

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 1938

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TUESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER, 1938.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. G. Pollock, Gregory) took the chair at 10.30 a.m.

DEATH OF HON. WM. LENNON.

REPLY TO MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to inform the House that I have received a letter from Mr. Austin Lennon, conveying thanks for the motion of condolence passed on 10 August.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT.

LOANS SINKING FUNDS.

Mr. SPEAKER announced the receipt from the Auditor-General of his report on the operations of the various Loans Sinking Funds of the State for the financial year 1937-38.

Ordered to be printed.

QUESTIONS.

EXPENDITURE FROM UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF FUND, 1937-38.

Mr. MOORE (Aubigny) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

“What were the amounts of payments from the Unemployment Relief Fund in 1937-38 under the following headings, viz.:—(a) to Brisbane City Council; (b) to other local authorities; (c) to Public Works Department on account of—(i.) State schools, (ii.) other schools and churches; (d) total on account of—(i.) intermittent relief work, (ii.) ration assistance; (e) to Treasury on account of—(i.) interest, (ii.) subsidies to local authorities; and (f) interest payments to the Bureau of Industry?”

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. M. P. Hynes, Townsville) replied—

“The information desired is being prepared, and will be embodied in the departmental annual report.”

BASIC WAGE INCREASE AND SALARY RESTORATIONS TO PUBLIC SERVICE.

Mr. WALKER (Cooroola) asked the Treasurer—

“What is the estimated annual cost to the State of—(a) the basic wage increase granted by the Industrial Court in March; and (b) the salary restorations to State employees in May, 1938?”

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

“This question should have been addressed to the Hon. the Premier, but from inquiries which I have made, I have ascertained that these particulars will be published in the annual report of the Public Service Commissioner, to be tabled in Parliament this session.”

IRRIGATION FROM BARKER'S CREEK.

Mr. EDWARDS (Nanango) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

“Will he have an investigation or further investigation made of the irrigation possibilities of Barker's Creek, Nanango district, in view of the large area of rich alluvial flats adjoining its banks?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, Herbert) replied—

“The Barker Creek proposal, together with other projected schemes, will be considered under the Government's announced water conservation and irrigation policy. Preliminary investigation has already been made in the Barker's Creek scheme.”

OPERATIONS UNDER INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACTS.

Mr. NIMMO (Oxley) asked the Treasurer—

“1. What was the total amount of assistance to industries under The Industries Assistance Acts, 1929 to 1933, during the

year ended 30 June, 1938—(a) by way of Government loans; (b) by guaranteed loans from outside sources?

“2. What were the names of the recipients of assistance and the amounts, respectively?”

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

“1. Nil.”

“2. See answer to No. 1.”

USE OF GOVERNMENT MOTOR CARS.

Mr. YEATES (East Toowoomba) asked the Premier—

“1. Have instructions been issued through his department that special number plates must be used on departmental cars, and that doors must be marked with the name of the department?

“2. If so, has such action been taken to prevent the use of such cars for private purposes?

“3. Is similar action intended to overcome the use of ministerial cars for private purposes?

“4. Does each driver of a ministerial car receive payment of overtime for working on Sundays?

“5. Do any drivers of such cars receive overtime for Sunday work? If so, which ones?”

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay) replied—

“1. Yes.”

“2. No.”

“3. See answer to No. 2.”

“4. Yes.”

“5. Yes.”

RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE, UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF FUND, JULY AND AUGUST, 1938.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) asked the Treasurer—

“What was the amount of—(a) receipts; and (b) expenditure of the Unemployment Relief Fund for July and August, 1938, respectively?”

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

“(a) Receipts—	£	s.	d.
July	188,784	5	5
August	208,671	19	6

£397,456 4 11

(b) Expenditure—	£	s.	d.
July	136,032	0	10
August	199,771	0	8

£335,803 1 6”

PUBLIC DEBT; STATE GUARANTEES OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton) asked the Treasurer—

“1. What was the amount of the public debt at 30 June last—(a) gross; (b) net?”

“2. At the same date, what was the total amount of the contingent liability on account of loans and overdrafts of local authorities and other bodies guaranteed by the Treasurer?”

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

“1. (a) £125,781,554;
(b) £125,061,280.”

“2. Final figures are not yet available. The approximate amount of contingent liability is £22,000,000.”

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

Mr. NIMMO (Oxley), without notice, asked Mr. Speaker—

“Can he inform the House when the report of the Auditor-General on the Public Accounts is likely to be tabled?”

Mr. SPEAKER: I asked the Auditor-General last week when he expected his report would be available and he told me that it would be ready about the same time as last year, that is, about 26 October.

PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Fifty-third report on the Creation, Inscription, and Issue of Stock.

Seventeenth report on the Creation, Inscription, and Issue of Government Inscribed Stock.

ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

The **PREMIER** (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay): I move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend The Electric Light and Power Acts, 1896 to 1937, in certain particulars, and for other purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT TRANSFER AND CO-ORDINATION OF POWERS BILL.

THIRD READING.

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

WAREHOUSEMEN'S LIENS BILL.

THIRD READING.

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

QUEENSLAND LAW SOCIETY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

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

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—THIRD ALLOTTED DAY.

Debate resumed from 31 August (see page 227) on Mr. Farrell's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. EDWARDS (Nanango) (10.44 a.m.): It is somewhat unusual for this House to debate the Address in Reply after the principal items contained in it have been the subject of debate on Bills that have been passed through all stages. The Premier has been in a tremendous hurry to introduce legislation respecting matters forecast in the Governor's Speech. That, in my opinion, was due to his desire to forestall certain happenings, particularly a discussion on a motion for Private Members' Day, of which notice has been given by the Leader of the Opposition.

In common with other hon. members I wish to extend my congratulations to you, Mr. Speaker, on your re-election as Speaker, and to Mr. Hanson on his reappointment as Chairman of Committees. I am very pleased to see the Chairman of Committees in the House again after his illness.

His Excellency the Governor is to be highly commended for the great interest he has taken in this State, particularly in the out-back country, where he has travelled extensively. His Excellency was also a great publicity agent for Queensland during his recent trip to the Old Country; and it is very pleasing to learn from him that our trade relations with Great Britain are on a better basis than they have ever been.

I listened with interest to the speeches of the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply and also to the remarks of other members, including the Premier and the Treasurer in his capacity as Acting Secretary for Agriculture and Stock, in the debates in which they have taken part. I have been forced to the conclusion that Queensland is in a dangerous position, not because it is not a good State—it is a wonderful State—but because the Premier appears to be satisfied that everything will be all right as long as a Labour Government are in power. Hon. members opposite claim credit for everything that has happened since the Labour Government took office. They claim credit, for instance, for the increase in dairy and agricultural production. The Treasurer indeed went so far as to say that the Labour Government were responsible for the increased production of every product that was grown in the State.

Mr. Collins: Quite right, too.

Mr. EDWARDS: I suppose the hon. member also accepts responsibility for the increase in the public debt? During the period the Labour Government have been in power, they have had an average of over £3,500,000 of loan money to spend each year, in addition to the enormous amount that they have taken from the people in extra taxation.

Mr. Jesson: Where was the taxation increased?

Mr. EDWARDS: The hon. member would not understand if I tried to explain to him.

The public debt is now over £123,000,000 and when the Labour Government took office it was approximately £54,000,000. During that period it cannot be denied that every avenue of taxation has been explored and a heavy burden has been placed on the taxpayers of this State. If the Government had spent wisely the large amount of loan money they have had this State would now be carrying one of the biggest populations of any State in Australia. It has not been spent on reproductive works with the result that on the completion of the works on which it has been spent workmen are thrown on the unemployment market again. That is not in the best interests of the State.

The great wealth of Queensland lies in the country, and great progress in its development was made during the term of the Moore Government. The impetus they gave to it was the genesis of the existing progress. Persons competent to know the facts tell us that owing to ringbarking, clearing, grubbing, and the placing of land under cultivation the productive capacity of the State has been increased enormously. This good work was all begun during the administration of the Moore Government, notwithstanding that that was one of the worst periods, economically, in the history of the State. It was the change from a Labour Government to the Moore Government that put the State on the right track of increased production, and thus provided constant work for its citizens.

As an illustration of what would have been the position had the Labour Government carefully watched over primary and secondary production, let me take the peanut industry. I include secondary industries because, of course, they must receive their share of attention in order that the raw material of Queensland shall not be sent to the South for manufacture there into goods to be returned to Queensland for sale. In a very few years this industry has risen to the position of employing a great number of men. The same remark may be made of the cotton industry, with even greater force, because that industry is distributed over a greater area of the State.

Mr. Collins: Your Government took assistance away from the cotton industry.

Mr. EDWARDS: The hon. member is the biggest diehard in the House. He would back the Government no matter what happened, and as he is a man from the land he talks mostly with his tongue in his cheek.

The peanut industry was established in 1925, when 815 acres were under cultivation. The acreage had increased to 5,693 in 1927 and 17,311 in 1936, when the estimated yield amounted to 17,230,000 lb., the number of farmers being 800. Approximately 240 men and women are employed almost all the year round in the silos and in the cleaning process at wages estimated at a total of £25,000. Hon. members will understand that gives a great amount of work to the workers of Queensland and brings into cultivation land that was previously unproductive; but that is

not all. At least an additional 3,000 men are employed by the farmers yearly in peanut production.

Mr. Collins: Why did your Government tell them they could sell their peanuts outside the State?

Mr. EDWARDS: Why did not the hon. member and his Government give them the help that was necessary to have the referendum carried and thereby make the position a great deal better than it is at the present time?

Mr. Collins: The Commonwealth Government were on the platform during the whole period.

Mr. EDWARDS: I realise what they did during that period, but it is essential that there should be a united front in these matters if we are to do what is best for the State.

The hon. member never hesitates to argue that the Commonwealth Government have ruined such industries as peanut and cotton growing. Yet when we refer to the real position of the State, its financial drift, together with the difficulties in which the unemployed men of the State find themselves to-day, we are told that we are decrying the State. When hon. members of the Government get up and do their best to ruin such industries as peanut and cotton-growing, however, it does not seem to matter.

I maintain that encouragement of such industries is the only method by which we can ever hope to provide continuous employment for Queenslanders. I am prepared to give credit to this Government for at least making an effort to do something, but I cannot say that I agree with the Premier's policy of throwing responsibility on to the shoulders of local authorities. After all, it must be remembered that the work carried out by the local authorities of the State plays only a minor part in the development of our primary industries. In fact, the greater the responsibility that is thrown upon them the greater becomes the taxation on the land, and the greater the taxation the more the producers are hampered in doing desirable work that is in the interests of the people as a whole.

Mr. Jesson: Do they not want good roads now?

Mr. EDWARDS: Good roads are essential, but good roads alone do not enable the people on the land to produce crops. They must have also freedom to put forth their best efforts, and that includes freedom from heavy taxation. As a matter of fact, crops were produced before there were any roads. It is true that good roads make their burden lighter in that produce is got to market more easily, but we must do a great deal more than that.

It is admitted by everyone that in Queensland less encouragement is given to the investment of capital than in any other State in Australia. We have only to look at statistics of the secondary industries in the Southern States to find proof of this.

Mr. Jesson: There is no comparison.

Mr. EDWARDS: Of course the hon. member would not understand. As a matter of fact, he is one hon. member who has never improved since he came to this House.

The position is indeed serious—so serious that, in considering it, party politics becomes of secondary importance to me. We have to put the State on a better footing than it has been on for some time, and the only way that I can see of doing this is to watch carefully the sources of our wealth production.

By careful attention, also, to the secondary industries, which give employment in the towns and cities, it will be possible to enable them to develop as in other parts of Australia and improve the home market, which is always the best market. That is the only way out of our present difficulties.

Thousands of men are about to go on rations. This is deplorable. For the last six years the Premier has said everywhere—over and over again—that Queensland is in a solid financial position, and conditions are much better than they were in the past. It must, however, be admitted that we are little better off than we were six years ago, in spite of the enormous amount of loan money that has been expended—with its correspondingly great increase in the public debt—and in spite, also, of the enormous amount of revenue that has been taken from the people by taxation.

It is unfortunate for the Government that these 20,000 men employed on relief work are being put on rations just at this time, because nearly all the seasonal industries are at a standstill and the sugar crushing is coming to an end after this or next month. The Government have undoubtedly chosen a very bad time to do this, and I am afraid that the cost of rations will rise 400 per cent.

A very lamentable aspect of the position is that the morale of the workers continually decreases if they have no work to do. The Government have a tremendous job in front of them, and will not be successful if they attempt to improve matters by carrying out huge public works or by forcing the local authorities to carry out certain undertakings that may not be necessary and thus increase the burden of taxation and rates on the people. If a farmer who may now be able to employ one or two extra hands is burdened with additional taxation, he will simply let that work go undone. In the grazing and farming areas, although with the coming of tractors and other machinery methods have improved out of recognition, no other improvements worth mentioning are being carried out. That suggests that there is something radically wrong. It means that there is a continual hurry-scurry to do all that it is possible to do to meet commitments year by year. We do not want that. Rather do we want the producers to be in a position to employ labour in carrying out improvements such as fencing, ringbarking, clearing, building, and general improvements. If that was done I believe that we should be in a much better position than we are to-day.

We are told from time to time that the people in the country are considered equally

with the people in the cities, but I should like to read a letter from the Department of Public Instruction, dated 3 September, to show that such a claim is not justified. Of course, I realise that the officers of the department are not responsible, because they must give effect to Government policy. It has been followed for some time, but it is not in the best interests of the State. The letter says—

“With further reference to your representations, I have to inform you that the Minister, having had under consideration the District Inspector’s report on the matter, approves of the establishment of a provisional school at Boondooma, provided that the proposed school site is cleared locally, that a school building (20 feet by 14 feet) together with separate closet accommodation for each sex is provided without cost to the department, and that suitable accommodation is available for an unmarried male teacher.”

The people in the cities and towns would not be asked to do these things, but the people who are pioneering the country, carrying heavy burdens, and, at the same time, endeavouring to have their children educated even though they may have to travel long distances to school, are asked to provide their own school—to give the land and clear it, build the school, in short, to do everything connected with it. That policy is wrong. Even if a certain amount was spent in the building of a school and later on its continuance was not justified, it is not a costly matter to remove the building to another site where a school is required.

This is the treatment that is meted out to people who are endeavouring to build up the wealth of the State. Naturally, when they are treated in this way they become discouraged and being ever anxious to give their children the best education within their powers they take the first opportunity of getting away from the land so as to live nearer the larger centres of population where educational facilities are available.

Mr. Collins: You cannot build a school for every child in the bush. Some reason must enter into these things.

Mr. EDWARDS: It is estimated that the number of children at this centre will be 20, but the hon. member is the biggest enemy of the country people because he has something to say against every suggestion that is made in the interests of country people.

Before I conclude my speech I should like to refer to the very serious coal strike that threatens the country. I do not propose to discuss the matter at any length, but I should like to point out that the newspapers mentioned yesterday and to-day that permission had been sought by the manager of the Mount Isa mines to have 3,000 tons of coal at The Bluff taken to Mount Isa with the object of keeping the works going during the strike and thus continuing to give 1,400 men employment. Now, this is entirely a matter for the consideration of the Government.

The Government should see that nothing stands in the way of the Mount Isa Company's being allowed to transport that coal to its mine. If the Mount Isa mine closes through lack of coal supplies 1,400 men will be thrown onto the labour market. That will further aggravate the unemployment position, not only for the State but also for the people who are at present unfortunately out of work. The Government should take steps to prevent such a disaster. The proposal of the Mount Isa Mines Limited is in the interests of this State, because it conserves wealth production and maintains a large number of men in employment, and it is also in the interests of the workers.

As I said previously, I hope that in spending loan money the Government will take into consideration the desirability of assisting the country as much as possible for the purpose of further developing the primary wealth of this State. Additional encouragement should be given to the cultivation of new crops. We have seen in recent years what a wonderful advantage that is to the State, but it is not only a question of adding to our production: it is also one of giving employment to the people.

Every endeavour should be made by the Government to lighten the load of taxation on the shoulders of those people who are trying to promote wealth production. It is absolutely necessary that the position of our secondary industries should be improved, and steps taken to encourage the establishment of new industries to convert many further primary products into the finished article. The Government should undertake a campaign, not only to attract capital to Queensland, but also—once that capital is invested—to help the industries it establishes to develop and expand. In this way and in no other shall we be able to overcome the difficulties confronting the State. We must all admit that we cannot continue to borrow money year after year, unless that money is spent on reproductive works that will at least return interest. We are on the eve of increasing taxation to pay interest on loans that have been raised in past years. No business could possibly carry on under those conditions.

The Government are constantly taking credit to themselves for the increase in production, but they never mention, nor will they admit responsibility for, the enormous increase in the public debt.

Mr. Gair: How can you build those schools you require unless you borrow money?

Mr. EDWARDS: Those schools could be built if the Government adopted my suggestions. Unfortunately, the policy of the Government keeps many people on the land in a semi-pioneering condition all their lives, mainly owing to the heavy taxation they impose. That is not the way to develop this State. There are wonderful opportunities before us, for instance in the fat-lamb trade. At present supplies appear to fluctuate in much the same way as the total sheep population of this State. That could be overcome by irrigation, even by sprinkling, along the banks of our watercourses. You, Mr.

Speaker, represent a sheep area, and you are aware that sheep will do well during a dry period as long as they can get a green "pick." Many pastoralists who grow 10, 15, or 20 acres of lucerne with the aid of sprinkling, raise fat lambs successfully.

Many other products, such as flax, could be grown in this State besides those already grown here, and it is the duty of the Government to stimulate the growth of these new products by helping the primary producers. I do not mean assistance by way of handing out money to the farmers, but by way of reducing transport costs and lightening taxation.

