

eight officers were posted in the muster yard where over 100 young prisoners of the irresponsible kind were standing about. They refused to fall in or to carry out any orders. The slightest mistake on the part of the warders, who were without firearms or batons with which to protect themselves would have precipitated a riot.

I make this disclosure in the hope that it will be instrumental in causing the strength of the staff to be increased. Repeatedly I have stressed the necessity for additional appointment to the Comptroller-General of Prisons, Mr. Hinchey. For some time the staff has been considerably below its proper strength. Although the Minister of Justice stated that no requests for additional appointment had been made to him, I am of opinion that he should take up the matter with a view to ascertaining whether they should be made. According to my information the staff is totally inadequate and on an average of twenty days' leave is due to each officer. Warders have to remain on duty for at least eight days, sometimes without a days' recreation. They have to work day and night in carrying out their onerous and responsible duties of guarding a number of dangerous men. If the Minister makes inquiries he will learn that on at least three occasions the inmates stood still and refused to obey orders. Fights frequently occurred as a result of prisoners accusing one another of obeying instructions. They walked about the yards, abused the warders, and used filthy language. When the warders went into the yards to quell the disturbances they were attacked by prisoners armed with sticks. The officer in charge summoned police assistance, but by the time constables arrived, the prisoners had decided to obey instructions.

I do not assert that the officer in charge is responsible for the position because he has been there for only a week or two. It is due principally to the two men who preceded him in that office. I raise the matter because I did not receive a satisfactory reply to my question. If the Minister decides to increase the strength of the staff I hope that he will

give consideration to the claims of splendid types of local men for the position. There is no doubt that additional appointments are required to preserve order so that there will be no repetition of the risks taken a few days ago of a general riot in the institution.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 10.25 p.m.

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## Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 3 August, 1939.

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Questions without Notice—Special Adjournment—  
Sittings of the House (Motion of Urgency)—  
State Finances.

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Mr. SPEAKER took the chair.

The opening Prayer was read.

### QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND  
ACCIDENT CASES: APPEALS.

Mr. SHANNON: I desire to ask the Deputy-Premier, in the absence of the Premier, whether his attention has been drawn to the repeated efforts of semi-governmental bodies when certain people successfully bring an action for damages to appeal to the higher courts? Will the Deputy-Premier see that legislation is brought down to prevent these semi-governmental bodies from appealing against judgments in workers' compensation and other accident cases?

Lt.-Colonel BRUXNER: It is not the intention of the Government to answer questions without notice until the censure motion has been disposed of.

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### SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

Motion (by Lt.-Colonel Bruxner) proposed:

That unless otherwise ordered this House at its rising this day, do adjourn until Tuesday next at twenty-five minutes after four o'clock p.m.

Mr. LANG: Does the Government propose to do any other business on Tuesday, besides holding the ballot for the election of a member to the Legislative Council?

Lt.-Colonel BRUXNER: No. It proposes only to take the ballot.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

#### SITTING OF THE HOUSE.

##### MOTION OF URGENCY.

Motion (by Lt.-Colonel Bruxner) proposed:

That it is a matter of urgent necessity that this House should forthwith consider the following motion, viz.: "That so much of the sessional orders be suspended as would preclude the continuation of the present sitting after 6 o'clock p.m."

Question put. The House divided:

Ayes, 43; noes, 31; majority, 12.

##### AYES.

Ardill, G. E.	Monro, C. O. J.
Arkins, J. G. D.	Moverly, A. H.
Bennett, C. E.	Mutch, T. D.
Bruxner, Lt.-Col.	Primrose, H. L.
Budd, A. E.	Reid, A. E.
Chaffey, Captain	Reid, J. T.
Dickson, S. D.	Reid, Major
Drummond, D. H.	Robson, E. M.
Elliott, H. O.	Ross, J. C.
Evans, G. P.	Shand, Major
Frith, W.	Sinclair, C. A.
Gollan, G. C.	Solomon, E. S.
Hankinson, R. H.	Stevens, B. S. B.
Hedges, W. W.	Tonking, A. U.
Jackson, J.	Treath, V. H.
Kilpatrick, M.	Vincent, R. S.
Lawson, J. A.	Wade, B. M.
Lee, J. R.	Wingfield, C. G.
Lethbridge, C. B.	Yeo, A. W.
Lloyd, S. A.	
Mair, A.	
Martin, L. O.	

##### Tellers,

Howarth, W. A. H.  
Mitchell, H. R.

##### NOES.

Baddeley, J. M.	Lamb, W. H.
Booth, G.	Lang, J. T.
Burke, Frank	Lazzarini, C. C.
Cameron, R.	McGirr, James
Carlton, W. J.	McKell, W. J.
Clyne, D.	Martin, C. E.
Davidson, M. A.	Matthews, C. H.
Davies, W.	O'Sullivan, M.
Dunn, Captain	Quirk, Mrs.
Evatt, C. R.	Shannon, T. J.
Gorman, R. D.	Stanley, F.
Hawkins, F. H.	Sweeney, J. T.
Heffron, R. J.	Tonge, A.
Horsington, E. M.	
Kelly, C. A.	
Knight, H.	

##### Tellers,

Arthur, J. G.  
Cahill, J. J.

#### SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.

Motion (by Lt.-Colonel Bruxner) proposed:

That so much of the standing and sessional orders be suspended as would preclude consideration forthwith of the following motion, viz.:—"That so much of the sessional orders be suspended as would preclude the continuation of the present sitting after 6 o'clock p.m."

Question put. The House divided.

Ayes, 43; noes, 32; majority, 11.

##### AYES.

Ardill, G. E.	Martin, L. O.
Arkins, J. G. D.	Mitchell, H. R.
Bennett, C. E.	Monro, C. O. J.
Bruxner, Lt.-Col.	Mutch, T. D.
Budd, A. E.	Primrose, H. L.
Chaffey, Captain	Reid, A. E.
Dickson, S. D.	Reid, J. T.
Drummond, D. H.	Reid, Major
Elliott, H. O.	Robson, E. M.
Evans, G. P.	Ross, J. C.
Frith, W.	Shand, Major
Gollan, G. C.	Sinclair, C. A.
Hankinson, R. H.	Tonking, A. U.
Hedges, W. W.	Treath, V. H.
Howarth, W. A. H.	Vincent, R. S.
Jackson, J.	Wade, B. M.
Kilpatrick, M.	Walker, R. B.
Lawson, J. A.	Wingfield, C. G.
Lee, J. R.	Yeo, A. W.
Lethbridge, C. B.	
Lloyd, S. A.	
Mair, A.	

##### Tellers,

Moverly, A. H.  
Solomon, E. S.

##### NOES.

Arthur, J. G.	Lamb, W. H.
Baddeley, J. M.	Lang, J. T.
Booth, G.	Lazzarini, C. C.
Burke, Frank	McGirr, James
Cahill, J. J.	McKell, W. J.
Cameron, R.	Martin, C. E.
Clyne, D.	Matthews, C. H.
Davidson, M. A.	O'Sullivan, M.
Davies, W.	Quirk, Mrs.
Dunn, Captain	Stanley, F.
Evatt, C. R.	Sweeney, J. T.
Gorman, R. D.	Tonge, A.
Hawkins, F. H.	Tully, J. M.
Heffron, R. J.	
Horsington, E. M.	
Kelly, C. A.	
Knight, H.	

##### Tellers,

Carlton, W. J.  
Shannon, T. J.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

## EXTENSION OF SITTING.

Motion (by Lt.-Colonel Bruxner) proposed:

That so much of the sessional orders be suspended as would preclude the continuation of the present sitting after 6 o'clock p.m.

Question put. The House divided:

Ayes, 46; noes, 33; majority, 13.

## AYES.

Ardill, G. E.	Mitchell, H. R.
Arkins, J. G. D.	Monro, C. O. J.
Bate, Jeff	Moverly, A. H.
Bennett, C. E.	Mutch, T. D.
Bruxner, Lt.-Col.	Primrose, H. L.
Budd, A. E.	Reid, A. F.
Chaffey, Captain	Reid, J. T.
Dickson, S. D.	Reid, Major
Drummond, D. H.	Ross, J. C.
Elliott, H. O.	Shand, Major
Evans, G. P.	Sinclair, C. A.
Frith, W.	Solomon, E. S.
Gollan, G. C.	Thomas, N.
Hankinson, R. H.	Tonking, A. U.
Hedges, W. W.	Treath, V. H.
Howarth, W. A. H.	Vincent, R. S.
Jackson, J.	Wade, B. M.
Kilpatrick, M.	Walker, R. B.
Lawson, J. A.	Wingfield, C. G.
Lee, J. R.	Yeo, A. W.
Lethbridge, C. B.	
Lloyd, S. A.	
Mair, A.	
Martin, L. O.	

## Tellers,

Robson, E. M.  
Turner, H. B.

