

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 3 DECEMBER 1941

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

“In view of the announcement recently made by me that a further £2 2s. per ton would be made available on 31 January, on sugar shipped to that date, it is not considered advisable to make the further representations indicated to relieve mills of the obligation mentioned at present.”

HOTEL LICENCE FEES.

Mr. BRAND (Isis), for **Mr. BARNES** (Bundaberg), asked The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs—

“1. What are the amounts of alcoholic purchases of the three smallest licensing fees submitted to Licensing Commission?”

“2. What are the amounts of alcoholic purchases of the three highest returns submitted to the Commission?”

“3. How many licensing fees are over £300?”

“4. How many licensing fees are under £25?”

“5. Is it the Commission's aim to delicense all under £25?”

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, Ithaca) replied—

“1 and 2. Presuming that the hon. member desires to know the total amount of the purchases of liquor for the period of 12 months ending 30 June last, in respect of which fees were charged to licensed victuallers during the current year, the answers are that the amounts of purchases range from £21 to £50,029.

“3. Nil.

“4. Three hundred and eighty-one hotels.

“5. The Commission is charged with the duty of determining this matter in the manner directed in the law.”

GOLDEN INVESTMENT COMPANY.

Mr. BRAND (Isis), for **Mr. BARNES** (Bundaberg), asked The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs—

“1. Who are the principals of the firm of Golden Investments?”

“2. How long has the present agreement with that firm to run?”

“3. What is the amount paid by the Golden Casket authorities to Golden Investments since the establishment of the firm to 30 June, 1941?”

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, Ithaca) replied—

“1. D. C. Gray and H. Partridge.

“2. The firm of Golden Investments has not been appointed for any special term. It operates the same as any other Golden

WEDNESDAY, 3 DECEMBER, 1941.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. E. J. Hanson, Buranda) took the chair at 10.30 a.m.

QUESTIONS.

“IN STORE” ADVANCE ON SUGAR.

Mr. BRAND (Isis) asked the Premier—

“In view of the close of the sugar season, will he make representations with a view to securing to the sugar-mills the ‘in store’ advance of 13s. per sack on the four weeks’ output upon which no advance has been made?”

Casket agent, and like any other agent can be cancelled without notice.

"3. From 10 May, 1933, to 30 June, 1941, Golden Investments has been paid £194,734 18s. 7d. commission on sales made by it outside the State, amounting to £1,977,762. Since the war such business has fallen away, and the management of the Golden Casket Art Union expects a further decrease this year."

HERD-TESTING OF DAIRY CATTLE.

Mr. PLUNKETT (Albert) asked The Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"1. How many head of cattle have been compulsorily slaughtered on account of disease during the past 12 months?"

"2. Has any compensation been paid in respect of such slaughterings? If so, how much?"

"3. If not, in view of the proposal for compulsory herd testing and the destruction of all cattle found to be diseased, will he institute a scheme of compensation in order to assist the producers concerned to restock their holdings?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, Barcoo) replied—

"1. In the year 1940-41, 25,613 cattle were tuberculin tested, of which 1,710 reacted. Since 1 July, 1941, 20,368 have been tested, of which 1,191 were reactors.

"2. No compensation has been paid. These reactors were destroyed on request of the owner, either on the farm or at the abattoir or meatworks.

"3. In common with many people in the dairying industry, I find it exceedingly difficult to determine the value of a diseased beast, and would hesitate, therefore, to commit my department to any scheme of compensation for such cattle. As tuberculosis varies in incidence in the various dairying areas of the State, any scheme of compensation based on contributions would obviously impose an unfair obligation on the owners of clean herds to the advantage of people owning herds very highly infected."

PASSENGERS, TOOWOOMBA-BRISBANE INTER-STATE MAIL TRAIN.

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

"Will he state the number of passengers carried by the interstate mail train 37 Down between Toowoomba and Brisbane during October, 1939, and October, 1941?"

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

"These particulars are not recorded. Passengers by this train travel from various places other than the section between Toowoomba and Brisbane. If the hon. member desires the number of passengers booked at Toowoomba for the periods mentioned the information will be obtained."

RAILWAY LOCOMOTIVES UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

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

"What is the number of locomotives now under construction, stating type?"

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

"Seventeen, made up as follows:— Ipswich Workshops, eight 'B18½', three 'D17'; Walkers Limited, Maryborough, six 'B18½'; total 17. Five 'B18½' engines have been delivered from the Ipswich Workshops since 1 July, 1941. A tender has been accepted for an additional six 'C17' locomotives."

TWO-WAY TRAFFIC IN BOWEN TERRACE.

Mr. MANN (Brisbane), without notice, asked the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs—

"Will he give consideration to the request of a number of residents from New Farm to have Bowen terrace declared a two-way traffic street?"

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, Ithaca) replied—

"Since the hon. member for Brisbane mentioned the matter to me I have asked the Commissioner of Police to investigate the proposal and let me have a report on it."

LOSS OF H.M.A.S.S. "SYDNEY" AND "PARRAMATTA."

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay) (10.37 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"1. That this House places on record its deep regret at the loss sustained by the Commonwealth and the Empire through the sinking of H.M.A.S. "Sydney" and H.M.A.S. "Parramatta" and the sorrow and sympathy of the members of Parliament of Queensland towards the relatives of the gallant heroes who voluntarily gave their lives in the cause of democracy and freedom.

"2. That Mr. Speaker convey the above resolution to the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth."

There is no doubt that the loss of H.M.A.S. "Sydney" is a very severe blow to Australia. It was a matter of report for many days before the worst was known, and all kinds of speculation took place in the streets and elsewhere as to what had happened. It appears that the "Sydney" sank the "Steiermark" (9,400 tons) and apparently later caught fire. Evidently there was a strong engagement. It is very distressing not to have full information as to what actually took place, and I am one of those who think that knowing everything is never as bad as wondering what has happened.

Mr. Yeates: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: But we can be assured that the men of H.M.A.S. "Sydney" died gallantly upholding the greatest traditions of the Navy to which they belonged. We know—and I know in detail very largely—of the magnificent work the "Sydney" did during this great war, and while we mourn the loss of the "Sydney" as one of our naval vessels, we think with pride of the wonderful work that she and the ship's complement did during their period of service. Our hearts go out in sympathy with the sorrowing relatives of the heroes who voluntarily gave their lives in the cause for which we are fighting.

The same applies to the "Parramatta." She was a corvette, of the type of which many are being built in Queensland at the present time—a very useful and valuable ship. She was sunk in the Mediterranean while on convoy duty, and from the information I have been able to obtain it is indicated that the "Parramatta" did very valuable service in the Mediterranean and elsewhere. The loss of almost the entire complement is a very serious one. Many of them were Queensland men, and one came from my own electorate. We are deeply grieved at the loss of the men on the "Parramatta," but if there is any comfort in the fact that men die in serving their country, at least these men had, and their relatives have, that comfort.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) (10.41 a.m.): I desire to associate the Opposition with the motion so feelingly moved by the Premier to extend our sympathy to the relatives of our gallant men who went down on the "Sydney" and "Parramatta." The name "Sydney" is one that will always be recorded in the naval annals of Australia, because the original "Sydney" played a particularly gallant part in the last war, in sinking the German ship "Emden," and the second "Sydney," whose loss we mourn to-day, had an equally brilliant record. Her exploits in the Mediterranean and other theatres of war since the outbreak of hostilities make us proud of our Australian ship, our Australians who manned her, and the Australian Navy Department, which controlled her. I feel certain that when the end came it was an end that her men would have wished for, if it was to be their fate, to lose their lives in war—that is, to go down in action against the enemy. As the Premier has said, it is unfortunate that we do not know the full details, but I am certain that when they are known, if ever they are, it will be found that the men covered themselves with glory.

The "Parramatta" was a class of ship that does not carry out spectacular work for the navy, but it does necessary work and gives a service just as essential as any other fighting ship. She met an end that has come to many other ships of her class that have given protection to our merchant fleets, and I am sure that in her career she built up a record of which we, as Australians, can feel very proud. I join with the Premier in extending our deepest sympathy to the relatives of the men who were lost on these two great ships.

Mr. DART (Wynnum) (10.44 a.m.): I should like to support the motion to extend our sympathy to the relatives of the naval men on the "Sydney" and "Parramatta." Three of them were Wynnumites and the father of one almost made the supreme sacrifice in the last war. He returned a cripple, and is still a cripple. I am sure that the sympathy of this Parliament will help to cheer the sorrowing relatives in their great hour of trial.

Motion agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

DEATH OF MR. H. C. McMINN.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay) (10.45 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"1. That this House desires to place on record its sense of the loss this State has sustained by the death of Hugh Cameron McMinn, Esq., a former member of the Parliament of Queensland.

"2. That Mr. Speaker be requested to convey to the widow and family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland."

The late Hughie McMinn, as we knew him, entered Parliament on 22 May, 1915, as a member for the period of the twentieth Parliament. Those who knew him as a member and a man respected him. He was a good-living man, a man of sound principle, and one who sought to do well by the community he represented. He was for a very long period associated with the industrial and political life of this State. He was elected to this Parliament and has now died. I am sure that all hon. members respect the services the late hon. gentleman gave to the State. We pass on to the widow and relatives our sincere sympathy in their loss.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) (10.47 a.m.): I desire to second the motion. The hon. gentleman was not known to me personally, although I have a knowledge of his public record. He gave excellent service during the time he was a member of this House, and during the whole of his adult lifetime he gave good service in useful public movements in this State. I join with the Premier in extending sympathy to his relatives.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

HARBOUR BOARDS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

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

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness

of introducing a Bill to amend the Harbour Boards Acts, 1892 to 1939, in certain particulars, and for other purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Gair, South Brisbane, in the chair.)

The TREASURER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) (10.50 a.m.): I move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Harbour Boards Acts, 1892 to 1939, in certain particulars, and for other purposes.”

This Bill is a simple and straightforward one. It has two or three purposes, one of which is to overcome the difficulties that have been met with in certain spheres, and another to meet two specific cases I will mention.

In certain ports of Queensland there are harbour boards and in other ports there are not harbour boards. There is no harbour board for the port of Brisbane, for instance. Harbour boards are entrusted with certain powers in the reclamation of land. In the port of Brisbane no such power exists, and it is desirable that the power should exist; and it is proposed by this Bill that the corporation of the Treasury shall have the same power that is given to harbour boards in those ports where harbour boards exist for these specific purposes.

The corporation of the Treasurer will be authorised to hold land under deed of grant in the corporation's name for harbour purposes. The corporation of the Treasurer of Queensland will, in effect, exercise the powers previously devolving upon the Governor in Council in respect of those harbours not under the control of specific harbour boards.

The Bill also empowers the Governor in Council to authorise the corporation to reclaim any land lying below highwater mark within the harbour limit, and on reclamation to issue a deed of grant in the name of the corporation.

The Bill also contains a provision authorising any person to reclaim any land lying below highwater mark within the limits of any harbour, upon such terms and conditions as may be determined and set out by the authorising Order in Council. When exercising that authority the Governor in Council must be satisfied that such reclamation will not interrupt and interfere with navigation or prejudice any right, title, estate, or interest of any other parties.

There are other provisions in the Bill, one of them being that the Governor in Council, upon the joint recommendation of the Treasurer and the Secretary for Public Lands, may issue a special lease under section 179 of the Land Act for any land lying below highwater mark outside the limits of any harbour. There are certain lands outside the limits of the harbour that are not vested in any body at the present time.

Mr. Nicklin: What are the limits of the harbour?

The TREASURER: They are specified by the Harbour Boards Acts.

There are two special provisions contained in this Bill, and really the matters I have mentioned lead up to those special provisions. One concerns the City Electric Light Company's property at Doboy Creek. Originally this property went up to the river front, then, to improve the river, a retaining wall was erected some distance from the company's property, so there is an amount of tidal land between the property of the company and the retaining wall. This Bill, if carried, will permit the company to reclaim this land, and it having reclaimed the land to the satisfaction of the corporation the Governor in Council may issue a special lease of the reclamation area to the company, the reclamation being regarded as improvements within the meaning of section 175B of the Land Act. If a person reclaims land in that way with the authority of the Governor in Council, it is only natural that he should have priority in the lease of the land. It is not right he should reclaim the land and it should be put up to public competition so that anybody could step in and obtain a lease of it.

The City Electric Light Company Limited took the matter up with the Government some time ago, and the Government agreed to do what the Bill proposes. The company is very anxious to reclaim the land and erect extensions to its premises on the reclaimed land. It is a very urgent matter. It is very anxious to extend its property.

The same position arises in connection with Thomas Borthwick and Sons (Australasia) Limited. It desires to be authorised to reclaim an area of 2 roods 25 perches of tidal land situated between the company's freehold and the present retaining wall. The same thing happened there. The retaining wall was built some distance out from the land, and there is tidal land between the company's freehold property and the present retaining wall.

Mr. Decker: At Pinkenba?

The TREASURER: Yes. This Bill will allow that company to reclaim that property. Having reclaimed it to the satisfaction of the corporation of the Treasurer, the Treasurer, with the concurrence of the Secretary for Public Lands, can issue a lease under certain provisions of the Land Act. It will allow the company to hold that land and use it for its own purposes, and erect some necessary buildings in connection with its meatworks.

These are virtually the whole of the provisions of the Bill.

Mr. Nicklin (Murrumba) (10.57 a.m.): From the information the Treasurer has given the Committee about the Bill, I should say, Mr. Chairman, that it is desirable and necessary, particularly the power proposed to be taken that will enable the corporation of the Treasury, as the controlling authority, to undertake the reclamation of land adjacent to rivers. There are areas adjacent to the Brisbane River that could be reclaimed with

advantage. In fact, a number of areas, in the Hamilton district, for instance, have been reclaimed already. I do not know under what authority the reclamation was done. I suppose the area behind the Hamilton retaining wall would be called part of the Brisbane River.

The Treasurer: We had certain authority for the work that has been done.

Mr. NICKLIN: There is no doubt that it will be an improvement for a harbour board or the authority controlling a harbour to have such a power. In the vicinity of harbours and rivers there are many areas that could be reclaimed with advantage, and there are many opportunities for reclamation by the construction of a retaining wall. That has been so near Doboy Creek. When retaining walls are built one often sees tidal land between the retaining wall and the land. Such areas could be reclaimed, and it is only right that this matter should be put in order by giving the corporation of the Treasury, as the controlling authority for the Port of Brisbane and other ports for which no harbour boards exist, the right to undertake these reclamations.

But there is one point that must not be overlooked when power is given to any person to reclaim an area with the approval of the Treasury or the harbour board concerned. It would not be right to give to any person the right to make a reclamation and enjoy the privileges that right conveys unless every care was taken to see that public interests and the rights of the people of the State or the harbour board or the authority in charge of the harbour were protected. I take it that the Treasurer will see that that is done before permission is given to any person to make a reclamation.

The hon. gentleman mentioned two companies that desire to reclaim areas between their properties and retaining walls. Those areas could be reclaimed with advantage, and if the City Electric Light Company Limited and Thomas Borthwick and Sons Limited are willing to do the work of reclamation, it is only right that they should be given priority in the leasing of the reclaimed areas. The only point I desire to emphasise is the need for amply protecting the public before granting permission to persons other than harbour boards or others in charge of harbours to carry out reclamation work.

Mr. DART (Wynnum) (11.1 a.m.): I rise to support the proposed measure. Two or three gangs have been working on retaining walls along the Brisbane River during the past few years, and it is wise to grant priority of lease to persons who will undertake the reclamation of areas between those retaining walls and the old river banks for the purpose of making necessary additions to their plants.

Mr. Maher: By whom are the gangs employed?

Mr. DART: By the Government, and most of the men live at Wynnum. I think it is necessary in the two instances mentioned by the Treasurer to give priority to the com-

panies that desire to carry out this reclamation work. I support the Bill because I think it will be useful, not only by helping those two companies, but in offering an inducement to others that may desire to carry out similar work at a later stage.

Mr. DECKER (Sandgate) (11.3 a.m.): I rise to support the point made by the Leader of the Opposition in connection with protecting the public interests. We all know that wonderful improvements have been effected along the banks of the Brisbane River, but we are lacking in public access to and public reserves on the river bank. Too many properties in Brisbane have been subdivided into river frontages, with the result that access to river frontages has been denied to the public. With the straightening of the river and the improvement of its banks, the Government must not lose sight of the fact, when considering leases over reclaimed areas, that the public are entitled to access to the river at those places.

The Secretary for Public Lands: That would be a matter for the local authority.

Mr. DECKER: No, it is a matter for the Government.

The Secretary for Public Lands: The local authority approves of the subdivision of areas. You know that.

Mr. DECKER: I know that if the Government grant Borthwicks or any other company the right to reclaim land, the council cannot object to it. The Government override the council. The power rests entirely with the Government.

I suggest to the Government that, when allowing land to be reclaimed and let on lease to private persons, they do not lose sight of the opportunity of making reserves and giving road access to the river for the convenience of the people. This has been neglected in the past, and an opportunity now presents itself, in a certain instance, to put this principle into effect for the advantage of the city. I hope the Government will not lose sight of that aspect of the matter. In fact, I go so far as to say that consideration might be given to offering river frontages to the Brisbane City Council for recreation purposes or for the purpose of giving the people access to the river.

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton) (11.6 a.m.): I think the hon. member for Sandgate has introduced an important point as to the need for giving access to the river to the public wherever that is possible. I do not know what the special circumstances are in the lower reaches of the Brisbane River, where the Government are now taking power to enable Thomas Borthwick and Sons (Australasia) Limited and others to reclaim certain lands. I do not know under what conditions the reclaimed lands will be made available, whether the lands in question might have a value to the public, or whether other interests might be entitled to consideration. Nor do I know whether the reclaimed areas will be put up for auction, to give all interests the chance of getting the benefits of the

leases. I do not know whether this Bill is introduced for the specific purpose of helping one party to obtain reclaimed land, or whether the lands might be of value to other people.

The Secretary for Public Lands: They would be of no value to anybody else.

Mr. MAHER: That might be so, and if it is so there should be no objection. There is no doubt that lands might be greatly improved by use and by the erection of buildings.

The Attorney-General: You want to support secondary industries?

Mr. MAHER: Quite so, but secondary industry is not entitled to monopolise the whole of the magnificent waterfront of the Brisbane River, and I say that whoever was responsible for the survey of esplanades, streets, and roads on river frontages in Brisbane in the past has made a ghastly mess of the job. We have a noble stream, which if properly aligned and bordered with boulevards and streets along the frontages would prove a boon to the public of Brisbane, not only to-day, but in the future. You can see the selfishness and, perhaps, the crookedness of the public body that even allowed valuable parklands right on the Brisbane River to pass into the hands of private interests. There is no justification for that, and, perhaps, members of Parliament took no steps to interfere with the leasing of valuable parklands to private individuals. This is a bad business in a city that needs to have lungs for its people in the shape of parks, gardens, and trees along the river front.

The Secretary for Public Lands: All councils have been guilty of that.

Mr. MAHER: I cannot say they have, but possibly before the Brisbane City Council was established, some of the old municipalities of the Brisbane area were guilty. At any rate, it shows the lack of planning for the future on the part of whoever was responsible. So, of course, to-day we have many of the Brisbane River frontages occupied by unsightly buildings down to the water's edge.

On one side of the river from Victoria Bridge towards Toowong we have the magnificent Coronation Drive, while immediately opposite on the south side there are very unsightly buildings to the very water's edge, whereas there should be a fine esplanade giving the public access to the river. Certain parts of the river frontage have been neglected in the interests of secondary industries in the first place.

The Secretary for Public Lands: What do you regard as an esplanade?

Mr. MAHER: In my opinion, an esplanade is a noble highway, street, or boulevard on a water front. For instance, in St. George there is the esplanade along the bank of the Balonne River, in Perth, Western Australia, there is the magnificent esplanade, as it is called, facing the Swan River, and in Sandgate there is an esplanade too. It could also have application to frontages to the Brisbane River. Down at the Hamilton there

is a splendid instance of a beautiful drive but in the beginning of things the people responsible made it too narrow and to-day it would cost a mint of money to resume enough private property to make it a broad esplanade. There has been a neglect of these interests and I suppose not much can be done about it now. If there is any part of the Brisbane River where parks or gardens can be established or esplanades can be laid down for future public needs, it is the duty of the Treasurer and the Government to guard public interests in this important respect.

It is difficult for me to understand all the implications of the measure from the brief explanation of it by the Treasurer, and perhaps it would be necessary to have considerable inquiry made even after the Bill was presented, in order to have a thorough understanding of all the circumstances that had led up to the request and to understand if the request is in the best interests of the extension of secondary industries that require this land along the water front. If it is so and these industries would give an added service to the State, well and good, but on such an important occasion as this we should not lose sight of the need to give the greatest possible measure of access to the people of this growing city to the magnificent waterway of which we are proud, but which regrettably has not received sufficient attention in the matter of beautification by municipal bodies and Parliament in the days that have gone.

The TREASURER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) (11.13 a.m.): I want to assure the Leader of the Opposition that all the safeguards he mentioned are contained in the Bill, but to the hon. member for West Moreton I want to say that although some nations of the world are ancestor-worshippers no-one can accuse him of being one, because he frequently wallops his ancestors and in a very big way. As we are not responsible for the actions of his ancestors, his castigation of them must pass over us. If the hon. member would care to join the Historical Society and read the history of the Brisbane River he would find that it has been converted from a poor and unimportant stream to the magnificent river it is to-day.

Mr. Maher: Nature made it a good stream.

The TREASURER: No, nature did not. Nature made the first river right enough but it was the Department of Harbours and Marine, first under Mr. Cullen and then under Mr. Fison, that made it the waterway that it is to-day. In most parts, and in all necessary parts, the water is 30 feet deep. In the beginning it was 13 feet deep. It has been widened, deepened, and made a very good port. There is no question about that. The things the hon. member fears will not arise so far as this Government are concerned, at any rate. The area at Kangaroo Point that has been reclaimed has been converted into certain park areas, which are used for recreation at the present time. Then that part of the river known as Kinellan Point, opposite Wellington road, South Brisbane,

has been the scene of reclamation work for some time. This will be beautified later on. The planting of our river banks with trees and flowering shrubs will make our river more beautiful than it is to-day.

This Bill confers powers as to reclamation work that do not exist to-day. A local authority has power to engage in reclamation work itself; therefore, as that power already exists, it is not included in this Bill. Nothing will be done to deprive people of access to the river. Those accesses are few to-day, and if greater access is necessary then the Committee can rest assured that the matter will receive attention.