Owing to the neglect of secondary industries in the past the costs of farming implements in this State are almost prohibitive. It is only by availing themselves of the long terms sellers offer that the farmers are able to buy up-to-date machinery and compete with farmers in the other States. Railway freights are so high that it is almost impossible for the farmers to use the railways. It costs from 8d. to 9d. a bushel to send maize from any place between Nanango and Kingaroy to Brisbane. Almost the whole amount of the farmer's profit received for the crop goes in freight and other costs. The other day I had occasion to truck a draught horse from Kingaroy to Cooroy and I found it cost £2 16s. That is an illustration of the difficulties that people in the country districts are labouring under.

It is very necessary that the railways should be placed on an efficient business basis. Charges should be reduced and faster trains should be provided in order to induce the people to use that form of transport. It takes the Nanango people about eighteen hours to reach Brisbane by rail and they can travel the same distance in five hours by service car. The train that leaves for Kingaroy at 5.30 p.m. does not reach there till about 8 a.m. next day and the service car does the same trip in five and a-half hours. People naturally avail themselves of the speedier form of transport and the railways charge heavy freights to make up for the loss. The connection of Nanango with Yarraman would reduce the distance these people now have to travel by 65 to 70 miles.

Mr. T. L. Williams: The district is entitled to it.

Mr. EDWARDS: I have said that for years, and I am pleased to know the hon. member supports it.

The construction of that link is very important, not only as a great help to the settlers but as a method of relieving congestion on the North Coast railway line. The heavy trainloads hauled from that district have much to do with the congestion between Theebine and Brisbane. The Government should investigate matters such as I have mentioned with a view to relieving the settlers of some of the disabilities under which they have been labouring for a great number of years.

In conclusion, I hope that the Government are sincere in their avowed intention to develop the State by helping the primary

producers who are doing the real work of this country; and that they will do everything possible to encourage the establishment of secondary industries. It is a well-known axiom that capital is attracted by good conditions. This should be the objective of the Government, and as success begets success, its attainment would be an advertisement to the people in the other States and the rest of the world and lead to a further flow of capital into Queensland. Thus there would be no need to induce migrants to come here by offering them special assistance. The country should be administered on sound business principles acceptable to its citizens, encouragement should be given wherever it was necessary, and the result would be continuous employment for the workers.

Mr. BROWN (Logan) (11.22 a.m.): I congratulate the hon. members who moved and seconded this motion upon their able speeches.

I also extend my felicitations to you, Mr. Speaker, on your re-election to your high office. I am quite sure you have given every satisfaction to every hon. member in this House during the time you have occupied the chair, and I believe that were the Opposition on the Treasury benches to-day and required a Speaker they would elect you. During the three years I have been in Parliament you have acted very impartially towards every hon. member.

I must not overlook the Chairman of Committees. I am not one to throw bouquets to men who do not deserve them, but Mr. Hanson deserves the congratulations of all hon. members for the able manner in which he has carried out his duties.

I desire, also, to offer my congratulations to the Leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for West Moreton. As a Government member I should select the weakest man for the position of Leader of the Opposition, and hon. members opposite have done so.

My congratulations are also tendered to the hon. member for Hamilton on being elected Leader of the United Australia Party. He leads a party of three, but the hon. member for Toowong is an independent member of the same party, and is in attendance in the event of the absence of one of the three during a division.

To the sectarian hon. member for Kelvin Grove I offer my congratulations, too. He holds the record of any party leader in this House, as he combines the positions of leader, whip, and secretary.

I also wish to offer my congratulations to the Premier, who has held that office longer than any other man in Queensland. I congratulate him upon going before the people with 46 sitting members at the last election and returning with 44. He lost in all three seats, but gained one from the Tories, and it is gratifying to know that the other three were lost only on the contingent vote. Had there been no contingent vote at the last State election every one of those 46 sitting members would have

returned, and we should have had one addition, in that the ex-hon. member for Dalby was defeated by a Labour candidate. Everyone must admit that that is a wonderful performance and one upon which the Premier deserves the heartiest congratulations.

I have been interested in municipal, State, and Federal elections for the last 47 years. Since I was 10 years old I have been interested in the Labour movement—even at that early age I had to do certain things on behalf of my father for the Labour cause—and of all the elections of which I have had experience, the last State election was the dirtiest and filthiest. It was nothing but filth and dirt from start to finish.

I should like to take this opportunity of thanking the people of the Logan electorate for expressing their confidence in me, despite the dirt that was thrown about the electorate on behalf of the various candidates who were opposing me. My opponents had canvassers circulating the story that I was a Roman Catholic.

Mr. O'Keefe: You would make a good one, too.

Mr. BROWN: Perhaps so. If I made as good a Roman Catholic as I do a Protestant, I should be a good one. Those canvassers went to the Roman Catholic people in my electorate and said, "John Brown is a Mason."

Mr. Nimmo: You would make a good Mason.

Mr. BROWN: And perhaps I should. Those canvassers then went to people who they thought were Protestants and said "John Brown is a Roman Catholic." It happened in one case that they made a mistake. People they thought were Protestants were in fact Roman Catholics. These canvassers said to the lady of the house, "John Brown is a Roman Catholic." She said, "I have known John Brown for many years and I have never seen him inside of our church, and I am a good Roman Catholic." (Laughter.) It was said, too, that I go to mass every third Sunday in the month, and that I give a donation of £25 to the Catholic Church, whereas I give only half a guinea to the Methodist Church! (Laughter.)

Then they said that I have a daughter being educated at a convent, whereas, Mr. Speaker, I have neither chick nor child. Moreover, they circulated the story—I live not far from the convent—that I take the nuns out for a joy-ride in my motor car! (Laughter.) Of course, people told these various canvassers that they knew that John Brown was no Roman Catholic, but they were told, "Well, his wife is." My wife is a member of the Presbyterian Church.

Then they said they had a photographer there who would take a photograph of me going into the Catholic Church on a Sunday morning. I knew the photographer was going to do so and I went out the back door so that he could not catch me. (Laughter.)

I was never so much disgusted in my life as during the last election campaign. I have not got over it yet, and I shall have something more to say later on.

A Government Member: Did they say you were a drunkard, John?

Mr. BROWN: They could not very well say I was a drunkard because I have never tasted a drop of strong drink in my life. I do not say that that is anything to my credit, but that could not be said about me.

In the Logan there were four candidates. Mr. John Bececonsall was supposed to be the Protestant Labour man. As I told the electors from the platform, he could not be that because there was only one Protestant Labour man and he was John Brown, 100 per cent. Protestant and 100 per cent. Labour. Mr. Bececonsall may have been 100 per cent. Protestant—I do not know anything about that and I do not care—but he is not 1 per cent. Labour, because if he was a true Protestant Labour man he would not be running against John Brown.

To show that the Tories were connected with this dirty campaign, I want to give the House the names of a few of the electors who signed the nomination papers of Mr. John Bececonsall. One was John Henry Morgan, of Cavendish road, Coorparoo, store-keeper, who is a well-known Tory in the district. Mr. Joshua Howlett, 37 Mansfield street, Coorparoo, milk-vendor, is another Tory. James Bradley, who signed the nomination paper, is not even on the roll.

Mr. Massey: Then he must be a Tory! (Laughter.)

Mr. BROWN: Edwin Thomas Holdaway, of Mansfield street, and Old Cleveland road, draftsman, is another Tory. John Carbine, of Wellington street, Coorparoo, off Old Cleveland road, builder, signed Bececonsall's nomination paper and worked on Trotter's committee. (Laughter.)

Several other persons connected with the Tory organisation in that district signed this man's nomination paper, and then worked on the committee of Mr. Trotter, the Tory candidate! Those tactics were designed to split the vote against me, and it was successful to a certain extent because my majority was a little over 1,100, whereas in a straight-out fight with the ex-Deputy Leader of the Moore Government, Mr. King, it was 2,039.

On the last occasion there were 1,500 more names on the roll, and I told Mr. Trotter that it was a straight-out fight between him and me, and that if I could not beat him by 3,000 votes he could have the seat. Then, Bececonsall, the Protestant Labour candidate, came into the fight, and he got 1,800 votes. That means that he "pinched" my votes, and to prove it to the House I need only mention that he asked his supporters to give their contingent vote to Mr. Trotter, the Tory candidate. If Bececonsall had been a true Protestant Labour man he would have said, "John Brown is a Protestant Labour man—give him your contingent vote"; but his

"How to Vote" card said, "1. Bececonsall, 2. Trotter."

There were 11,596 names on the Logan roll, and the total number of votes polled, including contingent votes, was 12,102, of whom 1,394 persons had two votes; that is to say, they exercised the contingent vote. Mr. Speaker, you know that the Labour Party has always supported the principle of one adult one vote, and one vote only, yet we have on the other side of the House three hon. members who have been elected on the strength of the contingent vote. They are not entitled to be here at all, because they were defeated on the primary votes.

The Leader of the Opposition has said that Labour was returned on a minority of the votes of the electors, but I should like to remind him that the Labour Party got an aggregate of 265,950 primary votes, and that alone is proof that the people of Queensland desired the return of the Labour Party. The primary votes of the Labour Party represent a quarter of the population of Queensland, including men, women, and children. The Country Party got 127,170 votes, and the United Australia Party 69,178 votes, or a total of 196,348—they are both the same parties; everybody knows that; they have never voted against each other in this Chamber.

The votes cast for the Protestant Labour vote come next. You may call that vote what you like, but I call it the sectarian vote, notwithstanding that those candidates nominated under the banner of Protestant Labour. The total number of votes cast for those candidates was 46,608. The total number of votes cast for the other candidates were—

Social Credit	26,034
Independent	2,857
Communist	8,510
Independent Labour	3,321
Independent Social Credit	2,524
Independent United Australia Party	5,123

Those are the votes cast for all parties. The total number of primary votes, not including contingent votes, cast for all the anti-Labour parties combined—"The liquorice all sorts"—was 291,348. The total number of votes cast for the official Labour candidates was 265,950. Therefore, the combined anti-Labour vote was 25,388 more than the official Labour vote. Yet they say that we have been returned to the Government benches on a minority vote!

Mr. Nimmo: You have proved that by your own figures.

Mr. BROWN: The total number of contingent votes received by anti-Labour candidates was 19,155 as against 4,450 secured by official Labour candidates. That is proof, Mr. Speaker, so far as the last election is concerned, that the people of this State desired the return of the Labour Party.

I repeat that the late election in the Logan electorate was the dirtiest and filthiest that I have ever had anything to do with. I have

never seen men resorting to such low actions to defeat Labour as were adopted this year in the Logan. Everything that could possibly be done was done to defeat John Brown, but notwithstanding that I was returned again with a majority of 1,177 votes over all the other candidates.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. BROWN: Over 1,000 electors who voted for the Protestant Labour candidate gave their No. 2 votes to the Tory candidate.

Take the Protestant Labour Party. If it was sincere in entering the elections, why did it not run a candidate against the Leader of the Opposition, who, I believe—I cannot say personally, I am only told—is a Roman Catholic? Why did it not run a candidate against the hon. member for Albert, who I believe is also a Roman Catholic? I say, therefore, Mr. Speaker, that the Protestant Labour Party were with the Tories from the start to the finish of the elections.

If they had been sincere they would have said, "Give your contingent vote to the Labour man who happens to be a Protestant." But they did not do that, they gave the contingent vote to the Tory candidate. The Tories of the Logan district signed the nomination paper of the Protestant Labour candidate. Their actions during the election were low and contemptible.

The following report of a statement made by the Leader of the Opposition appeared in the "Courier-Mail" of 29 April, 1938:—

"Sectarianism at Elections.

"Obscured Issues," says Mr. Maher.

"Laidley, Thursday.—It was regrettable that in the recent State elections sectarian influences had played a big part, and, in his opinion, had detrimentally affected the interests of the Country Party, said the leader of the Opposition and of the Country Party (Mr. E. B. Maher), at the declaration of the poll for Rosewood to-day.

"Two political parties, he said, had indulged in sectarian propaganda—the Labour Party and the Protestant Labour Party. Between the two, political issues had become obscured. Thus the voting at the elections did not truly represent the political beliefs of the electors.

"Largely because of those influences the Labour Party had 44 members out of 62, although it had received a minority of the formal votes polled. Certain sections of the community might think they would benefit by the return of a Labour Government, but the prospects of a much-needed reduction in taxation had been lessened, development had been retarded, and the position of industry, both primary and secondary, would become worse."

The Labour Party did not indulge in sectarianism in any shape or form, yet Mr. Maher accuses the party of doing so. He does not say anything about his own party or the United Australia Party.

I quite agree with the part of the statement that says that the voting at the elections did not fairly represent the political beliefs of the electors. I venture to say if the Protestant Labour Party had not been in the field the Labour Party would have polled another 30,000 or 40,000 votes. Evidence that the electors of Queensland endorsed the policy put forward by the Labour Party is to be found in the fact that they returned us to power with 44 members, and the number of votes cast for the party was only a few short of an absolute majority over the votes cast for all the other parties.

Unemployment is the main problem confronting the world to-day. As I have said before, my belief is that nothing will eliminate unemployment but a reduction in working hours. Other schemes may improve the situation for the time being, but unemployment will not be eliminated until there is a reduction of the working hours.

Every country in the world is spending millions on research work with the object of producing machinery that will manufacture products quicker than the machinery already in operation. The people have not been educated to combat machinery by reduced working hours, and that is what is wrong with the world to-day. It must be borne in mind Queensland has to compete with the other States, but it must not be forgotten that this is the only State in the Commonwealth that has a statutory 44-hour week. Some industries in the other States may be working 45, 46, 47, or 48 hours a week.

Here is a significant fact: at the time a Labour Government introduced the 44-hour week in Queensland, I was a member of the Brisbane Tramway Trust, and owing to the reduction of the weekly working hours by four, that authority had to employ 83 additional men. A reduction of four hours in the working week means a 10 per cent. increase in employment, and that is the one and only solution of the unemployment problem—a shorter working week. The world has failed to reduce working hours to meet the increased production of machinery, and I venture to say that if we put aside all machines invented in the past 30 years there would not be an idle man in the Commonwealth.

An Opposition Member: You would not drive a motor car then?

Mr. BROWN: In those days we got along just as well without them. The solution of the unemployment problem is the shorter working week and, irrespective of all the schemes that may be propounded to solve it otherwise, this has got to come about.

In every country the use of borrowed money is increasing by leaps and bounds, and the interest has to be met. Eventually the revenues of every country will be needed to meet its interest bill. The Government have put forward a scheme for the relief of unemployment, and I look forward to its being a success, inasmuch as I am quite sure that it would not have been introduced

if the Premier could not foresee success. It should be given a trial, and I stand behind the Government, inasmuch as something had to be done to put an end to intermittent relief work, which was increasing by leaps and bounds. However, the sooner a Labour Government control the administration of the Commonwealth the sooner will there be a shorter working week in the Commonwealth. This will be better for all, as any other method of relieving unemployment will afford relief for but a short while and then the position will be as bad as ever again.

Hon. members opposite have said that we were just as well off in the old days as we are to-day, but speaking from practical experience I can assure them that is not so. My father was concerned in the maritime strike of 1893, when firemen and trimmers on the coastal boats got £9 and £7 a calendar month. The men struck because wages were reduced from £9 to £7 a calendar month for firemen and from £7 to £5 a calendar month for trimmers. Because they refused to take the ships to Melbourne 161 firemen and sailors were imprisoned in Sydney for 14 days with hard labour, and they did not even have the option of a fine.

Consider the position of a married man who was working on coastal steamers at that time. He had to work for 31 days and received only £5. Take my own family. I was one of a family of seven children. My father, of course, got his food on board the boat, such as it was. There they would go through the potatoes; the bad ones would be for the crew and the good ones for the passengers. Eight of us—my mother and we seven children—had to live on 3s. 3d. a day. When I think of those things I wonder how people have the audacity to ask me so often why I support the Labour Party. I can remember the time in Queensland when those unfortunate shearers were sent to St. Helena for burning down shearing sheds. Later on it was proved that they were innocent, that the owners had burnt down the sheds themselves in order to collect the insurance, and they blamed the men for it. After having served his time in St. Helena, one of those shearers, the late Bill Hamilton, stood for one of the electorates in Queensland and was elected as a member of this Parliament.

I cannot forget those days and those happenings. No matter what comes or goes I give credit where credit is due, but I cannot see one instance in which the party opposite have ever done one thing to uplift humanity, and I say that without fear of contradiction.

The Opposition may say that they introduced the system of workers' dwellings. I admit that a Tory Government did introduce the Workers' Dwellings Act, but the late Dave Bowman and other hon. members of the Labour Party were unsuccessful when they endeavoured on many occasions to have sections of the Act amended in order that the workers would be able to obtain homes more easily. It was not until the Labour Party were returned to office that the con-

ditions were made more favourable for the worker who desired to build a home.

Last year alone over 600 homes were erected in Queensland under the workers' dwellings scheme. No State in the Commonwealth, indeed no country in the world, has the same proportion of workers who own their own homes as Queensland. I throw that statement out as a challenge.

In the early days in Queensland there were men of great honour on the opposite side. I recall of the passing of what was known as the Early Closing Act, which was introduced by a man named Foxton, who said that the credit for the Bill belonged to Frank McDonnell, then member for Fortitude Valley, who had a business in George street. It made no difference to him that he had got on a little in the world; when he had a shop of his own he was as staunch an advocate of early closing as in former years. Those are the men to whom I take off my hat, men whom I cannot forget—Givens, Stewart, Turley, Dawson, Jackson, all those men who laid the foundation of the Labour Party's policy. They are men I shall never forget.

I shall never forget, either, that from 1929 to 1932 that foundation, although it was laid on solid concrete, so to speak, was undermined by the Moore Government, and the legislation built upon it was pulled down. An amendment of the City of Brisbane Act allowed a man to have a vote in every electorate as long as he held there a 16-perch allotment.

Mr. Massey: Did Moore do that?

Mr. BROWN: Moore did do that.

Mr. Massey: He did not.

Mr. BROWN: I challenge the hon. member to deny it. I know it because I stood for election under that bitter franchise and just squeezed through. On my roll there were 25 voters in Singapore who had never seen Brisbane, but had bought 16 perches from T. M. Burke or some other agent. Those 25 voters, if they had come across by flying machine, could have recorded their 25 votes.

(Time expired.)