## NOES.

Arthur, J. G.	Lamb, W. H.
Baddeley, J. M.	Lang, J. T.
Bate, H. J.	Lazzarini, C. C.
Booth, G.	McGirr, James
Burke, Frank	McKell, W. J.
Cahill, J. J.	Martin, C. E.
Carlton, W. J.	Matthews, C. H.
Clyne, D.	O'Sullivan, M.
Davidson, M. A.	Quirk, Mrs.
Davies, W.	Shannon, T. J.
Dunn, Captain	Stanley, F.
Evatt, C. R.	Sweeney, J. T.
Gorman, R. D.	Tonge, A.
Hawkins, F. H.	Tully, J. M.
Heffron, R. J.	
Horsington, E. M.	
Kelly, C. A.	

## Tellers,

Cameron, R.  
Knight, H.

## STATE FINANCES.

Debate resumed (from 2nd August, vide page 5697) on motion by Mr. Spooner:

(1) That in the opinion of this House the drift in the State's finances as disclosed by the Premier in his speech on Wednesday, 26th July, 1939, and by the accounts and abstracts of receipts and payments just published has seriously weakened the Government's cash resources and created the present difficult financial position for 1939-1940.

(2) That this House recommends to the Government the urgent necessity of a new financial policy for 1939-40, so that its resources may be strengthened, works and development may proceed, trade may be revived and the Government's capacity for handling the problems of unemployment may be improved.

(3) That as one of the means to this end the House recommends the establishment by law of a separate trust account for the proceeds of the special income tax and wages tax to be earmarked exclusively for costs incurred or to be incurred for the relief of unemployment so that adequate provision may be made in 1939-40 for distress arising from this cause.

Mr. EVATT (Hurstville) [11.25]: Having perused the motion moved by the hon. member for Ryde and listened to the addresses delivered during the course of the debate, I find it difficult to conceive how any hon. member could logically oppose the motion. The hon. member for Ryde, when submitting the motion, declared that it was not to be considered as one of censure upon the Government; but the Premier stated subsequently that he regarded it as a censure motion upon his administration. In examining the merits or demerits of the motion, hon. members should not be deterred by the consideration as to whether the Premier regards it as a censure either upon his administration or upon himself personally. If they believe that the money collected from the people for the relief of unemployment should be expended upon the unemployed, their duty, irrespective of the constitutional consequences, is to support the hon. member for Ryde. When the Premier told the Chamber on Tuesday that he regarded the motion as being one of censure, he did so with one thought in mind, namely, to make an implied threat to Government supporters that if the

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

motion were carried a dissolution would follow. In effect, the Premier declared to the House and to the community: "During the life of this Parliament no one but me shall be Premier." According to him, that is the issue upon which hon. members have to vote.

Mr. HOWARTH: What is wrong about that?

Mr. EVATT: The Premier says, "I am the State." His attitude is reminiscent of that adopted by the Bourbon Kings of France before the Revolution. After a record term as Premier it is possible that he does consider that he is the State, and perhaps cannot conceive that anyone else should occupy the office. He has also implied that the Governor might act unconstitutionally. If a crisis is to develop as the result of the motion, every hon. member assumes that the Governor will act constitutionally. Personally, I should like to see a dissolution. I believe I voice the opinion of every hon. member on this side of the House when I say that a dissolution would be very welcome.

Mr. ARKINS: The hon. member should speak for himself!

Mr. EVATT: Labour representatives have no reluctance whatsoever to coming before the people of the State. What I am saying is that the veiled threat of the Premier is untenable if one examines impartially the constitutional implications. The Governor would certainly attempt to replace this discredited administration with another Government, led no doubt by a member of this House, in this Parliament. Possibly that would be the hon. member for Ryde himself, the mover of this critical motion. However, I ask hon. members, as I said at the outset, to approach the motion dispassionately, unaffected by any such threat of a dissolution.

There is no doubt that the public of this State are intensely interested in the motion and everything that has been discussed during the course of debate. I have no doubt that an overwhelming majority of the people of New South Wales want to see not only the end of the administration of this Government but also the removal

of Mr. Stevens from the Premiership. Several important results will follow if a favourable vote is cast for this motion. I might preface my remarks in that regard by referring to the utter hopelessness of the policy of the present Premier, as revealed by the remarks of the hon. member for Ryde, who assured Parliament that all that the Premier could suggest after seven years in office was that the army of unemployed, large enough as it is to-day, should be further added to by retrenchments and dismissals, and by the transfer of men on relief work to food relief.

Mr. A. E. REM: The Premier did not say that!

Mr. EVATT: The hon. member was out of the Chamber a good deal of the time yesterday and missed much of the debate. It is significant that in to-day's *Sydney Morning Herald* there appears this paragraph, headed "Railway Retrenchments":

Allegations that at least 1,000 men had been retrenched from the permanent-way in the railways during the last month were made by the State secretary of the Australian Railways Union, Mr. Lloyd Ross, yesterday. He declared that the policy of retrenchment was continuing to such an extent that it was probable that by the end of the week all extra gangs will have been disbanded. The department, he added, had refused to disclose figures. There were grounds for fears that all single men with less than two years' experience would be retrenched, and that the retrenchments might be extended to other branches of the departments.

That is an authoritative statement by the secretary of the largest railway union in the State, and no doubt it is based on fact. I do not suppose that the Treasurer who is at present in charge of the House will deny it.

Mr. MAIR: I think that I could deny it, but I would not do so without verifying my opinion!

Mr. EVATT: I am sure that the Treasurer would not capriciously deny it without first consulting the Minister for Transport, who, according to to-day's press, is in no way disposed to participate in the debate. It is clear that the policy of this Government is

one of utter despair and hopelessness. The motion asks for a change of policy and for honesty in dealing with the public finances. It asks that money taken for the greater part out of the pockets of the workers for unemployment relief should be so expended. Does anyone either inside or outside Parliament say that that is a motion which should be opposed?

Mr. A. E. REID: We are all in favour of that!

Mr. EVATT: Hon. members will await with interest the casting of the hon. member's vote. This Government has adopted an entirely negative attitude, an attitude of fatalistic lethargy in dealing with the problems that confront the people of New South Wales. The question arises will the hon. member for Ryde, if given the opportunity, show courage in dealing with these problems? And are past supporters of the Government going to give him that opportunity? I should imagine that they will. Will some mental vigour be disclosed, and shall we at last have some concrete policy of dealing with the unemployed of this State? It would be a great mistake to think that the grave issue facing the House is of concern only to the unemployed and their dependants. Every section of the community demands, and will continue to demand, that something be done to improve the position. Not only do the unemployed and their families deserve consideration, but our unemployed youth should be found work. Thousands of our young men who cannot get employment are in a condition of despair. The great majority of them have had no work for wages since they left school. Some in fact did obtain dead-end jobs but most of them are dismissed on attaining the age of 21 years. The second desirable consequence of a favourable vote on the motion may be that it will bring to an end the Country party domination of the Government.

Mr. A. E. REID: Would the hon. member support a "Spooner" Government?

Mr. EVATT: I should be prepared to support any Administration during the life of this Parliament that would fearlessly and honestly tackle the problem of unemployment. As I said before, I feel that the solution of the problem is a dissolution of the House, but constitutionally I do not think that that is likely. It has been said that this is not a real fight at all, but that it is something in the nature of a sham fight. If it is a real fight hon. members on this side of the House are ready for it and its consequences.

Major SHAND: It will be a real fight all right!

Mr. EVATT: Well, we are ready to make it a willing one, and if it results in a new Administration from the parties which have supported the present Government we shall deal with it on its merits. No Government could be worse than the present Administration, and a new Government might be a good deal better. It might deal honestly with the State's finances. If a favourable vote meant the end of the Country party domination of the Government it would be more than justified. Let me examine the position of the Country party in this House of ninety members. The Country party, which represents, at the most, some 160,000 electors, has twenty-two members in this House and that, one might say, out of a total electoral roll of 1,500,000 people.

Mr. LAZZARINI:

Mr. EVATT: And, as the hon. member for Marrickville says, the country electorates are gerrymandered. I hope that if we have a new Government it will deal with that matter. If I remember rightly the Premier, in his last three policy speeches, undertook to introduce electoral reform, but he is finding it increasingly difficult to persuade anyone to believe his public utterances. Day after day hon. members feel that they can pay no heed to the Premier's statements. The Country party represents only 10 per cent. of the people of this State, and, as such, it should have about nine seats, but as I said, the party holds twenty-two seats and comprises a quarter of the House. The

Country party would have the people believe that it represents about 400,000 electors. It is, without doubt, the tail that wags the dog. The Premier has delivered his party into the hands of the Country party and he has done that in return for its support. That party dictates the Government's policy, and no hon. member can deny it. That is why the unemployed are being betrayed and why the metropolitan schools are falling into disrepair. It is also the reason why the schools in Sydney electorates cannot get equipment and why the children have to huddle around improvised stoves made by their parents. The Government has no real policy to deal with the situation. It is supposed to be a united or fusion Government, but in fact it is a Country party Government. It is significant that not one Country party member has addressed the House during the present debate nor during the debate on the censure motion moved last week by the hon. member for Botany.