Motion (Mr. Cooper) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING.

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Cooper, read a first time.

LAND ACTS AND OTHER ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Gair, South Brisbane, in the chair.)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS
(Hon. E. J. Walsh, Mirani) (11.20 a.m.) I move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Land Acts, 1910 to 1937, the Prickly-pear Land Acts, 1923 to 1936, the Prickly-pear Land Acts Amendment Act of 1930, the Closer Settlement Act Amendment Act of 1917, the State Forests and National Parks Acts, 1906 to 1934, the Water Acts, 1926 to 1940, and the Rabbit Act of 1885, respectively, each in certain particulars.”

Despite the long title of the Bill I can assure hon. members that there is nothing of a very controversial nature in it. As a matter of fact, it contains quite a number of provisions that will go a long way towards correcting anomalies in the law that inflict some hardship on lessees.

One of the main provisions of the Bill is to provide for the compulsory registration of subleases of Crown tenures, particularly in relation to perpetual town allotments and suburban and country leaseholds.

There is also a provision for carrying forward on a deed of grant all entries regarding easement registered in the Department of Public Lands in respect of a holding of which the fee simple may be acquired. Take as an example an agricultural farm that has been acquired from the Crown under a freehold tenure; during the period it is under the control of the department an easement may have been registered on that property, and the clause in the Bill provides that it will be compulsory for the department to notify the Registrar of Titles of such an easement, and a noting to that effect will be incorporated in the deed to be issued to the landholder

subsequently. That will protect the rights of any person who may have been dependent on the easement for many years past.

Mr. Sparkes: That is on freehold?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is on land under freehold tenure.

Then we have a provision for the mortgaging of a sublease of a holding registered under the Land Acts, and for the registration of such mortgage. That will bring such mortgages into line with mortgages that have to be registered on holdings under the Land Acts generally.

There is provision relating to the appointment of trustees of reserves, particularly for the appointment under certain circumstances of a person as a trustee of a reserve notwithstanding that he does not live in the electoral district in which the reserve is situated. There are difficulties in the metropolitan area and some of the bigger towns where you may have a resident who is very actively interested in a reserve or a park in an adjoining electorate, but under the existing law he is prevented from being a trustee of that reserve or park because he is not an elector of the electoral district in which the land is situated. The provision in the Bill will remove that disability, and despite the fact a person is not a resident of the electoral area in which the park or reserve is situated, and despite the fact he may be absent from the electoral district for a period of more than 12 months, it will still be possible for the Governor in Council to appoint him a trustee. Under the provision of the Bill, of course, he may be removed from office if it is disclosed to the Governor in Council that he is not actively interested in the reserve or park, or if he is more than 12 months removed from the area in which the land is situated.

The Bill also sets out that to be a trustee a person must be an elector of some electoral district in the State of Queensland. The necessity for such a provision is obvious.

Mr. Sparkes interjected.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There is no qualification in that respect at the present moment. The reason should be obvious to hon. members opposite.

There is provision for the tightening-up of the auditing of books and accounts of trustees of land under the Land Act. That appears to have been done pretty loosely over the years. In many instances that have come under the notice of the department the trustees proceeded to handle the trust to suit themselves. An instance in my area has been brought under my notice of land that was set aside many years ago for a racecourse, but has not been used for a considerable time. The trustee concerned has been leasing the land and to all intents and purposes appears to have been pocketing the money received from the leasing. We propose to make provision in this Bill to enable the Minister or the Auditor-General to appoint any officer he deems fit to make an investigation of the books and accounts of such trusts. Provision is also made for the winding-up of such trusts.

There is also a provision that will make it compulsory for any bank or other persons who may be interested in the trust money to reveal to the Minister or his officer, the officer appointed by the Auditor-General, the money that may be at the credit of such a trust. That is very desirable.

We then come to a number of simple amendments, one of which provides for the right of a mortgagee to exercise power of sale. Under the Act as it stands there is some doubt whether the mortgagees of certain holdings have the power to exercise the right of sale. For example, there is a general power under section 159 of the Act that gives a mortgagee the alternative rights to enter into possession or to sell by auction or private treaty. In the case of preferential holdings there is some doubt in that respect, and we are bringing the relevant section of the Act into conformity with the general power in section 159.

The next provision deals with selections during the period in which selectors have only licences to occupy. It is introduced in consequence of an amendment bearing on certain other provisions.

Mr. Sparkes: That is the seven years?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is so. There is the provision relating to personal residence on selections. That is also provided for in the Bill.

As to registration of easements in freehold property, which may give access to leasehold land, or to land under the State Forests and National Parks Act, the Real Property Act requires that in order that the easement may be registered both pieces of the land—viz., the dominant and servient tenement—shall be under these Acts. A new section is now to be inserted in the Land Act so that the registration of an easement that affects both freehold and leasehold land or freehold land and a reserve may be effected in the Real Property Office so far as the freehold title is concerned. That gives protection to an easement through two leasehold properties or through a leasehold property and a freehold property. That will enable the easement to be proclaimed for the benefit of both landholders, whether it is land held as a reserve or freehold land.

Provision is made for the alteration of penalties for the removal of timber from Crown land or a State forest or national park, and so on. A number of instances have been brought under the notice of the department to show that as the Act stands at present it would appear to be profitable for people to remove timber from Crown lands for the reason that the minimum fine of £5 does not seem to be a deterrent. To prevent this practice we are proposing to make the maximum penalty £50 and to retain the minimum penalty as it stands. The court will have to assess the value of the timber removed by the offender and the Crown will have the right to recover the value of that timber in addition to the penalty inflicted.

Mr. Sparkes: That will apply, of course, to State forests also.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes, to any Crown area from which timber is removed illegally.

Mr. Clayton: And to country roads, too?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Local authorities have power to remove timber within a certain distance of the road for their own use.

Mr. Clayton: But if they sell it to a saw-mill?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: If the hon. member has any information bearing on that point, the department will be pleased to receive it and will act accordingly. As a matter of fact, in my own area I had to proceed against a local authority for removing timber from Crown land. That local authority was dealt with in the same way as any private person would be. We made it pay double royalty.

Mr. Sparkes: Why shouldn't it?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I agree. The hon. member will see that we do not make fish of one and fowl of the other.

Mr. Sparkes: And the local authority should be in a better position to know that it should not do that, anyhow.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is so. This provision will tighten up the law as to the illegal removal of timber from State forests and Crown lands.

Two amendments are proposed to the Prickly Pear Land Acts Amendment Act. One extends the time within which proceedings may be taken against a person who ring-barks timber outside the provisions of the Act. Under the present law, proceedings must be instituted within six months of the commission of the offence. The amendment provides that proceedings may be taken at any time within six months after the commission of the offence, or four months after the complainant discovers the offence, whichever is the later period. This amendment is necessary in that, owing to the areas that have to be policed, it is not possible for the existing staff to make such frequent inspections as would enable all infringements of the timber provisions to be discovered and proceedings to be instituted within six months of the commission of the offence. I think hon. members will appreciate the fact that the land rangers are not continually making inspections in these areas, and that they may not come into the locality more than once in 12 months. On the occasion of their visit they might find that timber has been rung outside the permit or in contravention of the provision of the Acts, and this will enable those cases to be dealt with. It is only a reasonable provision.

Mr. Sparkes: The fines in that provision remain the same?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There is no alteration in the penalty. All we are doing is tightening up the section. We had a case recently that seemed to indicate that there is a flaw in the existing law, and I

think that if anything is brought under our notice that suggests that indiscriminate ring-barking can be indulged in with impunity, it is only right that we should amend the law to overcome the difficulty. Every case that is brought under the notice of the department will be dealt with in accordance with the Act. It is no good making representation on behalf of those who persist in the indiscriminate ringbarking of timber. A number of complaints have been coming in from all over the State, and unless something is done to meet the position it will become worse. I stated in this Chamber previously that I did not propose to show any leniency to any person who has indulged in indiscriminate ringbarking, which leads to the destruction of the fertility of the soil and causes erosion.

Mr. Sparkes: The erosion part of it is a debatable point.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is very important, and one that is overlooked by many landowners.

Another provision inserts a new paragraph in the Prickly Pear Land Acts Amendment Act of 1930 providing that any person who offends against section 13 shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable to the same penalty as is prescribed by the section in the Land Act covering that offence at the moment. The penalty is not less than 1s. and not more than 10s. for every tree cut down, destroyed, or ringbarked without a permit or in violation of the permit.

Mr. Sparkes: That is the present law?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is the present law.

There is a further provision relating to an anomaly that has existed under the Closer Settlement Act for many years. It is sought to correct that anomaly now, and I think it should be of advantage to lessees. On repurchased estates under the Closer Settlement Act the opening rentals on auction lots are fixed at 5 per cent. of the value; in other words, 3 per cent. in accordance with the rental provided for under the principal Act and 2 per cent. towards covering any increased value referable to improvements. As the law stands, in the second period—that is to say, in the first reappraisal period, as it were—the court cannot give a lessee any relief by way of a reduction in rent. If the court's determination is higher than the original bid, the court is empowered to readjust the rent accordingly, but if there is a depreciation in the value of the land on the occasion of the first appraisal the court is not empowered at present to make any reduction. The rent must be maintained on the basis of 5 per cent. on the original bid, and we propose to give the court discretion to alter the value and adjust the rent accordingly to provide for a decrease in the valuation if so determined by the court.

There are a few clauses in the Bill with regard to the Water Acts, which are only a tightening up and a clarifying of the law with regard to the removal of gravel, and

the times the department may lay down for those who are granted licences to use pumps in streams. At the present time there is a doubt whether the department can prosecute anybody for using pumps in streams outside of the hours determined by it. This amendment will clarify the position and will enable us to deal with those cases where there is a deliberate infringement of the intention of the law.

A further amendment deals with the removal of gravel and soil from lands vested in the Commissioner, and it, too, is a clarification of the law.

There is a small amendment with regard to rabbits. The Minister is to be empowered to grant a permit to any person who may be in charge of a museum or public zoo or exhibition grounds to keep live rabbits. At the present time the Act provides that no person is allowed to keep a live rabbit.

Mr. Sparkes interjected.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member might know of somebody who is breaking the law, and I suggest that he bring the matter under the notice of the police. I understand that cases have recently come under their notice and the offenders will probably be dealt with. This is a simple amendment and one that I think will be accepted by hon. members generally. In effect, it means that the Minister will be able to give legal authority to public bodies to keep live rabbits.

Mr. Sparkes: Quite a sensible one.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It refers to the keeping of rabbits in captivity. The Minister will have the power to issue permits on such terms and conditions as he thinks fit in order that they may be properly controlled.

Mr. Macdonald: Do they not do it now?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There is no authority that we know of, and if we had that authority there would be no need for the clause.

Mr. Macdonald: Some people keep Angora rabbits.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I have given a brief outline of the Bill and I commend it to the Committee with confidence that it will be accepted without a great deal of debate.

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton) (11.40 a.m.): I thank the Minister for his courtesy in giving me an advance copy of the Bill and also for supplying a brief explanation of each of its provisions. It appears to me to contain no new principles whatever, that it is only a machinery measure and one that can be regarded as purely formal. However, there are one or two points I should like to touch upon briefly and I think I should begin at the end of the Bill and so give preference to my old friend the rabbit.

The Secretary for Public Lands: You know something about rabbits? do you?

Mr. MAHER: I always lift my hat to a rabbit. Despite the fact that many people look down on the humble bunny he has been a course of considerable profit to my partner and myself in past days.

The Premier: Many people would have been glad to get a rabbit to eat.

Mr. MAHER: My word! Anybody who has eaten a rabbit done with white sauce and onions and ham or bacon would not go back to roast fowl. I can recommend it to any connoisseur in the Chamber. Of course, the rabbit has been regarded as a pest and without doubt it is, as the grazier knows to his great detriment. When rabbits begin to breed extensively they sour the soil and sheep do not do well there. Moreover, the rabbit is something of a connoisseur himself, because he selects the very choicest herbage and beats the stock to it. However, that is by the way. The rabbit has been a source of considerable profit to many struggling people in the districts where they are to be found. For instance, the price of rabbit fur this year has reached a record and many trappers were able to get from 7s. 6d. to 10s. a lb. Rabbit skins under winter conditions fetch 1s. 6d. to 2s. a skin, and as about five full-grown skins go to the lb. there is a very good profit indeed. Therefore, in those districts where the rabbit has been a plague in the past it has been reduced to an absolute minimum because of the operation of trappers.

One of the complaints of the trappers in these days is that generally there are more trappers out in search of rabbits than there are rabbits to get, such is the keenness of the competition that has been brought about by the ruling high price of rabbit furs. Of course, these high prices do not always last and they are simply the repercussion of war conditions. The Baltic fur market is denied to Americans and they are buying rabbit skins to a greater extent than hitherto.

The Minister intends under this Bill to grant permits to keep live rabbits for scientific purposes, as for zoological or biological purposes. I do not suppose that any great risk is involved in granting permits of this kind, although the rabbit is a very prolific breeder. If by any chance anybody is interested in spreading them it would not be difficult to do so. There are certain areas where they do not usually thrive. The Minister will exercise the right of issuing permits.

Some years ago we had complaints in this Chamber on the introduction of the Angora and Chinchilla rabbits which are kept in hutches, domestically, for the value of the fur that is shorn off them. The carcass has a value, too. These fur rabbits were brought here and very many people paid excessive prices for stud rabbits. The industry, of course, did not thrive because costs in this country were too great, and it was not possible to carry on the industry here, although it is carried on successfully in Belgium, France, and many parts of England.

There is just an element of danger that rabbits brought in for introduction into

gardens may escape and have an opportunity of breeding and rapidly increasing in areas of the State where they have not previously been. There are some people who say that rabbits will not thrive in certain districts of Queensland, and I am inclined to think that applies generally to the Darling Downs. The Darling Downs is heavy black-soil country and is unattractive to rabbits. Many rabbits have managed to get through the rabbit fence for the last 40 or 50 years and have been found at Canning Creek and Kooroon-garra, between Millmerran and Inglewood. Owners of property there have told me that there has been no increase in rabbits there during the last 30 years. In fact, they appreciate them on their property because they are occasionally able to shoot one or two for Sunday dinner.

There has been a plague of rabbits east of the main range to the Casino district. Therefore, it is clear that they are able to live and thrive under coast conditions, even if the heavy black soil of the Downs does not suit them for burrowing and breeding purposes. There is just that slight element of danger, but it is negligible because the permits will be issued by the Minister. In the case of the Botanic Gardens, where they would be kept, as I stated, those in authority would have them under proper control. For many years past we have sent rabbits from Yelarbon to Brisbane for scientific purposes. They were kept and finally killed by those in authority. There seems to be no sound reason why we cannot take that risk.

The Bill also contains a provision giving the engineer in charge of irrigation power to prescribe the time during which water may be taken by licensees. This, of course, has particular application to many parts of the Lockyer district in my electorate, where there has been a tremendous expansion of farming under irrigation during the past five or six years. Hundreds of irrigation plants are taking water from the Lockyer Creek and its tributaries and from the Laidley Creek and its tributaries, and also from wells on the flats adjoining those creeks, and it has had a marked effect upon the prosperity of the town of Gatton particularly.

The Secretary for Public Lands: Dozens of them have not got licences.

Mr. MAHER: If they have not got licences that would indicate some laxity on the part of the department. The Sub-Department of Irrigation and Water Supply and Sewerage should deal with the matter.

The Secretary for Public Lands: We have 42 of them on the stocks now.

Mr. MAHER: I do not think it is necessary to put them on the stocks. I think the irrigators in those districts would be willing to comply with the regulations if they were pointed out to them. If it is necessary to have a licence, an officer of the department should wait on the irrigator concerned and draw his attention to the requirements of the law and get his application sent in straight-away. That would not be a difficult duty, and it would be far better than putting the

applications of 40-odd irrigators on the stocks.

The Secretary for Public Lands: Their neighbours applied for licences.

Mr. MAHER: The neighbours applied for licences against those who are irrigating? Is that what the hon. gentleman means?

The Secretary for Public Lands: Sometimes a man applies for the licence and complies with the law, and the man alongside him must know that he also should apply for the licence.

Mr. MAHER: What the Minister says is that one man has a licence and has complied with the law and another man is drawing water surreptitiously without a licence?

The Secretary for Public Lands: That is so.

Mr. MAHER: What is to stop the man who is operating in a surreptitious manner from complying with the law? Is there any reason why he cannot get water from the river?

The Secretary for Public Lands: If he makes an application it is investigated.

Mr. MAHER: I know there is frequently not enough water for everybody to draw on.

The Secretary for Public Lands: That is the necessity for the licensing system. You appreciate that?

Mr. MAHER: It is a problem that would test the wisdom of Solomon. There is a limited supply of water in some of the creeks and a great number who wish to draw upon the supply; obviously there is not enough water for them all, yet all the men should be equal before the law. That is why I say that it would require the wisdom of Solomon to solve the problem. However, I think the Minister should take a sympathetic view and try to temper the wind to the shorn lamb, and as far as possible give every man who has invested money in an irrigation plant a reasonable allowance.

I realise what his department is up against in dealing justly with the different circumstances of the irrigators along some of the creeks where there are limited water supplies. The Minister is taking power to enable the engineer in charge of irrigation to prescribe the time during which water may be taken. Obviously sufficient time must be given to an irrigator to get enough water to make a success of the operation, but it would be foolish to allow too many pumps to operate, because that would destroy the supply of water for all. That is where the difficulty of the department comes in, and the Minister seeks to give the engineer power to prescribe the times when they may pump water. Of course, there is no objection to that.

There is a proposal in respect to the ringbarking penalty to which on the surface I do not see that there can be any objection. It is the same penalty as applied before. Unfortunately, there are some people who,

given an axe, will destroy beautiful trees that have taken centuries to reach maturity. Evidence of that is to be found in our waterways. After the ringbarking and destruction of trees on the banks of these waterways, there is nothing to bind the soil once the roots of the trees have died. Storms wash the loosened bank to the middle of the stream, and over a period of years this has the effect of silting up the waterways. Hon. members know that there are many rivers and big creeks in Queensland that 50 years ago contained miles of extensive waterholes in which men could swim and fish, but in which to-day there is nothing but silt and sand. The waterholes have dried up. This is referred to as soil erosion, and has its foundation in the fact that the trees have been ringbarked unwisely in a desire on the part of many landholders to get the maximum of grass for their stock. After all, that is a mistaken policy, inasmuch as we lose the water. What is the grass on a few acres along the banks of a stream against the shade of the trees and the holding capacity of their roots? Man makes deserts. That is the history of the world.

The ruthless destruction of timber, without regard to nature's methods, has created great deserts in the world. In Libya, where our Australian troops have been fighting with distinction, there is evidence to-day that within the last 3,000 years there were extensive forests and vineyards and a community living under good rainfall conditions. That seems to suggest that man has interfered with the order of nature, and deserts have resulted. I had a very interesting talk with Dr. Bradfield on the subject, and he informed me that it was the belief of the geologists that all the deserts on the face of the earth had been created largely by man's failure to respect the laws of nature. There is need for a greater respect by landholders for the need to conserve the trees along the banks of our streams, as they have the effect of holding the banks, before it is too late. I have seen the evidence of it all over Australia, evidence of how the ruthless destruction of timber has resulted in the silting up of streams and the loss of valuable soil.

Of course, the ringbarking in flat country or over wide areas is a different question. One cannot grow trees and grass at the same time. It is necessary to ringbark country to get the maximum benefits of the land in grass.

The Secretary for Public Lands: But still leave sufficient shade.

Mr. MAHER: I think that is generally done, but, of course, if it was not done, if the country is ringbarked right out and if after three years, giving time for the roots to die, the country is fired to get it clear of all rubbish, and even if every tree is destroyed, nature in her process of regeneration, would in the course of time cause a certain regrowth.

The Secretary for Public Lands: It is very difficult on sheep properties.

Mr. MAHER: Where there is heavy stocking of sheep there is a good deal in the

Minister's contention, but with forest country you get a regrowth from suckering.

Mr. Sparkes: Sometimes you get bigger regrowths than you kill.

Mr. MAHER: That is so. There is constant suckering. In the brigalow scrubs you have to fire the country, and if it is an intense fire it will burn out all the timber, and if that country is heavily stocked by sheep it is obvious that it would be difficult for any regrowth to occur as the sheep would tackle the young suckers. If the country is not heavily stocked, some trees would come through again. It is hard to see how you can burn country and keep green shade trees within the range of the immediate burning. You might leave a belt of timber for shade, but that is all you could do. However, I can only assume that the Minister and his officers will exercise common sense in the application of that important provision.

Mr. Sparkes: Different districts have different requirements.

Mr. MAHER: That is so. Conditions vary greatly in different parts of the State.

So far as I can see, all the other provisions in the Bill have become necessary in practice. I notice that the rules with regard to trustees are being tightened up and the Governor in Council takes power to remove any trustees in the public interest for just and sufficient reason. I thought that power was held previously. It is certainly wise to hold it. I have had instances in which some trustees have become very pigheaded and obstructed all the business of the trust and held out on the remaining members on the ground that they could not be removed from office. They have refused to attend meetings, no quorum could be got, and a great deal of inconvenience and dissatisfaction has been created by their obstinacy. I have in mind the trustees of a soldiers' memorial hall. Another case I have in mind related to the trustees of a showground, and I had to get the Minister's predecessor—the hon. P. Pease—to come up and settle the difference between the trustees and the show committee. The trustees held tightly to the funds and refused to help the committee in improving the grounds and carrying out the objects of the trust.

The Secretary for Public Lands: I shall do all I can to encourage you to settle your difficulties yourselves before you come to me.

Mr. MAHER: I am sure the Minister will. Mr. Pease came up to this district I have in mind and met the trustees, and even when he came several of the trustees were quite truculent and asserted their rights and powers. The Minister gave notice of the cancellation of the trust and authorised a fresh election, and at the public meeting that was held subsequently only one of the original trustees was re-elected, which showed that the public were not behind the action of the trustees. I feel that there is good ground for giving the Minister powers to control obstinate trustees who take a stand against the majority of the trustees and who generally are wholly unreasonable in outlook.

All the other provisions dealing with mortgages and easements seem to me to be quite in order, and generally speaking the amendments proposed seem to be justified by the experience of the department and present-day needs.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) (12.6 p.m.): The Minister has certainly dealt with many Bills in the amending measure now before the Committee, and I hope he is not acting like the little boy with the pie—putting his finger into this Act to pull out the plums.

