits the holding of race meetings. That sums up the contents of the Bill, and surely there can be no opposition to it. Practically all the States have agreed to pass similar legislation, but I do not know whether it has been introduced in the other States yet. New Zealand has passed a measure somewhat similar to this; in fact, this is modelled upon the New Zealand measure, and I think the other States will agree to it. The question of an observance in England to commemorate Anzac Day has also been raised. There has been a conference over there, and certain measures have been taken to observe the day. But it is essentially an Australasian observance, and, because of that, I think it is well that legislation should be passed to make the day a statutory holiday. I move—That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I am not offering any opposition to the Bill, because I understand from the Premier that it is introduced at the request of the persons who are chiefly interested. Personally, I cannot understand their attitude in the matter of making it a close holiday. My idea is that we should be celebrating the birth of a nation, and not looking at it from the dismal side.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I have very much pleasure in supporting the second reading of this Bill. Certain things which have been cut out will make it a dismal day, but I do not think it should be a day for sport. I think that is one of the intentions of the Bill, so that people will not forget the sacrifices that were made by the Australians on that particular day. We, as a Nationalist party, have very much pleasure in supporting the principles of the Bill.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill. I remember in 1918, soon after I was elected to this House, the soldiers who were then returning asked me to introduce a deputation to the Premier on the question of making Anzac Day a public



holiday, and I remember the Premier using these words at that time: "When public opinion demands it, no Government can resist." I am very pleased to be in the House to see the request of that deputation consummated. It is one of those things which had to come as public opinion demanded it, and, knowing what I do of the British race, I believe the public will keep Anzac Day as it should be kept.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I have much pleasure in supporting a Bill to commemorate Queensland's part in the great war, and to perpetuate the memory of the brave ones who lost their lives in the defence of the Empire. There can be no opposition to that principle, and I am sure every section of the House is pleased to see the Government introducing a Bill that has been asked for by the soldiers to make Anzac Day a national holiday.

Mr. KING (*Logan*): I have very much pleasure indeed in supporting this Bill. I would like to mention that at a conference of the Local Authorities' Association held last year, a resolution was unanimously adopted by the delegates, that they should urge the appointment of Anzac Day as a sacred public holiday. I recognise that the provisions contained in the Bill go far towards achieving that end, and I have very much pleasure in supporting it.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowoong*): I would like to say, as a member of the Anzac Day Committee, that the committee were of opinion that it was essential that the day should be established, and in reply to the leader of the Opposition I would like to say that it was recognised by that committee that it should be a sacred day. The question raised by a section of the committee—the Secretary for Public Lands will bear me out in this, as he was in the chair on that occasion—and it was thought desirable that they should have a military parade, or something like that, as it was no use to go in for a whole sacred day; but the opinion of the Anzac Committee was that Anzac Day should be kept a sacred day. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): I also desire to support the Bill, as there is no doubt that it meets all the requirements of the Anzac Day Committee. It is an honour for Queensland to be the first State in Australia to put on the statute-book an Act providing that Anzac Day shall be set apart for a special purpose. We have the honour in Queensland of being the first State in the whole world, not excluding New Zealand, to initiate what is known as Anzac Day. I do not think we should allow this matter to pass without recording the name of Colonel Garland in connection with this Committee. He has given a good deal of time and consideration to the matter. This Bill, as it stands, will meet the whole of the requirements as presented to the president of the Anzac Day Committee. I understand the Premier is president of that committee, and I am very pleased indeed to know that this Bill is being put through.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): I have very great pleasure indeed in supporting the introduction of this Bill. The whole of Australia will follow suit in this matter, and it will do itself honour by enacting such a measure. We should feel particularly interested in connection with a move of this description, not only on account of the fact