The Deputy-Premier has publicly stated that he does not propose to speak during the debate. Of course, he will vote on the motion, but he will not speak to it although the Premier has said that he accepts the motion as a motion of censure against the Government. The fact is that the Deputy-Premier need not speak on it, because he knows that the policy of the Government is dictated by interests outside the House which control him. That is the position of the Government to-day, and that is why hon. members who represent metropolitan and suburban constituencies can get nothing effective done. That is why the schools are in bad condition and why the unemployed are neglected. Hon. members of the United Australia party know that what I say is correct and should admit it unequivocally. The Country party has an influence in this Chamber disproportionate to that which it should have and its influence is most reactionary.

Mr. LETHBRIDGE: The schools in my electorate require attention!

Mr. EVATT: No hon. member admires the people of the country districts more than I do. I am just as interested in the people on the land as any other hon. member, and I note that the hon. member for Corowa says that the schools in his electorate have been neglected. That is because he does not support the Country party. He at least is one country representative in this Chamber who does not bend the knee to the Graziers' Association, the Farmers and Settlers' Association and kindred associations, which are, in effect, the Country party of this State.

Mr. HORSINGTON: The real Government of New South Wales!

Mr. EVATT: That situation will be adequately dealt with because the Labour party will go to the country and tell the country people the truth. We will tell them how they were betrayed by the Country party, and how that party is tied to the big commercial interests in this city. In that way all this pretence that the Country party represents the man on the land will be exposed. Why is the Country party so silent? Not one member has given the Premier a word of support. They all wait outside the Chamber in the lobbies until they are called upon to vote as they will be told by their leader, unless, of course, these words of mine bring some of them to their senses.

Mr. SANDERS: That is only a pious hope!

Mr. EVATT: I am afraid so. Perhaps they are waiting to see how the situation develops. The next Premier might be the hon. member for Ryde, the hon. member for Drummoyne, the hon. member for Hawkesbury, or perhaps the hon. member for Willoughby. It might even be the hon. member for George's River who, last night, revealed a knowledge of high finance that would not only fit him for the Treasurership of this State, but would also, I venture to suggest, if he were sent abroad to London, fit him to occupy the high office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. I am curious to know what is the true reason for the silence of members of the Country party. What are they waiting for

Is it for the results of this vote? Are they seeking to preserve their chance to join a new United Australia party administration under another Premier? At present they hold more than one-third of the portfolios. According to the press the Minister for Transport will not speak on this motion. Thus not even the Country party leader will come to the assistance of the Premier. With its twenty-two members the Country party has a gross over-representation in this Chamber, an undue influence in the Government.

That is an intolerable situation to-day. A government should in no sense be representative of sectional interests. A government worthy of the name should not be bound to any particular group, but should represent all the people. I trust that when the hon. member for Ryde is sworn in as Premier he will pay heed to the need of having an administration which will represent every section of the community. When this motion is carried the hon. member for Ryde will be given his chance. I hold no brief for him, and I could say some harsh things about his administration of the various departments which were under his control from time to time. Perhaps as harsh things could be said about him in that regard as have been said about the Premier. However, he has, during this situation, displayed one quality which is lacking in the Premier. He has displayed a certain amount of generosity. Last week he was prepared to bend the knee and, as it were, to place his head upon the block. He thought that if he dealt with the situation in a spirit of generosity, decency and general fairness, he might expect reciprocity from the Premier. But he was sadly disillusioned. The Premier forgives no one and forgets nothing. We see on the Government side men who from time to time have been in the Ministry, men who have displayed courage and fearlessness in administration, but who, one by one, by contemptible methods, have been stripped of their portfolios. I shall not embarrass the occupant of the chair in this Chamber

by saying what I should like to say respecting a certain matter. But, whenever a Minister has had the courage to stand up against vested interests—whether they have been business or professional interests—whenever a Minister has dared fearlessly to expose public scandals, just so soon has he been marked for public, and in some instances, for private destruction by the Premier of this State. No one has been treated with greater indulgence by the public than has the present Premier. He has been forgiven time and again for acts of maladministration. He has been the spoilt child of the family, and the State has been an over-indulgent parent to him. The situation has developed to a stage where the Premier can conceive of no one else in this Parliament, indeed in the State, who could lead an administration. He has said to the hon. member for Ryde, "If you dare to recommend spending public money for the purpose for which it was collected you will be censuring me; if you deal honestly with public finance I will take that as a personal reflection upon myself." He has warned the members of the United Australia party, by implication and innuendo, that if they oppose him there will be an election. How long are those members willing to tolerate this type of Premiership? The United Australia party is the largest party in this Chamber. Parliament has run approximately half its course. Has the United Australia party any method of internal control? Does it ever meet? Has it any policy? The hon. member for Ryde, has said, in the form of a deathbed repentance: "An end to that; we will start afresh. We will expend this money as it should be expended." Some members have suggested that it is rather like Satan reproving sin.

The next result which may be achieved if this motion is carried is that the £6,500,000 collected annually for the relief of unemployment may be wholly expended for that purpose. The hon. member for Waverley, in his speech yesterday, dealt with what is called

the superannuation position. I understand the Treasurer has answered that in a way which, at any rate, has satisfied the Treasurer. Whether it has satisfied other hon. members remains to be seen. I am not at all convinced by the fact that some time ago letters passed between the State Superannuation Board and the Government. It seems that at the right moment in the course of this debate it has been possible to refer to certain letters which passed in some instances between members of the Cabinet. I asked the Treasurer yesterday, when he descended to very unkind criticism of the hon. member for Ryde, whether he had made any contemporaneous complaint. The Treasurer must deal with this situation on the basis that he was then a member of the Administration and on the basis that the hon. member for Ryde was then the Minister for Public Works and Local Government. The Treasurer has, in effect, asserted that the ex-Minister was expending money capriciously on certain works. I think he implies that the money was being squandered. Did the Treasurer ever indicate publicly or in this House what was his opinion of that expenditure? At a critical moment in the debate he said, "I sent a letter." That struck me as a rather peculiar remark. We have not been told the contents of the letter, and I hope the hon. member for Ryde will deal with that particular matter in his reply. There is a demand by the public and by this House for honesty in financial administration. We are told that on a most conservative estimate £2,500,000 annually is diverted from a channel into which it should go. That amount is diverted from the relief of unemployment to the Treasury. The Treasurer should answer that charge, but he has not answered it.

Captain DUNN: £16,000,000 in seven years!

Mr. EVATT: I do not wish to indulge in figures unnecessarily, but the amount would be sufficient to provide full-time work for 10,000 men at award rates of pay. The Treasurer will not deny it because he knows the figures to be true.

Mr. MAIR: I am not denying it unnecessarily!

Mr. EVATT: The hon. member for Ryde asks this House to say that that money shall be used for the purpose for which it was collected and by implication he says, "If I am Premier it will be so used." Hon. members on the other side must choose between the Premier and the hon. member for Ryde on this issue. Although, as I said earlier, I am not and never have been an admirer of the administration of the ex-Minister, I do say that on this issue the hon. member for Ryde should be given his opportunity, because he comes out of this discussion with flying colours. He asks this House to say that the money should be honestly expended. Allied closely to this particular problem is the question of juvenile and youth delinquency. I call it delinquency. Some people call it juvenile crime and they refer to the youthful criminals in the community. Probably the most important aspect of the debate relates to the increase in the number of boys and young men who have been brought before the criminal tribunals and charged for the most part with theft.

Motion (by Mr. Horsington) agreed to:

That the hon. member be allowed an extension of time.

Mr. EVATT: These boys and young men have been forced into crime by economic circumstances, and are faced with utter hopelessness and despair. They parade the streets of the city and suburbs in search of work. Is it any wonder that, from time to time, they are tempted to steal, and do steal paltry articles, which probably they sell for the price of a meal. Society is creating this class of offender. By denying them the right to live decently, it is driving them into the criminal courts. Society adopts an illogical attitude towards them, for after it forces them to commit offences it sends them to a penitentiary, sometimes for years. What a position! In those institutions they mix, for the most part, with hardened



criminals, and after their term of imprisonment is ended, society sends them back into the community.

I charge the Government with the responsibility of creating criminals out of fine Australian boys, boys who would have become worthy citizens had the Premier, during his seven years of office, tackled the problem courageously. As it is, the courts are filled with youths who are becoming acquainted with the brutality of the law. Only the other day a boy of 15 was declared an habitual criminal by a judge at Quarter Sessions. In possible extenuation of that sentence I think the Minister of Justice stated publicly that the boy had been released, but nothing will obliterate its influence. At the age of 21, if that boy seeks a position, his record will be examined and it will reveal that he is an habitual criminal in the eyes of the law, just because he stole a trumpet article! That problem is closely allied with the motion now before the Chamber. It is my theory that every person born into this society has the moral right not only to live in it, but to a statutory guarantee of employment. Are we to regard, as a necessary social evil, the army of unemployed men, women and young people? One might as well say we should tolerate disease in the community.