The Secretary for Public Lands: There are many Acts to be administered by the department.

Mr. SPARKES: I appreciate that. I am afraid I cannot agree with the hon. member for West Moreton that he would take off his hat every time he saw a rabbit. Personally I should take off my boot and hit him behind the ear. Of course, that shows the difference of viewpoint. I have killed many thousands of rabbits by hitting them on the head and I have some very vivid recollections of rabbits in my younger days. It has been said that they provide a good dinner for somebody or other, but I can assure the hon. member that if he had seen the many millions—not thousands—of rabbits that I have seen when I have been along the netting fences cleaning out the pits he would not be very eager to eat rabbit now. I should have to be very hungry before I would tackle one—I have seen so many millions in the pits mixed with dead snakes out in country with a temperature averaging about 114 degrees in the shade. When you have seen that I am sure you will not be very keen on eating rabbit. I am sure that the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock agrees with me to a certain extent.

Mr. Maher: I have gone down a well and dug a beast out.

Mr. SPARKES: The rabbit is one of the greatest curses that ever came to Australia.

Mr. Riordan: You cannot buy a rabbit in the city.

Mr. SPARKES: If the hon. member had been with me a few years ago he would have seen rabbits and he would have got many more than he wished to get.

Mr. Riordan: They are a luxury to the poorer people.

Mr. SPARKES: They may be a luxury in Brisbane but their eradication has caused the expenditure of many millions of pounds—and I am not talking about the hon. member for Bundaberg's millions, but the real millions spent by pastoralists in Australia. In fact it is impossible to say what the rabbit has cost Australia and the landowners, particularly those in New South Wales. Why, the cost of netting fences alone would amount to millions of pounds. We are still paying for the 800 miles of netting fence that exists to-day to keep rabbits back. We are paying to safeguard our own properties.

Mr. Maher: We are paying a heavy tax.

Mr. SPARKES: Yes, for the very person that the hon. member would raise his hat to. (Laughter.) The Secretary for Agriculture and Stock knows that they are kept at the Animal Health Station at Yeerongpilly for scientific purposes—I do not want to put him “in the gun” (laughter)—and are not likely to cause trouble.

The Secretary for Agriculture and Stock: They are well protected.

Mr. SPARKES: I know that.

The hon. member for West Moreton mentioned the question of wells, and I should like the Secretary for Public Lands to make it plain whether he is referring to wells on station properties. I have some on my own property from which I pump water according to my needs, and I take it that the Minister is not going to curtail my operations. I do not know how it would apply to the property owned by the hon. member for West Moreton, but I know that any curtailment would be a hardship to me.

The hon. member for West Moreton said that ringbarking has caused much soil erosion. He may believe in ringbarking on flat country and not on creek country, but I am sure he would ringbark on some creek country. We must remember that there is a great diversity in soils throughout the State. Take the Lower Burnett area, for instance. If you did not ring in the gullies of that area you would not get water at all. The hon. member would have us believe that by ringbarking on creeks you do away with the water, but in the Burnett area unless you ringbark you get no water. That is a very important point to consider. There are many well-known creeks—such as Jumma and Boughyard—where once you would have had a hard job to get water to fill your quart. To-day those creeks are flowing streams and this has come about through ringbarking. It is well known that you must ring in that country.

On the other hand, the growth of seedlings has become a particularly bad menace where ringbarking has been done in light sandy granite areas. I do not know whether it is because of the ringbarking or not. Various reasons for it have been advanced and some people say it is because the destruction of the opossum has allowed flowering seeding of the host tree. Some day I hope to be able to take the Minister to those areas, because I am sure he will be deeply interested in what is taking place.

I am not going to enter into a long discussion of soil erosion. I know, as the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock knows, what has occurred in the United States of America from soil erosion, and what the people there are trying to do to-day to arrest it. In Queensland we have a large area of softwood country along the Great Dividing Range, and the only way we can get rid of it is to cut on a face and burn it. I have about 8,000 acres of that country on the range, and I have gone to considerable trouble to try to preserve the bottle tree from being destroyed by fire. I have even gone so far as to clear 20 to 30

acres round each bottle tree, but it is difficult to do that because they are interspersed throughout the area. At any rate, I have told my men to leave a ring round every bottle tree in the hope that it will be saved from destruction by fire. While the country was under green timber the water would rush down the gullies after rain, over the tops of the roots and tear the ground to pieces, but to-day it is all under Rhodes grass. That is another area in my district that I should like the Minister to see. Anyone who has any experience knows that it requires a considerable rush of water to cause erosion on Rhodes grass country.

While I agree with the Minister that the destruction of timber along creeks has set up serious trouble for the future and has made it difficult to carry out reforestation, I must express the view that taking it by and large the cause of most of the erosion has been overstocking. Unless the timber is protected in sheep country it is almost impossible to grow anything because sheep are ravenous animals. At any rate, overstocking has been the greatest curse and it has been responsible for more soil erosion and destruction of our better grasses than anything else in Australia. It arises to some extent perhaps from the greediness of the landholder, but overstocking may have been forced upon him by the high price he paid for his land. In any case, overstocking has caused deterioration of the land and, of course, this has brought about the filling up of waterholes. With overstocking there are so many pads leading to the waterholes that after every storm the water rushes down the pads, carrying the silt with it to the waterhole.

The Minister mentioned that a penalty would be imposed for the wrongful taking of gravel. Does that refer to leased property? For instance, I have a grazing farm or a pastoral holding.

The Secretary for Public Lands: It applies to lands vested in the Commissioner.

Mr. SPARKES: I thought that was so. I have been associated with local authorities for over 20 years, but the local authorities with which I have been connected have never had any difficulty in getting whatever timber they required from the department.

The Secretary for Public Lands: Look at all the trees that were rung on the road to Dalby.

Mr. SPARKES: That is not in my shire, although I think it should be. The Minister will persist in referring to this road, and I am always being compelled to remind him that it is not in my shire.

The Premier: What would you have done?

Mr. SPARKES: If the hon. gentleman puts it to me in that way, then I must tell him that we should have grown more trees in their place. I agree with the Minister that the wholesale ringing along that road was unnecessary and uncalled for, and has had a detrimental effect, especially to the people with travelling stock. However, I

should like to explain in justice to the chairman of the shire concerned that the man who was to do the ringbarking was told to leave a strip of green timber along each side. I am only speaking from hearsay. A strip left along the fence provides a place for the stock to camp in the heat of the day.

The Premier: We will put it in your shire if you will plant new trees.

Mr. SPARKES: That is very good of the hon. gentleman, and it shows we are getting near Christmas when the hon. gentleman, whose ancestors did not give much away—although I have found them to be very kind—is in the giving mood.

The Premier: You are wrong. As a matter of fact, my ancestors were thrifty in order to endow charitable institutions for the less fortunate of their fellowmen.

Mr. SPARKES: I appreciate the hon. gentleman's remarks. I have not only friends but relatives who are Scotch, and I admit that what the hon. gentleman says is quite right. The Scotsman is very hard, but he is not mean by any means. I have the greatest respect for the Scotch people, and I appreciate the friendly gesture of the Premier. After all, it comes within a few miles of my shire.

The Premier: You have to plant the trees.

Mr. SPARKES: This area is right up to my shire door, and I am continually blamed for the actions of another shire. As a matter of fact, it is not even within my electorate.

Taken by and large, the Bill is warranted. I admit when I first heard the title I began to wonder what was going to happen, but after reading the Bill I was satisfied.

I wish to join with the hon. member for West Moreton in expressing my appreciation of the Minister's action in making a copy of the Bill available to us so that we might be conversant with its contents. If that practice was followed generally, it would save a good deal of debate and lost time in this Chamber.

Mr. YEATES (East Toowoomba) (12.22 p.m.): Mr. Chairman, I will give you a speech in 15 seconds. I wish to draw attention to the shocking piece of ringbarking between Bowenville and Dalby on the main road. This is the third time I have drawn attention to it, and I hope nothing like it will be allowed to occur again. If the Premier has any trees to give away, I suggest he have some planted there.

Mr. EDWARDS (Nanango) (12.23 p.m.): I appreciate the way the Minister explained the Bill. I listened with interest to the remarks of the hon. member for West Moreton and the hon. member for Aubigny in connection with the various things they mentioned that affect the man on the land. I heard it said by the hon. member for Aubigny that great destruction was caused in America and other parts of the world

owing to the removal of timber. We have no need to go to America to find evidence of erosion.

The debate has shown that the difficulties of one area may not apply in another area, and each case has to be dealt with separately. The Mallee district in Victoria is interesting in this connection. An enormous amount of money was spent in the early history of that area. As a boy I remember the area when there was not a settler on it, when it was a wilderness inhabited by dingoes and rabbits. Even in my time, over 400 miles was affected by erosion and that was due to the Mallee pollen. After some years, irrigation came into existence. Water was impounded and sent flowing through that area in open channels.

To-day, there are approximately 3,000 miles of channelling for the purpose of conveying water for domestic purposes to the various settlers in that area. The cost of clearing these channels each year must be enormous, inasmuch as they run through a particularly dry area and with the soil erosion continually going on the channels silt up. Although the railway line was constructed on an embankment approximately 3 feet higher than the surrounding earth, one frequently sees the sand bank up as high as the line. Those are illustrations of the amount of soil erosion that takes place in that district at present. Another illustration is that a bunch of scrub that has been left standing may be completely covered with sand. Moreover, because of the terrific strength of the north-west wind the soil from a paddock ploughed one day will in two or three days be found in an adjoining paddock. Hon. members will understand the tremendous cost that must be incurred by settlers in that district. There are instances in which three fences have had to be built, one on top of another, because of the action of the soil. We are a comparatively new country, but these illustrations indicate to us how careful we must be.

This morning an hon. member mentioned the brigalow scrub land, but, in my opinion, these lands are not subject to that kind of erosion. Certainly, on a steep incline erosion may be caused by water, but the soil is usually of a heavy nature, and that stands up to wind erosion much better than a sandy loam, which is to be found in parts of Victoria and other places.

It is very wise for the Government to take into consideration all these matters. It is quite true, as has been pointed out this morning, that in certain areas, if timber is destroyed on steep inclines, soil erosion starts. In the clearing of scrub land, many people fall all the timber, and if they do not fall it all they leave patches here and there, but when a fire is put through the land the chances are that all the timber is destroyed. In my own district one can see hills and inclines from which the soil has been eroded, and stones and rocky outcrops are to be noticed. Of course, that country is destroyed. This, too, shows how very careful one must be in all these matters.

In some districts the growth of suckers is so enormous that the land is almost useless. All over the area one cannot find an inch, as it were, without a sucker. In my own district, which is an old-settled one in comparison with others, one will find landholders in proximity to the railway cutting out everything. Not a tree has been left. I do not know why this has been done, but the land is of little value, either to the settler or the State. These are illustrations of the difficulties that beset us as a Parliament. One man goes on the land and chops down everything, and another holds it more as a speculation than for use, and neglects it. Hon. members will see how it is necessary to deal with each case on its merits, and from the point of view of how any action proposed affects the interests of the particular district.

At 12.29 p.m.,

Mr. RIORDAN (Bowen), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. EDWARDS: I have not, as yet, seen the Bill, and had the opportunity of studying it, but in conclusion, I wish to say something about the rabbit. I was virtually reared on rabbit. I am very fond of cooked rabbit, and as other members of the family did not like it I had on occasions to do all the cleaning, putting it in the pot, and keeping the fire going under it, to make sure that I should get some.

Mr. Luckins: Could you not cook one in a camp oven?

Mr. EDWARDS: Not in a camp oven. The rabbit has been a godsend to thousands of people in Australia and a curse to thousands of others. In the Grampian territory in Victoria, where the mountains rise in cliffs 300 feet high in some places, as at Hall's Gap, into which the bushranger Hall rushed after holding up a stage coach, rabbits could be seen in the thousands. I remember the time when things were very bad there. There had been a severe drought in Victoria, and trappers at that time, when the usual wage for a labourer was 15s. a week, were earning from £9 to £10 a week. Let us look at it from another angle. I know a good deal about the mallee country in which also the rabbits are thick. At sundown I have seen them so thick that it was possible to kill 10 or 20 rabbits with one shot. That can be done when one rabbit discovers a patch of green grass and the others cluster round trying to get a share of it. I have seen the settlers take truck loads of poisoned apples onto their properties, and spread them for miles, by this means destroying tens of thousands of these pests. Only those people who have lived in rabbit areas are able to realise how tremendously they can multiply in two or three years. On the last occasion when I visited my home district in Victoria, the rabbits were actually running in the towns at night, and I suppose they had been cleaned out of those places at least 20 or 30 times. This should give hon. members some idea as to how difficult it is to exterminate

them. Before planting his wheat in the early days the mallee settler would dig out the rabbits, in some cases the trenches being up to his shoulder in depth, and all this had to be done to get one crop, because next year the rabbits would be back in as great numbers as before. Whether rabbits will be so thick in Queensland, of course, time alone would tell. I have heard it said on numerous occasions that rabbits cannot live here, but I do not believe that for a moment. I believe there are certain areas in Queensland—the black-soil areas, in particular—in which rabbits would live and thrive to the detriment of the settlers.

I believe that all the other amendments outlined by the Minister will be of advantage in that they are the result of experience. We have found anomalies in the various Acts from time to time, and it is wise to introduce amendments to rectify these things so that the law may be administered in the interests of the development of Queensland.

Motion (Mr. Walsh) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING.

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Walsh, read a first time.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Gair, South Brisbane, in the chair.)

The TREASURER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) (12.39 p.m.): I move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Workers' Compensation Acts, 1916 to 1939, in certain particulars.”

There are three or four amendments in this measure, all very simple. The first amendment proposes to omit certain words. At present, compensation is paid up to a certain amount to a man who is injured and a certain sum is paid for each child up to a certain maximum, but the Act as at present says that the compensation shall be paid for those children he has at the time of the accident and we desire to omit the words “at the date of the accident,” so that a child born to him after the accident will be taken into consideration in adjusting compensation.

The next amendment concerns what is known as miner's phthisis payments. At the present time we pay half benefits of £300, full benefits of £550. Hon. members are aware of the conditions under which these amounts are paid. The miner's phthisis fund has not been as robust as we should have liked it to be, and over the years we have increased payments up to the amount we could afford as the fund improved. It was in debt at one stage to the extent of £70,000, but the position has improved and now, although the fund is not in credit, it has the appearance of reaching that much desired point, and we

believe that we are now in the position to say that increased benefits will be paid. We propose to pay £375 as half benefits and £750 as full benefits. I think that is a desirable thing and I am delighted to know that we are in the position to make those payments.

The third amendment concerns appeals. At the present time we have had something like 22,000 or 23,000 claims for compensation and of that number probably 400 only have been rejected. Of the 400—30, 40, or 50 in the year might go to a magistrate, and having gone to the magistrate and his decision having been given there is the right of appeal to the Industrial Court. That appeal at the present time is limited to a point of law, and if the magistrate has given a decision in accordance with the law there is no appeal from his decision on the facts. We have had cases heard by the different magistrates in which the circumstances have been substantially the same but varying decisions have been given. We desire to amend the law by allowing appeals to the Industrial Court to be in the nature of a rehearing, if the court so decides.

If fresh evidence can be adduced, well and good. The evidence that has been placed before the magistrate can be submitted to the Industrial Court by way of a rehearing. We think that is a very desirable thing, and we also believe that a greater measure of justice will be given than is the case now, and that it will ensure the payment of compensation where it ought to be paid.

The final amendment relates to sufferers from lead poisoning at Mount Isa. There are three provisions in the Act relating to lead poisoning, as well as the regulations, but they are not very clear, and the object of the Bill is to clarify the position. It is to make it clear that a man who has been working in the industry and has been declared susceptible to lead poisoning may be removed from the fear of lead poisoning, and that a man who has worked in the industry for less than four months may be similarly dealt with by the board. We promised the miners and the employees at Mount Isa, as well as the management, that the position would be clarified and it is now being done.

Those are the only amendments; they are simple and direct, and I have much pleasure in moving the motion.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) (12.44 p.m.): I desire to thank the Treasurer for his courtesy in giving me an advance copy of the Bill, so that I might have an opportunity of studying it before its introduction. From my study of it and its explanation by the Treasurer I am satisfied that it is desirable and that it will be of advantage to the workers concerned. However, there is one point that I should like cleared up in connection with the amendment altering the right of appeal to allow of a rehearing. Personally, I agree that the alteration should be made and that the Full Bench of the Industrial Court should be permitted to hear an appeal by way of rehearing, because a worker should be completely protected and he should be allowed to follow his case right

through if he thinks that he has not been fairly treated. However, the question of costs is subject to the regulations. It has been a very sore point with many people because the legal advice that many appellants have had to get has been costly.

The Premier: If you open that up you will wonder who was hit by the brick—the lawyer or his client. It is a good story.

Mr. NICKLIN: I am not concerned about the lawyer; I am concerned about the man who is responsible for the lawyer's costs. Usually, the lawyer comes out of the matter the best of all, but the regulations limit the amount of costs that a successful appellant may obtain against the Insurance Commissioner. The amounts awarded are not always enough to compensate him for the legal costs he has incurred to fight his appeal. The result is that his win virtually amounts to a loss. If the Commissioner is in the wrong, according to the decision of the last court of appeal, he should pay reasonable costs. Of course, I do not say that the appellant's solicitor should have an open go on the matter, but reasonable costs should be awarded in appeal cases. The general practice of any court of law is to allow costs to the successful party, and although they may not be high enough to meet all the legal costs incurred, they do go a considerable distance towards doing so. Under the regulations to the Workers' Compensation Act a maximum amount is laid down.

Mr. Devries: It might cut both ways.

Mr. NICKLIN: Yes, it might cut both ways, but this is an anomaly that is well worth looking into. I know the point has been raised in industrial circles, and it has been pointed out that appellants are often handicapped. They have to get legal opinion and help to present their case to the Commissioner. The Commissioner has legal opinion also, and if an appellant succeeds against the Commissioner it is only fair that he should get reasonable costs.

The Premier: The difficulty is when you put the reverse case. Supposing the worker loses the case, it would be hard on him.

Mr. NICKLIN: Yes, I admit that; I suppose he takes that risk. The successful litigant in a legal action endeavours to recover all his costs. Under the regulations, the costs are very limited, and a successful appellant may incur such legal expenses that he would really be a loser in the long run.

The Premier: I think it should be a fixed cost.

Mr. NICKLIN: Yes, I am not advocating that there should be no restriction on legal costs. I suggest that costs be at the discretion of the Full Bench of the Industrial Court. I think it is proper that some attention should be given to that matter while we are amending the Act, because the point has often been raised in industrial circles. I should like to hear the Treasurer's opinion on the matter.

The TREASURER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) (12.52 p.m.): Although I am not supposed to disclose the contents of the Bill at this stage, it does contain this paragraph—

“Subject to the regulations the costs of appeal shall be in the discretion of the court.”

If later on we are of opinion there should be a wider allowance for costs, the matter should be and would be considered.

Motion (Mr. Cooper) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING.

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Cooper, read a first time.

SECOND READING.

The TREASURER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) (12.53 p.m.): I explained the Bill fully a little while ago, and the only additional explanation I make is that what is commonly called miner's phthisis now refers to workers in mining or quarrying, or stone-crushing or cooking, baking, and flour-milling. All those people, come within the ambit of the Act. I should not like it to be thought it just referred to men employed in mines only.

The other matter I did not explain is that at present an appeal can only be on any point of law. Those points of law shall be decided without argument and neither party shall appear or be represented before the court. The amendment provides that the matter shall be in the nature of a rehearing and that indicates that counsel might appear for either side or both sides.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) (12.54 p.m.): Everybody will be happy to know that the position relating to miner's phthisis has so improved that increased payments are to be made to the sufferers from this disease. It is a very commendable action on the part of the Treasurer and the Insurance Commissioner to take this opportunity of increasing the payments for that disease from £300 to £375 for half incapacity and from £550 to £750 for full incapacity. I am sure that will be appreciated by all sufferers from this dread disease.

Motion (Mr. Cooper) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Riordan, Bowen, one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, in the chair.)

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

Clause 5—Amendment of sections 7 and 8 of Workers' Compensation (Lead Poisoning, Mount Isa) Act; Further powers of board as to certificate; Compensation—

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) (12.56 p.m.): I take it that those who are removed from the provisions of the Act relating to Mount

Isa would come under the provisions as to compensation payments?

The Treasurer: Yes.

Clause 5, as read, agreed to.

Clause 6—Collective title—as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

EMERGENCY SUPPLIES BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Gair, South Brisbane, in the chair.)

The TREASURER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) (2.17 p.m.): I move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to authorise the Treasurer on behalf of the Government of Queensland to make certain payments and to guarantee certain debts and overdrafts incurred for the purpose of providing reserve stocks of certain goods; and for other purposes.”

Briefly, the position is this: over the last 40 years we have had three wars of moment to Australia. The Boer War caused us no concern, for more reasons than one. One was that the Boers had no navy. The 1914-1918 war caused us a considerable amount of concern, more concern than did the Boer War, but we had then an orientation of nations that gave us a security that we have not got to-day.

For the first time in the history of Australia, it has been felt that we are within the possible range of attack, and for that reason it has been thought that certain things should be done. If we are now in the range of possible attack there is also the possibility of dislocation of our transport and trading. If our transport and trading are to be dislocated then we must do something before that happens. It would be entirely wrong to wait until it happens before doing certain things.

It has been thought necessary that there should be a scheme for the storage of necessary commodities in various parts of the Commonwealth—in various parts of the State of Queensland in particular. To enable this to be done, the Commonwealth Government passed certain statutory rules under the National Security Act, under which the Governor-General in Council authorised the Governor in Council in Queensland to act and make certain rules. The rules made by the Governor in Council will be found in the “Government Gazette” of 6 June, 1941.

If this proposal was to be a success it was necessary that we should have the complete co-operation of the whole of the community. Of course, that applies not only to this but to the whole war effort. In this particular direction we can say that we have had the hearty co-operation of the whole of the people of Queensland.

The rules printed in the "Government Gazette" of 6 June, 1941, have been reviewed by the Commonwealth Government, who not only approved of those rules, but congratulated Queensland on the thoroughness of the scheme. The rules provide for three things—

1. The continuance of normal trading facilities.
2. The constant turning over of food supply reserve to prevent deterioration.
3. The distribution of reserve stocks in order to minimise vital loss or damage in any district.