Mr. NIMMO (Oxley) (12.3 p.m.): I am sure we have had this morning a very fine contribution towards getting Queensland out of her difficulties. As a matter of fact, the hon. member who has just resumed his seat told us in one breath that the Tories had never done anything for the people at all, and in the next that they put through workers' dwellings legislation, with which I will deal a little later when I come to expose the propaganda of the Labour Party in the last election campaign.

The hon. member told us also of what was known as the Early Closing Act put through by the Tories, and made some startling statements with regard to the 40-hour week. His Government are in power; why do they not establish the 40-hour week by statute? They have the power, and a delegate the other

day said that if they agreed to do it the other States would follow their example. (Interruption.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. NIMMO: At any rate, they have the power and could do it if they wished.

The hon. member also referred to his father, who worked many years ago, in the dark ages, on a steamer on the coast for £7 a month, and only paid 3s. 3d. a day to the family to live on. Still the fact remains that that is better treatment even than is meted out by the present Government to our unemployed.

Everyone agrees that relief work should be abolished, but should we deal harshly with the relief worker who does not know just what is going to happen on the morrow? We know that worry kills quicker than anything else, yet the Government sent out this letter dated 9 September to a relief worker who received it on 12 September—

“Dear Sir,—In conformity with the decision of the Government to taper off intermittent relief work with a view to the total abolition of the intermittent relief work scheme at 30 June, 1939—it has been proposed that so far as single men are concerned, intermittent relief work will cease throughout the State during the week ending 17 September, 1938, and as from that date the number of married men at present on intermittent relief work will be reduced by 50 per cent.”

What must be the feelings of a married relief worker with three or four children when he receives five days' notice of the Government's intention to abolish relief work without any intimation that any other work will be given to him? Just imagine his feelings when he takes such a letter home to his family! What is at the back of this proposal by the Government?

Mr. Clark: You did not vote against it.

Mr. NIMMO: We had no opportunity of voting against the regulations providing for the way in which the thing is going to be carried out, but I do very definitely say that if our party had been returned to power we would have kept these men on relief work until we were able to hand them tickets to go to jobs.

Here is the crux of the matter. The letter continues—

“As you are included in the 50 per cent. of married men who will not be entitled to intermittent relief work after 17 September, you are informed that as from that date, you will be eligible for ration relief assistance only.”

The hon. member for Logan spoke about his father's getting £7 a month and keep—including keep, mark you!

Mr. Brown: I said £5 a month.

Mr. NIMMO: In the days when the cost of living was cheap.

Mr. Brown: £5 a month.

Mr. NIMMO: All right, then, £5 a month, but when the cost of living was cheap. In these days the Government propose to put the men on rations. Let us see what the Government are going to save by that.

Mr. Taylor: You are not making a true statement. The Government are not going to put full-time men on rations.

Mr. NIMMO: The Government have sent out these notices informing the relief workers that they will be placed on rations. Let us see what saving will be effected by the Government. The following table sets out the amount received by a relief worker at the present time, the amount that he will receive by way of rations under the Government's new scheme, and the saving to the Government—

	Intermittent Relief work per week.			Rations per week.			Saving per week.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Married man and wife	1	6	11	0	17	0	0	9	11
Married man, wife, and 1 child ..	1	12	0	1	0	9	0	11	3
Married man, wife, and 2 children	1	17	2	1	4	6	0	12	8
Married man, wife, and 3 children	2	1	8	1	8	3	0	13	5
Married man, wife, and 4 children	2	6	9	1	12	0	0	14	9

Of the amount to be paid for rations only half will be in cash.

Mr. McLean: You know that under the Moore regime those amounts for rations represented the pay of the men for local authority work.

Mr. NIMMO: I very definitely say—

Mr. McLean and Mr. Edwards interjecting—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I hope that hon. members will cease cross-firing.

Mr. NIMMO: I very definitely say that the action of the Government does not amount to fair treatment. They are banking on the hope that 80 per cent. of the men will not accept the work that is offered in the country. Unfortunately, these men have been trained to say “We will refuse” and so they will refuse the work that is offered. Then the Government will be enabled to carry on and pay the wages of the men who accept offers of work in the country, but if the entire 32,000 unemployed take the work in the country that will be offered to them, the Government will not be able to carry out their scheme of giving them full-time employment at a wage of £4 1s. a week.

The fact remains that this is one of those schemes that the Labour Government are continually putting over the people. It is another form of their bluff. I advise every relief worker who is offered a job to accept

it, no matter whether it is in the far-northern districts of Queensland, or what his family conditions are, because if he does the Government will not be able to give full-time work to all the unemployed.

There is nothing wrong with relief work provided we get value for the money. The State would have received value for its unemployment relief expenditure if the work had been properly supervised. The Government have been lax in carrying it out. They have simply ladled out the money to local authorities and said, "Give these men something to do" without seeing that the work was properly supervised.

I desire to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on again being re-elected Speaker. I know that other hon. members have done so, but I can conscientiously add my congratulations to theirs because you have effected many improvements in this Chamber since you were first elected to your high office. Your latest improvements have been in "Hansard." The printing and get-up of "Hansard" has been greatly improved. I do not know that very many people read it. The paper is a little heavier now, which might cause it to be used less, but the fact remains that its make-up is brighter and for this you deserve our thanks.

It was very pleasing to see the Governor present in this Chamber again to deliver his usual speech. We all recognise that he has done great work for Queensland as representative of the King.

It was my pleasure to attend the dinner given by the Government in Parliament House to Mr. Pike, the Agent-General, who is now on a visit to Brisbane. He was promoted to that position by the Moore Government and he has proved that his selection was a wise one, for he has filled the position better than many party hacks who preceded him. He has introduced a vigorous personality into his office. I congratulate him on the way in which he has carried out his multifarious duties.

On the occasion I refer to Mr. Pike dealt with the possibility of artificial fibres becoming a competitor with our merino wools. He gave many of us food for thought. It behoves not only the Commonwealth Government but also every person in all the States to see that steps are taken to prevent this artificial substitute for wool from being used in this country. There is no doubt that wool is the finest fibre that has been produced for the use of mankind, and any substitute must simply delude the people. Although this artificial fibre can be bought at a much reduced price, it is not satisfactory in any way. It is not even warm. It does not hold its shape.

I have in my hands a sample of cloth, landed in Brisbane at 1s. 10d. a yard, made of this staple fibre, as it is called. Thousands of boys' suits are being made of it. Hon. members can imagine the result if only a small quantity of wool is mixed with it. It has no wearing qualities, nor does it give

any warmth. The fact remains that it is now being admitted into the Commonwealth to compete with our woollen goods.

As we are primarily dependent on wool we should do our utmost to protect that industry against an article that although inferior to the woollen product may do great damage to that industry.

The hon. member for Logan gave us a fair example of the type of speech that is put over electors at election time. The gullibility of the public in swallowing that type of speech is remarkable in the extreme. (Government interruption.) Although we lost the election, the fact remains—and the remarks of the hon. member for Logan corroborate me—that the Government received a minority of the votes cast. The hon. member went to much trouble to add up the figures, and they showed that although the Government have a majority of members in the House they received a minority of the votes polled. It is a well-known fact that there were more people on the roll than the census showed there were people in the State. (Government interruption.)

Mr. Gair: That is expected from you.

Mr. NIMMO: There were many factors that helped the Labour party in the election. First and foremost was the electoral boundaries, which had been well set—well fixed up. (Government interruption.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Hon. members on my right must recognise there must not be interruption. There is a difference between an occasional interjection and continuous interruption. I hope the hon. members responsible will desist.

Mr. NIMMO: The hon. member for Wynnum is here despite the jerry-mandering of the electorate of Wynnum. The people living at Tarragindi Hill are put into the electorate of Wynnum. There is no community interest there. What factor operated in deciding the boundaries of that electorate? That is only one of many. That is one of the reasons why we lost the election.

The Premier poses very often as a prophet. Sometimes he is successful. He was a prophet in regard to the increase in the basic wage. That was forecast before the basic wage was arrived at. We know the basic wage was raised a few days before the election and that had a very material effect on the election.

Mr. GAIR: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member for Oxley in order in suggesting the Industrial Court increased the basic wage just to suit the convenience of the Government of the day.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Did the hon. member for Oxley say that or suggest it?

Mr. NIMMO: No, Mr. Speaker. I suggested the Premier forecast the basic wage rise and the amount it was going to be. He also made the prophecy that the hon. member for Oxley was going to get defeated by a big majority, but the hon. member for Oxley is here with an increased majority. That shows

he is a prophet in those things he knows something about, but in those things he knows nothing about, he is not a prophet.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has made a very grave innuendo by saying the Premier prophesied exactly what the Industrial Court was going to do and that he was then talking about something he knew something about. The inference is there that the Industrial Court did listen to something said by the Premier. I hope the hon. member will withdraw.

Mr. NIMMO: That is just the way you have looked at it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. NIMMO: Perish the thought that I should say the Premier went to the Industrial Court. I hope he didn't.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has conveyed to me what is a very grave innuendo; I hope he will withdraw it.

Mr. NIMMO: I withdraw.

Dealing with the motion before the House, after the transfer of trust funds and the adoption of every other available device to make the deficit appear as small as possible, it is extremely disappointing to find the deficit was £228,492, notwithstanding that receipts were £293,196 in excess of the estimate. Notwithstanding this, one hears hon. members opposite, and especially the hon. member for Logan, deploring the fact that nothing can be done to reduce unemployment. They virtually apologise to the people of Queensland for the fact that the result of their six years of office is nil, notwithstanding the promises they made. Everybody must be very disappointed.

Juvenile unemployment in particular is exercising my mind very much. After six years of office the Government have left the young people of the State high and dry. That is one way of putting it. The young people see nothing ahead. They are in despair. Comparatively speaking, very few, if any, apprenticeships are being served in this State. A large number of young people are approaching their majority with neither employment nor skill at any trade. Eventually it will be necessary to import skilled tradesmen from overseas. Certainly, the plywood and fibrous-plaster industries are offering opportunities of employment to a great number, but they are dead-end jobs and stop short of making skilled tradesmen of the boys employed in them.

What are we doing to give the boy a chance to learn a trade? Practically nothing, except that we see a large amount of propaganda emanating from the Labour Party. But it is propaganda and nothing else. The hon. member for Brisbane deplored the fact that there were boys without employment and that others were given employment up to a certain age and then, because they had to be paid a higher wage, were put on the labour market. We know that is true. Is it not a tragedy? The Government were going to do great things for the people and bring

sunshine and happiness into their lives, but after six years of office, the hon. member for Brisbane, sitting behind the Government, has had to make the statement that I have referred to.

The Brisbane "Telegraph" of 30 August states—

"Since the beginning of 1938 to 31 July, 2,474 applicants have obtained positions as a result of the activities of the Board of Juvenile Employment."

This paragraph is headed, "Over 12,000 jobs by Juvenile Employment Board." That is propaganda, and it is untrue propaganda.

A Government Member: It is true.

Mr. NIMMO: It is untrue propaganda. The facts are that a boy wanting employment, even if he desires to learn a trade, has to be registered at the Juvenile Employment Bureau, but has to find the employer himself.

Mr. Power: That is not true either.

Mr. NIMMO: It is true. He is told to go out and find an employer. He notifies the board when he does so, and it then takes the credit of finding that lad a job. Is that honest? I say without hesitation that it is claiming credit for the employment of every boy even though a boy may have found the job himself. Even in those places where it has found dead-end jobs for boys through political influence, it has by butting in prevented a decent boy from going in and picking up the job off his own bat. I say emphatically that nothing is being done to improve the conditions for juveniles in the State.

As I have pointed out already, the Government have been guilty of neglect of the interests of our young people, whereas their policy should be to explore every avenue for their employment. So concerned am I about the question that I went to New South Wales to see what the United Australia Party Government are doing in that State. There they have a system of trainee apprentices. Boys can be employed by the employer and taught a trade without signing any papers at all, but the employer must be registered with the board as a trainee employer. Boys are employed by the employer only for the period for which that employer has work.

There the position was once as bad as it is here now. Carpenters, joiners, bricklayers, and other tradesmen were afraid to take on an apprentice because they could see only six to eight months' work ahead of them. The New South Wales Government introduced a system of training the boys for the period for which the employers had work. The employer must be registered with the board and must have the board's permission before he can employ a boy. Boys have to be of good behaviour and they must be diligent. They have to fill in an application form and answer all the searching questions asked on it. The employer, too, must fill in a form. Immediately those forms are handed in to the board, the history of the employer is examined. He must be a man of good moral character, he must be a good tradesman.

When the employer's work cuts out the boy produces the card that is handed to him by the board and he is given another employer. He may serve six employers during his period of apprenticeship.

Mr. Hislop: What a way of learning a trade!

Mr. NIMMO: Is not that better than nothing. There is something wrong when we consider that most of the Russians and Germans who come to this country are tradesmen.

Mr. Hislop: Neither you nor anybody else could teach a boy a trade under the system you are advocating.

Mr. NIMMO: The hon. member who interjected is one of those reactionaries who are quite satisfied to sit down and watch. I am bringing this forward in an endeavour to have something done for our boys. We must all help if we want to do anything for our juveniles, and I am offering this suggestion.

Under the system in New South Wales, if the employer does not do the right thing by the boy his registration is cancelled and he can never get a trainee apprentice again. Under this system great opportunity is afforded the boys to learn trades. In that State there are thousands of youths learning brick-laying, carpentry, joinery, painting, plastering, plumbing, and gas-fitting. Even when they have served their apprenticeship, if there is no employment for them other than labouring, they are much better for having been taught the trade. It is only by teaching boys trades that we find that some of them may have inventive powers that may bring much good to the State.

It may be said that that is only a system in which the Government trust to luck that the boy will find work with another employer, but it is working very satisfactorily because the Government are sympathetic. That is the great thing. They are unlike the Government here in Queensland.

When the Government here got a sum of money from the Commonwealth to teach boys trades, what did they do? They went along to the unions, who said, "Oh no, there is too much competition in our trade. You are not going to teach them boiler-making or brick-laying or carpentry or any of those things because we cannot get enough work." "Then," said the Government, "we will teach them to be clerks and farmers and miners." If that is not pulling the general public's leg, I ask you what is? If a boy is going to be a clerk, the employer will teach him to be a clerk; you do not have him taught in a technical college so that he can go and teach his employer what to do. The best way to teach a boy farming is to get him on a farm, and we know that to give a boy a course of instruction in mining leads to nothing, and gives him no advantage at all.

To sum up, they took the money from the Commonwealth, the boys who have been going through the various courses of training are

clamouring for jobs, and the Government have misled the people.

In New South Wales the Commonwealth grant was £79,000. What a different thing was done there! The State Government subsidised that amount to the extent of £110,000, so that the boys could learn trades. There, as here, a result of the depression was that boys of 19 to 25 years of age had never learned a trade. The New South Wales Government, instead of sitting idly by like the Labour Government in Queensland have done, instituted a subsidised scheme for teaching those young men to become competent tradesmen. As long as they have had a reasonably sound education, boys of 19 to 25, will learn a trade very much quicker than those starting at 14 or 15. I think we will all agree on that. The Government of New South Wales took that fact into consideration and fixed four years as the qualifying period. A boy of 19 years starting work under this scheme is paid £2 in all, £1 by his employer, and £1 by the State as a subsidy. This is the way it works out—

	Amount paid by employer.	Subsidy paid by State.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
First year ..	1 0 0	1 0 0
Second year ..	2 0 0	0 17 6
Third year ..	3 0 0	0 15 0
Fourth year ..	4 0 0	—

After he has completed four years' work he can go to the board and, provided all his certificates are in order, can be regarded as a tradesman.

Mr. O'Keefe: Who issues the certificates?

Mr. NIMMO: The Apprenticeship Board of New South Wales. For a boy of 20 years of age the subsidy is somewhat similar. Consider now the young men of about 22, who are the biggest problem, and see the sympathetic treatment given to them by the United Australia Party in New South Wales. The wage paid to them is made up as follows—

	Amount paid by employer.	Subsidy paid by State.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
First year ..	1 0 0	2 18 0
Second year ..	2 0 0	1 18 0
Third year ..	3 0 0	0 18 0
Fourth year ..	4 0 0	nil

Of course, the basic wage has since increased from £3 18s. to £3 19s.

I invite the House to consider this scheme very carefully. We must all get together, the Government and the Opposition, to devise a scheme like that so as to give our boys an opportunity of learning trades. This is one of the greatest tragedies that we have to face. We meet these boys, we talk to them, we know that they are wonderful kids, but what can we do? We in Opposition are helpless with the present Government in power. Something must be done.

A Government Member: Humbug!

Mr. NIMMO: I am not humbugging at all. I have gone to a lot of trouble over this matter and I have with me a copy of a New South Wales award. Let me quote from it so that hon. members may make comparison with the industrial conditions in Queensland and so see how much is being done in New South Wales.

This is one provision—

“Any apprentice who cannot complete his full term of apprenticeship before reaching his twenty-second birthday, may, by agreement between himself and his master, serve his master as an apprentice until he reaches the age of twenty-three years.”

Here is another—

“The proportion of apprentices to journeymen that may be taken under this Part by any master shall be one apprentice to one journeyman, and any employer working at the trade shall, for the purposes of this award, be regarded as a journeyman.”

How different is the position in Queensland! Here, the employer working at the trade cannot be counted in calculating the number of apprentices that may be employed.

Mr. Gair: He is.

Mr. NIMMO: He is not. Of course, I know that it is only a matter of the leaders' submitting the matter to the men and we shall get somewhere, but in the past the Government here has been remiss in dealing with the juveniles of this State.

Mr. Gair: Ananias would be ashamed of you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member for South Brisbane to refrain from making personal offensive interjections. They have been made for some considerable time this morning, and if they came from the other side of the House I am sure that I would be asked to take action to stop them.

Mr. NIMMO: I can never forgive the Government for wiping out the railway superannuation scheme. It is one of the greatest political tragedies in the world.

Mr. King: Because the scheme was not actuarially sound.