Brigadier-Gen. LLOYD: Are not some of the unemployed unemployable?

Mr. EVATT: We might as well tolerate illiteracy, but we have almost swept it away. Unemployment is a social evil. The hon. member for Mosman asks whether some of the unemployed are not unemployable. I know he does not suggest that the army of unemployed tramping the streets of this city are unemployable. Only a small section is unemployable, so the hon. member's remark can have no application to the motion before the House.

On Tuesday, the Premier likened the Cabinet to the directorate of a limited liability company. He called for loyalty and said that a company whose directors lacked loyalty would fail. One might link that up with the charges that have

been made regarding the manipulation of the finances of the State. The Premier shows as revenue the money derived from the sale of the State Brick Works. Hon. members may be able to tell me exactly what the sum realised was: I think it was in the vicinity of £150,000. Is that an honest way of dealing with the finances of the State? The Government sells a capital asset and shows the proceeds to the public as part of the legitimate revenue of the land, which clearly they are not.

Hon. members will recollect that Lord Kysant, the director of an English shipping company, was imprisoned recently for misrepresenting its financial position, just as the Government has done with regard to its own assets. He made it appear that the capital of the company was income, and paid dividends for several years. What the Premier has done is very similar to what was done in the "bad old days" when, to improve the revenue position of the State, governments sold large tracts of public land. In that way a very healthy financial position could be presented. Hon. members looking at the matter dispassionately and fairly might say that such a practice was dishonourable, but is it any less dishonourable to sell an asset to try to improve the financial position?

Reference has been made during the debate to the conditions of the unemployed. For example it was stated that many unfortunate people were sent into concentration camps. I think it was the Colonial Treasurer who took exception to that term. To describe those camps as concentration camps is to give them the correct title. They are little better than concentration camps. The conditions in them are deplorable. The charge made for the food that the unemployed receive there is excessive. The transport arrangements beggar description. I invite hon. members to visit Central Railway Station, particularly at week-ends, to see the groups of men returning to this city from country districts where they have been kept in these camps. Their condition is pitiful. Some of these men have been so reduced in

health that they have returned to their homes suffering from influenza and other illnesses, including pneumonia. These men must either endure the conditions which exist in the concentration camps, or have no work. This policy must be brought to an end, and some Government must end it.

The policy of despair that has now seized this administration must be replaced by a policy of hope. During the course of his speech the hon. member for Botany referred to this matter, and quoted certain specific instances. One of these referred to a case at Moree. He exposed as typical the treatment of an applicant for food relief in Moree. I think he was taken to task by someone in the press for his statements, but the matter has been examined and carefully analysed. A man who sought food relief at Moree collapsed and was removed to hospital suffering undoubtedly from malnutrition. Since then the dole inspector and the police superintendent at Tamworth have been sent to Moree to investigate the matter, no doubt at the request of the Government in an endeavour to discredit the hon. member for Botany and to disprove his statements. The investigations, however, have already disclosed that more than twenty persons have been improperly deprived of the dole in that centre.

If an impartial investigation were conducted throughout the State similar cases would undoubtedly be disclosed. I feel sure that the hon. member for Ryde would order such an investigation and at least see that the matter was dealt with promptly and effectively. Similar cases can be quoted at great length, but I put it to the House that every member of the community has the right to live, and should have the right to work. We say the public has a right to live, because it is wrong to kill. Homicide is punishable, but this Government to-day is, in effect, killing people indirectly but surely by malnutrition. What is the prospect for the children of unemployed people; what is to be their life, their very existence? This motion presents hon. members with an opportunity to

tackle at least one aspect of this important problem, and I invite them fearlessly—because apparently fear has been instilled into some of them by the remarks of the Premier—to support it, and thus in some way to relieve the unemployment position.

Brigadier-Gen. LLOYD (Mosman) [12.30]: After carefully listening to the debate and considering the motion, I am at a loss to understand how the Premier can possibly justify his action in making the motion one of censure. The first paragraph reads: "That, in the opinion of this House, the drift in the State's finances has seriously weakened the Government's cash resources." The Premier himself had admitted and explained that aspect. Paragraph (2) declares that there is an urgent necessity for the introduction of a new financial policy. The Premier has declared that such a policy is under consideration. Paragraph (3) expresses the opinion that a special trust account should be created to receive all collections of special income and wages tax. The Premier has announced through the Colonial Treasurer that already provision is being made to put that plan into operation.

In the circumstances, the question that I have to ask myself is why the Premier, exercising his prerogative, decided to regard the motion as one of censure, when he and his Ministers are in agreement with every paragraph of it. I hate to think so, but could it be possible that the Premier, after years of mounting prosperity and at last achieving what is called "budgetary equilibrium," has suddenly discovered a huge deficit, does not feel prepared to take the responsibility any longer, and is seizing on the slightest opportunity to rid himself of the office he holds, totally regardless of the party to which he has the honour to belong? It is absolutely beyond my comprehension. Can it be that he does not want to face another heavy deficit, irrespective of the reason for it?

Not so very long ago we read in the press, day after day, statements to the effect that the Premier—a great financial wizard—was required in the Federal sphere. Did he deny that? Did he say

that he was not going to leave us in order to become a member of the Federal Parliament? Of course he did not! We had to take it for granted that such would have been his move if he had found a suitable opportunity to make it. But apparently the Prime Minister discovered that, after all, the old ship of State, the Commonwealth, could get along quite well even without the Premier. But what has happened? The hon. member for Ryde has been most reticent. He did not want to bring on to the floor of the House, to make a Roman holiday for members of the Opposition, matters which he considered to be of importance but which could be adjusted by the Government. What other opportunity did the hon. member have for speaking? When he did speak, he was most reticent; but he was attacked by the Premier. He had no means of bringing the matter before the House in self-defence other than by moving a motion of urgency. When he took that course, he was particularly careful to say that it was not a motion of censure. All he did was fully to explain to the House the reasons for his disagreement with the Government.

What I want to make perfectly clear is that the reason for this matter being brought into the House, with all the attendant vituperation and criticism of the United Australia party, is entirely the responsibility of the Premier. He refused to meet his party for the purpose of discussing the matter. Instead, he threw down what he chose to call "the gauntlet." Actually he did not throw down the gauntlet; he threw the United Australia party to the wolves. The sinister suggestion has been made that if we do not vote against the motion, he will throw us to the country in a general election. Some members of the United Australia party are not very keen about intimidation, threats, or tactics of that kind, and I say unreservedly that it is most reprehensible for the Premier, when he agrees with every paragraph of the motion, to declare that it is a motion of censure and that unless we support

him he will throw the party to the wolves and send us out possibly to be swept from the Treasury benches.

Seven and a half years ago, when a small group met, after an election the Premier was given authority freely and generously to select his own Ministers. For seven years no one has cavilled at that. He has selected whom he would. Every now and again the Cabinet door opens and hurtling down the stairs with his hat sailing after him comes some ex-Minister; no one has complained. On this particular occasion, however, he has encountered a difficulty. He has had to contend with a man of substance. He is a man who has been given credit throughout the State for the work that he has done during an appalling and trying period. How amusing it was to hear the Premier say that he wanted the hon. member to remain in the team when times were difficult, because he had been a Minister and spent money freely during five years of rising prosperity and easy spending.

We have all received copies illustrating the advance or achievement that has taken place month after month under the Stevens-Bruxner Government and claiming that the Premier's financial wizardry has brought about "budgetary equilibrium." Now, suddenly, a deficit is discovered. May I be pardoned for being mischievously reminded of the expression on the face of Charlie Chaplin when an alarm clock went off in his trousers. The Premier woke up one morning to find a deficit of several million pounds! If the Premier is the leader that he claims to be, I ask in all sincerity any member of his own party who has the privilege of being a member of the Government, whether he has ever heard of a leader who will not meet his own troops. What is he afraid of? Does he want to leave the Treasury benches in this time of stress? Does he want to be put out of office by the Labour party and some that are called the recalcitrants in the United Australia party? Does he want to discredit the mover of the motion by so

doing when there is no justification at all for his accepting the motion as one of censure.