I emphasise those three features because they have a large bearing on the responsibility of the Government in financing the scheme. Hon. members are fully conversant with the whole of the scheme, because the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock drew up and distributed an excellent brochure setting it out fully. Each hon. member received a copy and I am sure read it with pleasure and the feeling of security to be gained from the knowledge that anything of this kind could be undertaken.

This Bill is concerned only with the financial responsibility, which falls under two headings, and to ensure that there will be no mistake I will read them. They are—

"1. Where wholesalers and retailers give an undertaking backed by a fidelity bond to establish and maintain reserve stocks for which no overdraft accommodation guaranteed by the Government is required. In these cases no responsibility of any kind is borne by the Government.

"2. Where wholesalers and retailers are unable to finance the establishment and maintenance of reserve stocks and overdraft accommodation is provided. In these cases the interest on the special overdrafts is paid by the Commonwealth and State Governments in the proportion of two-thirds to one-third respectively."

It is interesting to note that there is no extra outlay by the retailers. The obligation is on the wholesaler to build up stocks, and to meet this obligation interest-free overdrafts will be allowed by the Commonwealth Bank or by trading banks. Where the overdraft is by a trading bank, it will be guaranteed by the Commonwealth Bank, and the Commonwealth Bank is guaranteed by the State. Interest is at a rate not in excess of 4 per cent. and interest obligations will be met, two-thirds by the Commonwealth and one-third by the State.

There is also a possibility of loss by reason of deterioration, and any such losses will be borne equally by the Commonwealth and by the State.

There is an additional feature in the Bill referring particularly to sugar. The Australian sugar industry is giving in this matter long-term credit interest-free. However, it will not be expected to bear the losses due to bad debts and deterioration, but none the less the gesture by the

Australian sugar industry is a very fine one, indeed.

Mr. Maher: Hear, hear!

The TREASURER: The total amount of sugar credit, so far as Queensland reserves are concerned, will probably be in the vicinity of £15,000, and the total value of sugar reserves £30,000. I might mention that the sugar credit throughout Australia will amount to £3,000,000.

Those are the contents of the measure. To summarise, it is one to secure payment of interest on the part of the State, the interest on the overdrafts will be met two-thirds by the Commonwealth and one-third by the State Government, and losses through deterioration will be borne equally, as also will the making-good of losses, if any, incurred by the Commonwealth and trading banks under the guarantee.

Mr. NIMMO (Oxley) (2.25 p.m.): I am glad to hear that we have taken time by the forelock and are making provision for the storage of foodstuffs should an emergency arise in this State or the Commonwealth.

As the Treasurer has pointed out, never before has Australia been threatened by an enemy in the manner in which she is to-day. Anything can happen, and although the precautions may involve the people of this country in a great deal of money, it is wise that that provision should be made now to protect them in a serious emergency.

The Treasurer has not told us who is going to bear the cost, but he has mentioned that one-third of the interest cost will be paid by the State and two-thirds by the Commonwealth. That is satisfactory. This is a national matter, and apparently the State is willing to shoulder a part of the burden. I should like to know who is responsible for the method of building up emergency supplies, whether it is the best one and whether it is a good one. I understand that the object of the Bill is to compel traders to hold full stocks in reserve and that an inspector may come along at any time to inquire what goods are in stock, and to what extent the reserves are being maintained. We have to visualise this situation: reserves may be fully maintained in Brisbane, and this city may be attacked by an enemy. The people of Brisbane may have to evacuate the city, and if it falls into enemy hands the enemy will gain a greater quantity of goods than probably can be found in any other part of the State.

The Premier: For obvious reasons we cannot state publicly in Parliament where the reserve stocks will be built up or how they will be handled.

Mr. NIMMO: Of course not, and I am only raising the matter so that the mistake will not be made of providing huge stocks in Brisbane for the maintenance of the Brisbane people when, in the event of an evacuation of the city, it might be found desirable to have a heavy stock held, say, at Charleville, where the people have gone from this city.

The Treasurer: You can rest assured that the committee that has handled this work was long-sighted enough to do that. Indeed, Queensland has been congratulated by the Commonwealth on the efficacy of its scheme.

Mr. NIMMO: I understand that in Great Britain the Government themselves have built up considerable stocks, and have not relied entirely on the ordinary trader. These goods are carefully guarded in case of emergency. I am not saying that stocks should be built up in all parts of the State in accordance with the schedule outlined by the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock the other day. I suggested that certain iron rations should be stored at certain points and that the committee responsible for this work should have its attention drawn to that idea. For instance, at certain outback places we could store stocks of bully-beef, tinned milk, and sugar for use in an emergency, and we should not have much need to worry about these far-distant reserves in the event of an attack. The people who had to leave Brisbane could be fed from these reserve stores.

The Secretary for Agriculture and Stock: Communication may be blocked between Charleville and Brisbane.

Mr. NIMMO: It may be, but that is hardly likely.

The Premier: You can rest assured that if we had to evacuate any place we should not leave any food in a suitable condition for an enemy.

Mr. NIMMO: Does the hon. gentleman mean that he would adopt the scorched-earth policy that is carried out on the other side of the world?

The Treasurer: I should say that something will scorch the earth in getting out of it.

Mr. NIMMO: Very likely.

The Premier: There are ways and means of making food unusable.

The Treasurer: Not unusable for us, but unusable for an enemy.

Mr. NIMMO: I thought it advisable that I should draw attention to these matters while the Bill was being considered. I am just raising the point as we might overlook the fact that certain stores might be accumulated in the big centres of population, and in the event of an emergency we should not be able to have the benefit of them, while we may at the same time overlook the desirableness of having a store of iron rations in some outback centre.

The Secretary for Agriculture and Stock: Provision has been made for iron rations in every possible centre.

Mr. NIMMO: I am delighted to hear that assurance. That was my only purpose in speaking. The Opposition will not raise any opposition to this Bill; in fact, they are very pleased that it has been brought forward.

Mr. BRAND (Isis) (2.31 p.m.): So far as I can understand this Bill has been introduced in national interests. It provides for emergency stores throughout the various communities in this State. It is on all fours with the policy of the Federal Government in providing for the people of Australia in emergencies. So far as I am concerned, the Government should have all powers necessary to carry out this very desirable work, and we should see to it that they get them as soon as Parliament can give them. I welcome the Bill, as these powers will enable the Government to fulfil a national duty.

Motion (Mr. Cooper) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING.

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Cooper, read a first time.

SECOND READING.

The TREASURER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) (2.35 p.m.): I move—

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

The intention of this Bill is to care for the financial side of the scheme.

The matter of provisions and the storing of necessary commodities have all been dealt with under the National Security Regulations outside the ambit of this Bill. Hon. members will see by the Bill that it merely covers the financial aspect of the matter, and I can assure hon. members that the questions that have been raised are fully covered by the provision that has already been made. As a matter of fact, I am not overstating the fact when I say that the Queensland committee was informed that the Commonwealth Government think the arrangements made in Queensland surpass those of any other State in the whole of the Commonwealth.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) (2.36 p.m.): The Treasurer has pointed out that the Bill provides for the financial arrangements for the excellent organisation that has been built up in Queensland to provide emergency stocks. I take the opportunity of congratulating the committee on the businesslike way in which it has tackled the problem in Queensland. There is no doubt it has done a good job, and has enjoyed the co-operation of the majority of the people who are concerned in this matter—and there are quite a number of people concerned in the handling of emergency goods, wholesalers, storekeepers, and business men generally throughout the State. I notice the committee has occasionally had to read the Riot Act, so to speak, to bring one or two into line, but it can be safely said that the majority have co-operated to the fullest extent with the committee—and sometimes at considerable inconvenience to themselves—realising that the object of having these emergency stores is to meet emergency conditions; and they have borne the little inconvenience quite willingly in the national interest.

The TREASURER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) (2.38 p.m.), in reply: I appreciate the reference by the Leader of the Opposition to the Emergency Supplies Committee, which has certainly worked with efficiency. There has been wholehearted co-operation throughout the State. One or two difficulties have been met with here and there, and the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock is going North to straighten out the one or two difficulties that remain. But the committee can be said to have done a splendid job of work and to have received the full co-operation of members of the trading community in this most necessary service to the State in its hour of great peril.

Motion (Mr. Cooper) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Gair, South Brisbane, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 to 5, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

LIQUOR ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay) (2.41 p.m.): I move—

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

There is not a great deal left to say in regard to the Bill itself. It was very fully discussed yesterday on its initiation in Committee. The Minister in charge of the Bill with meticulous care went through every clause, explaining it in detail to the Committee, so that when it came to the vote everyone knew fully the implications of the Bill and every matter of policy involved.

A Liquor Bill, of course, is one that causes diversity of opinion in Parliament. I have been in Parliament for 26 years and I know that there are two Bills that no Government brings in unless they think it is desirable and necessary; and a Liquor Bill is one of them.

One of the points of major difference of opinion is in regard to the hours of trading. I take the view that the hours of 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. are the most reasonable that could be determined upon by Parliament, having regard to all the circumstances. There are, of course, people who do not regard hotels as having any public interest to serve; there are people who desire to have them closed altogether. Very naturally, their approach to the question is in the direction of limiting their service or their activity. They do not regard them as giving a public service at all. They regard them as an enemy, and, therefore, think that their powers or their influence must be completely destroyed. That, of course, is an argument that can be well understood. People who put forward a case

for prohibition have a right to put forward that case, and, indeed, very strong arguments can be used for and against that proposition, but a Parliament charged with the responsibility of discharging a public duty has to take into account the wishes, the desires, the customs, and the habits of the people—democracy demands that—and so long as the people regard the right to have intoxicating liquor as one of their social customs it must be regulated in a manner that serves the public interest and is not detrimental to it. The drinking of alcoholic beverages has been known throughout history. Many of the earliest songs were drinking songs. On all kinds of festive occasions, wines or other liquors were dispensed. I do not know of any country in any period of history that did not have drinking customs associated with its social festivities. Therefore, we are dealing with a long-established practice, and we have to take into account the wishes of the people and the psychological background.

In Queensland we have had examples of certain hours, the first that I remember being from 6 a.m. till 11 p.m. Those hours were not rigidly observed. In those days it was very easy to obtain liquor on Sundays or during prohibited hours.

The 1912 Act of the Denham Government did not alter the hours but it tightened up certain provisions of the law and included new sections. No set of hours has ever been 100 per cent. observed at any time, either in this or any other country. I believe that every effort should be made to observe the law; in fact, I go further and say that it is the duty of all Governments to see that the law is vindicated and carried out. It is the definite intention of this Government to see that this Bill is carried out in every detail, but where the law is in advance of the considered will of the people, there is an incentive for it to be broken, and Parliament must pay some attention to that if it is very widespread.

The hours of 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. were never considered to be satisfactory by anyone.

Mr. Barnes: Except by the Bundaberg police.

The PREMIER: The first two hours in the morning were superfluous, unless a man happened to be on shift work, and 8 p.m. was too early in the evening for the majority of workers. I remind hon. members that I am not dealing now with the class of worker who has a private bar in his own home. Because of the 8 o'clock closing, many people who could afford it installed private bars in their own homes, and during the past 12 months the sale of cocktail cabinets has increased enormously. That does not apply to the working-class homes for two very important reasons, the first being that the average working man's wife would not allow it because she would know that they could not afford it. The average wage-earner's family income is insufficient to meet a charge of that kind. People who are better off financially could give parties in their own homes, keep an ample store on their own

premises, and any hour that suited them was the time to close the bar. Therefore, in considering this question of drinking in the evening we have to pay more attention to the man who uses public houses or hotels.

The man knocking off work at 5 o'clock or half-past 5 or 6 o'clock goes home for a bath, has tea—or whatever you call it—and it is not usual for the man who has his meal at half-past 6 or 7 o'clock to want to drink at 8 o'clock or between 7 o'clock and 8 o'clock. The normal time for that man to have a drink—I am referring to a normal man—is about 9 o'clock in the evening, and you will find, if you make an analysis of working people generally, that this is the most suitable time for them to have a drink, that is to say, between 9 and 10 o'clock.

The idea that any change in hours will increase drunkenness is one that cannot be sustained. The majority of working men have only a given amount of money to spend. Some spend it on the Saturday, and others spread it out over the week, but, whatever method is adopted, if he is a decent husband and father he is not going to drink to the detriment of his family, and, consequently, he has only a certain amount of money to spend on beer or whatever drink he happens to desire most. From his point of view, between 9 o'clock and 10 o'clock is the most reasonable time for him to have a drink; between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. is too early, as it is too soon after the evening meal.

I have discussed conditions with all sets of people—decent people—who are carrying on the services of the nation, and the consensus of opinion I have found among these men who were not committed to a temperance platform was that an alteration in the closing hour from 8 o'clock to 10 o'clock would be the most suitable. I believe that to be so. The man who gets drunk is abnormal, and I shall deal with that phase of the question later in my speech.

The fixation of hours has always been the function of Parliament, and there is no reason that I can see why Parliament should seek to evade its responsibility. Parliament should take the responsibility of fixing hours as it has always done since the first Parliament was opened in Queensland. We are responsible to the people, and we should accept to the full our legislative responsibility. In any case, I made it very clear during the election period that Parliament had the right to alter trading hours at any time it desired. I gave no impression whatever that there would not be a variation in the law. We, of course, very definitely policed the 8 o'clock closing, and it involved the use of a very large number of police—an undue number of police—and the present Liquor Act was more rigidly administered than any other Liquor Act I have known in this State. I have found that the public generally were looking to Parliament in this session to alter what they considered to be an anomaly and an intrusion into the rights of the individual.

The Bill also provides for the abolition of dumming. If a licensee is convicted of

three offences against the Act he forfeits his licence, and it can be dealt with by the Licensing Commission. No question of equity or injustice can arise in such circumstances, because the licence is accepted under certain conditions, and if he disobeys those conditions and is convicted for so doing in a court of competent jurisdiction he thereby forfeits the advantages that have been given to him under the licence.

Mr. Macdonald: And rightly so, too.

The PREMIER: It is rightly so. As a matter of fact, a licence is a contract between the licensee and the Crown, and if the contract is not observed it can be cancelled. It should not be varied at will or at the desire of one party to the contract only. No-one would consent to any contract's being vitiated simply at the wish or for the benefit of one party to the contract. The Licensing Commission will have power to deal with that. No change in the licence can take place except on account of a bona-fide transaction. The power exercised by the Licensing Commission is similar to the power conferred on the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board in regard to assigned sugar land. For instance, no assigned sugar land may be transferred unless the contract of sale is approved by the board, and, of course, it must be fair to all parties concerned. In this way the sugar industry has stamped out dumming, and the same practice will be observed in the Bill.

The general penalties are being increased, and it will become very unprofitable for anyone to break the law. The section dealing with the offence of serving persons under the influence of liquor has been very considerably tightened up. Temperance should be encouraged. I have every respect for the men and women engaged in temperance work so long as they are temperate themselves.

Mr. Macdonald: In speech?

The PREMIER: That is what I meant. There are various forms of intemperance, as no doubt the hon. member for Stanley knows.

Mr. Macdonald: I have a full knowledge.

The PREMIER: The hon. member has a full knowledge, I agree.

Mr. Maher: Any emphasis on the "full?"

The PREMIER: No. I was pointing out that I have every respect for the vast body of men and women who engage in temperance work. But temperance is very largely a matter of training, of character-building. People can be intemperate in a good many ways. For instance, they can be intemperate in the views they hold concerning the social conditions under which they live. They can also be intemperate in their judgment of other people. That is one of the worst forms of intemperance. I have often wondered why in compilations of great essays the writings of St. Paul have not been included. They are among the finest literature of the language. There is abundance of wisdom in them as well as very sound philosophy.

St. Paul, who was one of the greatest writers who ever lived, in I. Corinthians, c. 13, v. 13, said—

“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”

How many people realise the truth of what St. Paul emphasises there?

A great number of people in their haste to achieve an otherwise good objective become very intemperate in the language they apply to people who cannot see eye to eye with them. In other words, they do not practise the teaching of St. Paul, “Faith, hope, charity . . . but the greatest of these is charity.” People who criticise men who hold different views from them on the liquor question show that very often. If you disagree with them they often attribute to you an unworthy motive; they suggest all kinds of sinister backgrounds to the man who expresses his opinion, as he has a perfect right to do in a free country. We do not object to their putting forward their case, but I expect them to consider any case on its merits without indulging in a lot of insults about side issues and making suggestions that are entirely unworthy of them.

The matter as I see it is briefly this: that everyone born into the world has to carry his own responsibilities in life. To the extent that he is capable of doing that he will succeed in life and become a good citizen. Character-building is largely in the same category as body-building. We all know that taking suitable exercises in the open air improves our health and increases our stature. So with character. Character is built up by resistance to and the overcoming of temptation rather than by imposing various forms of prohibition. A man cannot claim to be virtuous if he has never been tempted. If a man has no longer the capacity to sin can he claim to be morally good? The man who is good and virtuous is one who has encountered all the temptations that beset us in this world, and by strength of character has fought and won his battle and overcome his desires. The human body is the most complex structure that I know of, the most complex in every detail—any student of anatomy will agree with that—yet many of us treat it with less care than we do the bicycle or motor car.

Who would ever dream of putting sand into the delicate mechanism of a high-powered motor car? Only a criminal lunatic would do that. Yet, quite regardless of the result, we do things to our bodies that we would not do to things that we have purchased and which could be replaced by purchase again if we destroyed them.

The view that I am seeking—quite inadequately—to put forward is that the human body should be regarded as the temple of the living God. Despite all his weakness and despite all his failings it is the highest form of creation. Very early in life people should be taught to look after their bodies. They should have the desires of their bodies explained to them, and they should be taught

self-restraint, and they should be taught that the mind should at all times control desire. If that teaching is carried out early in life then the individual has little to fear although he has to be continually on his guard. To the extent that men build their character in the manner I have described, so the power of resistance to temptation becomes greater and greater. The further you fall down the more difficult it is to rise again.

Mr. Barnes: You know that.

The PREMIER: Yes, I know that; and the hon. member will be a wiser man when he comes to know it, too.

All people who have given any study to the problem know the truth of what I am saying. You cannot regard mankind as a number of people to whom you must say, “I forbid, I forbid, I forbid.” Everyone knows that the fascination of narcotics is to some extent based on the fear complex that surrounds early training. Alcohol is a narcotic—there is no doubt about that—and if people are told they must not touch it in any shape or form there is built up in the young mind a desire to see what it is like. It is like the neighbour’s apples: they are far more attractive than the ones that grow in your own orchard. I take the view that nationhood and individuality in character depend on the proper training of the individual. I do not believe it to be a good thing to go round telling people that taking beer or whisky is sinful. It is an entirely wrong technique, and one that will not be accepted by the majority of the public. Regarding the people who disagree with you as having sinful traits and tendencies is no good either. But if, on the other hand, you have a temperance movement that teaches the value of maintaining a healthy, sound mind, and that the human will should control the human desires, then you are going to build up a strong character in the individual and through the individual a strong race. I do not think there is any doubt about that. The temperance movement, as I have defined it, has in it a great number of people who claim to be the official leaders of the temperance movement. They are extreme in their attitude. They make statements that frequently have no foundation in fact, and if they cannot beat you in a straight discussion, they impute improper motives for the stand you take.

However, Mr. Speaker, this Bill deals with the normal, and the normal is that there must be hotels in Queensland and they must normally supply a service to the people who use them. That is provided for in this Bill in a suitable manner, and I am satisfied that, with effective administration, the Bill will become a landmark in liquor legislation and be in the public interest and promote the public welfare generally.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) (3.12 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, since yesterday we have had the opportunity of examining this Bill in detail, and although it resembles the curate’s egg in

that it is good in spots—unfortunately, the good spots are not sufficient to outweigh the disadvantages of the bad features.

The Premier this afternoon gave the House a homily on temperance. He told us many things that we were aware of, and have no great bearing on the vital question before the House. As I see it, the vital question is whether this legislation at the present time is an advantage or a disadvantage to the people of the State. That is the only thing that we as a Parliament should consider.

The Premier said that it is the function and prerogative of Parliament to fix the liquor-trading hours in this State. That is true, Mr. Speaker, and it would be right if every member of this Parliament on a subject such as this expressed his view irrespective of party ties and associations. I venture to say that the vote recorded on this Bill up to date has not been cast in that spirit. Had it been, I venture the opinion that yesterday the majority would have recorded their votes against it.

Looking at this Bill from the point of view of public interest, let us ask ourselves these questions: Will it aid the war effort? Will it encourage economy? Will it save spending on non-essentials? Those are three points that time and again are placed before us by our national leaders. At the moment we are asked to make a maximum war effort, to encourage economy, and to cut our spendings on non-essentials. Will this Bill have that effect? I answer that most certainly it will not. It will be detrimental to our war effort, it will not encourage economy, it will encourage spending on non-essentials. To prove my case I intend to put in the witness-box men whose opinions we value.

The first witness I call is the Prime Minister of Great Britain, the Right Hon. Winston Churchill, who made the following statement about the effects of alcoholic liquor on the war effort:—

“Nothing must be done which retards or impairs the development of our army. What it lacks in numbers compared with the Nazi or Fascist hordes, it must make up in quality and equipment.

“Every moral and social cause, the prosperity of every trade, is involved in the victory of the temperance movement.

“If you can succeed in reducing the enormous expenditure in strong drink, every trade in the country will benefit. More food will be bought, and better kinds of food; more clothing will be bought; more education, and a better kind of education, will be given to the children.”

Now I quote Sir John Simon, who, when speaking in the House of Commons as Chancellor of the Exchequer, said—

“It has been made plain in recent speeches by the Prime Minister and myself that the Government consider that it is the duty of everyone to restrict consumption of non-essentials so as to make available for the prosecution of the war the greatest possible proportion of our resources. I would regard restraint in the

consumption of alcoholic beverages as one of the ways in which the public can fulfil this duty.”

Then we have our own Prime Minister, whom I quoted yesterday, as saying—

“A wasted hour in industry helps the enemy. A wasted shilling helps the enemy.”

We have a further statement by Mr. Curtin in this morning's Press—

“I appeal to the people of Australia to spend as little as possible on the Christmas gifts to which they have been used.”

And he urged them to give gifts that will help our war effort.

The Government's Christmas gift to the liquor interests is the extended hours that are provided for under this Bill.

Mr. Devries: They are not extended hours; they are only altered hours.