Mr. NIMMO: Why was it not made sound? Why just simply tell the men that the scheme was to be scrapped and then wipe it out? A large body of public servants enjoy a superannuation scheme to-day, but absolutely no provision has been made for the railway men. A railway superannuation scheme was introduced by the Moore Government, it was criticised by hon. members opposite and on their return to power abolished. The present Government should have honoured those contractual obligations and I have no doubt that ultimately the scheme would have been proved to be sound. The only weakness was that during a period of stress, contributions were very much reduced. Nearly all the railwaymen, who discuss the matter with me, including some of the younger members, expressed regret that they had to give up their superannuation scheme.

My time is getting short, but I want to refer to cost of living figures. The statement has been bruited about from one corner of the State to the other that the cost of living in Queensland is lower than in any other State of Australia, and I believe that hon. members opposite think that the statement is correct, but I question the accuracy of the figures. I have in my hand Bulletin No. 19, containing the “All Items” figures. It discloses that what can be bought in Brisbane for £1 can be got in Toowoomba for 19s. 10d. I leave it to the imagination of hon. members to decide whether goods can be carted up to Toowoomba and sold cheaper than in Brisbane. The same bulletin discloses that food and groceries that cost £1 in Brisbane can be bought in Warwick for 19s. 5d. Does any hon. member believe that? It is just how these statistics are compiled. I have contended for a long time that the figures are not correct. In fact, I investigated the figures when I was in Melbourne and I say that the cost of living in Melbourne is lower.

Now, what is the position with rent for a four- or five-roomed house?

A Government Member: Have you investigated Sydney?

Mr. NIMMO: Yes, I have investigated the figures relating to Sydney. Under the present method of compilation, a four or five-roomed house in Brisbane is credited with a rental value of £1 a week, whereas a five-roomed house in Charters Towers is credited with a rental value of 11s. 9d. Charters Towers is a decadent mining town. Doubtless many houses there are not occupied, and rental values have accordingly decreased. I do not think it fair that cost of living figures should be made on those comparisons. A five-roomed house in Warwick is valued at 13s. 7d. a week.

I went to Warwick and asked where the houses were that were valued at 13s. 7d. a week. I was told, “All those houses along the creek which are rented at 2s. a week are taken into consideration with other rental values, which brings the average down.” Then again, take Bundaberg. The rental value of a five-roomed house at Bundaberg is given at 14s. 10d. a week. The fact remains that the average rental value of a five-roomed house in Bundaberg is more like 25s. a week. With the present high cost of building material it would not pay to put up the house and let it for less than that.

I cannot for the life of me see how the Brisbane cost-of-living figures are arrived at, especially rentals. We know that mere shacks on the Logan road can be rented for 4s. or 5s. a week—possibly the hon. member for Logan knows of them—but they are not homes in the true sense of the word; they are mere makeshifts. Yet those rental values are taken in conjunction with other rental values and comparisons then made with the rental values in New South Wales and Victoria, where the homes are of solid brick, which keeps the people warm.

I definitely say that the cost-of-living figures in Queensland want reviewing, and

that a more careful method of compiling them should be devised in order to arrive at the true facts. We have been told in years past that figures can be made to prove anything. Here is evidence that supports that assertion. It is a well-known fact that cost of living figures are higher in Queensland than the Southern States.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HEALY (Warwick) (12.43 p.m.): I was rather amused at the hon. member for Oxley's dragging the old superannuation skeleton from the cupboard, but I was more surprised to hear his assertion that railwaymen regretted its demise. There are several ex-railwaymen now members of this Assembly. I think they will agree with me that it was a scheme that railway employees were well rid of. As a matter of fact, it was forced upon them. If my memory serves me correctly the scheme provided that a man on reaching the retiring age would receive £110 per annum as long as he lived, and to participate in that benefit it was only necessary for an elderly man to have paid into that fund £110. Younger members of the service, on the other hand, were called upon to contribute £600, £700, and £800 in order to get a similar benefit. However, that is by the way.

In accordance with time-honoured custom I desire to extend to the mover and seconder of this motion my sincere congratulations upon their very fine maiden efforts in this Chamber. I feel that both the hon. members for Maryborough and Dalby will become very valued members of this Assembly.

I was particularly impressed with the glorious victory achieved for this party in the Dalby electorate. As a matter of fact, I thought prior to that victory that the winning of the Warwick seat in 1935 was an outstanding performance, but I give similar credit now to the hon. member for Dalby. He achieved at the last elections what up to a few months before was regarded as the impossible.

At 12.45 p.m.,

The **CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES** (Mr. Hanson, Buranda) relieved Mr. Speaker in the chair.

Mr. HEALY: One could not but be impressed with the speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor on the occasion of the opening of this Parliament, and we cannot let the occasion pass without placing on record our appreciation of the services that have been rendered to the people of Queensland by His Excellency during his sojourn here. We are also reminded of the fact that His Excellency represents the link that binds us to the British Commonwealth of Nations. In the very disturbing conditions in which other nations find themselves, it is certainly a matter for congratulation that the British-speaking races have retained their hold on democracy. I feel that on an occasion such as this we are in duty bound to remember that it is only by the firm links between the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations that we can hope to achieve suc-

cess and realise the ideals that that Commonwealth of Nations stand for. It is the duty of responsible leaders in all parties to strive to strengthen these links. I believe the most efficacious way is by doing everything that will promote the contentment, happiness and wellbeing of our people, in short, to give effect to the old Christian teaching of "Peace on earth and goodwill towards men."

Although the Governor's Speech was short compared with similar speeches, hon. members will agree that it was of very high quality. It may aptly be called a speech that was all meat extract and no hoofs or horns.

The speech foreshadows legislation that, by all thinking people—I emphasise the word "thinking"—must be regarded as courageous and is aimed at providing not for one section but for the whole of the people of Queensland.

It will be remembered that in 1932 the Labour Government promised to do everything that was humanly possible to lead Queensland out of the economic jungle in which it had become entangled. Since then our efforts have been continually directed to achieving that objective.

It was found that readjustment was neither easy nor simple but required extreme thought, care, and caution. In the formulation of a plan to cover the intervening period it was found necessary to blaze a track through the wilderness. This has been accomplished by the legislation already submitted to and approved by this House, and, with the passage of further Bills forecast in the Governor's Speech, Queensland will march steadily along the path of progress, setting an example—as it has done before—in social reform not merely to the other Australian States, but to the world in general.

Considering the forces arrayed against the Government at the last elections and the vile filth disseminated during the campaign, the result achieved must be regarded as the greatest tribute ever paid to a political party or a Premier in the history of Queensland. During the course of that election campaign the chief promise made by the Government was in connection with remissions and reduction of unemployment relief taxation. Such reform was sought by all sections of the community, not only by the taxpayers but by those whom economic circumstances had forced to accept intermittent relief work as a palliative and a substitute for full-time employment.

There is no desire nor is there any intention on the part of the Government to create or impose any hardships on any section of the community, but there is a definite desire and intention to abolish a system that is not only foreign to Australian ideals and sentiment, but is eating into our social structure like a malignant growth into the human body. It has not only been undermining the morale of our adults, but also has had a very adverse effect on the lives of our boys and girls. The result of this system has been the building up in Queensland—and no doubt the same applies to the other Australian States—of an army of unskilled men

out of all proportion to the number of skilled tradesmen. To this some reference has been made by the hon. member for Oxley.

I believe that it is still possible to check this drift and rectify the position to some extent at least. As is well known, there are hundreds of decent, educated single men of from 25 to 30 years of age—I know of two boys in particular who were successful in their Junior University examination but who missed their opportunity in the drab years of the depression—who have been forced to avail themselves of this form of work. Unfortunately, they were so far down the list of successful candidates that they were not able to get jobs. Indeed, in those days many of those near the top of the list did not obtain positions. The two lads I know of passed that examination years ago, and to-day they may be likened to square pegs in round holes; they are endeavouring to earn a living by hard manual yakka, work for which nature did not fit them.

I believe that it is possible to do something for such men. They have a sound foundation in that they have had a secondary education, and they have the capacity to learn a trade or some other useful occupation if they get the opportunity. It is not too late even now to give them the opportunity of taking a course in our State educational establishments with a view to teaching them a trade and then, after a stipulated period, make some arrangement with private employers and with State Departments to draft them into the callings for which they are adapted or for which they have been given the necessary technical training.

Another aspect of our intermittent relief scheme that has been the cause of a greater drain upon the Unemployment Relief Fund than it should have been is the task of providing suitable work for those of our men who are on the border line of invalidity, and who because of the rigidity of the Commonwealth pensions regulations are not eligible for invalid pensions. Hon. members of this House no doubt are well aware of this rigidity. It was only within the last couple of years that I learned that a man who had lost one leg or arm was not entitled to an invalid pension. The regulations say, in effect, that if a man has lost one leg in industry and has one leg left, he is still capable of taking his place in industry with men who have not suffered this misfortune. It has entailed a good deal of work, as hon. members know, and it has caused a great drain on the Unemployment Relief Fund to administer the system humanely so far as these men are concerned.

At 2 p.m.,

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Mr. HEALY: The hon. member for Brisbane suggested last week that any measure for the abolition of this pernicious scheme should be Australian-wide in character and should originate from the national Parliament. With that opinion I heartily agree. At any rate, seeing that Queensland has taken the lead in the abolition of this scheme, the Commonwealth should now liberalise its

pension provisions to care for border-line cases.

Mr. Maher: Have not immense sums of loan money been expended to provide work and wages?

Mr. HEALY: As is well known, the intention of the Government is to absorb as many intermittent relief workers as possible in full-time work. I can think of no better work than the water conservation and irrigation schemes that have often been mentioned in this House. I was gratified beyond measure to read in the Press of a scheme for water conservation formulated by Dr. Bradfield for Queensland.

Mr. Nimmo: Do you think there is anything in it?

Mr. HEALY: I feel sure that there is a very great deal in it, and that is proved by the fact that already preparations are in hand for a preliminary survey on the McIntyre River. I noticed in the report that the loss to Queensland annually of stock on account of drought amounts to £2,500,000, and also that the total cost of the scheme formulated by Dr. Bradfield will be £30,000,000. It seems remarkable that in a young State crying out for development and for water conservation schemes, where we have all the necessary labour available, there should be any difficulty in obtaining £30,000,000 for such a purpose.

I hope that the time is not far distant when the financial system of this country will be altered to enable us to use our internal credit resources to provide the £30,000,000 for a project that will save Queensland £2,500,000 annually. It is essential that something should be done to minimise the consequences of drought and at the same time increase our productivity. I need hardly say that over the past years drought has had a very severe effect upon primary production as well as incidentally upon our railway revenue.

Hand in hand with water conservation must go irrigation, the storage of fodder, and the greater production of crops. A scheme for water conservation and irrigation for a young State like Queensland is not a Utopian idea by any means. I believe that the future prosperity of Queensland depends upon those two projects, and there is no part of it better suited to irrigation nor any land more fertile than the Darling Downs. For more than 50 years the producers on the Darling Downs have relied solely on the bounty of nature, but surely the effects of recent droughts have taught us the lesson that we must do something to help ourselves during nature's lean years.

In that connection I desire to submit for the earnest consideration of the Government the establishment of a scheme at the head of the Condamine River about 6 miles above Killarney where natural conditions are highly favourable to the conservation of a large volume of water and where large tracts of country would be benefited by such a scheme. I understand that when investigations were carried out many years ago it was thought

that an 80-ft. weir would impound 1,000,000,000 gallons.

Two other schemes were investigated in the early days—one at Spring Creek not far from Killarney, and the other at the head of Emu Creek. At Emu Creek it was believed that there a reservoir could be constructed impounding 317,000,000 cubic feet of water, and the officer who investigated the proposal said he had no doubt that it would be a highly successful reproductive work, and, what is more, that the soil within the gravitation area was such that it was not likely to become impoverished as would happen in other areas.

There is another important avenue of development open to us, that of forestry. Without appearing to work the parish pump unduly, I desire to point out to the Government that there is an area of 1,700 acres known as Morgan Park about 3 miles from Warwick.

Of this 500 acres has been allocated for aerodrome purposes, but the remaining 1,200 acres would make an ideal site for a forest nursery, because the soil, I am assured, is suited for that purpose and the area is permanently watered.

I commend these schemes to the Government not only as avenues for the absorption of our workers in desirable employment, but also as methods of promoting the wellbeing of this State.

At question time this morning I gave notice to the Premier of a number of questions in regard to the operations of the State Wheat Board and some of its personnel, because I am anxious to obtain either a refutation or a confirmation of rumours in circulation in the wheat districts. I believe that Parliament is the right place to extract that information, and I look forward to the reply to-morrow. It is well that to-day we should remember, after 18 years of its existence, that the State Wheat Board, or the pooling system, was initiated by a Labour Government. In initiating that pool the Government of the day sponsored an economic idea that has been adopted in other parts of the world. I feel sure that there is not one hon. member in this House, no matter what political party he may belong to, who is not proud of the pooling system that operates in this State, and of the fact that it has been emulated in other parts of the world. Not only did the Labour Government inaugurate it, but they have also mothered and fathered it down the years of its existence, conserving the rights of the wheatgrowers of Queensland by the State wheat pool which, as hon. members know, has faced and overcome many difficulties indeed.

Many and varied attempts have been made by vested interests to smash this pool. Indeed, one section of the milling industry in particular has fought it bitterly at various times, and it is just four years ago that this section attempted to get a stranglehold on it. Eventually, the Labour Government of the day were forced, figuratively speaking, to make these millers realise at the point of the

bayonet that they would not be permitted to jeopardise either the interests of the Queensland wheatgrowers or the livelihood of the wheatgrowers—in other words, that the Government would not submit to the dictates of a few middlemen.

The pooling system has enabled the wheatgrowers of this State to obtain approximately 1s. a bushel more for their wheat than they otherwise would have received. That increase of 1s. represents a gain of approximately £2,000,000 on the wheat handled by the pool since its inception, a great part of which would otherwise have gone into the hands of the middleman. That sum went into the pockets of the wheatgrowers in the first instance, and subsequently was of great benefit to the whole community.

During the past few months circumstances have again been such that it was imperative for this Government to take a stand in protecting the Queensland wheatgrower from being the victim of another attempt to control the pool. By some means or other members of the wheat pool, who are also members of a co-operative milling concern, arranged for this co-operative milling association to be actually controlled by the management of one of the biggest milling companies of Queensland. Thus members of the Wheat Board, who were elected to represent the interests of the Queensland wheatgrowers, became both buyers and sellers of wheat.

It is a well-known axiom in business that the man behind the counter cannot sell to himself. Bankers or trustee-company directors who made loans to themselves would soon find themselves in very serious trouble. In the deal between the Co-operative Milling Association and the private milling company, Government action was necessary to circumvent a deliberate attempt to deprive the Wheat Board of its power to protect the growers. A regulation was necessary to prevent members of the Co-operative Milling Association directorate from being members of the Wheat Board. In effect, the regulation said that no representative of the wheatgrowers should serve two masters. It is impossible for him to serve on the one hand the milling interests that want to buy wheat at the lowest price, and at the same time faithfully represent the wheatgrowers who want the biggest price they can get.

I feel sure that when the history of this matter becomes well known the wheatgrowers will be 100 per cent. behind the Government in the action they took to protect their interests. In the words of one of the so-called disqualified members of the Wheat Board, it is the greatest compliment that has been paid to the wheatgrower since the inception of the board. I agree with those sentiments, and I go further and say that it is but another safety valve that has been inserted by an alert and sympathetic Labour Government for the protection of the wheatgrowers. The action taken by the Government in this matter is only in accordance with Labour's policy of helping the wheatgrower to maintain a system that gives him a higher price for

his wheat than is received by the wheatgrowers in any other Australian State.

During the course of the debate on the Address in Reply an hon. member opposite reflected on the operations of the State Advances Corporation, and attempted to belittle the policy of the Government in building homes for the people. I take this opportunity of reminding that hon. member and other hon. members opposite that the progressive policy of home-building that has been pursued by the Labour Government over the past six years has stimulated the demand for homes throughout the State, and the result is that more than 60 per cent. of the people own their own homes or are paying them off. That is a fact of which every hon. member should feel very proud. The percentage of people who are paying off homes or own them in this State is higher than that in any other State in the Commonwealth. I hope I shall live long enough to see the time when 100 per cent. of our people will own their own homes, and when we shall be able to relegate to oblivion that tough old landlord who has been a barnacle on this and every other State for so many years.

Mr. Nimmo: Members on this side inaugurated that.

The Premier: The landlord system?

Mr. HEALY: It is one thing to inaugurate a system and another thing to carry out the system in the interests of the people for whom it was designed.

As the Premier reminds me, I have no doubt that the pioneers of the party of hon. members opposite inaugurated the landlord system.

The Government's home-building policy has been of material aid in the relief of unemployment inasmuch as a condition precedent to the approval of an advance by the State Advances Corporation is that all work must be done with material of Queensland origin and manufacture. This policy has encouraged the manufacture of building material within our own State and has meant that during the past three years over 5,000 men have been given employment either directly or indirectly.

There are one or two matters in connection with our educational system that I desire to refer to, but the limited time at my disposal enables me to refer to one only at present and I refer to the admission of teachers to the Department of Public Instruction, more particularly those who have passed what is called the Class 3 examination. Some candidates who passed this examination have been waiting upwards of two years for appointment, but have received no indication as to when they will be appointed. If the supply of teachers is greater than the demand, the fact should be given due publicity. On the other hand, if the department recognises that Queensland teachers should first pass through the Teachers' Training College—and this is indeed a very good policy—I ask that those who have been successful in the Class 3 examination should at least be given an opportunity to pass through that college with a view to subsequent appointment in the Queensland teaching service.

Mr. BRASSINGTON (Fortitude Valley) (2.23 p.m.): The hon. member who has just resumed his seat delivered a very comprehensive and interesting address and one that shows he has a sound knowledge of many of our agricultural problems and the other affairs of the State.

With other hon. members I take this opportunity of extending my congratulations to the mover and seconder of this motion. Both gentlemen acquitted themselves very creditably and displayed a sound knowledge of the many and varied problems confronting this State. I hope that they will be long spared to us and that the people will show their confidence in them by returning them to serve the State in this Assembly for many years.