If he throws out his Ministers at his own sweet will, why should he wrap his arms around the pedestal and when his position of leadership is threatened say, "You can throw me out, but I will wreck the structure before you do so." What consideration does he show there for the country or for Parliament? Why should we waste the time of the House in the unseemly recriminations that have been heard during the last few days? We think that men who are selected to hold ministerial rank are giants and that they must have some great measure of ability, otherwise they would not be there. Sometimes one who we did not realise possessed such talent, is taken from alongside us and we must assume that we were wrong in our estimate of him. But when they are elevated to ministerial rank, how can one Minister of the Crown after serving five or six years with a comrade in the Cabinet, even attempt to "put over" the House that what any member of the Government said was not the expression of Cabinet itself. How can a member of the same Government say that the hon. member for Ryde spent money in a way that he should not have spent it? I have always understood that if a member of a government gave approval of anything, he gave it as the approval of Cabinet, with the possibility that that member of the Government might have fought tooth and nail against the decision that in this House he was compelled to give. If the Colonial Treasurer finds fault with something that the ex-Minister for Public Works and Local Government has done, it is a matter of his own opinion, but he is just as much responsible for it as is any member of that Cabinet.

When the hon. member for Ryde leaves Cabinet for some reason he is fully entitled to state that reason. Something was said about "faking" the Budget. I cannot but be very disappointed to learn that an amount that was borrowed was not included that year as a loss. I cannot but feel concerned that governments can

carry on in that way. How is it possible? Have we not an Auditor-General; have we not someone to say: "That is not correct accounting"? Why do we have to wait until there is some disagreement in Cabinet to find it out? I feel that we are being asked to play with a double-headed penny. In the first place if we support the Government we are asked to vote against what the hon. Treasurer has said the Government intends to do. How could we possibly go out on the hustings and support anything else than that the money collected should be put into a trust fund and used for the purpose for which it was collected? There is not any member of any party in this House who for a minute would agree to any other course. There is one cleft stick, and the other requires us to make a decision as to whether the Premier will still be the leader of the United Australia party. We are to have the help of members of the Opposition in deciding that. I will say this much for the members of the Country party, they have minded their own business. We have never interfered with the election of their leader or the selection of their Ministers, or commented upon such matters one way or the other. In their wisdom they remained silent, because they said that this was a matter for the United Australia party itself. So they have not interfered; and all honour to them for it. Of course, our friends opposite enjoy the opportunity of watching a "box-on," and no one can begrudge them their appreciation of it; but I sincerely regret their opportunity.

This is purely a matter of the leadership of the party. If I were the hon. member for Ryde I would not be pushed into this false position. He said that he would not move a vote of censure, and indeed he voted against a motion of censure last week. If I were the hon. member for Ryde I would vote against this motion if it were a motion of censure, and I would carry the matter to its proper venue—with flying colours and solid support.

Mr. J. C. Ross: It would never get there!

Brigadier-Gen. LLOYD: Hon. member have it in their own hands to say whether it would get there. I think it is a pity to break a sound and solid rule—"Never amuse the Philistines." Do not give something with which to lash you at an election. Fortunately, they did not get much. It is an astounding thing that after seven and a half years of the allotment of funds by the ex-Minister for Public Works, the severest criticism that can be offered is that he put up a showground somewhere in the country with unemployment relief labour. I congratulate the hon. gentleman that that is the greatest fault to be found with his expenditure of £35,000,000 or £50,000,000.

Mr. BADDELEY: That is all right, but how are you going to vote? That is what we want to know!

Brigadier-Gen. LLOYD: I will tell the hon. member. I am not going to vote for his amusement, and I am not going to vote to help the Labour party to decide whether the Premier remains leader of the United Australia party or not. The Great War was won in the first skirmish at Neuve Chapelle. Though I might desire earnestly to change the leadership of the United Australia party, I would not ask members of the Opposition to help me to do it.

There is another matter of considerable interest that arises in this discussion. We hear of the secrecy of Cabinet decisions. What are these weighty and secret decisions? I do not know, after listening to this debate, if it would not be a good thing for the press to be present at Cabinet meetings. What have they to discuss that is not of importance to all of us? Members are sent into Parliament and they in turn select a few people to be Ministers of the Crown; but we do not give them the country. What sort of a farce has Parliament become? There is no discussion here, these matters seem to be decided in Cabinet, in strict secrecy, and the decisions are brought in here simply to receive the imprimatur, the authority of Parliament. There should be very much more freedom of discussion in this House. Cabinet has no right at all

to withhold these things from the representatives of the people who are sent into Parliament to govern, to control and to administer the State and its affairs. In the House of Commons the Prime Minister tells the result of the deliberations on foreign policy no matter how important they are. Yet we are supposed to leave everything to Cabinet and to vote blindly in the House. Where is democracy if this Assembly is to be controlled by the hon. member for Croydon? If he can put in what Ministers he will and put them out—his own, for he cannot interfere with the Country party—does not that mean that he will have nobody there who disagrees with him, and is he not in complete control? We cannot say that we have a democracy.

An HON. MEMBER: We have a dictatorship!

Brigadier-Gen. LLOYD: If we have a dictatorship, it is handed over to one individual—the leader of the Opposition or the Premier.

Mr. KNIGHT: In spite of your protest you will vote to perpetuate that!

Brigadier-Gen. LLOYD: I will not vote to perpetuate it in any way at all. I will vote to avoid providing you with a further exhibition of this sort. I will vote so that the United Australia party itself can decide who will be its leader. That has nothing to do with any member of the Opposition, any more than it would concern me what you would be doing in a similar circumstance. I sincerely hope that the hon. member for Ryde will not fall into the trap that has been laid for him by the Premier, and that he will go back to the proper venue, where he will get the support that he so richly deserves.

Mr. TURNER (Gordon) [12.51]: This is the most important motion upon which I have been called upon to vote during the two years that I have been in Parliament. It is only right that a member called upon to vote on such an occasion should explain how he intends to vote, and why. I am not going to make any bones about my position. I came into Parliament two years ago with

one object in mind, to do the best that I could to improve the social conditions of the people of New South Wales. That statement will be borne out by motions standing in my name on the business paper. I shall go out of Parliament gladly if I cannot succeed in supporting a Government that is prepared to pursue the policy that I have had in mind ever since I entered public life. That is the only consideration. Hon. members must look at the circumstances of the time and consider what action is best in the interests of the country. I have done that. Overseas, I see the whole world virtually standing to arms. At any minute the bugles may blow in Europe. This country having been protected for 150 years by the broad oceans, may now, for the first time, have to defend itself on its own shores. At home we have just had revealed to us a huge deficit, much larger than was first represented. And we have a shrivelling revenue that is creating additional unemployment. To summarise: Abroad there is tension that may end in war; at home we are faced with almost unprecedented difficulties.

In such circumstances, the most important consideration is stability of Government. Therefore, I have examined the consequences of a vote on the motion one way or the other. How are we to ensure stability of Government in such circumstances? Supposing that the motion is carried, and that I am instrumental in bringing about its being carried. The constitutional position would probably be that his Excellency the Governor would call upon the hon. member for Ryde to form a Ministry. The hon. member would do that. Then, if he obtained the support of the United Australia party and the Country party, he might be able to carry on the Government of the State. I shall be extremely frank and say that the probable personnel of that Ministry would not be such as would command the support of this House or of the country for any length of time. If, as a result, a general election ensued, it would ensue within a few

weeks. The question is whether, having regard to the circumstances at home and abroad, I should be justified in bringing about another general election in New South Wales. I believe that the result of such an election might very well be the return to power of a Government composed of hon. members now sitting on the Opposition benches, and I say emphatically that I was not returned to Parliament to facilitate the handing over of the Treasury benches to hon. members opposite.

Mr. ARTHUR: The hon. member admits that the people want a Labour Government, and he will not give them an opportunity of voting to that effect!

Mr. TURNER: I am not admitting that. I merely admit that in such circumstances, hon. members on this side might place themselves in an invidious position. That is the reason why I propose to vote against the motion. But that does not conclude my comments on the situation in the eyes of the electors. Another question remains to be settled—the leadership of the Government. Whichever way the vote goes it will not settle that question.

Mr. E. M. ROBSON: Yes, it will!

Mr. TURNER: I do not believe that it will. The leader of the Opposition said that either the Premier or the hon. member for Ryde would have to leave public life after the vote had been taken. I go further and say that both of them will have to leave public life; that what has happened in this House in the last few weeks has caused disgust to me and to the large bulk of the people outside with regard to both of them. This House itself has been brought into contempt by what has gone on in recent weeks both inside and outside Parliament. That is why both hon. members will have to leave public life. Neither should command any longer the support of the more conservative element in the community.

Unquestionably a drift has occurred in the finances of the State, and it is much greater than was represented by the Premier. The hon. member for Ryde has drawn attention to that, and I accept

his analysis of the Budget figures as being correct. It is true that there was an actual deficit of £2,700,000, but it would have been vastly greater if all the expenditure contemplated in the Budget had been incurred. That deficit does not truly represent the drift in the finances, and we must lay that principally at the door of the Premier. He is head of the Government, and above all others must answer for that state of affairs. I listened attentively to what the Premier had to say about a letter directed to him by the hon. member for Ryde, dated either the 27th or the 29th May, and I was not altogether satisfied that he was telling the truth about the circumstances surrounding it. It is a small thing in itself. I do not say that the letter has very great consequences, but on the question of the Premier's personal honour it is very important indeed.