Mr. NICKLIN: The alteration means an extension of the night trading hours, which will unquestionably mean increased expenditure on the non-essential of liquor at this time.

Yesterday I stated that one of my objections to the introduction of this measure was that it would give greater opportunity for the consumption of liquor to the thousands of our young men in the fighting forces. I was taken to task by a number of speakers for making that statement. They said I was speaking in a derogatory manner of our fighting forces. I served for a considerable number of years during the last war, and I saw what happened to the young men there. I do not wish to see a repetition of that. I say emphatically that it is my opinion—irrespective of whether any other hon. member agrees with it, although I am confident that I have the support of a large number of people in the community—that it is not right to give this opportunity at the present time to those lads of ours who are serving in our forces. In support of my statement, I quote the following from the “Brewers' Digest,” of May, 1941, in connection with the making available of beer at army camps:—

“Here is a chance for brewers to cultivate a taste for beer in the millions of young men who will eventually constitute the largest beer-consuming section of the community.”

Apparently, the liquor trade also thinks that this extra two hours will be to the advantage of its trade.

The Premier said that we were here to interpret the wishes of the people. Yes, we are here to interpret the wishes of the people, but have the people had the opportunity of intelligently letting us know exactly what their wishes are in this matter? We have heard a very large section of the community protesting vigorously against the proposed measure. The Liquor Trades Employees' Union have protested against it, and quite a number of hotelkeepers in this State are protesting against it. Where is the demand

for the alteration in the spread of hours coming from? That is a question that has not been answered during the debate. Yesterday, remarks made by the secretary of the union were quoted to show that if certain conditions were given the employees they would favour a spread of hours from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. Let us see what the secretary of the union recently said when news was given to him that there was to be a change in the trading hours. He said—

“We were astounded when we heard of the decision, in view of the resolution passed at the Labour Convention at Southport to observe the present hours . . .”

The Premier: There was never any resolution at Southport supporting it.

Mr. NICKLIN: I am only quoting—

The Premier: And I am correcting you.

Mr. NICKLIN: I am quoting what the secretary of the union said. He went on to say—

“Under the present Act many employees in the past have been prosecuted and fined for serving liquor on Sunday and after hours without the permission of the licensed victualler. If the same system continues it will certainly make the closing times a farce. Unless heavy penalties are inflicted for non-observance of the trading hours the law will continue to be broken . . .”

“My opinion is that the alteration of hours should have been brought about by an appeal to the people.”

A number of circulars were issued—part of the circular was quoted last night by the hon. member for Windsor—in which the union set out its objections to the Bill. In view of all that evidence, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be interesting to know—and hon. members of this House are entitled to know—exactly where the big public demand for the alteration of the hours is coming from. I do not think we have had any evidence produced in favour of any alteration at all.

Mr. Gair: Brewery shares have fallen, according to the Press.

Mr. NICKLIN: I should like to mention the matter of breweries, too, and emphasise the interest that brewers would have in a measure of this nature, seeing the stranglehold they have on the hotel trade of this State. After all, if the Bill were to help individual hotelkeepers, it might have some virtues, but, at the present time, it will not help individual hotelkeepers to any extent, because as such they have almost gone out of business. In this State hotels are almost all owned by brewers and their associates. The “*Wildcat Monthly*” gives particulars of the balance-sheets presented by two big brewing firms in this State, and it will be found that in 1932 Castlemaine-Perkins Limited had £426,691 invested in hotels. In 1937, after the last amendment of the Liquor Act, which was certainly not to the disadvantage of the breweries, their investments in hotels had grown to £1,354,979.

Mr. Collins: Was that in Queensland?

Mr. NICKLIN: Yes, in Queensland. And, in 1941 the investments in hotels had grown to £1,525,879.

The same upward trend is revealed in the figures of Queensland Breweries Limited, although it is not so easy in that case to ascertain exactly what amount was invested in hotels by that company, because its investments are shown under the one head of “Breweries, plant, warehouses, and hotels.” Its figures show that in 1932 it had £286,433 invested in breweries, plant, warehouses, and hotels, and that by 1941 the amount had grown to £1,641,595. The figures show that since 1932 the brewery ownership of hotels had increased in value from about £500,000 to nearly £3,000,000 in this State. Therefore it can be seen what a big interest this vested interest and this monopoly has in the Bill. Hon. members opposite are the people we have heard ranting and raving in this House about monopolies, but here is one of the greatest monopolies in this State, and not one word of protest is heard from them. What is the reason for it? There is dead silence on the other side of the House, and it seems to indicate that the only interests that want the Bill are the breweries. The people have very vociferously said that they do not want the measure, and the liquor trades union has said very emphatically that it does not want it, and judging by the way the breweries have been buying hotels it can be seen that it is to the advantage of the brewery interests to have the measure.

Nothing has been submitted to justify the introduction of the Bill at the present time. It would be mighty hard to do so. Many provisions have been included in it only to cloud the real issue. We have been told that the Government are going to carry out the law effectively, and that no-one will open his hotel after 10 o'clock p.m. We have heard those things before, and we have had the experience of seeing the liquor law effectively enforced just before the last election. The Premier told us to-day that a large number of police had to be used to enforce the law.

The Treasurer: Do you know that brewery shares have dropped to-day?

Mr. NICKLIN: I am not interested in brewery shares, but I should like to remind the Treasurer that immediately it was announced that there was going to be an alteration in the spread of liquor-trading hours brewery shares went up.

The Treasurer: And now that they have seen the Bill they have gone down.

Mr. NICKLIN: I cannot imagine anybody's selling out his brewery holdings because of the Bill.

Let me get back to my point about carrying out the liquor laws. It is quite a simple matter to do that. If the Government gave it out that it was their express intention and desire that the liquor laws should be observed they would be observed.

They do not want hundreds of extra police to carry them out. If hotelkeepers or any other persons who break the liquor

laws know that they will have to pay the penalty if caught then they will not take the risk. It is all nonsense to endeavour to mislead the House by saying that hundreds of extra police will be required to enforce the liquor laws. If that is true, what will be the position when the liquor laws are strictly enforced, as we are told they will be? If we carried that argument to its logical conclusion then we could expect a big increase in the strength of the Police Force. I guarantee that it will not be necessary to put on one extra policeman to do so; all that is necessary is to say that the law is going to be enforced. That will be quite sufficient.

The introduction of the provision giving power to the Government to close hotels in the event of an emergency, or alter the spread of hours as laid down in the Bill, is a clear admission by the Government that this is not a time to introduce this Bill. The introduction of a clause of that nature amplifies the argument I have used that this Bill operates against our war effort and that this is not the time when it should be introduced.

Let us examine also the provision dealing with the sale of liquor in and about dance halls. That is one provision with which everybody will agree. This is an evil that has been growing for some considerable time, and it is high time that some action was taken to check it. The Government are to be commended for taking this opportunity to deal with that problem. I am not quite certain, Mr. Speaker, whether this provision is quite effective enough.

The Premier: We will give you full information on that point in Committee.

Mr. NICKLIN: I intend to ask for some information because, on looking at the clause in the Bill, I think there is a loophole. I hope there is not, but if my surmise is correct it will be disclosed when a full discussion takes place upon it in the Committee stage. I trust an amendment will be made whereby it will be made absolutely watertight.

The discussion that has already taken place in this measure, together with the free discussion that will take place at the Committee stage, makes it difficult to introduce any fresh arguments in addition to those already used. Personally, I am of opinion that the reasons advanced from this side for the rejection of this measure at the present time are good and sufficient. I say emphatically that this is not the time to introduce a measure of this kind. There is no public demand for it and it will not be in the interests of this State or of our national war effort. I strongly oppose the Bill at this stage.

Mr. COLLINS (Cook) (3.35 p.m.): I cannot agree with the contention of the Leader of the Opposition regarding the Bill.

Mr. Macdonald: We do not expect you to.

Mr. COLLINS: When I want the hon. member's opinion I will ask for it.

The case put forward by the Leader of the Opposition is weak in every respect. I quite agree a man is entitled to his opinion, and I have every sympathy with that great body of public opinion that believes that too much strong drink is being used and that we should have less of it, and that the character or the morality of the people should be improved. I think that the people who hold that opinion are just as sincere as we are in ours. If I believed that this Bill was going to weaken the war effort or have a deleterious effect on our people, I should no more agree to the Bill than some hon. members of the Opposition do.

The Leader of the Opposition contends that the Bill will affect our war effort. Has any other country that is going through the trials and tribulations of war—probably to a greater degree than we are—imposed any more stringent liquor hours than we have? I contend that none can be named, and so far none have been named.

An Opposition Member: Did you hear Churchill?

Mr. COLLINS: I will quote Mr. Churchill. Does he forgo his cigar? Does he forgo his drink?

An Opposition Member: Don't be petty.

Mr. COLLINS: I am not petty, but the man's name was raised. Great Britain is not restricting her hours of liquor-trading, and they are very much more liberal than the trading hours in Queensland. If it is all right for Britain to carry on with those hours during the terrific ordeal she is experiencing, surely there is no harm in our doing it out here. We are not increasing the trading hours in this State, and in certain respects we are restricting the sale of liquor. We are merely altering the trading hours—not increasing them—to a more convenient time for the public. I am not concerned about the publican or the brewery in this connection, but I am concerned with the welfare of the people of Queensland, and it is purely in the interests of Queensland that I support the Bill. It is not going to encourage drinking because it restricts the great volume of drinking that is taking place to-day, and it restricts the worst phase of drinking. When one goes to a dance, as almost everyone has during the last few years, and sees the growing use of liquor amongst young men and young girls, I think it is time somebody took a hand and tried to restrict this class of trade, which is one of the worst phases of drinking that affects the most precious section of our community—the young girls who are growing up to womanhood, the future mothers of our race. We have no more precious jewels in the community than those young women, and if there is anything we can do to safeguard their interests it should be done. An enormous quantity of liquor is used at dances under circumstances and conditions that should not be permitted. In that respect the Bill will do much to bring drinking back to where it legitimately belongs—to the

licensed hotel where it is under public supervision and where it can be properly controlled. Can anybody say that drinking can be controlled in the vicinity of a dance hall that may be alongside a park or paddock? When young people get under the influence of liquor under those conditions the worst phase of the excessive use of alcohol may happen. The Bill will, without doubt, restrict the use of liquor.

We are altering the drinking hours by extending them from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. Is that not going to be to the benefit of the people who use liquor sensibly? If they want a few drinks they will be able, instead of having to rush into a hotel and gulp them down before 8 o'clock, go to their homes, have their tea, and in the leisure time of the evening come back to town and have their drinks, either in the bar or the lounge of a hotel, the place in which sensible drinking should be done.

Will the Bill encourage excessive spending? That is a point raised by the Leader of the Opposition. I contend that it will not do that, inasmuch as I believe that the most irresponsible section of our community are those young people who take it out in "bottle" parties, on the beaches, the dance halls, and the like. It will largely discourage this practice, and will restrict the use of liquor to the older people, who will frequent the lounges of the hotels, which become more or less their clubs, in the evening.

There is also this factor. Amongst that section of the community a certain amount of money is regarded as being money to be spent on luxuries. These people may regard drinking as one of their luxuries, and is there any difference between using this money in having a few drinks, which they enjoy, and going to the horseraces or dog meetings, or even, as I heard an hon. member on the Opposition benches say yesterday, going to the pictures and there seeing some of the most puerile tripe that was ever imported into this country, but which has been advocated on the floor of this House as being something people should go to see and enjoy? It would actually be a dozen times better if some men went and got drunk rather than that they should sit for two or three hours watching some of the picture shows that I have seen—and that goes for every hon. member of the Opposition. I do not think they can be so mentally affected that they can enjoy some of the pictures that they argue people should see rather than a certain amount of relaxation that can be got by some people from the sensible use of liquor. I contend that the sensible use of liquor is responsible for much genuine enjoyment and general relaxation, and we should give those people who do enjoy it the right to enjoy it to better effect than in the past.

The increasing of the penalties on publicans is all to the good. If you place a good publican in charge of a hotel, it will do away with much of the bad drinking. The good publican does not like to see drunks about his premises, and he will not allow them there. On the other hand, if the inferior

or poorer type of man is allowed to hold licences, it will do much towards making the drinking habit worse than it is. The stringent regulations controlling the publican who breaks the laws of the land, and serves liquor to people who are under the influence, are to be recommended.

There has been no outcry against the extension or the alteration of hours. I do not see how any sensible man, who has travelled in this State, can say there has been. I suppose I have travelled as much as most hon. members. My electorate is in the far North of Queensland, and extends also to the North-Western part of this State, and since I have been in Parliament I have never seen 8-o'clock closing strictly observed. I am making no secret about that. It is common knowledge. This Bill is merely legalising what has been accepted by public opinion for many years past.

Mr. Barnes: Why did you not squeal when I was persecuted in Bundaberg?

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member has not been persecuted half enough yet. The Bill is legalising what public opinion has accepted. Hotels have been trading after hours. That was well known. About a year ago, the enforcement of the trading hours was tightened up, and for the time being had some good effect. The liquor laws of the past have been contrary to common sense. Everyone knows how difficult it is to impose upon the people a law that is contrary to common sense and the consensus of opinion of the community. This Bill simply legalises what has been going on in this State for the last 20 years, and in bringing in this measure I think the Government are doing the sensible thing. I cannot agree that by its introduction we shall encourage drinking.

The provision prohibiting the sale of liquor in dance halls is to be commended. Of course, I am speaking now mainly of the country. I do not know much about what has gone on in the city of Brisbane, because I never frequent the hotels here after 8 o'clock. I ask hon. members opposite to imagine themselves sitting down at 8 o'clock on a hot summer's night in Cairns and trying to convince themselves that they are happy in drinking a glass of cold water when they are thirsty. To expect that is against all common sense and reason, and I do not think any reasonable hon. member of the Opposition can cavil at anybody's desire to have a drink there after 8 o'clock. Of course, we could have a separate law for that part of the State, but I should not like to see one Act of Parliament applying to the drink question in the North, another in the Central district, and a third in the Southern district.

Mr. Taylor: There is no need to worry. You do not have to drink water in Cairns. The Attorney-General sees to it that you get more than water there.

Mr. COLLINS: I have had more than water in Cairns, and I make no secret of it. This Bill is one that can and will be enforced strictly; it is one that will operate to the benefit of the community.

It has been argued that this is not the opportune time for altering the law. No time is opportune in the minds of some people. That is a stock argument used by those who do not want to see the law altered. It has been a stock argument against almost every reform that has been made. Anyone would think that the drink question was something new. Why, I know of no older habit in the world than the use of spirituous liquors. Even in the earliest records of history we find that liquors have always been used by certain sections of the community.

Will anyone say that the use of liquor in Queensland has increased? There certainly is no evidence of that. Certainly, none has been adduced by those hon. members opposite who oppose the Bill. If it has increased, why not produce evidence to prove that it has? If it has not increased then why not admit it? Hon. members opposite might be able to say that a greater amount of money has been spent—I do not admit even that—but it must be remembered that liquor prices have risen. The cost of liquor in Queensland is higher now than it has ever been. In fact, it is probably higher here than it is in any other part of the world. Certainly, it is higher here than any other country I know. Therefore, if hon. members opposite did produce figures to show that a greater amount of money was expended on liquor they proved nothing. The quantity of liquor consumed and the alcohol content of it is what counts in considering whether there has been an increase in the consumption of liquor. In my opinion, right through the ages the sensible use of liquor has been one of the agents through which a big section of the people has derived one of its chief enjoyments in life.

Everyone knows that an effort was made in the United States to bring about total prohibition by restricting the sale of liquors to hours that were not acceptable to the public. Everyone knows that the public just refused to obey those laws to such an extent that the Government were forced to revert to the sensible policy of licensing liquor houses.

Exactly the same thing has obtained here. We have found that the restriction of drink to the hours of 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. was not acceptable to the people, that if they could not get it at the hotel after 8 p.m. they would buy large quantities of it before the hotels closed and then go to some secret place to do their drinking. Could anything be worse than that? I say that the more you keep liquor to where it belongs—licensed premises—and keep it under public audit the greater the benefit you will confer on those who use liquor sensibly, and the more you will keep it away from those who cannot control themselves when they do have it.

I maintain that the Bill is opportune and that no sound argument has been adduced by any hon. member opposite in opposition to it.

Mr. NIMMO (Oxley) (3.51 p.m.): The hon. member who has just resumed his seat made the statement that the consumption of liquor in Queensland was falling.

Mr. COLLINS: I said that it was not increasing.

Mr. NIMMO: I have with me a paragraph showing that the drink bill in Queensland for the years 1938, 1939, and 1940, was £1,104,855, indicating that there was an increase of £475,221 in 1940 on the previous year's consumption. It also shows the expenditure per head of population and one can hardly imagine that in a country at war such a large increase should have taken place.

The Secretary for Public Lands: A purely revenue increase, and it does not reflect the consumption increase at all.

Mr. NIMMO: All I can quote is the amount of money spent.

Mr. COLLINS: Give us the gallons of liquor consumed.

Mr. NIMMO: The more spent in purchasing liquor, naturally the greater the consumption. I am only pointing this out to show that the hon. member for Cook was not quoting the true facts when he said that the consumption of liquor was falling. With the large number of men who have gone overseas for war purposes there remain fewer people in Australia to consume the liquor available, and, naturally, the people here must be consuming a greater quantity to make up for those who are away.

Much has been said in this debate about what is being done in Great Britain and other countries, but in Great Britain we find that no wine is being imported except that required for church purposes. The only spirits entering the country are rum for the services and a certain amount of high-proof rum for manufacture into gin. Magistrates at various places, such as Liverpool, Leeds, Salford, Manchester, Glasgow, and Swansea, have imposed earlier closing during the period of the war. That statement does not bear out the cable received from the Agent-General.

The Secretary for Public Lands: What is your authority?

Mr. NIMMO: The information is collected from reports from the towns or cities.

Much was said during the debate to the effect that canteens were provided at munition works where munition workers may get their liquor. In England we find that the canteens on trains for the use of troops serve only food and hot drinks and no beer. The munition workers can get food, tea, milk, and other things, but no intoxicating liquor.

In Germany beer has been diluted to half its pre-war strength, and recently the manufacture of it was reduced by 25 per cent. Germany now consumes little more than half the amount of beer a head consumed in Great Britain. In France a newspaper of 10 August last published an article that stated that the excessive consumption of alcohol by French soldiers during the eight months before the German offensive was responsible for the collapse of the French front. It indicated that far too much liquor was being consumed on the Continent. The Sunday "Chronicle"

of 25 August, 1940, said that the military authorities blamed drink for the moral collapse of the French armies. I am trying to show hon. members opposite that all their talk about there being no restriction in European countries is wrong. In Canada several of the States have reduced the hours of trading, and 6 p.m. is the closing hour in some. In April last, Cardinal Villeneuve, Catholic Primate of Canada, speaking at the Empire Club, Toronto, said—

“I hope for the sake of the country and the Empire we all realise that abstinence will powerfully aid us to win the war. Efficiency is the demand of the hour, and alcohol is the enemy of efficiency. Are you making some sacrifice?”

Those are his words, not mine.

Mr. Riordan: Why did you not put the profit you got from your shares in the breweries into the war effort, if you are so much concerned about the war effort?

Mr. NIMMO: Yesterday, I denied that I had any shares in breweries, and I make that denial again to-day. I think it is a scurrilous thing that hon. members opposite should discredit any man by scurrilous and scandalous statements. When we were dealing with the Bill to grant pensions to coalminers, the hon. member for Bowen said that I owned a coalmine. Good gracious me, I must own half the State of Queensland, according to hon. members opposite. What sort of talk is this if hon. members opposite can try to discredit anybody? I strongly object.

How are we caring for the health of the people engaged in industry? I have not yet heard the Treasurer speak on the Bill and say what his views are.

The Treasurer: I spoke on it last night.

Mr. NIMMO: The liquor trades union is sending out a circular asking the people very strongly to oppose the extension of hours. This is what it says—

“Mr. Public, we ask you to analyse the following:—

What the 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. alteration of hotel hours will mean to those men and women in the industry and to you.

Five late nights a week! We will not get home until midnight or later.”

We all know how we feel to-day after a late night last night, but the employees in the hotel bars are to be asked to work five nights of every week for every week of the year. We have hon. members opposite sticking that down their throats, and the hon. member for Cook has distinguished himself by saying that he was going to force them to serve in men's clubs. Will anyone say that the same amount of drinking takes place when a man takes home a bottle of beer as when he stays in a hotel?

Mr. Collins: Yes.

Mr. NIMMO: No. Most of the drinking is done out of a feeling of good nature. People get in a room in a closed bar and they drink and shout for each other, keep on talking and

talking, and the more drink that is consumed the longer they stop. The people do not go there with the idea of having one drink and then leaving. Most of the trouble will arise from the late closing of hotel bars. On the Continent of Europe there is a better system, because there the people can sit down, really on the footpath, and drink. For instance, in Paris, they can drink beer in full view of everybody. When people get in in closed bars, as hon. members opposite say they should, they stay there and will not go home. Anyone who has been there knows exactly what takes place.

I wish to quote now from a statement made by Mr. Hickey, the representative of the liquor trades union, at a recent sitting of the Industrial Court on an application for shorter hours for employees engaged in the liquor trade. He said in the course of his sworn evidence—

“With regard to the first point . . .” That is, the health of the employee. I remind the House that hotel employees at this time work until only 8 o'clock at night. Here we have the Government forcing them to stop in their employment till 10 p.m.

Mr. Collins: Who is forcing them to do so?

Mr. NIMMO: The Government are. The employees have to stop there. Here is the evidence given by Mr. Hickey—

“It must be noted that bar work is classed as a dangerous trade by all insurance companies. No insurance company will issue a first-class policy on the life of a barman or barmaid, and the loading on any policy is 50 per cent. In this respect, barmen and barmaids are placed in the same category as miners working underground. Bar attendants are at all times exposed to the danger of infectious and contagious diseases. Although places of entertainment are fitted with machinery for the cleansing of the atmosphere, hotels are not, in spite of the fact that there is, during the busy hours, a greater congestion of human bodies in a confined space. Men go to the hotels straight from their work, many of them still covered with the dirt and filth they have been working in. While the law says the public must not expectorate on the footpath, customers spit all over the place in a public bar, whilst body odours and odours of perspiration and the bad breath of customers is almost overpowering. This constitutes a grave danger to the public health, but it is a graver danger to the health of the bar attendant who is compelled to remain in this atmosphere for several hours at a time.”