Reading the Speech delivered by His Excellency, which is a resume of the Government's policy, one is struck by the progressive note it strikes and also by the cardinal point in that policy, the orderly planning of development. There is no hon. member who can object to the introduction of such a policy. I did not have the opportunity in speaking upon the two measures passed by this Assembly since the opening of the session to bring this development about, and I now take this opportunity of expressing favourable opinions upon some of its phases.

One recognises that this great State needs as much development as it can get, and any Government who follow a policy of development are entitled to a full measure of support, not only from hon. members of this House but also from the whole of our citizens. I believe that every citizen who wishes to see Queensland progress and who has confidence in the welfare of the people will give the Government due credit and every possible support in an endeavour to meet a very trying situation and to make this the great State that it is destined to be.

One is impressed by several important factors. I believe that every hon. member will agree that in Queensland we have perhaps the most wonderful territory in the world. It has almost every natural resource, with a magnificent climate, and if wise government is continued, it will play its part in the future happiness of mankind and make a great contribution indeed to the welfare of civilisation. But there are one or two things that give us pause and cause us to ask ourselves questions as to its possibilities. We are impressed by the magnitude of the problems before us. We realise, for example, that in an area of 670,500 square miles we have a population of barely 1,000,000, in other words slightly more than one person to each square mile of territory in the State. That must give every citizen of Queensland food for deep thought and we might well ask ourselves if it is not time we pushed on with the job, speeded up development and improved the State as much as we can in the shortest possible time.

Other countries carry denser populations, and some have reached the enormous figure of approximately 474 people to each square mile. Without endeavouring to make prophecies as to the future, we might very well

ask ourselves if it is not possible that this extensive territory, with so few in it, will excite the envy of the less fortunate peoples throughout the world, especially those that are so over-crowded that the problem of sustaining an existence is becoming acute.

We read in our newspaper every morning of the threat or possibility of war. I do not desire to discuss that question in this Assembly, but I do desire to offer the opinion that nationalistic strife and hatred among peoples is basically a contest between those nations that have and those nations that have not territory ample for their needs. Impressed as we are by that fact, we must dwell on the thought that here we have an immense open territory that will hold many more millions of people. Again I emphasise the fact that we must of necessity and as a matter of duty get on with the work of development so that the population of this country will be increased to the maximum in the shortest possible space of time. Let us make one or two other very necessary observations. One of the things that strike me most is the fact that there are advocates not only in Australia but in other parts of the world who are seriously challenging our right to hold this great territory and at the same time maintain a White Australia policy.

Only a few weeks ago a responsible citizen, an Anglican bishop living in New Zealand, advocated handing over a part of Australian territory to Japan for developmental purposes. We had Lord Somers, a former Governor of one of the Australian States, endorsing that opinion. Then, in the columns of a very responsible newspaper of this State, the Brisbane "Telegraph," there appeared on Tuesday, 6 September of this year, an article written by a man named St. George Mansbridge which was a definite attack upon our White Australia policy, upon those ideals that we have fought for and have maintained. It showed a desire to throw overboard the White Australia policy and to substitute for it the introduction of black labour, low wages, and the shocking, scandalous conditions operating in the low-wage countries.

The time is opportune, and it is my duty, to quote some of the opinions expressed by this gentleman in the article entitled, "Has the White Australia policy failed?" He begins the article by saying—

"Why the North should still be handicapped by such an impracticable policy as White Australia is difficult to understand."

He then goes on to say—

"The future of this country is of far greater importance than all the vote-seekers, therefore this White Australia ideal must go, or at least be substantially modified."

Then—

"My suggestion would be to utilise the services of some 20,000 aboriginals who live in the North. The aboriginal reserves appear to be continually growing smaller,

but, before they vanish entirely, let us, for once, consider these people seriously, and help them to help Australia."

That is the thin edge of the wedge of breaking down the White Australia policy and introducing coloured labour into the continent.

This gentleman then abandons any attempt at concealment and says—

"There should be a resurvey of the North, a general exodus of imported white workers."

In other words, according to him the whole of the tropical North of this country should not be settled by white people at all. Our white citizens who have created industries and carved out homes for themselves in the North and have helped to make that policy valuable to Australia should, according to him, be forced to leave the territory and hand it over to the blacks.

Mr. Brand: Is he speaking of the whole of Northern Australia?

Mr. BRASSINGTON: He is not dealing particularly with the Northern Territory. If this suggestion is accepted, how long will it be before the advocates of black labour, not merely in Australia but in other parts of the British Empire, will argue that other parts of Australian territory also should be commandeered for the purposes of utilising black labour? When we see an attack upon the principle of White Australia, no matter whom it comes from, we realise that behind it is the endeavour to break down the conditions and prosperity enjoyed by the majority of the citizens of this country.

The article goes on—

"Later we might even consider the importation of Indian and Chinese citizens; but, at the moment, let us make use of our own people."

I think that labouring this argument is not worth while at this juncture, but I emphasise that it is our job to see that we maintain our right to a White Australia by proceeding with a policy of development, by settling our country as early as possible, by building up our population and definitely making the White Australia policy a permanent attainment.

For that reason I wholeheartedly subscribe to the Government's aim to develop this country and to maintain existing standards and conditions and generally to give to our people a better deal than they are getting at the present time. I take this opportunity, too—

Mr. Brand: And a sound policy of immigration?

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I shall have something to say on that later. I suggest to this Anglican bishop of New Zealand, Lord Somers, and St. George Mansbridge and other advocates of a Black Australia, that it is not for them to attempt to shape the national policy of this country, that it is for the responsible Australian statesmen to devise Australia's policy and to let the people of Australia know what are the responsibilities

of Australian Governments in this connection. I think every hon. member in this Assembly should take the opportunity to dissuade these gentlemen from making such utterances, and at all times take the opportunity to maintain and protect a policy that we all ought to hold dear, a policy of White Australia with decent conditions and a progressive standard of development.

An hon. member opposite interjected, "A sound policy of immigration." Let us consider that important question. In this country there are two schools of thought in regard to populating Australia. There is the school of thought that apparently has never learnt anything in the last 30 to 40 years, a school of thought that believes that the problem of populating this country can be solved by the indiscriminate introduction of a large number of immigrants without any consideration of the ultimate effect upon Queensland or Australia. The other school of thought, the more modern school, representing democracy, is led by the Labour movement, and includes those who believe in progress and stand for a reasonable standard of Australian ideals. This believes that the best way to populate this country is to develop it properly—to push on settlement, build towns, and develop industries, and so automatically lay down the foundation for a strong, virile population that will be an asset to this great Commonwealth of which we have the privilege to be citizens.

Let us compare that policy of building up our population with the introduction of migrants without restriction, without choice and without consideration of its effects upon the people here, where we already have a large army of unemployed that industries cannot absorb. This policy is a wrong one, and if carried into effect will increase the number of unemployed and help considerably to break down the conditions now enjoyed throughout the Commonwealth. That is a lesson that we cannot overlook, it is a rule that we cannot ignore, but I believe that every progressive Australian will oppose a policy of wholesale immigration and will favour a policy of progressive development designed to open up the country, build towns, increase the population, and so make Australia the self-supporting nation that she is destined to be.

I think we can all agree on this important point that the sooner we develop our State the greater will be the benefits conferred upon the people, and that the sooner we get on with the job the sooner shall we have the assurance that we shall be able to hold this territory and maintain the policy of White Australia. I am satisfied that the Government are proceeding upon very sound lines in laying down a scheme for planned development. By this means we shall know what we are doing and where we are going and so shall obtain the results that we set out to achieve.

It is very evident that if the Government's policy of developing the State and maintaining a White Australia policy is to succeed enough money will have to be made available

for the purpose, but the question arises: whose is the responsibility to make the finance available? I am satisfied that every progressive citizen believes that the Loan Council and the Commonwealth Government should shoulder their share of this responsibility.

The people of this State should insist upon these authorities' standing up to their responsibilities. I for one sincerely hope that when the Premier goes to the Loan Council again and with other leaders of democratic thought in this State states the case for the people of Queensland and the other States, and lays down the amount of finance required for developmental purposes, he will receive the support of public opinion throughout Queensland and the rest of Australia. I sincerely hope that the plans for the development of our State will be carried out and it will not be hamstrung by a lack of financial support. That is a very important issue and one on which the people of this State—if they desire the Government to govern as they should, and if they desire a progressive policy to be carried out—should give the Government, through the Premier, a full measure of support, thus forcing those who hold the financial strings in the Commonwealth to see reason and lend the financial aid necessary to enable a policy in the people's interest to be carried out. If only we could achieve all our splendid plans there would be infinite possibilities ahead of us. That depends on the measure of finance available.

Some of the things we can achieve are really attractive when we give them consideration. One of the most attractive features of a policy for developing this State was rather fully dealt with by the hon. member for Warwick, that is, the possibility of overcoming the greatest ravage this State or the Commonwealth has ever known—namely, drought, and its effects upon our people and upon their prosperity. If only this plan can be implemented in the future to solve the problem of water and fodder conservation, then one of the principal problems that face this State will be overcome, and in its place we shall have a greater degree of security for our people.

Did not the Speech dwell on this important aspect of the subject by referring to the fact that in the past few years the great flocks in this State had increased by 4,000,000? That alone indicates the possibilities that lie in the future if the ill-effects of drought can be mitigated by the Government, if they obtain the financial support they are entitled to receive from the Commonwealth and so can carry out their great developmental schemes in their entirety.

The very basis of this policy is the proper recognition of the financial claims of this State by the powers that control the Commonwealth, and I repeat that the people, through their representatives, should support this claim of the State for a recognition of its financial necessities, so that this developmental plan can be carried out in its entirety.

Coming nearer home, we have somewhat of a problem on our hands to-day, consequent on the changed conditions of those who are out

of work as a result of the Government's policy. There are many useful works that could be done in the metropolitan area to give many of our unemployed citizens full-time employment under proper conditions. I shall be pardoned for taking this opportunity of bringing before the notice of the Government some public works in the metropolitan area that merit consideration. If finance is forthcoming and these public works can be undertaken, much of the distress from which many of our people are suffering will be alleviated.

The first suggestion I have to offer is one that may be rather ambitious, but I believe it is one that will have to be investigated eventually and will prove of great benefit to the people of the metropolitan area. I refer to an investigation into the possibility of the electrification of the city and suburban railways. There are people who will say that is impossible. Let us not argue with them. I recognise that the cost of carrying out this work would be considerable and would call for much effort, but there would be compensating advantages. At the present time our locomotives are steam-driven and the people have to put up with the inconvenience caused by coal dust. The electric train service would be clean and far more speedy.

Mr. Maher: It would mean less work for the coalminers.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: If our plan is fully implemented and we can go right ahead as we hope the Government will be able to do, other industries will be developed that will create work for the coalminers for whom our friends opposite are shedding crocodile tears to-day.

As I was saying, an electric train service would be cleaner and faster and much more attractive to the public and the cost would be largely recouped by the additional patronage by the people. I hope the matter will be investigated.

Mr. Russell: The Premier has already turned it down.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: It is a matter that is worth reviewing. If it cannot be done to-day or in three years' time it could be investigated when finance is available.

My second suggestion is the elimination of railway level crossings in the city. I have spoken on this matter before, and I do not wish to enlarge on it. A few weeks ago I read a report in the Press that the Commissioner for Railways proposed to use Roma Street as the principal railway station in the metropolitan area, and that it was proposed to run the northern traffic, both passenger and goods, through Normanby and Mayne Junction. If that policy is adopted it will mean an increase of traffic over two level crossings, one at Bowen Bridge and the other at Campbell street, Bowen Hills, which are danger spots at the present time. From time to time reports of accidents at these crossings appear, sometimes persons are injured and sometimes loss of life occurs, and if the traffic over these crossings is to be doubled or trebled as a result of this change, the

persons using those crossings will run a greater risk of injury or death.

My suggestion in regard to level crossings may also be regarded as a little ambitious, but I believe that when the Government are in the position to proceed with works in this city that is one of the proposals that should receive consideration, because it is a work that would give employment to our people and diminish the risk of accident and death to many of our citizens.

I could say much more on this matter, but my time is limited, and I wish to make some observations on other matters.

I would suggest to the Minister for Transport that the department investigate the Brunswick Street railway station, which was long since obsolete, and needs improvement. If at all possible a new station should be erected.

It is evident that the capacity of the Government's planning policy to provide work for our workless will be the measure of its success. I feel that some consideration must be given to the causes of unemployment and the general effect upon the wellbeing of all citizens. To deal briefly with the question, may I say that it and the menace of war are the gravest problems at present facing mankind. Since the industrial revolution that took place in England from 1770 onwards, unemployment has increased in severity. It has visited England as a plague in the form of depressions and caused untold hardship and suffering to tens of thousands of people. In our time Governments have made honest and serious attempts to solve this very difficult problem. In the United States of America approximately 12,000,000 persons are unemployed, even though President Roosevelt with unlimited supplies of dollars has a complete programme for the organisation of agricultural and other industries.

As to Queensland, is there any fair-minded citizen who will deny that the Government have made tremendous and amazing efforts to grapple with this problem? Have not the Government been striving for the last six or well nigh seven years to grapple with it. As the Leader of the Opposition interjected when the hon. member for Warwick was speaking, have not immense sums of loan money been expended to provide work and wages for our people? Despite it all, seemingly this problem can keep abreast with all efforts to cope with it, and thus one is forced to the conclusion that some consideration should be given to its causes and whether it can be permanently solved under the economic system under which we live.

I have read the works of many prominent economists. They have expressed the opinion that a large number of those who are displaced from industry have been permanently displaced and will never again find a permanent place in industry under the present economic system. That is not my opinion and hon. members opposite may not accept that as a sound conclusion, but whether they do so or not, the fact remains that the problem is

pressing. It is still with us and the Government are making an honest and straightforward attempt to grapple with it and to give to those who are out of work full-time employment and the best possible deal.

Reverting to the theme of my earlier remarks, I repeat that if the Government's plan is to succeed they will need financial resources with which to do it, and if we accept the opinions of many of the world's most famous thinkers that under our economic system there must be a permanent army of unemployed, we must also accept the corollary that as that army grows that economic system must in the end break down. I am not going to give my opinion to-day on whether it should be allowed to break down or whether it should be stayed up; I merely suggest to hon. members opposite, who represent wealth, privilege, and property in this Chamber—

Mr. Maher: Not too much of it.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: When this or any other Labour Government attempt to care for the happiness and wellbeing of the people by legislation that may mean an attack upon property or wealth hon. members opposite are the first to object. I suggest that if the opinions of the world's greatest economists, writers, and thinkers can be taken seriously, and if we can assume that in the end the system will break down, those who do not desire to see it break down but to see it retained should be the first to make the sacrifice. Those who have the most to lose should be the first to provide the means to make this or any other plan of development the unqualified success that it deserves to be.

Mr. Brand: Do you mean more taxation?

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I shall have a word to say on that later. If we can judge the development of the system by the apparent economic operation of laws, and if in the last analysis this system eventually breaks down through its own weakness, the vested interests that the hon. member represents will lose everything. Surely we on this side are not asking too much when we ask that this plan be given a fair trial, that it receive sound support, and that the persons who have the most to lose should be the first to come forward to support the Government and to see that they are not restricted, that they are not hamstrung by lack of financial co-operation and so prevented from carrying this splendid idea into effect.

The hon. member for Isis interjected, "Do you mean more taxation?" I am not going to discuss taxation to-day other than to say that hon. members opposite apparently speak with two voices upon this important matter. Did they not, through the "Telegraph" and other responsible newspapers, year in and year out, demand that this Government reduce the unemployment relief tax? Their cry was, "Taxation is too heavy. You are stifling industry. You are preventing the development of this State." Now taxation is going to be reduced in this State, and coincidentally with that we see in the daily

newspapers that the Lyons Government propose to increase the sales tax and so take £1,200,000 a year more out of the pockets of the people of Australia. It is proposed also to levy other taxes. The sales tax, of course, will come out of the pockets of the people who can least afford to bear it. Not a word from hon. members opposite about this additional taxation! They have continuously assailed this Government over the unemployment relief and other taxes, and now, when they have an opportunity to make a fight on behalf of the people of the country, they are silent.

I have a rather remarkable article here that appeared in the "Telegraph" of 8 September, 1938. I am not going to quote or comment on this article, which is entitled "A Social Danger," other than to say that this very responsible and well-edited newspaper, which influences public opinion in this State to a great extent, was one of the newspapers that clamoured with hon. members opposite for a reduction of relief tax in recent years. It is right that we should refer to these things because, after all, this Government are honouring their election promises. Hon. members opposite, knowing that the Lyons Government are increasing taxation, have not a word of protest on behalf of the people of Queensland.

Like other hon. members in this Assembly, all of whom I believe to be sincere, I trust that the Government's policy will be completely successful. I hope also that during the period of transition from relief work to full-time employment the hardships to be endured by a section of the community will not be upon them for long. However, for every person who thinks, for every member of our movement from the leader down to the last member of the rank and file, there is a valuable lesson to be learned. It is that until the people control the financial resources of the Commonwealth of Australia, until the control of the financial machine is taken from a group of interested persons and vested in the people, the problems we face to-day and have faced in years gone by will always be with us. I think it will be the duty of the Labour Government to lead the fight against vested interests, against those who stand in the way of progress, and I hope that the fight will be carried on until social justice, tolerance, and reason become the rightful privilege of every citizen in the community, irrespective of his station.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) (3.2 p.m.): At the outset I should like to join with hon. members in expressing appreciation of the fact that His Excellency the Governor has been reappointed for a further term of office. During the time he has been Governor of Queensland he has lost no opportunity to make himself familiar with all parts of the State and with the activities of every section of the community. During his recent visit to Great Britain the work he did on behalf of Queensland, particularly for our primary industries, has earned him commendation from all quarters. I think his reappointment is a very happy thing indeed.