And how does the hon. member for Ryde stand? In the first place, he above all others is responsible for bringing about a situation that might result in a general election at a time of national unrest, at a time when the stability of the Government is of paramount importance. I can see no reason other than personal ambition for his action. Indeed, the whole House has been riven by personal ambition in the last few weeks, and I have felt nothing but disgust for what has gone on about me. The hon. member for Ryde has been responsible for the expenditure on public works of millions of pounds, a great deal of it wastefully. A great deal of that expenditure was not properly thought out and much of it was politically dishonest. The Colonial Treasurer made reference to the fact that nearly £1,500,000 had been spent in the electorate of Ryde itself, and the political dishonesty in that expenditure will be shown to exist in the case of many other expenditures.

[Mr. Deputy-Speaker left the Chair at 1 p.m. The House resumed at 2.30 p.m.]

Mr. TURNER: I may sum up what I was saying before the luncheon adjournment by stating that the charges against the Government of Budget faking, and the other matters which hon. members have been discussing during the past few weeks, are, to my mind, nothing more nor less than ripples on the face of the stream, and the stream runs very deep and towards the sea of personal ambition. For the past three weeks we have been fiddling while Rome burns, and should have been better engaged in trying to find a way to get the State out of its difficulties. That would have been a useful subject for debate over the past two or three weeks. I do not propose to traverse the whole field of the motion, but I say that because of the decline in business activity, the result of international unrest, it is necessary that the Government should take up the slack in employment and provide work for men for whom private enterprise cannot find remunerative employment. That, I admit, is a colossal task. There are thousands of men in the State out of employment, and, if they are to be employed on public works, those works should be reproductive, unless the dead-weight public debt is to be increased. The State's burden has been added to by the system under which public works have been carried out during the last few years. Unless the Government can carry out useful and reproductive works, the dead-weight financial burden on the community will become greater. I do not mind what the public debt is, so long as it is not a dead weight, nor do I overlook the fact that usually the more reproductive works are carried out the more the skilled labour required. I do not overlook the fact also that the bulk of unemployed labour is unskilled, but a very large proportion of our unemployed men are under 30 years of age, and, if they are not skilled, surely they can be trained and become skilled and be provided with employment on reproductive works. That is the real task of the Government.

Shortly after I entered Parliament I urged the Government to make provision

against another possible depression. Unfortunately, depressions come upon the world from time to time, and we should lay our plans well in advance to cope with such an event. Considering the large number of slums in the metropolitan area, and that the Housing Board has reported that in the city and suburbs there are 30,000 houses virtually unfit for habitation, it should be possible to embark upon a building scheme which would provide employment for a large number of men, and with mass production methods it should also be possible to employ a high ratio of unskilled men. We are badly in need of a sound building scheme. There is on the business paper a motion in my name for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the extent to which the building society scheme meets the requirements of the lower-paid workers, the desirability and practicability of extending the scope of the homes for unemployed scheme to meet such requirements, and as to how otherwise such requirements can best be met. In addition, water and sewerage works, which are reproductive, should be carried out, and, moreover, such works would absorb in employment a large number of unskilled men. I do not believe that in this State scenic roads, which, I admit, are to a limited extent advantageous in attracting tourists from overseas, should be built out of loan money, which, ultimately, becomes a burden on the community. There must be a far more rigid control of public expenditure, and in that connection the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works should be reconstituted. The State is spending millions of pounds of loan moneys on public works, and there is more than a suspicion that the expenditure has been twisted into various channels as the result of a policy of political dishonesty. Under the circumstances, it is time that Parliament regained control of expenditure on public works, and for that reason, as I have just said, the Public Works Committee should be set up to inquire and report to Parliament on the advisableness of constructing such works.

Finally, I believe that the proceeds of the special income and wages tax should be paid into a special account, and legislation should be brought down to specify the charges which might properly be made against that account. I think I have, with some frankness, clearly shown what is the issue of the motion. The House would have been better occupied during the last few weeks in discussing a way out of the State's difficulties than in plunging hon. members into another general election, because, if the motion is agreed to, we shall bring another election very close. The great need at the present time is stable government. I suggested that there are two hon. members who should leave public life—first, the Premier, and, second, the former Minister for Public Works and Local Government. It is of no use to leave the matter at that, and I make two suggestions—first, that the House should not carry the motion, but should ensure stability for the time being, and, second, that hon. members on this side of the House should hold a party meeting and decide who is to be the new leader. He should be neither the Premier nor the hon. member for Ryde. I suggest that the party should meet and abide by the decision of the majority. I am willing to do that even if the Premier or the hon. member for Ryde is elected as the leader, but I suggest another candidate altogether. In this debate the only Minister who has come out with any credit is the Colonial Treasurer himself. It has been shown during the course of the debate, particularly in respect of matters that were brought out of the party room by the hon. member for Kogarah, that the Colonial Treasurer is a man of honour. I believe that as Premier he would have the support of the country. Hon. members should not vote simply in accordance with their own personal ambitions. They stand as the trustees of the people and they should consider what the people want. They should consider what sort of leader the people would be willing to support, because we can keep in office only a leader whom the people are willing to follow. I came into this House two years ago, and if I go out



of it I shall take with me at least my own personal integrity and no man can take more.

Mr. SPOONER (Ryde) [2.42], in reply: What emerges more clearly than anything else from this debate is the fact that the Premier has been guilty of cowardice. He has failed to preserve the standards that have been set by earlier illustrious and distinguished Premiers in this State. In the first place, the Premier will not meet his party and presumably he will not meet the members of his party because he is afraid of them. Secondly, the Premier will not treat on its merits the motion which has been brought before the House and which seeks to offer constructive advice. He has run away from his obligations in the hope that by so doing he may temporarily evade the fate that awaits him. He knows that this is not a censure motion and that it is not intended to be one. He knows that when I moved this motion I declared it was not a censure motion. He is treating it as a censure motion so that he may embarrass the supporters of the Government. No one knows better than the Premier the strength of the no-election party in every House of Parliament. This afternoon certain members may vote against this motion, knowing that by so doing they support a retrograde unemployment relief policy, but hoping that they may avoid an election.

The Premier tricked his own party by declaring this to be a censure motion when it is no censure motion at all. He afforded to his party no opportunity to discuss the situation in the party room. He gave to his supporters no opportunity to meet him in the party room to debate this question, but he forced the debate and the discussion on to the floor of this House, and when the motion was moved he declared it a censure motion. His object is to save his own political skin and to reserve to himself a further term of office. I resent the suggestion that has been made in this House and the whispering that has taken place. I resent the suggestions that have been bruited about to the effect that if this

motion is carried there must be a dissolution of Parliament and another election. A dissolution of Parliament lies in the hands of a higher authority than the Premier. It does not become any of us to declare what is going to happen if this motion is passed. That prerogative lies in other hands, and it is not for us to anticipate and to warn other hon. members as to what may happen if the motion is carried.

This motion is not and has no need to be a censure motion, but if it is defeated because a suggestion has been bruited about that if it is carried a dissolution will follow, the Premier will then be given a mandate to go forward with a policy of restricting expenditure on unemployment. I do not believe that this House agrees with such a policy. After hearing the speech of the Colonial Treasurer yesterday afternoon does any member doubt what will happen if this Government carries on with its proposed policy? The speeches of the Premier and the Colonial Treasurer yesterday afternoon, for sheer misrepresentation, hold pride of place, and I propose to say a few words on the subject of the expenditure in the Works and Local Government Department so that it may be viewed in its proper perspective. The total spending of the Government of New South Wales from revenue accounts and loan accounts last year was £65,000,000. The Department of Works and Local Government was voted by Parliament on the revenue and loan estimates the total sum of £6,000,000, representing less than 10 per cent. of the total amount.

Judging by what was said on the subject by the Colonial Treasurer, one would have thought that the Department of Public Works and Local Government was the only spending authority of the Crown. The sum of £65,000,000 does not include expenditure by certain authorities like the Main Roads Department which spends nearly £4,000,000 every year and which is quite outside the Budget. The Department of Works and Local Government is only one of the spending agencies of the Crown, and it spends less than 10 per

cent. of the total amount. Parliament voted to that department or to the Minister in control, the sum of £6,000,000, but the actual expenditure incurred was approximately £5,800,000, or £200,000 less than the amount voted. Out of that sum I had to provide, first, for the administration costs of the department, secondly, for the cost of maintaining maritime outposts, apart from Sydney, and thirdly for the cost of the maintenance of the local government system and many other services. In addition I had to provide for the total cost of 18,000 unemployed in New South Wales. I had also to provide for the cost of subsidies for local governing bodies under the works grants scheme and also for the ordinary public works of the State. Works that are not classified under the headings I have already indicated, are the Port Kembla Jetty construction, the Mitchell Library, Coff's Harbour and many other works. I had to meet all that expenditure out of the sum of £6,000,000.