The Government now propose to force those employees to work two hours longer at night in that atmosphere.

The Secretary for Public Works: If the union knew its business, its members would work only eight hours a day or 44 hours a week.

Mr. NIMMO: That is the position as I see it. The step we are asked to take will

do a grave wrong to this country. I ask the Government even at this late stage to withdraw the Bill. There is no need to extend liquor hours at the present time. I am told that if the extension of trading hours becomes law 150 men engaged in the bottle trade will lose employment. Since the stricter enforcement of 8 o'clock closing, the breweries, through the hotels, are selling a great deal more bottled beer. I understand that the amount of bottled beer sold since then has been tremendous. Before the enforcement of 8 o'clock closing many men hung about hotel bars, which meant that their wives and families were deprived of their company and friendship. When 8 o'clock closing was enforced they took a couple of bottles of beer home at night and drank it in the home. Not nearly so much harm was done as when they remained in hotel bars until a late hour. The information concerning the bottle trade has been given to me by the men in that business, who say that the whole reason for this alteration of the law is that less profit is made out of bottled beer than draught beer.

Why should we legislate to benefit any particular section of the community? This is a very serious problem at the present time. If we are going to help in the war effort to our fullest capacity, then we must curtail expenditure on non-essentials. No-one can gainsay the fact that excessive drinking in the evening is non-essential. We should see to it, if this Bill becomes law, that 10 o'clock closing is rigorously enforced.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. NIMMO: Well, the man should be. If a man is drinking after hours he should be caught. We are supposed to have a very close and rigid inspection of hotel bars to-day. A fortnight ago I was going along the Ipswich road and I saw a number of people coming out of a hotel bar at 3 o'clock on Sunday afternoon; they were not there paying a visit. I believe that right throughout the State to-day the law is not being enforced; yet we are calmly told if we put this Bill through it will clean up the job. Is there any hon. member in this House who will say that the present conditions in Brisbane are not 50 or 60 per cent. better than they were prior to the tightening-up of the administration of the law, and the enforcement up to a certain point of the Liquor Act? I say they are. In January, this year, I was in Warwick, and I said to the hotelkeeper at whose hotel I was staying, "How does this early closing affect you?" He said, "Well, there is no trade of an evening." I said, "Don't you get men coming along and saying, 'What about a drink?'" He said, "That is what I am here for now. If any extra-good customer came along he might get a drink, but do you know that they get used to the earlier closing hours and we never see one now. You might as well close up at 8 o'clock and be out by a quarter-past 8, because the people have got used to it and there is no demand for the later hours." That is a definite statement made to me by a reputable hotelkeeper in Warwick.

There must be some reason for bringing in this Bill. The hon. member for Bowen told us the reason was that he could not see hotelkeepers in his electorate starve to death because of the enforcement of the liquor hours. That proves that these people are not going to starve to death when this Bill passes. They will get greater revenue, which they will take out of the pockets of the people—by taking from them the money that should go into other commodities or even into war certificates. Here we have the Prime Minister asking everyone to refrain from buying the usual Christmas presents and to buy war-saving certificates instead, yet the Labour Government ask the people to spend their money—money that they should put into war savings certificates—on booze.

Mr. RIORDAN (Bowen) (4.8 p.m.): It was not my intention to say anything further on the Bill, but the hon. gentleman who just resumed his seat referred to a statement made yesterday, and the question I asked him across the Chamber to-day—whether he was supplied with a pamphlet because he was a shareholder, and he said it was scurrilous and a libel. During the lunch-hour a search was made in the share register, and it was found that amongst those people who have shares in Castlemaine Brewery is one Thomas Nimmo, Chelmer, occupation M.L.A.; 451 shares are shown on the share register, and if the hon. gentleman does not know about it I suggest he cash in on them and give a share of that money to the war effort.

Mr. Nimmo: You go and see it.

Mr. RIORDAN: I am bringing that forward to show that if he does not believe that the truth should be told, he should not tell deliberate untruths himself. The hon. gentleman made a statement that I said he owned a coalmine.

Mr. Nimmo: Yes.

Mr. RIORDAN: I never said he owned a coalmine at all.

Mr. Nimmo: You did.

Mr. RIORDAN: When the Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers (Pensions) Bill was before the House, I said to the hon. gentleman, "How long have you got rid of your shares in coalmines?" and the hon. gentleman said "I have no shares in coalmines." The other day I accused him, but had to withdraw, of using intimidating tactics towards the school teachers in his electorate.

Mr. Nimmo: That was untrue.

Mr. RIORDAN: He stated that it was an untruth. Well, I had to take his word for it and withdraw. If any person likes to pay the necessary charge to make a search in the share register he will there find in black and white, "Mr. Thomas Nimmo; occupation M.L.A.; 451 shares in Castlemaine-Perkins Brewery," and I make the suggestion that if he does not know of it, he get rid of those shares he says he knows nothing about and give the money to the war effort which he is

doing so much squealing about when this Bill is going through the House.

Mr. Nimmo: I will sell all my shares to you for ten bob.

Mr. RIORDAN: The hon. gentleman is suggesting that they are not his. He should "go and look at the entry." Somebody is using his name.

Mr. Nimmo: There you are, I am offering to sell them to you for ten bob.

Mr. RIORDAN: The hon. gentleman may have got rid of them just recently. We know he is a very shrewd business man. The hon. gentleman also said that it was not wrong for people to take drinks into their homes, that it was much better that drink should be taken to the home than that we should have the curse of drinking at public bars. One of the most vicious forms of drinking to-day is drinking in the homes amongst the children. If the hon. gentleman stands for that sort of thing I must disagree with him.

The hon. gentleman is also one of those who are laying great stress on the bad treatment being meted out to the employees of the liquor trade. There are other industries in which the employees work even longer hours, and I do not suggest that conditions should be made worse in any measures passed by Parliament, but I am not like the hon. gentleman opposite, who from time to time, when it suits his own political ends, stands up in this Chamber and makes a great plea on behalf of the workers. When the sit-down strike occurred at one of the breweries what remarks did the hon. gentleman make about those men who were taking direct action to gain what they thought were their rights? When a 40-hour week was at stake or an increase in wages was at stake or better conditions were at stake, and when share interests were likely to suffer, there was a loud protest about the action these men took. The hon. gentleman gets up here with his tongue in his cheek and tries to make us believe that he is not the Thomas Nimmo, M.L.A., of Chelmer, who has 451 shares in the Castlemaine-Perkins Brewery, according to the share register. If the hon. gentleman has not the necessary 2s. 6d. to make a search I will gladly give it to him, and while we are about it, perhaps it would be worth while making further searches to find who are some of the other shareholders.

This afternoon the Leader of the Opposition repeated everything said by him yesterday. Much of his cry was that this was the wrong time to introduce this Bill. I have never as yet heard any protest from these people about the excess profits made by people who have war contracts. The hon. member for Hamilton offered to pay and did pay back the excess profits he made to the Commonwealth. Have the woollen mills of which the hon. member for Oxley is a director ever made such a gesture to the Commonwealth Government? Have we ever heard anything along those lines from the hon. gentleman? But he makes dirty insinuations that the motive of this Government in introducing this Bill is

to placate the brewery interests. As an hon. member of the Government I am not concerned about brewery or liquor interests, publicans, or anyone else. I am concerned about the decent people who are in that trade, carrying on a legitimate business, and giving a public service. I am also concerned about the people who look upon these things as being something in the way of a public service. The hon. gentleman said we were told only the country areas were interested. There is merely greater need for some reform in the country areas than in the city areas. An hon. member yesterday said there should be a zoning system. I do not know that such a scheme would work out.

It has been suggested that the travelling clause is too wide. Possibly many people who oppose this Bill are desirous of opening up greater avenues for Sunday drinking. I do not want to see that happen. I also suggest that one thing hon. members opposite who have opposed this measure should remember—and this should have some weight with them—is that the Country Women's Association intimated that it would not be a member of the deputation that waited upon the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs, its reason being that it had to look after the country interests as well as the city interests. It is all very well for the hon. gentleman to get up and say that I was making scurrilous charges against him and libelling him, but I am going to ask him to be true to himself and not to endeavour to mislead this House in connection with the 451 shares that appear on the register under the name of Thomas Nimmo, M.L.A.

Mr. DECKER (Sandgate) (4.17 p.m.): It is evident that this Bill has been introduced for one purpose only—to serve the interests of the breweries. In my opinion, to say that this measure will be of great assistance to the worker is only using the worker as a tool to benefit the big financial interests that are definitely backing the Bill. If that were not so, then we should have had arguments from the Government stating the quarter from which the urge is coming.

Mr. Collins: It has come from public opinion and common use.

Mr. DECKER: It has not come from the liquor trade. I know of no union that has approached the Government or given any publicity in favour of the move. No hotel-keepers have clubbed together in an effort to have this Bill introduced. The source of the urge is a mystery, and the only sensible conclusion at which one can arrive after listening to this debate is that the Government are serving the interests of the breweries. All other arguments have been unfair, and I propose showing how unfair they have been.

The Minister who introduced the Bill quoted a letter from a liquor trades union to the breweries in an effort to establish that the liquor trade was in favour of an extension of the hours. When the Minister was checked on that statement he admitted that the letter was a year old. Where does that letter come from? Only from the breweries.

Mr. Power: No, it was quoted in the court when the case was dealt with by the court.

Mr. DECKER: No, it is a copy of a letter that was sent to the breweries at that time.

Another very grave injustice was done to a section of the community when the Minister referred to clubs. This reference in last night's "Telegraph" gives me a clue of the unfair treatment of clubs in an effort to force this Bill through Parliament. There is a statement in last night's "Telegraph" that "Every club had traded illegally," I emphasise the words, "every club." It goes on to say that the Sandgate Golf Club and the Sandgate Bowling Club have been trading illegally ever since they started until they were policed in November last year. I want to tell the House that the Sandgate Bowling Club has never opened its premises on a Sunday since it has had a licence.

Mr. Collins: Has it ever traded illegally?

Mr. DECKER: I will come to that if the hon. member will just wait. I tell the House again that the Sandgate Bowling Club has not opened its bar after 6 o'clock at night on a week day, and never opened its bar on a Sunday; and I further say that since the outbreak of war the only time the pavilion or premises has been used for any night function has been for a Red Cross function, and on that occasion the bar was not opened. I say that for the Sandgate Bowling Club, and in my remarks I embrace other bowling clubs.

Mr. Collins: Do those remarks apply to the Sandgate Golf Club?

Mr. DECKER: I shall come to that later. I am saying that for the Sandgate Bowling Club, because in that and other bowling clubs there are members of high standing in the community, men who honour and try to conduct their clubs in the interests of the clubs and the districts in which they are situated.

The Secretary for Public Lands: There must be something wrong with them if they do not want a drink.

Mr. DECKER: I say that it was shocking for these people to be slandered and abused by the Minister; in making out his case for the extension for the trading hours of hotels he cast a slur on respectable clubs.

The Secretary for Mines: Did you read in this morning's paper that a bowling club was fined for trading illegally?

Mr. DECKER: I want to read a letter I received from the Treasurer of the Sandgate Bowling Club this morning, and I want to table it. The letter is addressed to me, and states—

"E. P. Decker, Esquire, M.L.A.,

"Dear Erie,—

"To say the least I was surprised at the statement made by the Minister for Health and Home Affairs referring to clubs—cutting attached. What exactly does

he mean, and why is Sandgate Bowling Club specially mentioned?

"This club has always maintained an honourable reputation for observance of regulations governing clubs, and at no time has it ever been cautioned or policed. As you know it is composed of gentlemen well known for exemplary character who bring the same standard of ethics into the management and conduct of the club. It is stated these clubs were policed in November last. If the Minister has information of which we are entirely ignorant we shall be very glad to receive it. Personally, I look upon the report as a misstatement, and as it was made publicly and must have reactions I should be glad if you would take up the matter and have it publicly cleared.

"Yours faithfully,

(Signed) ALEX. HUNTER,

"Honorary Treasurer,

"Sandgate Bowling Club."

Mr. Collins: It never disobeyed the law?

Mr. DECKER: It was never cautioned nor policed. Hon. members opposite cannot believe that a respectable club can have an honourable record. The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs should withdraw the statement he made.

I know the reason for his statement. It was not made against the club, but was made by the Minister against the hon. member for Sandgate. He was mentioning all about hotels and the working man and other little incidentals, but he neglected the big interests, and when I mentioned breweries to him my statement was like a red rag to a mackerel. It was not a political statement against the Sandgate Bowling Club, but was a reply to my most telling interjection. His statement was meant for the hon. member for Sandgate and not the club. I know that. The Press took advantage of the statement, and published it, and we who know the facts know that the statement does not apply to the Sandgate Bowling Club, and I say that the Government should be men enough to withdraw it.

I now ask the Minister to withdraw that statement against the Sandgate club and all other respectable clubs.

Mr. Collins: What about the golf club?

Mr. DECKER: The Sandgate Golf Club is a highly respectable one and managed in a highly-respectable manner. It has never been cautioned nor policed by the Government for any illegal practice. When respectable people in the community congregate together to conduct clubs they are determined to observe the law, and it is unfair of the Minister to select two particularly exemplary clubs for unfair criticism. It convinces me that the breweries are responsible for the Bill, but the Minister has introduced it behind a smoke-screen of increased penalties and other provisions with which we are all agreed. He has endeavoured to cloud the big issue, and I say emphatically that the only interests the Bill serves are those of the breweries.

Mr. BARNES (Bundaberg) (4.27 p.m.): I can confirm all that the hon. member for Sandgate has said about the Sandgate Golf Club. I played golf there on three Sunday mornings, and there was no drinking. I admit that on my first Sunday I tried to get a drink and they told me no beer was served there. They did not know me except that my name was Barnes, and I was not wearing a beard, but they did not know who I was the following Sunday. It is perfectly obvious that the Minister intended to cast reflections on the hon. member for Sandgate and not on the Sandgate club. That is typical of the filth that goes on in this House.

Much has been said on the liquor question and about public opinion concerning it. Before I comment on the statements that were made yesterday, I think I should read this paragraph—

“As conqueror of a sitting Labour member, self-appointed crusader in Labour strongholds, critic of Government administration, and what-not, Mr. Barnes has little chance of getting his expected Bill through a strongly pro-Labour House.”

The fact remains that the honourable “Truth,” or the Gestapo paper, was wrong again, because I got it through the House even though it is 10 p.m., not 11 p.m. After I had made my speech yesterday the hon. member for Bowen said that the “Bundaberg bomb” was a dud. He went on to say that he was in favour of an 11 a.m. opening for hotels, and that he had stressed the point in caucus. That has been my attitude right through. I want an 11 a.m. opening for hotels, too. I suppose the hon. member will contradict himself again when I move an amendment for an 11 o’clock opening in Committee.

Furthermore, the hon. member said by way of interjection that I was supposed to have ptomaine poisoning although I was in the House next day and did not appear to be very sick. If he will consult the records of the House, he will find that I was not in the House next day.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is entitled to discuss the principles of the Bill but not something that is not contained in the Bill.

Mr. BARNES: To bring about this Bill I toured a part of Queensland, and I should like to read this pamphlet—

“A Liquor Act designed to suit vested interests and destroy the property and equity of a thousand hotelkeepers without compensation . . . surely all this is opposed to the true principles of Labour.

“Amend the Liquor Act along suggested lines of the Bundaberg member to prevent ruin to hotelkeepers and give the people freedom of choice—for which we are fighting to-day. Let us have economic security, not bureaucratic restrictions, to raise our social standards.”

Much has been said about the value and the harmful effects of liquor.

Likewise, much can be said—for argument’s sake—about the value or lack of value of red meat. I say with authority that more damage is done by eating red meats than there is through drinking liquor. We know that alcohol cannot be digested. Alcohol has to go out of the system either through perspiration or excretion in some form or other.

I have always been an advocate for the controlling of drink in hotels. There is sufficient power in the old Liquor Act to control drinking. Hotels can be controlled by that Act as long as its provisions are enforced. That Act provides for the imposition of penalties for serving drunks. In spite of that fact, 9,000 convictions were recorded last year for drunkenness, and not one of any licensee or any other person for serving a drunken person. It must be remembered that these convicted persons could not get drunk without first getting drunk in some way or another. If a licensee was convicted for supplying drunks, this social evil would be overcome. I admit that when I was a licensee of a hotel I served drunks. The point is that persons serving drunks with liquor were not prosecuted. Therefore, one had to comply with their request for drink, otherwise one would lose their custom. If Jones or Smith refused to supply a drunk, he would go to the next hotel and Jones or Smith would lose not only the drunk’s custom but his friends’ custom as well. If the Licensed Victuallers Association—I can speak collectively for it—was assured by the provision of a penalty sufficiently high that the law in this respect would be enforced, not one Licensed Victuallers’ Association member would serve a person who was intoxicated. All we have to do in this Bill is to control a person serving a drunk. I had four years’ experience as a brewery traveller and four and a-half years’ experience as a publican. I can say definitely that there is only one method of controlling the offence of serving a drunk with liquor, and that is the imposition of a high fine. I would make the fines in that respect much bigger, provided we gave the pubs and the people what the hon. member for Cook said they wanted. He said that in the past public opinion had defied the law and had got ahead of the laws enacted by this Parliament. That is also happening in other respects—by the way—Mr. Speaker. If that is so, and the hon. member said that the public had ignored the law for the last 20 years, why should it take this House 20 years to bring in amending legislation? Are hon. members opposite afraid to legislate in accordance with their own opinion, for fear of the votes they would lose? If they are, let them hand the power over to me and I will put through the Bill that the public need in this respect, also Bills with regard to betting and everything else. That is because I have the courage of my convictions. The drink trade can be controlled by controlling hotels.

The Secretary for Public Lands interjected while the hon. member for Sandgate was speaking. He said that the members of the Sandgate Golf Club do want a drink. Of course they do. Why do not the Government legislate to open the bars of golf

or bowling clubs on Sundays? A person wants a drink badly after playing 18 holes of golf. We want to recognise that fact and make provision in this Bill to that effect. I say that golf-club and bowling-club bars should be open on Sunday to serve drink to their members who desire it.

Why should I be compelled to throw drunks out of my hotel? I can assure hon. members that I have thrown 300 drunks and disturbers out of my hotel. Why should we take that risk of throwing them out when women and children may be passing? They hit back sometimes; but, fortunately, I can hit back better. Because the law is not enforced I have had to be a dill and a pug. You have to be a dill to run a hotel. If the Liquor Act was enforced strictly, then the hotel business would be a respectable one. To-day, you have to be a dill to put up with that.

Mr. Luckins: What is a dill?

Mr. BARNES: Cast the right eye over the left shoulder and look around.

Mr. Jesson: Tell us what it is.

Mr. BARNES: Look at yourself in the mirror.

On several occasions in my hotel, because the public knew the Liquor Act was a racket, they tried to take control.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not entitled to discuss his own private affairs. I ask the hon. member to discuss the principles contained in the Bill.

Mr. BARNES: I thought there was no better opinion than what I knew, Mr. Speaker. I have seen people go into a hotel and pick up a bottle and let drive at a person who would not shout for them because they knew the publican would not squeal to the police because he was trading after hours.

According to the hon. member for Cook, public opinion wants 11 o'clock closing. In the first place, I am the only hon. member in this House who has a mandate from the people, and the mandate from the people is for 11.15 p.m. Furthermore, hon. members opposite must admit that I forced public opinion throughout Queensland.

If this letter is true I am wrong. This letter reads as follows—

“Mr. F. Barnes, M.L.A.,

“Parliament House, Brisbane.

“Dear Sir,—At a meeting of the executive of this association held to-day, a discussion centred round your recent circular to association members on your proposed tour of these parts, which you set out in detail.

“The unanimous opinion of this executive is that your intended mission is viewed by hotelkeepers in the light of an unnecessary interference, likely to be detrimental to liquor trade interests, and any such meetings by you in this district consequently are not welcomed by the Licensed Victuallers' Association members.

“The consensus of opinion of members is that the Government of the day, returned to power recently at the polls with an unmistakable vote, has a mandate from the people to govern, and can be depended upon to do so in the best interests of all sections of the community, with confidence.

“I trust that you will accept this expressed view of my members as sincere, a decision not reached in haste, and appeal to you to refrain from adopting any line of action likely to contribute to the disturbance of existing harmonious relations.”

I answered that on 7 June, 1941—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Can the hon. member tell me this letter has any bearing on the principles of the Bill? If the hon. member will not confine his attention to the Bill I shall have to ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. BARNES: Much has been said about how this came about. It is said that the time is now inopportune, and I am trying to show how it came about. We are not entitled to extend the liquor-trading hours unless we can show the public that there is a demand for it. I am trying to show the public that the demand was there. There is no other reason why the Government introduced the Bill other than that I influenced public opinion.

It was suggested by “Truth” on the Sunday prior to the introduction of the Bill that I would move a private amendment to make the hours 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. I have more brains than that; I would have got my head chopped off—and besides, there is too much work in that for me; when I have other people to do the work for me, why should I?

Much has been said to the effect that this is the wrong time to introduce this Bill. Well, I disagree with that view; but I do agree that the breweries think this is the wrong time to introduce this Bill. The breweries had no intention of having the Bill brought in until next year; nevertheless, by the pressure I brought through public opinion, I forced the rank and file in caucus to bring in an extension of the liquor hours before the breweries and the vested interests were able to buy up the hotels and show a handsome profit.

Much has been said about the objection of the union. The staffs in hotels finish at 8.30 o'clock, and if they do not get off before that time their night is ruined. When I go into hotels, barmaids draw their fingers across their throats, meaning they would cut mine. I do not blame them. It is the way they look at it. Talking to one or two of these barmaids, I found they would be perfectly satisfied if they were able to work perhaps three or four nights a week and they would be off a couple of nights. I say emphatically that they should not be allowed to work more than three nights a week.

In the court at Bundaberg I refused to close the windows of my hotel. I said those windows were open in the interests of health.

I would not allow my staff to work in the smell of beer, sweat, and body odours, &c. This Government have allowed those conditions to prevail for the workers. The other day I heard the Premier mention cane-cutters. I thought he had completely forgotten the workers. This honourable Government allow barmaids to work in the smell of smoke, beer, body odour, &c., and according to the hon. member for Cook they have allowed their workers to work amid such filth and corruption for 20 years. If, Mr. Speaker, the persons concerned were the owners of big city hotels, and they were serving in their city hotels, I could understand it, but I fail to understand the damage that is allowed to be done not only to the staff but the customers by having closed-in bars. You have heard someone say you can stand a fork up in Tennant's ale. Well, Mr. Speaker, you could cut the air in those bars at night-time.