that so many Australian sons did so nobly and well, and fought in the interests of freedom, but this House, from its own particular and personal standpoint, does itself honour in associating itself with the passing of such an Act. Quite a number of members in the House at the present time saw service in the Great War, and indeed, the hon. member for Nundah was amongst the first fifty men who landed at Gallipoli on Anzac Day, and, in addition to that, we have very many members whose sons also served during the Great War. The chief cause for satisfaction in the introduction of the Bill is that it emanates largely from the soldiers themselves, and that we are carrying out their desires. I am sure that the whole country will only be too glad to perpetuate the imperishable deeds of our lads on that great day.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): I have to congratulate the Government on introducing this Bill and making the 25th of April a memorial day for Australia—a day that marks the first time Commonwealth troops fought in the cause of the Empire and in the cause of freedom. It is a most sacred day, as they were ready to lay down their lives and to risk their bodies in the cause of the Empire and the flag. I trust that this day will be kept as a memorial day, in order to recall the great sacrifices those men were prepared to make. They asked nothing, and thought nothing, except that the Empire stood in need of their services. Asking nothing and expecting nothing, they were ready to put themselves between the danger that then threatened the Empire and threatened Australia and the cause they stood for. How well they did it history has told us, and I am sure that this generation and generations that are to come will always hold their memory in the very highest regard, and their names will always be recorded amongst those who rank highest in the annals of British heroes as men who laid down their lives for the Empire and duty.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I have pleasure in supporting the Bill, and I hope that, when we come to commemorate this day, we will teach our children what was said during the war—that this war was a war to end war. That is what we were told during the war, and as one who has quite recently read Philip Gibbs's "Realities of War," and his "Back to Life," I realise that these books recall that we have got behind the scenes now that the censorship has been lifted; and we can appreciate his description of the trials and struggles of the men who fought in the war. I hope our children will be taught in future on this particular day to hate war and that war is no longer needed amongst the nations of the earth; that we can settle our disputes without killing each other as we have done in the past.

Mr. COSTELLO (*Carnarvon*): I wish to say a few words in support of the Bill and in congratulation of the Government on its introduction. I do not wish to make a long speech on it, but I think it is only just to pay this tribute to the memory of the members of the First Australian Division who landed on Gallipoli on 25th April, 1915, and of the deeds they did on that day and afterwards.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): I have pleasure in supporting this Bill. We might say that Anzac Day was the birthday of the Australian nation.

Mr. COLLINS: The Eureka stockade.

*Mr. Bebbington.*]

Mr. BEBBINGTON: That is quite outside the question. It is quite certain that if the lads who landed at Anzac had not given up their lives, Australia to-day would be under a foreign flag, and we would be serving under conscription under a foreign nation, so that all the liberties we possess and our ability to sit as representatives of Queensland are due to the sacrifices of the boys who fell there. The same remark applies to the men who went from every part of the British Empire. I might quote the remarks of General Ferguson, who, when the British were retiring from Mons, told a small force of 20 000 men, "We must go back; you must hold up the enemy." Out of that force only some 3,000 ever turned up again. Those were great sacrifices, and they can be traced right throughout the war; and our lads, no doubt, held their own with any others in the British Empire.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumbidgee*): I also want to say a few words of appreciation of this measure. I happen to know that it is the wish of the soldiers that this day should be consecrated to the memory of those brave men who laid down their lives at Gallipoli. I have never been exactly a flagwaver, but I feel that it was a privilege to mix with the men of Anzac. It was, indeed, a most wonderful thing to see the Australian boys coming from the backblocks, from the cities, from everywhere, and adapting themselves to the style of life of Anzac. I do not think we quite anticipated the soldiers they would make a month or two before they landed at Gallipoli; but the men who landed on that rugged peninsula rose to the occasion and did their duty, and this Bill is a very fitting tribute to the memory of their deeds and of those who were left there. We did leave many of them there. We saw many stretchers coming down to the beach with mangled men in them who would be no more for this world, and when we saw them we realised what war meant, and what doing one's duty to the end really was. As an ex-soldier who has done some small duty to the Empire, I think this is the least we can do in tribute to those who died for it.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): It is a pleasure to note the unanimous support with which this Bill is received. I think sometimes that we do not give credit where credit is due, and it seems to me I would, perhaps, be treating the Government with a lack of courtesy if I did not read this letter which I have received from the Toowoomba sub-branch of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League—

"THE RETURNED SAILORS AND SOLDIERS'  
IMPERIAL LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA.

"RETURNED SOLDIERS' ASSOCIATION  
(QUEENSLAND BRANCH).

"Toowoomba Sub-Branch,  
"21st September, 1921.

"Sir,—At the general meeting of the Toowoomba sub-branch of the above league, the following resolution was carried:—

That this meeting of the Toowoomba sub-branch of the R.S.S.I.L.A. commends the Queensland Government upon the introduction of the Anzac Day Bill, and trusts that the measure may become law.

"I was instructed to ask your support

[*Mr. Bebbington.*

of this measure, and we feel sure that it will be readily given.

"Yours faithfully,  
"W. D. KENYON, Secretary.

"T. R. Roberts, Esq.,  
"Parliament House, Brisbane."

In all earnestness, I express our appreciation of the action of the Government in this matter.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed.

#### COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at 10.30 p.m.