I want hon. members to view this matter in its proper perspective. I want to illustrate that there has been no orgy of expenditure in the Works and Local Government Department during the time that I was in control of it, and that there has been the utmost economy in order to provide for the sustenance of 18,000 unemployed out of a vote of £6,000,000. Another point which I wish to illustrate is that the 18,000 men to whom I have referred were employed upon relief works on an entirely different basis from that operating in respect of ordinary relief work. If we divide the sum provided on the loan estimates, £2,600,000, by 18,000, we shall find that we cannot spend more than £3 5s. per week per head. If we spend more we shall only employ a portion and the remainder will be on the dole. Therefore it is necessary that the class of relief works to be carried out should be such as do not cost more than £3 5s. per head. There must be in every work carried out of that description a very high labour content. There could not be mechanical work of any quantity, because the cost would not

carry it. That is one of the controlling factors of relief work. Not only last year, but ever since 1932, the quality and standard of the relief works under my administration steadily rose year by year. This we aimed at as far as possible, having regard to the quality of the labour available and the total amount that could be spent upon the works.

What is this wasteful expenditure of which the Treasurer talks? With the greatest respect to the Treasurer I submit that he does not understand the relief work problem in New South Wales. Not that he is not capable of understanding it, but he does not know it as it exists throughout the length and breadth of New South Wales. If the Treasurer says I have been wrong in introducing amenities in country towns and suburbs I want to say now that I take pride in the fact that I have taken a lead in developing country towns. I believe in municipal undertakings whether they be cultural, sporting, or in the health interests of the people, and I believe that they are excellent work on which relief labour can be employed. Despite all that can be done to stop this work by political reactionaries, the job will only be temporarily delayed by my leaving the Cabinet, and it will go ahead soon. I would build municipal libraries, swimming pools, and sports grounds all over the State for the ownership of the people and the cultivation of a civic interest and pride in the whole State. The Treasurer has made reference to works that were started long before defence work became vital in New South Wales. It is all very well to talk about defence works. Eighteen months or less ago there was no problem of defence works. The matter was not mentioned, and we had to find relief works. The works talked about now were known to the Government. They were discussed day after day at question time in this House. No member of the Government protested. The Premier never wrote to me and said I was not right. Why is it

necessary now for the Treasurer to tell the House the stories he tells of these works?

Mr. MAIR: Because the conditions are entirely different!

Mr. SPOONER: The conditions are entirely different not because of the unemployed or the funds, but because the Budget broke down last year and because the breaking down of the Budget has nothing to do with the funds. I object to the funds that are made available for the relief of unemployment being encroached upon for other purposes. I have said for the last twelve months that it has not been possible to carry out certain works because of the overlapping of departments. I remember that three or four months ago I wished to build a road from Bulli to Mount Keira, a distance of seven miles. A survey was made, but, lo and behold, I received a letter from the Minister for Transport saying, "Do not touch that road; it has been proclaimed a main road." I looked it up and found that it had been, but it is only a bush track. It was declared a main road eleven years ago, and still remains a bridle track to-day. I was prevented from doing that work because it is regarded as a main road.

I remember going to Broken Hill with my friend, the Minister for Education, with whom I have always been on good terms, and I found the school buildings there in a disgraceful condition. I got estimates and found that it would cost about £10,000 to put them in repair. I said, "Will you let me spend £10,000 on the schools of Broken Hill?" It took me a long while to come to an agreement, because the Minister said that if that were done it would establish a precedent for other parts of the State, but because Broken Hill is to a certain extent isolated and the conditions there are different from those in other parts of the State, it was eventually agreed that relief labour should be engaged to carry out this work. In May, 1938, I requested Cabinet to allow me to carry out certain irrigation schemes in different parts of the State. Many were waiting. I was told I must not do that, because it came

within the province of another Minister, so what is the use of talking about the works I had to carry out?

The Treasurer seeks to mislead the House, because he knows that water schemes, schools, and hospitals cannot be constructed with relief labour. The inevitable result would be the transfer of, a large proportion of relief workers to the dole. Works such as water and sewerage services are constructed on the principle that the local authority must pay its share of the cost. The Treasurer is misleading the House in suggesting that, with relief labour in the south, water schemes could be carried out at Tumbarumba and Albury instead of other classes of work.

Mr. MAIR: That would use the money!

Mr. SPOONER: If the money were so used, only a fourth of the men would be employed; the other three-fourths would go on the dole. The State will not stand for such a policy.

Criticism of my grant-loan schemes is quite unfounded. I have given the Treasury the fullest information about them all. Commitments have been made in accordance with legislation passed by this House or Cabinet policy. This is a herring drawn across the trail. I remember that Mr. Wentworth, of the Premier's Department, came to my department and spent days and days there. I gave him access to my department and allowed him to roam all over it and obtain all the information that he could lay his hands on. To come here and say they did not understand the commitments of my department is not correct or just.

Mr. MAIR: It is true, all the same!

Mr. SPOONER: It is not true. The Treasurer has no right to say it is. If he maintains that it is true, it is because he does not know his own department. Even if it were true that the Department of Public Works had for years been spending money and entering into commitments, and the Treasury did not know, that is a reflection on the Treasury, and there could be no greater indictment of it. We are told that Cabinet sub-committees will be set up to control expenditure. There is nothing new in

that. We have had Cabinet sub-committees since 1936. I tried my hardest to get them to meet regularly, but they would not. On three occasions I failed to have them revived. I remember writing to the Premier, but he could not get them to meet. I prepared lengthy statistical documents and reports setting out the position of unemployment and the class of works that could be carried out, but the committee would not function. That is the story of the sub-committees in the Government. A sub-committee is now suggested as if it were a new form of organisation. At this stage let me say a few words as to the degree of importance that was attached during the debate to what is known as "Cabinet confidence." The Premier has been most meticulous in regard to the confidential letters that I sent to him on the 29th May. If he had not been so meticulous and had given them to the House, I think hon. members would have taken a tremendous interest in their contents.

Mr. LANG: Were they marked "confidential"?

Mr. SPOONER: They are not my letters and I will not produce them. If the Premier chooses to produce them he can, but I will not. I am not going to break a confidence whatever happens. Those letters are regarded by the Premier with meticulous confidence, because they are confidential communications between a Minister and his leader. But he was not so meticulous when it came to reading to the House a minute that I wrote to him concerning a conversation I had with the Premier of Victoria, Mr. Dunstan. He lost that high sense of dignity and regard for confidential communications which he had for the letters I wrote to him on the 29th May, and when it came to telling the House that I recommended a postponement of the application of a new policy he did not mind quoting a minute that I wrote to him about three weeks previously. He told the House the contents.

When it comes to confidential communications, let us be perfectly frank and admit that we regard them as such only when it suits us, but when it does

not suit us we break the confidence. If it suits us, we say "this is a very sacred document" and we put it away, but if it does not suit us we issue it to the world at large. I am going to say another word about the minute that I wrote three weeks ago, because the Premier has misrepresented the facts to this House by saying that I recommended the present policy should continue until the 1st October. Let me tell the House that it was not the intention of the Government to bring forward a recommendation dealing with the finances and the policy that would apply to all the departments of the Government, including my own. That was the function of the Premier or the Treasurer, and the Treasurer did bring forward a minute to make a recommendation. I am not going to say what the nature of his recommendation was, but if the public knew they would be shocked.

Mr. MAIR: They already know!

Mr. SPOONER: If the public knew it would shock their sense of fairness. I said I would never agree to that policy, but that if the Premier agreed, I would write him a minute setting out my views on the matter and I would deliver it to him the following week. He did agree and I sent him the minute. I said, "This is the proposal that I make regarding necessary legislation. It will require the State setting up a new organisation, and much preparation, so let the present system continue until the 1st October, and get necessary legislation through in the meantime; then you will be in a position to do things by 1st October." That is quite different from saying that I suggested everything should stand as it was until then. When the Premier quotes confidential communications let him quote them fully, not merely the part that suits him. If I were to follow his example and discuss confidential documents I would tell the story of a suggested policy that was morally unjust and would have had serious social reactions. Hon. members who vote against my motion to-day will leave the Government free to carry out a policy

that I am sure many of them will regret. The Government has allowed the State to drift financially and it now wants to economise at the expense of a section of the public that has not been responsible for the drift.

Let there be no misunderstanding. I said clearly in the course of my previous remarks that I accepted full responsibility for everything that the Government did concerning the special income and wages tax. I say nothing about the past, but conditions are different to-day. We have not the money that we had previously, and we must now segregate the special income and wages tax in separate trust funds. When this Government came into power and Budgets were off equilibrium, and there were huge numbers of unemployed, it was necessary to stabilise or mobilise our finances, but whatever we did in 1932-1933 is no precedent for what we do now. Perhaps we stand on the eve of another increase in unemployment, and we must organise on the basis of the experience gained in the past few years. We should capitalise that experience and knowledge by segregating those moneys and ensuring that there will be an earmarking of expenditure in the future.