I might mention that, despite the evidence before the House to the contrary, 8 o'clock closing in Queensland has not been enforced in any town in the country, and I do not blame the publican. Public opinion is ahead of the Government, according to the hon. member for Cook.

A Government Member: It has been rigidly enforced in the Western portion of Queensland.

Mr. BARNES: I am not saying that there are not some places where it is enforced, but I have not seen one town in Queensland where the Liquor Act has been enforced.

Mr. Riordan: They say it is enforced at Capalaba.

Mr. BARNES: That is a very sore point with the Government, but they will get over it if they have enough dishonest magistrates.

Now, as to this terrible liquor: I had a friend who went from Rockhampton to see a Macquarie street specialist. The advice he gave her was to go back to Rockhampton and drink a pint bottle of Foster's lager a day. She said, "I am paying you £3 3s. for this." He replied, "I can give you no better advice." He advised her to drink the pint bottle of Foster's lager daily, but if she knew of anybody who drank it as a drink to advise him to knock it off, as the preservative in it would kill him.

All hardworking men should have at least two or three pots of beer when they finish work. It would be a tonic to them. If this Liquor Bill was introduced by this honourable Government for the workers of Queensland—Hooley!—why should a wharf labourer finishing work at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning after working hard not be able to get a pot? When I finish my work I can get it. If I am entitled to it, surely the worker, the wharf labourer, or other shift worker who is working harder, should be able to get it. But the law will not permit a hotel to serve these people after hours. There should be a provision under which such workers would be able to get a pot for half an hour after they cease working. It need not be compulsory for all

hotels to serve them—they could arrange for one to do so at 2 or 3 in the morning. The law should allow the hotels to serve these wharfies and other workers after they cease their work, but the onus should be on the worker to prove he is a bona-fide worker. But you cannot do that; it would be against convention. English conventions are usually upheld, and this is one of the few English conventions I would uphold. Why can we not fall in with the English convention as regards liquor? Why should hon. members talk so much of English laws? They do so only when the laws of England suit them. In England an extension for two hours can be obtained. The same should apply to Queensland. The seaside hotels in this State starve in the winter-time. We should zone the seaside hotels and help them.

Away back in 1924 and 1925, when I was out in Quilpie, I was surprised to find that they showed pictures on a Sunday night. The reason they did so was that the jackeroos could only come into town for the week-ends. On Saturday night they danced and on Sunday night they went to the pictures. What was the use of having hotels open in those towns during the early parts of the week? What they wanted there was to have the hotels open a bit later on the Saturday night, close earlier during the middle of the week, and open again on Sunday morning and Sunday night. We should get down to logical methods of carrying on our affairs and open hotels for two hours on Sunday morning and two hours on Sunday night. I suggest that those Sunday hours be from half-past 10 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and from 5.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. If we had those hours a wife would know, just as she did in Bundaberg—that is why she voted for me—that her husband would have to come home for his dinner at half-past 12 on Sunday, whereas under this Bill with the 40-mile traveller's clause the husband would not come home until after 2 o'clock because the publican has the right to serve between 12 noon and 2 p.m. Under my suggestion the wife would know the husband was coming home and she would be happy.

Then, under my suggestion, there would be no such thing as offences against the liquor law because the penalty would be too great. On a previous occasion I stated in this Assembly that in their native state there was no crime among aborigines because the penalty for crime was death. The lesson to be gained from that is that if the penalty is made high enough no-one will break the law. Under the present Liquor Act a person may be declared an habitual drunkard after three convictions. No-one would relish being declared an habitual drunkard, and I suggest that if we provided that a man should be declared an habitual drunkard after three convictions there would be little or no drunkenness in the community, and a further advantage would be that as there was so little drunkenness it would be possible to dismiss at least half if not 66 per cent. or 75 per cent. of the Police Force.

Liquor not only annoys the police from the point of view of drunkenness, but in

other directions. Why should you, I, or anybody else be allowed to drive a car down the street while drunk and perhaps be the means of killing our wives or children because the Government of Queensland have not the courage to enforce the law they have made? One man said that the law was made by asses and that we are the horses who must abide by them. I am inclined to believe him. In the past it was said that laws were made for horses and that we are the asses to abide by them. Since then, however, conventions have changed, and that is the whole reason for this upheaval on the liquor question.

Not one of the proposed amendments is necessary to achieve what I think the temperance people desire—the abolition of drinking to excess. Under the present system four people, each with £1, may go to a hotel and spend 10s. on drink by 11 o'clock. Then, a fifth person who has not had a drink at all will come along and say, "Let us have a drink." By that time the other four will be in anything, including the Salvation Army or the town band. After 11, because they want this extra drink that has been suggested by the fifth person, they go to the shanty grog shops that have been referred to, and by the time they have finished, if they have not been knocked down and robbed, they have spent their remaining 10s., go home drunk, and spew all over the place. I told the womenfolk in Bundaberg that I would not send their husbands home drunk, that they would not come home drunk and spew all over the place.

Mr. Devries: That is a nasty insinuation on the Salvation Army that you made.

Mr. BARNES: I did not mean to make any insinuation. I am sorry. I take that back.

Mr. Jesson: You can take the spew back, too.

Mr. BARNES: It is all over the hon. member; I cannot.

There is only one way of overcoming this problem and that is to make laws, and make the people abide by them. You can take my word for it that if the laws are enforced as they should be not one publican in Queensland will serve drink after 11 p.m. under my system, but under the proposed Bill thousands will serve it between 10 p.m. and 11 p.m. on week nights and also on Sundays. Why, even under this Bill I know several ways of getting drink without being prosecuted.

There are many things in the amending Bill that are covered by the existing Act. There is much in the Act about locking doors. In Bundaberg I sold soft drinks at all hours of the night, Sundays included, and I kept my bar doors open. They said that that was not provided for in the Act. On the contrary, it is provided for in the Act, and I say that all this in the amending Bill is so much waste of time. Section 69 (4) of the Act says—

" . . . Proof that at any time when the sale of liquor is prohibited any door or

other entrance by which admission can be gained to any bar room on the licensed premises, whether from outside or inside the premises, is open or unlocked shall be prima facie evidence of a sale and consumption of liquor on the licensed premises at a prohibited time."

We have a repetition of that in the amending Bill. Why all this talk? I kept my pub. open—front door and other doors. The only difference between the clause in the amending Bill and the Act is that the Bill refers to a storeroom. I should like hon. members of the House to know that a man selling liquor from a storeroom means that the storeroom is the bar. The whole of these provisions are already in the Act. Unfortunately, I was allowed only 25 minutes to speak on the Liquor Act as a whole. Apparently, the people of Queensland are beginning to wake up, and they will give the likes of me extra time to speak on these matters instead of having to rush through the session.

Section 18 (2) of the Act reads—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not entitled to deal with a Bill clause by clause at this stage. He is only entitled to deal with the main principles.

Mr. BARNES: I am pointing out what section 18 (2) of the Act says. It says—

"There shall be charged, levied, and collected from and paid by a registered brewer an annual fee not exceeding two and one-half per centum of the gross amount (including any duties thereon) paid or payable by such registered brewer for all liquor which during the period of twelve months ended on the last day of June in the preceding year was sold or disposed of by him to persons other than persons licensed to sell liquor and other than to registered clubs or exempted clubs."

A person can go along to a brewer and buy a dozen of Fourx at 13s. 6d.—that was the price at the time when I was in business—and this was the same price private people were being charged. This was the price that was being charged to us, and we had to pay 2½ per cent. licence fee on top of that. If the Licensing Commission charged the same people 17½ per cent. more, they could put the money into improving hotels by delicensing some of them. This would allow publicans to compete with the illicit bottle trade of merchants. That section should be amended to read, "All breweries should have to pay on private sales 20 per cent.," and not 2½ per cent., and the publican, who has all the overhead expenses to meet, would be able to keep things going.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! That matter is not contained in the Bill.

Mr. BARNES: I am speaking of section 18 (2) of the Act.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to confine his attention to the Bill.

Mr. BARNES: I have no intention of going against your wishes, Mr. Speaker; do not misunderstand me. What I am saying is that section 18 (2) of the principal Act is being amended by this Bill. The amendment suggested is not penalising anybody, because people who want to buy illicitly—and that is what I call it—will go to the breweries.

Why don't the merchants and breweries furnish private sale returns as the Act provides? They do not do it to-day. Why? Because the Act is designed to suit the brewery interests. They can sell illicitly and they can sell one bottle instead of 2 gallons. If they had to pay the Licensing Commission 20 per cent. on those sales instead of 2½ per cent., there would be fair competition. The Minister said, in answer to my question to-day, that 381 people paid a licence fee of less than £25. If the extra 17½ per cent. was collected on the private sales throughout Queensland—the amount would be colossal—the Licensing Commission could afford to delicense more of the small hotels that cannot afford to give service to the people. Much has been said about what the Act provided in 1935. The Minister himself said that it was the best piece of liquor reform ever adopted in Queensland. I have had occasion, as a brewery traveller, to get a piece of phlegm, 7 feet 6 inches long, out of a beer pipe, and millions of small pieces. Never have I known an inspector under the Act to go to the hotel and examine the pipes. I said to my chief, "I will go and put the inspector onto so and so, and do him a good turn, but if I do it I shall lose his business, and I cannot afford to do that." It is not the business of a brewery traveller to do it. I was a young fellow, and they would say, "Fancy young Frank Barnes telling old so-and-so how to run beer." They would take no notice of me. But if an inspector did it they would have to take notice of him. I went on to show them how to run beer when I took over the hotel, and they were forced to take notice of me eventually. The licensing inspector said that Barnes was the only man who forced good accommodation, and good beer, throughout Queensland.

Mr. Jesson: How is it that you did not make a fortune in Bundaberg?

Mr. BARNES: I lost £6,000 because I would not give the police free beer. Much has been said about the Licensed Victuallers' Association, and it is contended that it does not want the hotel hours extended. That is ridiculous. It wants from 8 to 11, and I want from 9 to 11. I am not far out. The people of Queensland collectively want from 8 to 11, although individually some would like different hours. Some would like the zoning system. Well, let them have it. The man in the West is the best judge of what is required there. I should like to know what the representatives of the people have to say in caucus, but, unfortunately, their proceedings are held in secret. I venture to say that when I move an amendment to-morrow for a closing hour of 11 p.m. the hon. member for Bowen will not have the courage to vote

with me, because he would not be a yes-man any longer. If he did, it would be the best thing he had ever done in his life. He will have to do it later on.

Much has been said about the restriction of the consumption of liquor, and that brings me to the war effort. Do hon. members know that the wet canteens in camp are allowed to remain open until 9 p.m., which suggests that the military authorities themselves think that is necessary to let the soldiers drink until 9 o'clock? However, in the camps they can be controlled, because if they commit an offence there they can be deprived of three days' leave or given three days' fatigue or something like that. The same men can come to town and do as they like, as they did some time ago.

Give the people what they want. In the first place, they want security. If you give them the financial security to which they are entitled, there will be no trouble, and they will not be drinking after hours. You can wipe all the laws out if you do so. If a drunkard continues to run his liquor through dirty rags, and is given three months' imprisonment, then he will wake up, too. You will be doing him a good turn and in this way the public would be served with better behaviour. The liquor question is the most important one that has been before the House for years, and we must look at it in that light.

The other day when I was concluding my speech, I was dealing with Lennon's Hotel. I said that the licensee could provide for a 50 years' lease for that building at a cost of a quarter of a million of money, and if a landlord works in with the policemen that officer could set out to catch him for breaches of the Act and he would eventually be compelled to forfeit the licence and lease. Why should any man have the right to deprive anybody of business interests worth a quarter of a million? Why, for example, should any policeman in Bundaberg have the right to take £8,000 from me? They had that right and tried to take it from me, but, unfortunately, they could not do so. They were not big enough. I beat them to it.

The Liquor Act makes no provision for the right of appeal against a conviction. Notwithstanding all the lectures that I have delivered in this House, and notwithstanding that I have pointed out what a blot on Magna Charta this was, still no right of appeal is provided in this Bill. If it is wrong not to give a right of appeal under the Liquor Act, it is also wrong to give no right of appeal against a conviction in any other court. If the police control this Act they would see its provisions were enforced. I told the Licensing Commission that I prosecuted 16 hotels in Bundaberg for breaches of the Act. On the day I issued these summonses a summons came from the Licensing Commission to "root" me, but by my action I "rooted" the Commission instead. Why should anyone have the right to try to break me and cause me to lose £8,000?

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) (5.3 p.m.): Since we spoke on the introductory stage of this Bill, we have had time to peruse its provisions. I wish to say at the outset that with the exception of the clause providing for additional trading hours at night that I think the Bill is an excellent one, and it is unfortunate that an excellent Bill has been marred by the extension of the trading hours.

Yesterday, the Minister in charge of this Bill informed us that just prior to the election action was taken to tighten up the liquor laws and enforce them. We know that duly happened. As the hon. member for Gregory interjected yesterday, we know that hotels in the smallest country towns were compelled to close at 8 p.m. Why was that action taken? The hon. gentleman who introduced the Bill yesterday made no attempt to tell us why it was necessary for his Government to take action to tighten up the administration of the liquor laws. He said that his Government's action showed plainly that they were not pandering to any particular interests, and that they were prepared to go to the country under their proper colours. We must appreciate that. Why did not the hon. gentleman tell us why his Government took that action? Surely we have the right to know why that action was taken. The Premier this morning, in an excellent address, one that only such a gentleman as the Premier could make, omitted any explanation of this fact. I want to know why no action was taken by the police to enforce the liquor laws and how it came about that something occurred, and it was necessary to enforce them. Surely something must have occurred after a lapse of years to make that action necessary. We have no indication why it was taken; nevertheless, it was taken, and we know to-day that people walk out of the bars pretty sharply at 8 o'clock. Even in the smallest country hotels the bar closes at 8 o'clock.

Mr. Jesson: That is the law.

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. member always butts in with some ridiculous remark. I ask why the law was enforced during that period, but I do not expect him to have sufficient intelligence to tell me.

There is another matter about which I would like an explanation. I refer to the clause that gives the Government power to close up hotels in any part of the State.

The Premier: I will tell you all about that in Committee.

Mr. SPARKES: I thank the Premier. My belief is that that clause is put in because of the fear that there may be a riot.

The Premier: The reason for that clause is that I had reasonable foresight and took action because of it. If we need power or think we need power we take it.

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. gentleman knows that there must be some reason for seeking that power. There is no getting away from it—the Premier feels that if there was a riot, or if this city was bombed or some other unpleasant occurrence took place, he

would take steps to have the hotels closed if he thought it was desirable.

The Secretary for Public Lands: What is wrong with that?

Mr. SPARKES: We are getting somewhere at last; the hon. gentleman is a great asset to me in many respects, and I appreciate his assistance. He said, "What is wrong with that?"

Mr. Jesson: What is wrong with that?

Mr. SPARKES: Of course, in comes Weary Willy. Nothing at all is wrong with it, but does it not show clearly that the Government are afraid of liquor? Otherwise, why have that clause? Yesterday the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs asked if anyone could stop a boy from having an ice-cream. No provision is made, nor would it be necessary, to stop anyone from having an ice-cream during the period of a riot. The hon. member for Cook said that Winston Churchill smoked his cigar. There is no reason why anyone should be stopped from smoking a cigar if a riot occurred in this city, but there is reason for the clause put in by the Government—framed by those who have the brains of the Government, not those who merely make a noise—and it has a definite purpose. In the event of a riot they feel that it would be necessary to close the hotels because they know that the influence of liquor would be detrimental to the State in the event of such an occurrence.

The Secretary for Public Lands: Are you going to vote against that clause?

Mr. SPARKES: I have indicated plainly that I think it is an excellent Bill with the exception of the clause that provides for the extension of the trading hours into the night. That cannot be denied.

A Government Member: And a lessening of them in the morning.

Mr. SPARKES: It is well known, and it was suggested even by the Premier, that the night is the time when a person is likely to drink. I make the statement definitely that more liquor will be consumed because of the additional trading hours at night. The hon. gentleman may shake his head.

Mr. Collins: There is nothing to suggest it will.

Mr. SPARKES: Mr. Speaker, there is nothing to suggest it will? There was this suggestion—

Mr. Jesson: You want to go back to the cows and the chickens.

Mr. SPARKES: When the hon. member fails to make an intelligent interjection, he becomes dirty and abusive. That only shows weakness. I have pointed out that that clause shows to me a fear on the part of hon. members opposite. The Premier has said that they want this power, that it might become imperative to use it. There is their fear of liquor in the event of a riot.

The Premier: No, not at all, not in the case of a riot.

Mr. SPARKES: In the case of a disturbance.

The Premier: Supposing Australia was in imminent danger during the war, do you not think that during such a period it would be necessary to close hotels and make the necessary arrangements?

Mr. SPARKES: I agree, fully.

The Premier: Every man would be on the job. That is only a wise precaution.

Mr. SPARKES: If Australia was at war and we were in a perilous position, we should have to have our wits about us. We should have to give Australia of our best. It is then that the hon. gentleman does not want liquor to be drunk. He fears it.

The Premier: I do not fear anything.

Mr. SPARKES: He fears it will have a detrimental effect on his people. The hon. gentleman has shown me quite clearly that he wants these hotels closed. The hon. gentleman does not close a fruit or an ice-cream shop.

The Premier: We may have to close you up.

Mr. SPARKES: Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, that would suit the hon. gentleman or some of his followers. Unfortunately, or fortunately—whichever way one likes to look at it—I have the right to speak in this House. I have the right to say what I think, even though it hurts, but I cannot help that.

The Premier: You flatter yourself.

Mr. SPARKES: I do not kid myself. I leave that to hon. gentlemen on the opposite side. I am stating the case simply as I see it. Yesterday, we had the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs interjecting that he would prevent a person from having an ice-cream. That is ridiculous, but we will take that statement made by the Minister. Would there be such a provision unless there was a necessity to close up the shop of a person selling ice-cream? That is obvious.

The Premier: You may have to close up all establishments at such a time.

Mr. SPARKES: I know, but I feel that the hon. gentleman is not as keen on this Bill as he would make us believe. Learned, clever, and great tactician as he is, I cannot help thinking that he is not as keen on this Bill as he would have us believe.

The Premier: I do not care what you believe.

Mr. SPARKES: Unfortunately, there has been brought into this debate the question of not giving soldiers a drink. It was never necessary to bring that in, but it was brought in and it was suggested that we were casting a reflection on our soldiers by arguing that they should not be allowed to have drink. The point is that, in my opinion, hon. members on the Government side have cast a grave reflection on our boys when they suggest that these soldiers require a stimulant before they will fight. One hon. member said that a soldier should have a couple before he went over. Is it not an insult to

our boys to say that before they will give of their best you must dope them with alcohol, that you must dope them before they will fight?

I know that I have no right to say that a person shall not have a drink, and I have no desire to say that, but I do suggest that 12 hours in any day is reasonable time within which any man can have a drink. I have the greatest respect for all the other provisions of the Bill, especially the one relating to dance halls, but I do object to the alteration of the trading hours in that, in effect, it is an extension of night trading by two hours. The public have been educated to the 8 o'clock closing. That hour has been policed by the police, and I can see no reason for the extension of that time by two hours. To my way of thinking, that is unreasonable. The Leader of the Opposition quoted Mr. Curtin's request to spend as little as possible on Christmas presents. Surely, if the leader of Australia suggests that that is desirable we should do all we can to help his Government by not doing anything to encourage expenditure on liquor?

The Attorney-General: What have you done towards helping them?

Mr. SPARKES: If the Attorney-General would care to examine the list of subscriptions made to war loans and other matters to help the war effort, he will be able to find that out for himself.

Mr. Jesson: What did you do in the last war?

Mr. SPARKES: I am not here to say what I did in the last war. The hon. member for Kennedy can find that out, too, if he so desires. The question before the House is whether there should be an extension of the liquor-trading hours, for the Bill unquestionably makes an extension of the hours for trading at night. The other clauses in the Bill are excellent.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is indulging in a great deal of tedious repetition.

Mr. SPARKES: It is possible that I am, but it is very difficult to concentrate on a speech when one has right under one's ear the whole time a continual babble of interjections. If they were intelligent interjections, or if they were in any way connected with the debate, I should not mind.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SPARKES: Hon. members opposite have stated that in the country there is an outcry for longer hours of trading at night. I think that is so.

A Government Member: By whom?

Mr. SPARKES: By the hotelkeepers in the electorate. I agree that many men complained because they bought in under the condition that trading went on from 8 to 11 at night, and—

An Opposition Member: A business risk.

Mr. SPARKES: Admittedly, but it was a well-known fact that trading at night was

allowed throughout the country. This is no reflection upon the police, as a blind eye was turned towards trading at night, particularly in the country. I am not conversant with city conditions, but can speak about the country. A prospective buyer would probably look at the trading books and see the takings from week to week, and on those takings he would probably buy. But the bombshell came, and when his operations were cut off at 8 o'clock, his takings were greatly reduced. I have never been able to find where these wonderful, generous breweries came along and reduced rents to the hotelkeepers.

Mr. Jesson: You have not reduced the price of beef to the consumers, either.

Mr. SPARKES: I have no more to do with the fixing of the price of beef than the hon. member has with the making of intelligent remarks.

It is remarkable that some of the finest debaters we have in the House—the Secretary for Public Instruction, the Treasurer, and other prominent Ministers—have not taken part in this debate. The Treasurer to-day made the statement, by way of interjection, that brewery shares have gone down.

The Attorney-General interjected.

Mr. SPARKES: I understand that it was the Treasurer who said that, and I believe I am right in saying that he did. Perhaps that coincides with the fact that when an extension of trading hours was talked of by the public and the Press, shares went up, but when this Bill was introduced and investors could see the very strict clause in it concerning the closing of hotels at any time, the public might have been influenced into thinking that there was a possibility of shortening hours. It is made perfectly plain that no extension of trading hours will be allowed beyond 10 o'clock. Perhaps that has made investors wary.

The Premier: You would be driving capital out of the country.

Mr. SPARKES: I have no desire to drive capital out of the country, and the Premier knows perfectly well that that would not drive capital out of the country. As a matter of fact, capital cannot go out of the country to-day, even if it wished to, and the Premier knows that better than anybody else. I am desirous of seeing that every penny is devoted to the war effort, upon the lines suggested by the Prime Minister of Australia.