To you, Sir, I should also like to extend my congratulations on your reappointment as Speaker of this House. During the last six years you have upheld the dignity of your position and, in my opinion, have fully merited the confidence that has again been reposed in you.

I wish to bring before the House and the Government a major disaster that is facing one of our great primary industries if action is not taken in the very near future to assist it. I refer to the pineapple industry. This is not a matter for dilly-dallying but for immediate action if this valuable industry is to be saved. The industry has had its ups and downs. In the past it has managed to recover from the knocks it has taken, but the knock that it has received on this occasion is the most serious of all.

This time last year pineapple growers were getting £9 6s. 8d. a ton for their fruit at the cannery. They are now getting £5. We must take into account also the fact that the growers have to face rising prices of the commodities that they have to use to produce their crops. During the past 12 months there have been two rises in fertilizer prices, the price of cases has increased almost 50 per cent., and the cost of other commodities used by the industry has risen proportionately. In consequence, the 1,500 growers engaged in the pineapple industry in this State are facing a very difficult position. It might well be asked, what caused that position? To sum up briefly, it was brought about by a small shortage in fruit as a result of drought in 1936 and 1937, which gave a false impression of the real position in the industry.

To amplify that statement it will be necessary to cover briefly the history of the industry over the last few years. In 1930 and 1931, owing to the large proportion of fruit that could not be consumed in the Commonwealth it was necessary to export a very considerable quantity, and that at a big loss to the industry. In 1931, under the Australian-Canadian trade agreement, a very valuable preference was obtained for the industry which gave the growers heart and caused them to plant again, but unfortunately next year, under the Ottawa Agreement, that preference was lost, but the industry gained a 15 per cent. ad valorem preferential duty in the United Kingdom, and later got a further preference in Canada, which gave the growers sufficient encouragement to continue to export to that Dominion. Aided by a large grant from the Sugar Industry Concession Committee, exports in 1934 had grown to over 100,000 cases, but, unfortunately, the decline in export set in because of drought and the increased consumption in Australia, and, naturally, the Commonwealth Government asked why the industry did not take steps to increase its export. The industry was taking steps to meet the situation, but, unfortunately, it was unable to combat the weather conditions that then prevailed. This inquiry from the Commonwealth Government, allied with the short crops due to drought, gave the false impression that there was an opportunity in the pineapple industry for unlimited expansion, and that idea was

fostered by statements that appeared in the Press at the time.

I quote from a paragraph that appeared in the "Courier-Mail" of 4 April, 1936, under the heading of "A Million Pound Crop of Pineapples"—

"A million-case crop is the objective of the Minister for Agriculture and the leaders of the industry."

On the 14th of the same month the "Telegraph" came out with an article headed—

"Grow More Pineapples.

"Campaign Proposed.

"Minister Replies to Critics."

Those were the captions on a rather good article written by the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock explaining the reason for the proposed extension of investigation work in the industry, but unfortunately the effect of that article was spoiled by those headlines, which helped to give a wrong impression about the industry.

At that time the position was such that the manager of the Committee of Direction of Fruit Marketing saw fit to issue the following warning in the metropolitan Press:—

"Based on Press report of a recent conference between the Minister of Agriculture and his officers, Mr. Duthie representing the canners, and myself on behalf of the pineapple industry, the impression has been formed in many quarters that the Committee of Direction is advocating the wholesale planting of pineapples. Such a policy—without a canners' guarantee to handle at a reasonable price all pineapples surplus to market requirements—would not only be a betrayal of those at present in the industry, but would inevitably result in a land boom and the probable ruination of many men at present not engaged in pineapple culture."

That is more or less what has happened to-day.

Notwithstanding that warning we find, that after a tour of the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock in North Queensland, many very optimistic Press reports appeared in the provincial Press in various centres, in regard to the possibility of pineapple culture in those areas. They did not appear one day; they appeared day after day with the result that many persons in North Queensland got very interested in the possibilities of pineapple culture.

In opening the Rockhampton Show in June, 1936, the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock painted a very rosy picture of the possibilities of pineapple culture in the Rockhampton and surrounding districts. It drew forth a leader—and a very good leader, too—from the Rockhampton "Bulletin" on 30 June, 1936. It was headed—

"Mr. Bulcock discovers pineapples."

In that article the writer said that notwithstanding the rosy picture which had been painted by the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock it was very essential for growers to

be assured that a market was available before they entered into the cultivation of this crop.

After these optimistic Press statements, a very decided warning was issued by the Australian Canned Fruits Control Board, which is responsible for the sale of our canned fruits overseas. It was dated 10 July, 1937, and read—

“The recent heavy increase in pineapple plantings in Queensland is concerning the Canned Fruits Control Board, and the board desires to sound a warning. The annual average yield of pineapples in Queensland is 800,000 cases, and about 45 per cent. is surplus fruit, and is absorbed by the canneries. The export markets available to Australia for canned pineapples are limited both in number and volume.”

The manager of the Committee of Direction followed that statement with a warning in the “Telegraph” of 12 July, 1937, to the effect—

“During the last year or so the idea has become firmly established that our pineapple industry offers scope for unlimited development necessary to meet the crying demand for the British and Canadian markets for Australian canned pineapple. The prevalence of such an idea, with its natural corollary, unlimited production, is a definite danger, said the manager of the Committee of Direction, Mr. B. Flewell-Smith to-day when commenting on the warning issued by the Secretary of the Canned Fruits Control Board (Mr. W. J. Adams) regarding the heavy increase in pineapple plantings in Queensland.”

Yet we find in the metropolitan Press, and in country Press also, a statement issued by the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock. The following statement appeared in the Gympie “Times” of 30 July, 1937:—

“While the Government was anxious that the pineapple industry should expand it was sensible of the dangers of over-production, and it would therefore make a survey of the industry, said the Minister for Agriculture and Stock (Mr. F. W. Bulcock) to-day.

“In pointing out the dangers of over-production of pineapples in Queensland the Canned Fruits Control Board had overlooked two factors, (1) by the use of acetylene treatment the period over which fresh fruit was available to consumers was widened considerably, and (2) there were possibilities of a very extensive market for pineapple juices which had already won a place for themselves though practically all the sources of supply were outside Australia.”

Now, although the Minister in one part of that statement gives a warning in regard to over-production, yet he is optimistic enough to say that because of the acetylene treatment and increased sales of juice there was nothing very much to be worried about. Unfortunately, the acetylene treatment has

not been the success that was expected of it as a result of the initial experiment, and unfortunately again the Australian people cannot be encouraged to develop the habit of drinking fruit juice that appears to be common in America and other parts of the world, where it seems to be a daily practice for the people to have a pint of some kind of fruit or tomato juice to begin the day with. That habit, unfortunately, has not become general in Australia.

Mr. Russell: It is growing.

Mr. NICKLIN: It is growing, but it has not grown sufficient to meet the needs of the industry.

The article concludes by saying—

“It would be difficult to estimate when saturation point would be reached, Mr. Bulcock added, but a well-ordered system was necessary. As the department did not wish to encourage persons to enter into uneconomic production it was about to make a survey of the people engaged in the industry, those who contemplated engaging in it shortly, the total plantings, and the estimate of average yield. When this information was gathered it would be possible to find a balance between production and sale, and growers would be advised of the position.”

When the Estimates for the Department of Agriculture and Stock were under consideration in 1936, I pointed out what would happen if some control was not exercised in the industry. I pointed out that if unlimited plantings were encouraged it would be faced with serious difficulties within a couple of years. Again last year I advocated that a census should be taken in order to ascertain what the position would be when the new areas that were planted came into production. That census was taken but unfortunately we have had no announcement from the Minister as to what difficulties would face the industry when the new areas came into production. In view of the fact that I directed their attention to the matter, the Government must accept some responsibility for the position facing the industry to-day.

The Commonwealth Government must also accept their share of the responsibility. As late as 7 January this year, Sir Earle Page made the following statement:—

“Controllers of the pineapple industry in Queensland have slept for the last five years on the opportunities for the expansion of their trade in the British market secured to them by the Ottawa Agreement.”

What is this trade that the pineapple industry has slept on and we have lost in the United Kingdom? The trade we are losing means a loss of 2s. 9d. a dozen on each dozen 30-oz. cans, 2s. 5d. a dozen on each dozen 20-oz., and 1s. 1d. a dozen on each dozen 16-oz. exported.

At the present time we have more canned pineapple for export than we have an export market for. Recently the Hawaiian canners announced a drastic price reduction of 1s. to 4s. a dozen in the United Kingdom. We have had to follow suit. Moreover, owing

to the over-supply of canned foods in the United Kingdom, the sales of canned fruit will be seriously affected.

Mr. Riordan: Did the Committee of Direction enter into any agreement with Duthie Bros. as to the establishment of fruit canning at Bowen?

Mr. NICKLIN: No. The Committee of Direction made no arrangement with Mr. Duthie in regard to the cannery.

Mr. Riordan: No agreement at all?

Mr. NICKLIN: I understand Mr. Duthie gave the growers of Bowen an undertaking that if they produced 50,000 cases of pineapple for canning he would put a cannery there.

That is the position that faces the industry to-day. I have several suggestions I wish to place before the Government. In the first place I think the position of the industry should be placed before the Commonwealth Government and that Government should be asked for financial assistance to cover losses by export for the next two years to enable the industry to readjust itself. The State Government can help in that readjustment by introducing legislation to stabilise the industry in this State. I suggest that control of the pineapple industry should be established in Queensland under legislative authority by a committee. That committee should be composed of a representative each from the Department of Agriculture and Stock, the Pineapple Sectional Group Committee representing the growers, and the canners. Perhaps the personnel could be increased by a member representing the wholesale fruit trade of this city. It should have power to declare districts, i.e., districts in which pineapples can be grown, in order to prevent an uneconomic expansion of the industry. There is an epidemic of planning at the present time in the legislation brought before this House, and surely an industry such as this, which means so much to the State, both from the point of view of employing a great number of Queenslanders and that of an exporting industry creating credits abroad, should have its development planned. Development should not be allowed to continue as it has done in the past. The industry should not be allowed to expand, and then fade away, and so in the net result fall back several years.

Mr. Riordan: Will you tell us your intentions regarding the co-operative factory that you intend to foster at Bowen?

Mr. NICKLIN: I am not talking about that at the present time. That has nothing to do with this aspect of the subject. Perhaps I shall come to it later.

The Secretary for Mines: Mr. Duthie is prepared to put up a factory and to handle 50,000 cases of pineapples. What market has he in mind?

Mr. NICKLIN: He said that a number of years ago. I think he would like to get out of it now.

Mr. Riordan: Not so many years ago.

Mr. NICKLIN: The committee should be given power, in addition to declaring pineapple districts, to assign areas. By that means I do not mean to stop production in the industry but control planting as our market develops. It is useless to produce a commodity for which there is no profitable sale. As our market develops, we can increase the assigned area. Power should also be given to allocate proportionately each grower's crop to the fresh-fruit market, to the Australian canned fruit market, and to the assisted export market, i.e., the fruit that is exported with assistance from the Sugar Industry Concession Committee. If there should be any surplus, it should be exported at world parity, which at the present time would return the growers £2 13s. 4d. a ton, which is less than a farthing a pound. This would ensure to each grower his fair share of available markets.

Power should also be given to license canneries. After all, control of the canning side of the industry is very important. It would be useless if canneries were allowed to spring up all over the place like mushroom rooms and place an inferior article on the market. This would retard the sales of canned fruit.

Last but by no means least, steps should be taken to explore all the avenues for increasing consumption of both fresh and canned fruit by the creation of a fund for advertising. That fund could be provided by a levy both on the canned and fresh fruits. Undoubtedly there are many avenues for increasing the sales within our own borders, and they should be exploited to the limit, as well as those for overseas sales.

As an illustration of the value to Queensland of this industry and of the extent production has increased in the past twelve months, I quote some figures. In 1937 the total production of pineapples was 758,835 cases, of which 20,097 were exported to the United Kingdom, 14,772 to Canada, and 1,926 to New Zealand. For the summer crop of 1937 239,440 cases were processed and 111,395 cases for the winter crop. In the summer of 1938 357,556 cases were processed, and up to the second of this month, in the winter of this year, 162,925 cases were processed. For this year a total of 520,481 cases of pineapples were processed.

This year we shall produce over 1,000,000 cases of pineapples, and it is estimated that the production will be even greater next year. At present 1,422 growers are engaged in the industry with 5,885 acres under production and 1,254 acres of fresh plantings. From those figures it will be seen that this industry is a very valuable one. In addition to the employment of the 1,400 odd growers actively engaged in the industry and the workers they employ, a great amount of work is given in other industries in that the pineapple grower uses many commodities in the production of his crop. The industry is of considerable value to Queensland. It is in such a position that something will have to be done in the very near future if it is to

be kept solvent. The onus is now on the Government to do that something.

Mr. Riordan: Do you not think there is an onus on the grower as well?

Mr. NICKLIN: The grower has done what he has been asked to do. He has increased production to provide for the wants of the overseas market that was obtained for us as a result of the preference secured overseas.

During the course of this and other debates in this House, many speakers on the Government side have spoken about what the Government have done for the primary producers of Queensland. We give the Government credit for the fact that they have done something for the primary producers, but, unfortunately, for some unknown reason, there are some sections of the producers for which the Government will do nothing. One of those sections are the milk producers, who supply the metropolitan area. Efforts have been made for years to induce the Government to do something for those milk producers. Undoubtedly they have been treated shabbily by the Government. The suppliers of milk to the metropolitan area have been crying out for a number of years for some consideration, and I hope that it will not be long before something is done.

Judging by the comments that were made during the last election campaign I thought that one of the Bills that would be listed in the Governor's Speech on this occasion would be a Milk Bill, but that was not so. It was only when the producers took the law into their own hands a few months ago and ceased supplying the metropolitan area that the Government took action and gave them a non-marketing board. This, however, is only a palliative and is by no means a solution of the difficulties confronting these producers.

Unfortunately, since that milk strike a number of milk producers have been victimised. By this victimisation a number of producers who have expended all their energy and spent all their lives on the land in order to supply milk to the metropolitan area have been denied the right of sending in supplies.

Mr. Riordan: Who victimised them?

Mr. NICKLIN: The milk vendors in the metropolitan area.

In 1932, when this Government were returned to office, a promise was made by the Government and by some of the candidates on behalf of the Government, that a Milk Bill would be introduced. I give credit to the hon. member for Enoggera for his strong advocacy of this Milk Bill. A committee was appointed by the present Government in 1932 to investigate this problem of milk supply in the metropolitan area, and it stated in its report that some action should be taken to establish a milk board.

In 1934 a sub-committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party also agreed that a Milk Bill should be introduced, and I have

here a cutting from the "Courier-Mail" of 17 October, 1934, which I shall read—

"Milk Supply.

"Party Decides on Bill.

"Central Depot Proposed.

"After a postponement of two years the City of Brisbane Milk Supply Bill is to be introduced by the Government."

We are still waiting for it, and there does not seem to be any sign of its coming along yet.

During the last election campaign the Labour candidate who opposed me—a very promising candidate he was, too; he promised everything all over the electorate—is reported in the "Courier-Mail" on 29 March, 1938, as quoting a letter on the subject from the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock. The article states—

"Milk Industry Control Bill.

"Measure Drafted, says Labour Candidate.

"A letter from the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Bulcock), read by the Labour candidate for Murrumba (Mr. G. A. H. Watson), speaking at Samford, stated that a Bill dealing with the milk industry had been drafted, and would be introduced on the return of the Government.

"Mr. Watson said the dairy farmers in the Dayboro district in the past had been unable to agree among themselves about co-operation, and were mainly to blame for the bad position of the milk industry. Immediately the Labour Government found they were willing to co-operate, it gave them the protection of a non-marketing milk board, with a view to the creation of a marketing board as early as possible.

"The letter which he had received from the Minister for Agriculture that day said: 'Now that all sections seem to be working in harmony, very favourable consideration will be given towards increasing the powers of the producers in ensuring an adequate and hygienic milk supply to the city. The new Bill which the Labour Government will introduce will have very wide powers, and will cover all phases of production and marketing.'"

That is what the Labour candidate said during the election campaign and, seeing that he produced the letter from the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock stating that the Bill had been drafted, I expected to see it listed in the Governor's Speech as one of the measures to be considered at this session of Parliament.

Mr. O'Keefe: Your electors turned it down.

Mr. NICKLIN: Fortunately, my electors have more sense than to take much notice of Labour promises. It seems as if the Government were not going to introduce the measure this session although Brisbane is the only capital city in the Commonwealth

that has no legislation to govern its milk supply.

There is undoubtedly justification for the creation of a board, in the big waste in distribution if in nothing else. One of the bogies always raised when a Milk Bill is mentioned is that it will mean an increase in the price of milk to the consumers. That has not been so in other cities of the Commonwealth. Looking over the results achieved by the operations of the Milk Board in Sydney, since it was established in January, 1932, up to the end of the financial year 1936-1937, I find that total sales of milk have amounted to £4,961,322. During that time the price to the consumer has not altered. There have been several increases to the producer, brought about by savings effected in distribution costs and by the fact that the distributing companies in Sydney have taken the cut and given an extra share to the producers.

Whereas the producer to the Sydney metropolitan area receives from 1s. 1d. a gallon for his milk, which is sold at 6d. a quart, here in Brisbane, where the retail price to consumers is about the same, the producers for the last two or three years have been getting from 6d. to 11d. a gallon. The Sydney Milk Board has accumulated a fund of £62,576, after paying to the producers a bonus of £30,180 and without in any way acting detrimentally to the consumer in increasing the price of the product.

Thus it is seen that by a proper system of organisation and distribution in that city the producers have had a fair deal and the consumer has got a good product at a very reasonable price. In Brisbane, without an efficient system of control, the position is fair to neither the producer nor the consumer; the consumer is not getting the product that he deserves and the producer is by no means getting the price that is his right. Before the session concludes I hope the Government will have seen the error of their ways and have introduced a measure to deal with the milk supply in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Russell: Are you asking for a board of producers?

Mr. Nicklin: No, I would have representatives of the consumers on the board, too.