I resent the suggestion that, because the House is asked to carry a motion for a constructive policy, that involves an election. The House would normally carry it by a large majority. A feeling has been created by the Premier that will cause some hon. members to vote against the motion, but in doing so they will also vote against the principles that are embodied in it. Whatever the result of the vote may be, the Stevens Government is morally defeated. I am convinced that this Government is hopelessly defeated by public opinion in the electorates. I consider it to be the duty of all of us to be candid and do the best we can in a constructive way to create a new policy. I do not want an election although it would not worry me personally. I want a Government with a constructive policy.

The hon. member for Gordon has no right to say that I am ambitious. There is nothing I desire more at this moment

than to have a month or two's rest from ministerial office and the hon. member is wrong in saying that. If this Government could formulate a constructive policy I should be the happiest man in this House and would support it from the back benches. One of my regrets in public life—and I have to express my gratitude to the Premier for inviting me to enter the Cabinet immediately I was elected to Parliament—is that I did not sit on the back benches for twelve months after I came here. But it is easy to be wise after the event. I regret that I did not sit on the back benches as a private member, but I have no desire at the present moment to do otherwise than support a proper policy. I am young enough, and my turn will come later. I do not want to hurry things. I am ambitious but I have no immediate ambition, nor am I ambitious to the extent that I want to disturb the good work in the State. I want this or any other Government to carry out a good policy, and I will do everything to help it. I refute the suggestion of the hon. member for Gordon.

Neither the Premier nor the Treasurer has adequately answered the statements I made in my speech. They have introduced a number of new subjects which, like the flowers that bloom in the spring, have nothing to do with the case. I propose to summarise or recapitulate them, so that hon. members may recall what they have heard during the debate and the extent to which they have been answered. I said, first of all, that the deficit of 1938-39 was under-stated by approximately £1,000,000. I said that that sum was obtained by an advance from the Superannuation Board, and used to replace the short payment to the unemployment fund. I said there was a variation of about £4,350,000 between the Estimates of September, 1938, and the results as at June, 1939. I said the estimates of revenue which were made by the Premier in September, 1938, were not realised by a long way. Then I said there were certain amounts exceeding £500,000 which were included as miscellaneous revenue, and which there was no prospect

of ever realising. I said that the deficiencies on revenues and loan accounts were partly financed from cash resources and that this had created difficulties for 1939-40. I then said, most emphatically, that since December last the Premier had failed to take constructive steps to rectify the position for 1938-39 and to protect the revenue position for 1939-40. That is a summary of the things I said, and if hon. members go back over the speeches of the Premier and Treasurer they will not find a refutation of those statements. They remain substantially unanswered, and hon. members will now appreciate the justification there was for the motion I have moved.

This motion is not my fault at all. At the beginning of last week there was a motion before the House in the name of the hon. member for Botany. The leader of the Opposition moved an amendment to it which was a direct censure upon the Premier. It would have been easy for me to stand up and deliver then the speech I have now delivered, excepting that I did not then possess certain information. A great deal of it could have been given, however, but I did not do so. Why? Because I was not prepared to support a censure motion against the Government to which I had belonged for seven years. I was not prepared to give substance to a censure motion against my own parties and my own Government, and so I refused. I was criticised through the press. People said, "What is this man doing? Why does he not speak?" I said, "I will speak at a meeting of the party; in the party room." I said further that if there was anything in the interests of the country that I should bring forward, I would do so. After Parliament rose on the Thursday, I repeated in the press that I wanted a party meeting before the following Tuesday. There was no party meeting. What was I to do? Was I to let the matter rest, and have the public say that I had no complaint to make regarding the 1938-39

accounts, or was I to bring this motion forward? I brought this motion forward in a proper and honorable manner and instead of its being debated and dealt with on the floor of the House the Premier rises and says, "This is a censure motion. If you carry this you censure the Government." It is not a censure motion at all. That was only a way of avoiding the issue, and if hon. members think I shall withdraw from my position on that account, I assure them that I will not. I moved the motion, I believe in it, and I think I have established that it is correct. I have also placed on record my view as to what should be done, commencing from now, with regard to the prospects of special taxation.

Mr. THOMAS: It is not so much what is in the motion as what the hon. member said in moving it!

Mr. SPOONER: Never mind what I said in my opening speech. If hon. members go back a week earlier and recall some of the things the Premier said to me, they will see that I have shown him the utmost courtesy and they will realise what he deserves from me. Does he expect me to come back into the House and treat him as I did before? No; it is my duty to state the facts and state them properly.

The United Australia party to-day, unfortunately, is under a most extraordinary form of dictatorship, and I mean to say that somewhere else shortly, namely, in the party room—in our own domestic circle. What right has anybody to say, "Because I am the elected member for Croydon, I am not going to let you have a party meeting to deal with subjects of vital importance to your electorate?" That would be the end of democratic government, but it is not going to be the end, so far as I am concerned. I will fight this to the bitter end. A Government that has a good policy will have my support, but I will not have anything to do with a dictatorship. From this day onward I am going to fight it to ensure that the members of the party and Parliament get proper treatment and consideration.

Question put. The House divided:

Ayes, 43; noes, 41; majority, 2.

#### AYES.

Arthur, J. G.	Lazzarini, C. C.
Baddeley, J. M.	Lee, J. R.
Bennett, C. E.	Lethbridge, C. B.
Booth, G.	McGirr, James
Burke, Frank	McKell, W. J.
Cahill, J. J.	Matthews, C. H.
Cameron, R.	O'Sullivan, M.
Carlton, W. J.	Quirk, Mrs.
Chaffey, Captain	Robson, E. M.
Clyne, D.	Ross, J. C.
Davidson, M. A.	Sanders, E. L.
Davies, W.	Shand, Major
Dunn, Captain	Shannon, T. J.
Evatt, C. R.	Spooner, E. S.
Gorman, R. D.	Stanley, F.
Hawkins, F. H.	Sweeney, J. T.
Heffron, R. J.	Tonge, A.
Horsington, E. M.	Tully, J. M.
Kelly, C. A.	Walker, R. B.
Knight, H.	<i>Tellers,</i>
Lamb, W. H.	Lloyd, S. A.
Lang, J. T.	Martin, C. E.

#### NOES.

Ardill, G. E.	Mitchell, H. R.
Arkins, J. G. D.	Monro, C. O. J.
Bate, H. J.	Moverly, A. H.
Bate, Jeff	Mutch, T. D.
Bruxner, Lt.-Col.	Primrose, H. L.
Budd, A. E.	Reid, A. E.
Dickson, S. D.	Reid, J. T.
Drummond, D. H.	Reid, Major
Elliott, H. O.	Richardson, A.
Evans, G. P.	Sinclair, C. A.
Frith, W.	Stevens, B. S. B.
Gollan, G. C.	Thomas, N.
Hankinson, R. H.	Tonking, A. U.
Hedges, W. W.	Turner, H. B.
Howarth, W. A. H.	Vincent, R. S.
Jackson, J.	Wade, B. M.
Kilpatrick, M.	Wingfield, C. G.
Lawson, J. A.	Yeo, A. W.
Lloyd, Brig.-Gen.	<i>Tellers,</i>
Mair, A.	Solomon, E. S.
Martin, L. O.	Treath, V. H.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 3.28 p.m. until  
4.25 p.m. on Tuesday next.

## Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 8 August, 1939.

Legislative Council: Election of Member—Dried Fruits Bill—Officers of the House—New Ministry (Ministerial Statement)—Special Adjournment—Adjournment (Petroleum Products).

The PRESIDENT took the chair.

The opening Prayer was read.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL: ELECTION OF MEMBER.

By direction of the President the ballot-box was exhibited by the Clerk and then locked.

The PRESIDENT: I now declare the ballot open.

*Balloting having proceeded between 4.30 and 6.30 p.m.,*

The PRESIDENT: I have to announce that the hour for the termination of the taking of votes at this sitting has arrived, and I direct that the doors be locked. Is there any hon. member present who has not received a ballot paper and who desires to vote? Will any such hon. member rise in his place in order that his name may be recorded?

*No hon. member rising,*

The PRESIDENT: I direct that the doors be unlocked. All hon. members who have received their ballot papers before the hour appointed in the writ for the termination of the taking of the votes having completed before that hour the recording of their votes, I declare the ballot closed.

### DRIED FRUITS BILL.

Royal assent to this bill reported.

### OFFICERS OF THE HOUSE.

The PRESIDENT reported that he had received Commissions in favour of William Kenneth Charlton, Esquire and Andrew Delfosse Badgery, Esquire, who had been appointed by the Governor and Executive Council as Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Council, and Usher of the Black Rod and First Clerk to the Legislative Council respectively.