Before I conclude I should like to draw attention to the differentiation in railway fares on the North Coast and South Coast. By the South Coast I mean the section between Brisbane and Tweed Heads, which is a losing section. The fares on that section are considerably cheaper than those on the North Coast, which is one of the best paying sections in the State. The single second-class fare on the South Coast from South Brisbane to Southport, a distance of 50 miles, is 5s. 6d., but from Brisbane Central to Landsborough, a distance of 51 miles, it is 8s. From South Brisbane to Tweed Heads on the South Coast, a distance of 69 miles, the fare is 8s. 3d., whereas from Brisbane Central to Palmwoods on the North Coast, a

distance of 60 miles—9 miles less—the cost is 9s., or 9d. more.

Why should there be this differentiation? Landsborough and Palmwoods serve the North Coast seaside resorts, yet the people are discouraged from going there because the railway fares are cheaper on the South Coast. The cost of a Saturday-Sunday excursion second-class return fare from South Brisbane to Southport is 5s. 6d. and to Tweed Heads 8s. 3d., whereas on the North Coast for similar distances the cost is 9s. to Landsborough and 10s. to Palmwoods. This differentiation is having a detrimental effect on the development of the North Coast, and in my opinion there should be an equitable adjustment of fares. If one can travel 69 miles for 8s. 3d. on the South Coast line, one should be able to travel the same distance for the same fare on the North Coast, instead of having to pay 9d. more.

To compare other fares charged in the metropolitan area with fares in the country it is found that one can travel from Brisbane Central to Mayne, a distance of 2 miles for 2d., but in the country one has to pay 6d. to travel 2 miles. The fare from Brisbane Central to Toombul, a distance of 5 miles, in the metropolitan area, is 5d., but the cost of travelling the same distance in the country is 11d. Why should not country people going to their market town, say a distance of 5 miles, be able to travel for the same rate that people in the metropolitan area are charged instead of over twice as much? This is plainly a differentiation in favour of the people living in the metropolitan area. There should be a review of fares in the country districts to bring them on a level with those in the metropolis.

I commend these suggestions to the Government and hope some action will be taken to bring about a levelling-up in these rail fares, and thus give to one important section of the people the same opportunity to develop that is given to another section.

Mr. POWER (Baroona) (3.41 p.m.): At the outset I desire to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on again being elevated to the high and important office of Speaker. That is due in the first instance to the good sense of the people of the Gregory electorate in again returning you to Parliament, and, in the second place, to the confidence that has been shown in you by hon. members on both sides of this House. It is a compliment, Sir, that the Opposition did not take advantage of the opportunity of nominating a candidate against you.

I regret very much that the sectarian issue was raised at the last State election. I do not propose to discuss that subject in Parliament. I desire to treat it with the contempt that it deserves, but I desire to congratulate the people of Queensland on their intelligence in not falling to that filthy issue. I could if I so desired link up the names of hon. members of the Opposition with this party. On one occasion I made it my business to go to a certain place where a meeting was being held to foster this sectarian issue. I saw a certain man who is a member of this

Parliament, and a member of the Opposition, attending a meeting of this alleged Protestant Labour Party.

Mr. Edwards: What were you doing there?

Mr. POWER: I was there watching to see who were going in.

Mr. Edwards: You were pimping.

Mr. POWER: I was watching to see who were going there. I also desired to see if any member of my organisation was not playing the game by not honouring the pledge he signed as a member of the Australian Labour Party. I was very pleased that not one of them attended, but if the hon. member for Nanango desires I could name the hon. member whom I saw there.

Mr. Edwards: I suppose you reported them.

Mr. POWER: If any member of my organisation had gone there I should have taken the opportunity of dealing with them in the right way.

I congratulate the people of Queensland on not being associated with such a filthy issue. I could give the history of some of the people connected with that organisation. I do not propose to do so inside Parliament, otherwise people would say that I was taking advantage of the privilege of Parliament. I have definite evidence in connection with one individual associated with that party who was associated with another man's wife, and when her husband found out, she committed suicide, and at a later date the husband also committed suicide—all as a result of this individual's conduct. I do not want to deal with that question further, but shall treat it with the contempt it deserves.

This Government have done all that they possibly can in the interest of the people and development of this State. The Rural Development Transfer and Co-ordination of Powers Bill, which was recently passed by this House, is indicative of the sincerity of the Government's desire to rid Queensland of the intermittent relief scheme. It is a measure that is well worth passing. It will be admitted on all sides that during the transitional period some hardships will possibly occur, but I believe that when the scheme is launched properly it will receive the co-operation of the public that it deserves, and it will, therefore, make for the success of the Government's policy. Although it will be somewhat of a hardship on those who have to go out to the various parts of Queensland, I believe that within a short period the position will adjust itself.

The intermittent relief scheme has been exploited by the local authorities throughout Queensland. It would be interesting to obtain the figures showing the number of permanent employees engaged by local authorities previous to the introduction of the intermittent relief scheme and the number permanently employed after the relief scheme had been in operation some time. I believe the figures would be startling. On numbers of occasions local authorities took

advantage to curtail their expenditure and the Government subsidy was used to carry on work that should have been paid for out of their ordinary revenue. By those means they were able to reduce their rates.

In many instances local authorities employed relief workers on ordinary road making. At Southport men were engaged laying water mains. It was never intended that that class of work should be carried out under the intermittent relief scheme. Water supply is a necessary work from the health point of view and it should not be done by relief work. The Co-ordinator-General of Public Works will be able to prevent any exploitation of the intermittent relief scheme in the future.

Many local authorities applied to the Government for a loan and subsidy to carry out certain specified work. They specified the number of men who would be engaged and the period the work would take, but instead of employing that number of men they employed a lesser number for a much longer period. I maintain that if a local authority—or anybody else—enters into a contract with the Government, it is its duty to carry it out. The Co-ordinator-General of Public Works can compel a local authority, subject to the right of appeal, to carry out certain works. There are quite a number of works round the city of Brisbane and other parts of Queensland that should be carried out in the interests of the people. I refer particularly to a number of open sewers. Some time ago it was suggested that the overflow was caused by the running of storm water by the Water and Sewerage Department of the Brisbane City Council into the sewers. In a number of cases that was not the cause of the trouble, but in the low-lying districts the sewers did not have sufficient capacity to take away the storm waters. In an area adjoining my own, part of a three-valve sewer has been converted and we find that now it is emptying into a six-valve sewer open at both ends, with the result that the water has merely been shifted from one area to another without relief to the people further down. This should be rectified in the interests of both health and convenience. When it rains for any length of time many streets are under water. I am not exaggerating when I tell hon. members that I have inspected Vincent and Torwood streets, in Milton, after heavy rain and found 5 feet of water in the street and people unable to leave their homes.

The Co-ordinator-General of Public Works should investigate this class of work. I understand during the recent floods various low-lying areas were inspected, and flood levels taken and that there is in the Brisbane City Council a plan showing such areas. Proper storm-water sewers should be constructed, taking into account the respective catchment areas. That is work of a very important nature and should be carried out by the local authorities.

The use of concrete in the construction of roads as a substitute for bitumen is an

important matter that should be given consideration. I understand that bitumen to the value of £30,000 was brought into Queensland last year, and we should explore every avenue to prevent this importation of a foreign-produced article. Roads constructed of bitumen do not compare favourably with those of concrete and something should be done to make the local authorities and the Main Roads Commission construct concrete roads in lieu of bitumen roads. From the traffic point of view, particularly in wet weather, bitumen roads are dangerous, especially at night when glaring headlights on motor cars add to the difficulties of drivers. Many drivers are not courteous enough to dim their headlights and, as bitumen roads are dangerous, it would be in the interests of the State if the use of bitumen could be eliminated and cement substituted.

There are many facilities in this State for the manufacture of cement, and, although I know that the cost of a cement road is greater than that of bitumen, I fail to see why it should be so. Bitumen has to be imported from overseas, but no doubt the workmen of Mexico and other places where it is manufactured work very long hours and receive a very low rate of pay. Within Queensland there are natural facilities for the manufacture of cement and at any rate an investigation should be made to ascertain why its cost is so high and if something cannot be done to reduce it. A reduction of cost would mean an extension of use, and the natural corollary is that the greater the production the less the cost. Every avenue should be explored with a view to expanding an industry that can be carried on within the State, thus creating employment and effecting a saving in the amount of money sent overseas.

As to unemployment relief work and the desire of the Government to rid Queensland of it, one must realise that 50 per cent. of the unemployed men of Queensland live in the city of Brisbane. Some consideration should be given to the finding of work in the metropolitan area for those men who are here. A very important piece of work that could be undertaken would be the construction of a rat-proof wall along the river bank from Grey Street Bridge to the Regatta Hotel. We know that there have been a number of land slides along there in the past, that work is being carried out there and that Coronation Drive, as the River Road was re-named after the Coronation of our present King, is being re-christened "Corrugation Drive," a description with which I heartily agree. Some action will have to be taken to maintain that river bank and the construction of such a wall could be undertaken with safety. A number of men could be employed upon it as well as in the quarries obtaining stone. It is essential, too, from a health point of view. We know that the Health regulations provide that householders must take every precaution to keep their premises free from rats. It is just as important that our river banks should be proofed against them. I could advocate many other schemes that would mean absorbing great numbers of our unemployed, but that

would be futile, unless we know where the necessary money is coming from. The Commonwealth Government should give more favourable consideration to the repeated requests that have been made by our Premier at Loan Council meetings for more loan moneys for the development of Queensland. We have heard a good deal about the development of Victoria, but that State would fit into one corner of Queensland. As our State is so large and our population so small, it is necessary that a fair amount of taxation shall be levied here, but the Loan Council should at least give serious consideration to the repeated requests that have been made by this Government for more loan money for the purpose of developing Queensland.

I have pointed out in this House previously that money can always be made available to prosecute war. If it can be made available for the destruction of human life, then it should be made available for the preservation of human life, and for the purpose of giving to those unfortunate people in Queensland, and Australia, who are unemployed, an opportunity of enjoying a decent standard of living. The Commonwealth Government have the money. It is stored away and it should be made available to Governments when they ask for loan money. If more loan money is made available to this Government, it will be spent in the right direction. Hon. members opposite have complained on more than one occasion of the expenditure of huge sums of loan money by this Government. I remind those hon. members that we cannot develop the State without spending money and there is no reason whatever why the future generation should not share in the responsibility of meeting some of the redemption payments on the various loans that are made available to this State. There is nothing wrong with borrowing money so long as it is spent in the right direction, and it has been so spent in the past. We are doing all that it is possible to do to help the unemployed of Queensland.

I wish to refer now to the great number of accidents that have been occurring in the city of Brisbane for some time past. The Commissioner of Police is doing all that he can to reduce accidents to the minimum by educating the public, but I maintain that the local authorities are responsible in no small measure for the great number of accidents that are occurring in the city at the present time.

At 4 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Hanson, Buranda) relieved Mr. Speaker in the chair.

Mr. POWER: The traffic regulations provide that you must drive as near as possible to the lefthand kerbstone. However, roads are built with a bitumen strip on the crown, while the shoulders are left unmade. I think it would be well if the local authorities gave serious consideration to putting the bitumen on the shoulders of roads instead of on the crown of them, thereby enabling drivers of vehicles to carry out the traffic regulations in their entirety. That seems to be sadly neglected by local authorities, and I urge

the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs to take the matter up with them.

The other day I paid a visit to the Dental Hospital, having business to do there. Mr. Vidgen, the gentleman in charge, asked me if I should like to have a look over the institution. I was amazed at the number of persons I saw waiting for attention: it was like an early-door rush to a picture show. I inspected the whole of the building and saw the excellent work being done by that department. To see the staff doing very fine work in such a small space causes one to realise the need for the construction of the new dental hospital. I urge hon. members who have not visited the Dental Hospital to do so and to see the very fine work that is being carried out by Mr. Vidgen and his staff.

I regret to learn that we are going to lose a very valuable officer of the State Children Department in the near future. I refer to Mr. Clarke, who has been in charge there for some time. He is a man very suited for the position that he holds, and I think it will be hard to replace him. He seems to have the temperament for the job and commands the respect of all those with whom he has been associated. I sincerely hope that when he lays down his pen he will enjoy for the rest of his life a well-earned holiday.

A great number of advertisements have appeared in the Press recently indicating an exploitation of child labour. You can pick up a paper any day of the week and you will find advertisements for boys to ride bicycles, perhaps with the words added, "Must have junior pass" or "must own bicycle." I have made inquiries from a number of young lads who have obtained positions with the firms that advertise in this way and find that they are receiving the magnificent sum of 12s. 6d. a week. The parents of such a lad is compelled to buy a bicycle, paying it off at the rate of 5s. a week, so that they are receiving approximately 7s. 6d. a week from the employer.

I think it is a pretty bad state of affairs to find large loads carried by boys riding bicycles about town. It is at times impossible for them to see directly ahead by reason of the large number of parcels they are carrying. I think the Police Department should give some consideration to compelling employers to safeguard the lives of these lads by not overloading them. Accidents are reported every day, and many of them are caused by the carrying of large parcels.

Another matter I should like to refer to is the congestion of traffic in George street, Brisbane. To advocate the widening of the street would be futile, because that involves a considerable expenditure. I am not complaining either about the vehicles parked in the street, because one has to park somewhere in order to do business, but I am concerned about the slow-moving tram traffic in that street. Perhaps the trams arrive at the intersection of George and Adelaide streets a minute or two early and so that they will not arrive at the Railway Gates ahead of time they creep slowly down George street, thereby holding up a considerable line of

motor cars and other vehicles. The traffic branch of the Police Department should take the matter up with the Tramways Department of the Brisbane City Council immediately with a view perhaps to reducing the running time between the intersection of George and Adelaide streets and Countess street, and thus speeding up the tram traffic in this narrow street. The traffic is held up in the evening and again in the morning, and it is necessary to get the trams out of the way as quickly as possible. It will be necessary to give serious consideration to the adoption of one-way traffic in many other streets in the near future, and earnest consideration in this respect will have to be given to George street.

The hon. member for Oxley dealt with the employment of juvenile labour and quoted many figures in support of his contention. At times he makes some very startling statements that are likely to damage the credit of the State. In fact, at times he is prepared to say anything without any regard to consequences. He said to-day that the Government had done nothing to find work for the boys and girls of this State. He knows that statement is not true. He also said that no boys were being apprenticed, but if he had only taken the trouble to look into the matter he would have found that a number of boys had recently been apprenticed in the Railway Department.

The hon. member referred to a scheme that was in operation in New South Wales, but I sincerely hope it will never be introduced into Queensland. For some considerable time the Master Builders' Association and others have urged the introduction of such a scheme here. The hon. member said that builders and others would not apprentice boys because they could not be certain of providing them with work for longer than eight months and so would be responsible for training them for the balance of the term, but he knows that that statement also is not correct. He knows that the Apprenticeship Committee permits the transfer of apprentices from one employer to another and he also knows, or should know—and he should not debate the subject unless he knows—that there is an agreement whereby members of the Master Builders' Association may transfer apprentices from one employer to another when a contract is running out. That arrangement has been in operation for some time.

My point is that the Government are doing all that they can to find work for the juveniles in this State, but my concern is that a number of employers, including those associated with plywood mills, advertise for boys, keep them in employment for a time, and dispense with their services as soon as they are entitled to a higher rate of pay. They then advertise for a fresh lot of young boys but the first lot have really wasted their lives in having accepted employment which the employer knew was to last for only a limited time. That practice is being continually carried on in many timber and ply mills in and around Brisbane. The employers advertise for a strong, healthy boy who must not be more than 16 years of age, keep him for 12 months,

work him as hard as they can, and then throw him on the unemployment market. The employers should at least give a little more consideration to the welfare of these young people instead of ruthlessly dispensing with them in the way that they do.

In a number of timber mills and case factories these young boys are asked to work near circular saws. There is in my electorate the spectacle of a lad not more than 17 years of age who is now minus all the fingers on one hand as a result of an accident that occurred when he was working at a circular-saw bench. The Labour inspectors should give serious consideration to my suggestion that they make a rigid inspection of a number of factories in order to prevent similar accidents from arising. No lad of 16 or 17 years of age should be allowed to go near a circular saw. It might be necessary to amend the law to deal with this matter. If so, then it should be done as quickly as possible.

The Government are doing, and will continue to do, everything possible to relieve the situation in respect of unemployment. I have noticed that a number of local authorities are calling meetings to see in what way they can help the Government. I believe that the scheme is a worthy one. If that is so, it is only right that employers should co-operate with the Government. Should the scheme prove a failure the Government can take credit for having attempted to rid Queensland of this intermittent relief scheme, but if the scheme receives the co-operation and support from those local bodies and employers to whom it should appeal, then I have no doubt as to its ultimate success. We know that quite a number of local bodies view it sympathetically.

We know, too, that quite a number of persons who were associated with the introduction of the intermittent relief scheme were the first to condemn its abolition. We know also that both the Country Party and United Australia Party policies aimed at the total abolition of the unemployment relief tax. If they realised that desire how can they place men on full-time employment? They gave voice to that policy both on the hustings and over the air. If the people had unfortunately put them in a position to carry out that policy, what would they substitute for it to relieve the distress occasioned by unemployment? They merely attempted to hoodwink the electors. Unfortunately, they succeeded in doing so in 1929, and the people on this occasion were determined not to give them another opportunity. If the Government get that co-operation from the people which they deserve in their effort to place the unemployed on public works, they will have succeeded in ridding Queensland of a system which should never have been introduced.

This part of the policy of the Government, as well as those other matters mentioned in the Governor's Speech, will, I feel sure, be of benefit to Queensland.

Mr. RUSSELL (Hamilton) (4.14 p.m.): I cannot understand the silence of hon. members on the Government benches. It is remarkable, because usually they take advan-

take of the debate on the Address in Reply to work the parish pump for all they are worth. There must be some concerted move to prevent Government members from speaking. I should be very glad to hear what metropolitan members think about the proposal of their Government on the unemployment question, but with the exception of one or two they are not prepared to air their views.

The hon. member who just resumed his seat, in common with his confreres, is prepared to blame the Commonwealth Government for everything. In fact, he alleges that the Commonwealth should find loan money for unemployment. I should like to ask him: where is all this money that he talks about? I should also like to remind him that before the end of this year the Commonwealth Government must find £70,000,000 for the conversion of loans, the finding of which will tax the resources of Australia very much indeed. It is recognised that unemployment is a matter for the State to attend to, and it is idle to attempt to throw the responsibility on other people. It is our problem and we must face it.

We have already this session dealt with two very important items of Government policy and after allowing for those and unemployment, there is very little in the Speech. In fact, it is one of the most barren Speeches I ever listened to. Evidently the Government are not showing their hand. Later on, we may have other measures brought forward; perhaps we may witness the spectacle of the Government adopting the policy of the United Australia Party and the Country Party.

I join issue with the hon. member for Baroona who claims that his party were the first to advocate the abolition of the unemployment relief tax. Although he does say it was advocated by the United Australia Party and the Country Party. We on this side of the House must take credit for having the courage to advocate the abolition of this tax. We proposed that the tax should be abolished during the present Parliament, but not all at once. We came to the conclusion that the system that had been put into operation had not cured the evil, that despite the enormous taxation levied on the people it had not been mitigated to any great extent. We have to admit that to-day there are at least 20,000 people out of work. That is a very grave reflection on the efficacy of the legislation. The remedy that was proposed in 1930 failed to bring about the abolition of unemployment and we thought it should be abolished and some other system tried. That is why we argued—and I presume that is why the Premier copied our policy—that these men who were fit and able to work should be engaged on work of a permanent and national character. I recognise that it would be impossible to employ all these men on this class of work because a large section of them would be physically unable to do heavy work, but in the main, a large section of the unemployed could be absorbed on these useful works.

We have recently seen the plan of the Government to deal with the unemployed.

From a certain date 50 per cent. of the married men and all the single men must go on rations. That is to say, a favoured few will have the opportunity of being put onto works. I understand it is proposed to absorb about 2,000 almost immediately, and others will be engaged later on. The unemployed are very perturbed about their present position. Something must be done to alleviate the distress among them. It would be a cruel thing to take these men off intermittent relief work immediately. The men on intermittent relief work should be kept on until the Government are able to employ them on permanent work. If the Government do not do that it means a great hardship will be inflicted on a large section of the community. I think from motives of humanity the Government should consider their plight and see that they are not placed in a worse position than they are in to-day.

A Government Member: Do you advocate an increase of taxation?

Mr. RUSSELL: No increase is required. During the current year, the Treasurer will have at least about £1,250,000 from unemployment relief taxation. There has been no reduction up to the present and we must bear in mind that all the assessments for last year not paid by 30 June are coming in in July, August, and September. The Commissioner of Taxes will receive a large amount of money on income tax assessments. The Treasurer has had the handling of fairly large sums of money during the present half-year and that should be ample to keep these men on intermittent relief work at any rate until they are put on work of a permanent nature. There are many other ways of finding the money, but it is not my business to tell the Treasurer. He should find that out for himself.

The Premier: There are not many ways that you can tell me about.

Mr. RUSSELL: Perhaps I can tell the hon. gentleman some.

The Premier: You want it both ways.

Mr. RUSSELL: The hon. gentleman might not thank me for suggesting it. I give the Premier credit for certain things. We must co-operate as much as we can and we will help the Government if they are willing to accept our suggestions, but we certainly will not be treated with contempt. I content myself by pointing out that there are several ways in which money can be used for the relief of unemployment and the spectacle of thousands of men being thrown on to rations can be prevented.

I was very much interested in the remarks made by His Excellency as to the benefits he had derived from conversations with prominent men in the United Kingdom. He pointed out the great advantage that he and others have had in visiting the United Kingdom and making valuable contacts, principally with the object of stating Queensland's case. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley quoted a speech made by a black-labour advocate and said that we should take

steps to remove all misapprehension in regard to the White Australia policy. There is a good deal of misapprehension about it in some quarters. We know very well that even in our midst there are advocates for the employment of black labour in the Northern areas, but they are a mere handful of people and their utterances count for nothing. But apart from that, visits to the old country by prominent persons such as the Governor have the effect of dispelling many illusions and enable our viewpoints to be placed before the people of Great Britain. I therefore urge the hon. member for Warrego to follow the example of His Excellency. I venture to say it would be for the country's good if the Government sent him overseas to get first-hand information of the situation in Great Britain. We are about fed up with his vituperation of British statesmen. He waxed very sarcastic in regard to the government of Great Britain being in the hands of men from certain schools. In fact, scholars from Harrow have played a very important part in the government of Great Britain. In political circles over there are a class of men who are well educated and have studied political science. They are men of substance and with ample time at their disposal and in a crisis they are with their experience and knowledge able to handle the situation.

How can the hon. member for Warrego say that we are not indeed fortunate to have presiding over the affairs of the British Commonwealth of Nations men like Earl Baldwin and the present Prime Minister, Mr. Chamberlain? These men have done their duty nobly by the citizens of the British Commonwealth of Nations. They have no axe to grind. To-day Great Britain is an outstanding example in that it is the one country in the world that is doing its utmost to preserve peace throughout the world. I suppose no nation is more respected amongst the nations of the civilised world than Great Britain to-day. If the hon. member would take a trip to Great Britain I am sure that he would be converted and that he would come back expressing the same views as those expressed by His Excellency the Governor.

The hon. member for Warrego is certainly very vehement in his criticism of the Commonwealth Government, but one misstatement he made was that the peanut industry was saved by the Government of Queensland, and that the Federal Government fell down on the question of protection. He further declared that the Commonwealth Government would not grant loans to the peanut pool unless the State Government guaranteed them, and that prosperity in the Kingaroy area has been solely due to the fact that this Government did the job that the Federal Government would not do. The facts are that peanut growing was started in Kingaroy many years ago, and although it had many vicissitudes in the beginning it is in a prosperous condition to-day. It certainly could not carry on without the guarantee of the Queensland Government.

We all know the reason why the Commonwealth Bank did not advance the money. As

I pointed out on a previous occasion, all these pool boards are created by the State Government's legislation, and many of them are in a precarious position inasmuch as they must depend on the loyalty of their suppliers. If the suppliers are not loyal to the boards, then they must collapse. We know that in the Kingaroy district to-day there are many growers who sell their goods outside of the pool altogether. It is unfortunate that the producers are not loyal to their own pool boards, but there is nothing that we can do to compel them to be so. Under section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution they can trade over the border untrammelled by the control of the pool board.

What has really made this industry in Queensland has been the imposition of an import duty by the Federal Government. The present import duty on peanuts is 4d. a lb. on nuts in the shell and 6d. a lb on kernels.

The Premier: They blame you for weakening the market.

Mr. RUSSELL: Me, personally?

The Premier: Yes.

Mr. RUSSELL: I am the best friend the board ever had. In fact, I am the first man who ever put Queensland peanuts on the Australian market. I want to see the pool board progress, and I certainly do feel very strongly on this. I believe in the commodity-board system, and I think every producer should be loyal to his board.

The protective duties I mention have made the industry in Queensland. Despite the high protection, the producers are selling peanuts in the shell at 4d. a lb. and kernels at about 5½d. a lb., much below the import duty. It is evident that the growers are satisfied with the prices. It would be quite easy for them to get higher prices if they liked, because with the enormous protective duties of 4d. and 6d. there is no possible chance of peanuts being imported from any part of the world.

Another thing that the Commonwealth Government did, and which was to the advantage of the industry, was that when there was a great scarcity of peanuts and the Southern buyers were demanding to be allowed to import peanuts from China, they gave permission for the importation of a limited quantity of peanuts and made the Peanut Board the sole importer for Australia. The board actually controlled the sale of imported peanuts during the scarcity. I think the Commonwealth Government were very fair, and it is because of the high protective duties that the industry is now so prosperous.

The hon. member for Logan said something this morning about the Workers' Dwellings Act. He gave the credit to the anti-Labour Government for introducing the legislation, it is true, but his aspersions on members of the anti-Labour Administration to the effect that they put obstacles in the way of the carrying out of this very valuable Act are not correct, and I do not think he should have made them. This is a piece of legislation that both parties have agreed with, and it has been very successful. I think some-

thing more should be done, but I intend to dilate upon that later.

The hon. member for Maryborough in his speech on the Address in Reply made a very good case indeed for the plywood and timber industry. I think the sentiments he expressed were endorsed by most of us. However, I point out to him that the credit for the formation of the Plywood Board should be given to the Moore Administration.

During 1930, when we were discussing the timber and plywood industry generally, we had an advisory committee that delved into the whole matter to find means of stabilising the industry and creating bigger trade. One of the proposals made was that a commodity board should be formed, but the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act, as it then stood, did not allow a Plywood Board to be constituted. It will be found that while the hon. member for Cooroora was Secretary for Agriculture and Stock, that is, while the Moore Government were in office, the words "plywood and veneers" were included as commodities that could be covered by the Act. The idea was that as conditions in the industry were so chaotic, the interests of manufacturers, of suppliers, and of the men engaged in the work would best be served if a board was constituted to control the supply and the price to be charged.

There was a good deal of opposition from some of the manufacturers, but I am pleased to say that those persons who opposed the formation of the board have now been converted to the need for it.

The board was constituted under the Labour Administration and is to-day very successful.

The hon. member for Maryborough made a mistake in saying that plywood to-day is cheaper than it was prior to the formation of the board. As a matter of fact, before the formation of the board it reached the very low level of about 10s. or 11s. a 100 square feet. That was an unprofitable price. To-day the price of plywood is about 16s. a 100 square feet, for export South. The manufacturers allowed the board to take over and provided the necessary machinery, but again success was not achieved without the aid of the Federal Government. They fixed the import duty on softwood plywood at 7s. 6d. a 100 square feet. Prior to that the duty was 7s. 6d. a 100 superficial feet, which meant that the duty was quite a negligible one, and to correct the anomaly the duty was fixed at 7s. 6d. a 100 square feet or 100 face feet. That has given the plywood industry a very big fillip and has had the effect of keeping out the imported softwood plywoods that were imported in those days, principally from Canada. To-day Queensland is supplying almost the whole of the softwood plywood requirements in the South with the exception of a small quantity of plywood manufactured from Oregon logs. So that to-day the industry is stabilised, prices are better, manufacturers are making a fair profit, and a large number of men are being employed in the industry.

Whilst the State Government have conferred benefits on the industry they in turn

have received a very large revenue from the sale of their logs. The current rates paid by manufacturers for plywood logs range from 22s. a 100 superficial feet for logs 54 inches to 59 inches in girth up to 28s. 6d. a 100 superficial feet for logs 84 inches and over in girth on trucks at Brisbane. In no other country in the world is such an enormous price paid for softwoods. Some of the increase in the price of the logs is due in a small measure to the diminished supply from private lands. While as a purely business undertaking the State Government are justified, I think, in exploiting the market to its fullest, particularly in regard to the cream of the logs—they are a rapidly disappearing quantity—it must be recognised that the time is not far distant when the supply of this class of log will cease. According to the reports of the Sub-Department of Forestry the end of our timber resources is not far ahead. In fact, a few years will probably see the end of the supply of first-class logs. We know very well that despite our efforts with reforestation we shall not be able to make up the lag between the time that our present supplies peter out and supplies start to come in from the reforested areas. It will mean, of course, that the softwood manufacturers will have to have recourse to Canada for logs suitable for manufacture into plywood.

At 4.38 p.m.,

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Mr. RUSSELL: While I am on this question it is interesting to note the financial results to the Treasury from the Sub-Department of Forestry, which has always been looked upon as a milch cow by necessitous Governments. We know that enormous surpluses have been handed over by it to consolidated revenue. For five years ended 30 June, 1937, the net surplus handed over to consolidated revenue was £1,080,000, whereas the amount expended from loan funds for reforestation was £397,000. According to the statement made by the hon. member for Maryborough, who evidently has access to the latest figures, the receipts for the year ended 30 June, 1938, amounted to £838,000, of which £375,000 was transferred to consolidated revenue. While the Government find it a handy source of revenue to bolster up their Consolidated Revenue Fund they must recognise that in a very few years to come they will not have these sources to tap, because supplies will have diminished. It is hard to know just how that deficiency will be made up, but we can sound a note of warning to the Government not to expect such an enormous revenue from this source, which has supplied them with so much revenue for a long time. In fact, it is generally expected that five years hence we shall see the end of our first-class marketable logs.

We may have supplies of smaller timber from the reforested areas. These will not be suitable for building or plywood purposes although they may be quite suitable for case-making. I have always been an advocate of using all the spare land we have on the North Coast for the growing of exotic pines, even if they can only be used for the manu-

facture of case timber. It means, of course that on the depletion of our softwoods there will be an enormous importation of softwood timber from Canada, where there are supplies that will last for many generations.

While the effort to popularise our hardwoods is to be commended we must realise that hardwoods cannot in every case take the place of softwoods. I contend that in any case the Government should pay much greater attention to the regeneration of the very fine hardwoods we have in Queensland because in the years to come our hardwood forests will be one of the finest assets this State could wish for. We know, too, that nowhere in the world can hardwood be produced to equal the Australian hardwood.

There has been a ruthless destruction of hardwood in the years gone by. Millions of feet of the finest hardwoods have been destroyed, and we have not taken steps to see that supplies have been replenished. To-day it is very difficult to get supplies of hardwood. There seems to be no continuity of supplies in Queensland, and many of our timber merchants are now forced to look to New South Wales for supplies. That is a very serious position to be in, and I earnestly urge that greater attention be paid to the regeneration of these hardwoods. We have many thousands of acres of land in Queensland suitable for growing hardwoods. There is no better vocation to which we could put our unemployed youth than in sending him out to our hardwood forests to weed out the rubbish and thus allowing the best hardwood timber to exist. Many hardwoods regenerate themselves, and do not require the special attention associated with softwood forests. I therefore recommend greater attention to the regeneration and reforestation of our hardwoods.

I have already mentioned the workers' dwelling scheme in passing. I might add a few words in regard to that very important matter. Probably you are aware, Mr. Speaker, that in the forefront of the United Australia Party's policy we advocated a housing scheme for Queensland. Although the Premier rather deprecated it, he must before many years elapse come round to our way of thinking.

The Premier: As a matter of fact, the people who got you tried me first.

Mr. RUSSELL: That is all right. I made investigations myself independently. I am very keen about this project. I recommend to the Premier that he make an investigation of the whole subject. He should appoint a small committee from this House to investigate it. I am not prepared to take departmental reports, as they might be coloured.

I do not wish in any way to reflect upon the utility of the State Advances Corporation. That institution is doing very valuable work and I do not desire to interfere with it, but its scope is too limited. The Governor stated in his Speech that something like £400,000 had been spent last year by way of loans for the construction of workers' dwellings. That amount is totally

inadequate. If you gave every man the opportunity of building his own home you would have less discontent in the community. A man in his own home is a better citizen.

The Premier: If the subject is as good as you say it is, why should you ask for a Government guarantee? Why not float your company straight away?

Mr. RUSSELL: The Premier says, "Why don't we get private enterprise to build these homes." If you go to a private institution to-day you would be asked to put down a fairly heavy deposit and I do not think you would be able to borrow under 6 to 7 per cent. I understand the State Advances Corporation lends money at about 4 per cent. I do not think that rate can be maintained, because it costs the Government pretty well that amount.

After all, is it the duty of the Government to build homes for people at all? It is all right when ample funds are available but when there is a scarcity of money would it not be better to use the funds for the relief of unemployment and adopt a different scheme for the building of homes.

I am much enamoured of the New South Wales scheme, which is founded on the English system. I want to assure the Premier there is no opportunity for jerry-builders or land-speculators to make enormous profits. The whole system is based on the co-operative building society principle. The shareholders subscribe their own money to the funds of the institution. Money is borrowed from the financial institutions with the guarantee of the Government. I understand the rate of interest is 5 per cent., but it may be a little higher.

The Premier: It is more than that.

Mr. RUSSELL: The society that I interviewed in Sydney a few weeks ago was paying 5 per cent. It had a full membership and has built a number of very fine homes. These homes are inspected by a Government inspector and there is no chance of jerry-building—no more than there would be under the Government scheme in Queensland. The system has worked well in New South Wales and the Government of that State have agreed to guarantee up to £10,000,000. Already £5,000,000 has been utilised. I understand that if the societies were allowed to use all the funds they require they could absorb £5,000,000 per annum for building homes for the people. The beauty of the scheme is the repayment of principal and interest is so small; it is much lower than paying rent. The scheme has been availed of largely by people who have assured incomes or fair prospects, but it would not appeal to people in uncertain circumstances.

In view of the present situation I am of opinion the money we are spending on workers' dwellings could be very well applied to the relief of unemployment and private resources should be tapped for the building of these homes. The Premier knows the scheme very well. The Government guarantee

up to 90 per cent. of a loan up to £900, and over £900 the guarantee is diminished. I know of a man who is paying about 23s. 6d. a week in principal and interest on a beautiful home costing £750 that could not be rented in Sydney for £2 a week. I seriously recommend the scheme to the Premier, despite his sarcastic remarks.

The Premier: There was no sarcasm about them at all.

Mr. RUSSELL: I should like the matter investigated. I am anxious to provide homes for the people. If the Government have plenty of money available they could apply some of it to that purpose, but if they have not it is another matter. The indications are that the Premier will be pinched for money in the future. Our first duty is to our unemployed and he is justified in tapping every fund at his command for the relief of unemployment.

The Premier: I will do that all right.

Mr. RUSSELL: The hon. gentleman got money from the Australian Mutual Provident Society for the construction of the Story Bridge, and consequently will not be creating a precedent by obtaining money from financial institutions to build these homes. I suggest he investigate this proposal. Not only will it afford relief to his Loan Fund but it will give a great fillip to timber merchants, builders, and workers generally in the building industry, creating much employment for our artisans, and alleviating their distress. We are justified in tapping any source available to relieve the terrible curse of unemployment that is in our midst to-day.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Moore, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 4.53 p.m.