Mr. WALKER (Cooroora) (5.24 p.m.): I do not intend to occupy the attention of the House for very long on this subject, as I do not pose as an authority on it. I should like, however, to refer to my objections to the Bill and say that I am sorry, indeed, to hear the imputations made with regard to the conduct of breweries and companies. I do not think that that sort of talk gets us anywhere, because my experience of the many companies I have been connected with leads me to the conclusion that the men comprising them are of the finest class, and have only one object in view—namely, complying with

the law and legitimately looking after the interests of their respective companies. I think that remark applies to brewers also.

The fact that they have built up big assets is not to their detriment. A few years ago one of the breweries decided to increase its share capital but before doing so it notified its shareholders of its intention and thus gave them an opportunity of taking out their proportion of the increased shares. I have never known that to be done by any other company, and it is only fair to mention it. If the directors had been up to any nonsense they could have made use of the knowledge to buy in the shares for themselves.

It has been said that certain people hold shares in breweries. There are men in this House who are shareholders in breweries and I know them on both sides of the Chamber, but is that going to alter the value of their criticism of the Bill? They invested their money from the highest motives—to get a decent return. There is no harm in that and it is very unfair to say that they will vote against something that is urgently required just because they have a few pounds invested in brewery shares. I was sorry to hear the personalities that have been engaged in during the discussion.

I voted against the Bill because, first of all, this is not an opportune time to introduce it, and second, I said to the temperance people last election that I would not support the Government in their desire to increase the hours of drinking. I am keeping my word to-day. I am firmly of the opinion that it is absolutely wrong to increase the hours. I am not going to repeat the opinions of the leading men of the world, which were read by the Leader of the Opposition. Speaking for myself, I want to say that it is wrong to increase the hours and for more reasons than one. The subject could have been allowed to stand over for a while.

The Premier said that the Bill had the unanimous support of his party and, naturally, we believed him, but that is not where the move originated. It took place in the party a little while ago when a few members got working and were strong enough to see that the Bill was brought forward. Later it was amended and they all agreed to the particular clauses in it. That is all right; that is their business. I hold the view that we are not big enough, with all our prejudices, to deal with this subject on non-party lines and do justice to the wishes of the majority of the people. It should have been made a non-party measure and then we could have got somewhere and satisfied the public.

I do not want it to be thought that I am of the opinion that we are a lot of boozing people. I have travelled the world and like many other people getting up in years I am competent to make reasonable comparisons. However, I do not want to make comparisons between Australia and the other countries of the world, or, indeed, comparisons between Queensland and the other States of

the Commonwealth. I want to express my own views. I know that in the early days of Gympie the hotels were open for 24 hours every day and on Sundays, too. In those early rough days there were probably fights all day Sunday because of the excessive quantity of liquor that was consumed. I realise, too, that since that time we have progressed at a wonderful pace, but I do not think it would be wise to increase the pace because liquor reform has reached a high point of efficiency in this State. Indeed, there is no State in Australia or country in the world with a better record of liquor reform since the days when I was a kid than Queensland has. The people of Queensland are a very temperate people. I speak as one who has lived on the mining fields, and I know that when men cease work for the day they have the right to have a drink of beer. I should not mind if they had a quart. I have heard the old miners in the early days of Mount Morgan say that if it were not for the fact that they were able to get a glass of beer or two after finishing work, they would have had miner's phthisis many years before they did.

I remember at the beginning of my life in the place where I was brought up seeing a hotel 50 feet in front of me and another 50 yards in the other direction. They were built out of slabs, and neither provided accommodation. They existed solely for the sale of cheap beer at 4d. a pint, but when the quality of the article is taken into consideration in comparison with that sold to-day it would be worth about 1d. The beer to-day is light in comparison. Scientific research has been busy, and has produced a wholesome drink. I understand that it takes a lot of beer nowadays to knock a man over, whereas in the early days if he took a couple of pints he was fit for any act that would bring him the Victoria Cross. I will also say for the benefit of the younger hon. members of this House that in the early days most of the merchandise used in Gympie was overlanded from Brisbane, and I venture to say that almost every other farmhouse between Caboolture and Gympie was a shanty. They sold only rum, and it was said that this spirit improved with age. I do not know why this illicit trade was confined to rum only.

I do not think the present an opportune time for this Bill. That is my objection to it. I admit that if the question was submitted to a referendum whether hotel trading hours should be from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. or 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., I should vote for 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. I honestly make that confession, and I should do so because there are so many of our people engaged in such a variety of callings or trades that we have a duty to cater for all their wants, but I believe the matter should be left in abeyance until 12 months after the war. We could put the capital that will go into circulation as a result of this amending Bill to much better use at the present time.

I have scrutinised the clause that deals with the supply of liquor at dance halls. We know that for a number of years excessive boozing has been going on in our dance halls,

but, notwithstanding what has been said in the debates on the Bill, I do not believe the present Bill will have any effect on that evil. A little while ago, not only did a private person bring liquor to dance halls in a certain district, but the local publican also took a couple of cases of beer and a couple of bottles of rum in his motor car. The Commissioner of Police has knocked that practice on the head, but not before two or three convictions were obtained. This evil can only be cured if hon. members give him a helping hand. This menace to our younger generation should be cleaned up. Their parents believe that they are taking part in a healthy recreation under healthy surroundings, whereas they are doing so under doubtful conditions. This Bill does not take into consideration the illicit side of the consumption of liquor at dance halls. Many people attending these dances have motor cars and lock up the liquor in the boot of the car. They can do so, so long as they do not bring four dozen bottles of beer. This Bill will not stop that practice. Every man who owns a car and makes provision to take liquor to these dance halls will say that it is his private property, and as long as he has under four dozen bottles of beer this Bill will not prevent him. It is rather the exception that one can go to a country dance and enjoy himself. More often than not he is called upon to second somebody in a fight or pick up the contestants. This practice is ruining the pleasant country dances as they were formerly known to us, and it can be prevented only by making it illegal to bring liquor within half-a-mile of the dance hall. I put that suggestion before the Premier in all sincerity. On many occasions when I have been invited to social evenings I have witnessed deplorable disturbances which have to be suppressed because of this unfortunate practice. It is desirable to amend the Bill to deal with the matter. There are any amount of big dance halls in our populated centres with no hotels in the vicinity, and the supply of liquor at these dances is the responsibility of the men and women who attend them. The evil is a big one.

My greatest objection to this Bill is its provisions relating to Sunday trading. That is a horrible thing. It is going to put the clock right back. I hope that even at this last minute the Premier and his supporters will not leave the door open to what in a little while will be an "open slather" on Sunday mornings and Sunday afternoons for travellers.

I live at Tewantin and I am familiar with those many seaside resorts, and a distance of 40 miles is only about one hour's run. People can travel that distance, take the oath and sign up, and they can stay in a hotel for four hours on Sunday.

The worst phase of the question so far as the country is concerned is the consumption of liquor at these dances. We like to see young people dancing, but, unfortunately, many men bring booze in their cars, and there is no control over it. I am not reflecting on the hotels. These people come along with two or three bags of beer and they go out

and drink after every dance. The provision in the Bill permitting Sunday trading will permit this practice to be carried out on Sunday. There is nothing to stop the man who takes beer down to the dance from taking it to seaside resorts, such as Coolum and Maroochydore, on Sunday. Under the Bill anyone who travels over 40 miles and signs the hotel register will be able to go into the hotel for four hours on a Sunday afternoon, and when going home he will meet the people coming from church. I think it is wrong, and that it is a retrograde step. I hope the Premier will listen to what I am saying. I am not speaking for a brewery or a temperance body, but I am stating what I have seen. We should prevent these evils from taking place. It is no use the Premier's getting up and talking about self-control. We know it is important to have that control; I know many men who can exercise it, who can for instance stop smoking, but it needs backbone, and these young people do not realise the evil of drink. It is just a question of having a good time. They go and have a drink because the boy or girl friend is going, too. They go into the parlour and then the evil begins. Goodness knows, we are not playing the game with the churches now, otherwise we should not be allowing those young people to be running round with the dresses they wear at the seaside to-day, which is nothing more nor less than disgraceful. In 9 cases out of 10 it may be all right, but the tenth is wrong. They wear these flimsy, tight-fitting dresses that do not even hide the figure. And as for the men, they cannot get their pants any shorter. Many of these young people are running round two-thirds nude, with just sufficient on not to expose the delicate portions of their bodies. It is not possible to see anything worse.

Those are my objections to the Bill. Otherwise, it is a good one. A stop could be put to the evil in regard to the dance halls by declaring a zone in which no liquor could be consumed, and trading on Sunday afternoon should not be permitted. We should then be giving the churches a hand, and we are under an obligation to help them, because without true Christianity and religion we cannot get anywhere. Let us give these people a hand and we shall have the blessing of every right-thinking person.

Mr. MOORE (Merthyr) (5.39 p.m.): The objections to this Bill by hon. members of the Opposition have not been very logical, and the insinuation that hon. members of this party acted at the dictation of the breweries is a very filthy one, which I deny and repudiate. When public opinion shows very clearly that a state of affairs is against the wishes of the majority, the Government should introduce legislation to alter it.

The desire to amend the existing Liquor Act, so far as I, a metropolitan member, am concerned, was brought about by the fact that the existing legislation was not catering for the people. A large amount of liquor was consumed by the public usually after the hours for the closing of hotels according to the Liquor Act, and that desire by the

majority of the people to consume liquor after 8 o'clock is evidence that the Act should be amended to meet the wishes of the people, and that is the reason why I am supporting this measure. I believe that when this measure is put into operation the evils suggested by members of the Opposition who spoke against the measure will be stopped. The correct place for the consumption of liquor is on licensed premises. When this measure is understood by the people and the hotelkeepers, with the co-operation of the police, the greater part of the drinking will take place in hotels, and that will be in the interests of the people generally. Nobody can deny the attendant evils of illicit drinking off licensed premises and for that reason also the Bill is opportune. It is the responsibility of the Government to amend legislation according to the will of the people whether in war time or peace time.

At 5.44 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Gair, South Brisbane) relieved Mr. Speaker in the chair.

Mr. MOORE: The argument was advanced that the altered spread of hours would interfere with the war effort. From time to time we hear much talk of the war effort, but I suggest to those who are prone to talk glibly about the effect of the Bill on the war effort that they consider impartially the question who are the people who in the main are contributing to that effort. It is those who are commonly known as the workers in the community. It is they in the main who are undergoing training to prepare for the defence of Australia. It is an indictment of these workers of this State to build round them a different psychology from that of others because they are engaged in war work. The mentality of the Queenslander is such that his actions will be no different whether he is engaged in peace-time or war-time activity. Because a young man enlists, discards the garb of civil life, and dons a uniform, there appears to be an attempt to build round him an atmosphere in which he loses a certain amount of his manhood and is susceptible to all the temptations incidental to the times.

I admit that there are added temptations, but the mentality of the Queenslander enables him to rise to the occasion. I deny any suggestion that he is the spineless creature that some hon. members would have us believe him to be. If the majority of the people desire to partake of liquor at a later hour than 8 p.m.—and there is ample evidence that they do—it is the duty of the Government to amend the law to allow them to take their refreshment under decent conditions. This Government need offer no apology for introducing this measure at this time. The argument that the time is inopportune, and that the operations of this Bill will interfere with the war effort, has been raised by hon. members opposite merely for the sake of saying something. Comparison has been made between the liquor traffic in Queensland and that of other countries, but what applies in other countries does not apply here. The mentality of the Queenslander is superior to

that of most other races in the world, and the Government, knowing the habits, likes, and dislikes of the people of Queensland, should legislate to suit the requirements of the people, irrespective of what has been done in other parts of the world.

To my way of thinking, the Bill is a sensible and practical measure. It has been needed for a long time, and the Bill has been shrewdly worded to allow such things as those referred to by the hon. member for Cooroora to be handled effectively. If I read the Bill correctly, the police have authority to deal with all incidents that occur in the vicinity of dance halls, or any halls where admission is paid for. That being so, I am firmly of the opinion that we have seen the end of the many unpleasant incidents that have occurred round these places in the past.

The other provisions of the Bill, such as that dealing with licence fees, are logical, and will be of benefit to all sections of the trade.

Many arguments have been brought into this debate in opposition to the measure. Insurance has been mentioned, for instance, probably with a view to adding some weight to the arguments of the Opposition, but I think most hon. members will not treat that matter very seriously. I believe that the Bill has been wanted by the general public. So far as I am concerned, I say, as a supporter of the Government, that the Bill has not been introduced at the dictates of outside bodies. Members of bodies that mostly represent the minority of the citizens of this State frequently endeavour to influence the opinions of members of Parliament, but I believe, as do the Government, that all legislation should be introduced in the interests of the majority of the people.

Mr. Yeates: If they had a mandate.

Mr. MOORE: If this Government talked about a referendum, the hon. member for East Toowoomba would be one of the first to howl about such great expenditure in these times. Hon. members opposite have short memories, and if one desired to take up the time of this House, one could find sufficient arguments to show the inconsistency of their statements on various matters.

However, I am quite satisfied that the Government have done the right thing at the right time in the interests of the State, and the Bill will provide for a better and cleaner service when it is put into operation.

Mr. DART (Wynnum) (5.50 p.m.): I spoke at length yesterday on this Bill, and I do not intend to speak for very long this afternoon, but there are a few points I should like to stress again in the hope that I may be able to convince the Government that it is not too late to withdraw the measure. I am rather disappointed at the stand many hon. members have taken, because I am personally inclined to think that they are not in favour of the Bill and would vote against it if a free vote was taken. I am wholeheartedly behind the Leader of the Opposition in his opposition to the Bill in its present state. I admit that there are perhaps some good

points in it, but I do not suppose any Bill could be put forward that had not some good features. I do not think this Bill should be brought forward at a time when we are facing world-wide difficulties and when we do not know what the next day will bring. There is in Queensland a complacent Government who are willing to sit down and pass legislation encouraging the people to spend money extravagantly. If they were encouraging the people to spend it on useful purposes we could, perhaps, agree, but we cannot agree to the spending of money on a luxury, and, after all, liquor is a luxury. It is a thing that we can do without. I am an example of one who has done without it all his life, and I am advocating what I think is in the best interests of humanity. At the same time I am broadminded enough to allow the other man to do what he wishes to do, but I wish the same principle to be applied to myself. There are many people who think differently from the Government. This Bill has not come about as a result of agitation by the people of Queensland; it has not come here on the majority vote of the people, but on the representations of the influential few, the moneyed people. I say candidly that this Bill is not in the best interests of the working man, but in the interests of those who are capable of looking after themselves. The Government are putting the Bill through for the wealthy and well-to-do.

We should consider many important points before we agree to the passing of such legislation. Perhaps the alteration of hours will be of no benefit to our soldiers; it will certainly not help in industrial production; it will not promote national fitness; but it will be an encouragement to the spending that has been denounced by the Prime Minister of Australia and other public men in responsible positions and fit to judge.

Those are my own sentiments and no-one has written anything to help me in my speech on the Bill. I have, however, some clippings that are worth reading, because they support my objection to it. I agree with the provision to protect young women at dance halls.

The Attorney-General: Then why vote against the Bill?

Mr. DART: I am not going to vote against any protection for women anywhere, and, if the Attorney-General proposes to vote against protection for women, that is a matter for him.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the Bill.

Mr. DART: I have read the Bill and I know that power is to be taken to protect young women at dance halls. We know that in the past drinking has taken place at dance halls and that the evil was not controlled as it should have been. The hon. member for Cook admits that the Bill is 20 years overdue and that it is going to remedy something that has happened over the past 20 years. He admits, in effect, that the Government acted wrongly in the past and that they are now going to remedy those wrongs. In my opinion,

the Bill is not going to remedy anything. It proposes to increase the weekly hours.

The Attorney-General: Not at all.

Mr. DART: The hours are to be from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., or 12 hours a day for six days of the week. Then, on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, they propose to give another four hours.

The Treasurer: That is not true—Sunday is not the Sabbath.

Mr. DART: I am surprised to hear the Treasurer say that Sunday is not the Sabbath. Sunday is the Sabbath.

The Treasurer: Sunday is not the Sabbath.

Mr. DART: If the Treasurer is a Seventh Day Adventist and believes something different from those who say that Sunday is the Sabbath, he can have his own way. I know that he is a Band-of-Hope boy supporter, and, as such, I expect him to support everything that will remove temptation from all young boys.

At 7.15 p.m.,

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Mr. DART: I am interested in the future of all the youth of the State, not in a few boys who belong to the Band of Hope. The late Lord Baden Powell was very much interested in the youth of the nation and was the founder of the Boy Scout movement. He had something to say to boys in general on the use of intoxicating liquor. His indictment of strong drink must appeal to hon. members opposite, as well as bear out my statement that this Bill will not be in the best interests of our youth. The late Lord Baden Powell, in his interpretation of the scout pledge, said—

“Very much of the poverty and distress in this country is brought about by men getting into the habit of wasting their money and time in drink, and a great deal of crime and also of illness, and even madness, is due to the same habits of drinking. Liquor—that is, beer or spirits—is not at all necessary to make a man strong and well. Quite the contrary. The old saying ‘strong drink makes weak men,’ is a very true one.

“It would be simply impossible for a man who drinks to be a scout. Remember that drink never yet cured a single trouble; it only makes trouble grow worse the more you go on with it. It makes a man forget for a few hours what exactly the trouble is, but it also makes him forget everything else. A man who is drunken is generally a coward. Once a man gives way to drink it ruins his health, his career, and his happiness, as well as that of his family. There is only one cure for this disease, and that is—never to get it.”

Hon. members opposite who are supporting this Bill will presumptuously tell us that they can take liquor in moderation. This proposal to lengthen the trading hours will afford an additional opportunity for people

who prate about self-control, but it will permit late trading to the disadvantage of the State. The inducement it will hold out to our men folk to remain in hotels until 10 o'clock at night will not be conducive to the maintenance of home life and will tend to the expenditure of money that should be spent on family comforts. Therefore, this Bill will not be in the best interests of family life, and, therefore, not in the best interests of the State. The Government should avoid longer hotel trading hours, as they will prove a great temptation to young people especially.

We know that many men have not sufficient will power to resist drink, and when the drink is in the wit is out, and they are not able to control themselves sufficiently to go home at a decent hour.

We are well catered for in Brisbane, and I do not think the hotelkeepers are looking for an extension of the hours. We have 139 hotels in Brisbane, and I have not heard a request from any hotelkeeper for an alteration of the hours. I believe the hours of 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. have given satisfaction.

From Victoria Bridge to Woolloongabba there are 13 hotels, and that seems to me to be more than are required in that district. How will these hotels be able to exist? As the Minister said, they are looking for more customers. I am sure they will only prove a trap to those who have a tendency to remain behind and spend the money they should be spending on their families and homes.

Under the English law, shouting is prohibited, and I believe that we should be well advised to eliminate it here. If the habit of shouting was abolished, I am sure it would eliminate the spectacle of men remaining in hotels after they have had a drink or two. Shouting is a great evil. The Bill will provide opportunities for drinking at later hours, and one can visualise one person shouting for his mate, and his mate shouting in return, until they have had too much and have spent the money that should be spent on their wives and children. I hope, if the Minister introduces another amendment of the Act, he will eliminate shouting.

Mr. Riordan: You said that four times.

Mr. DART: It is worth repeating. Perhaps the hon. member does not believe in what I believe in, and perhaps he could make a better speech if he did not shout so much. I was referring to the treating of one another at the bar, and I maintain that it should be cut out. You never hear of a man's going along and shouting another a pound of beef or a loaf of bread, so why should he shout beer?

The Bill requires that a person shall have travelled 40 miles before he can obtain a drink on a Sunday. I agree with the hon. member for Isis that that distance is too far. After all, who can travel 40 miles? Not the working man. This clause, therefore, is not for the working man, but for those who have money and own motor cars. Hon. members opposite say they are out to help the working man, but this clause operates against

the working man. Under these provisions, the working man will never be able to get a drink. In fact, the Government have brought in a Bill that contains conditions that prohibit a working man from getting a drink.

Mr. Power: What distance do you suggest?

Mr. DART: As I am opposing the Bill, I am suggesting no distance. You can see, Mr. Speaker, how much sympathy hon. members opposite have for the working man. This provision puts a drink out of the reach of the working man altogether.

Mr. Collins: That is not logic.

Mr. DART: The hon. member for Cook could have no better logic than that. He professes to stand for the working man, and he is not the only one of his party who makes that claim, but it is hon. members of the Opposition who are working in the interests of the working man. We provide for him something he will enjoy. The Labour Party has been guilty of keeping a man five weeks without rations because he was drunk. I have received a letter from the Under Secretary which discloses that the Government kept a man five weeks without rations because he had drink. That is the kind of thing we get from hon. members opposite. They are not fair to the working man. The man mentioned was out of work and was deprived of his rations.

The operations of this Bill will affect children very much, inasmuch as there will not be so much money going into the homes. It will be keeping the wealthy men, the publicans, and the brewers. What did the Government do towards helping little children? They pay 4s. 6d. a week for a child, to help the father when he is on relief.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DART: This Bill will tend to take money from the home. With the temptation before them, people will spend the money in the hotels. Sometimes it is very necessary to legislate for those who are unable to control themselves, and I should have expected that in the number of men who constitute the Government—in numbers there should be wisdom—there would be some who would make laws in the best interests of the people.

A man who wants a drink on a Sunday has to travel 40 miles, and, according to this Bill, has to remain in the hotel for two hours while he is drinking. He cannot take liquor away with him, therefore he will have to spend his money in drinking it all in the hotel. I am opposed to the sale of liquor at all on Sundays, even if a person has travelled 40 miles. That provision is not in the best interests of the people. If a man has plenty of money he can travel long distances, and his appetite will be whetted if he knows he is permitted to get a drink.

The law should be strictly administered, but what good to the community will these penalties be, even though the Government receive the money? Is it not better to have

temptation taken from the people, from those who are so weakminded that they will travel for the sake of drinking?

A clause of the Bill provides that hotel bars shall remain open till 10 p.m.

Ten o'clock is a late hour for a working man to be away from home, but there are young men who have more leisure, who require less sleep than others and who have no family responsibilities. Those men will be able to remain in the hotels until the stroke of 10 p.m. Whilst there, they may become intoxicated, then leave the hotel, think of some social function at which there are young ladies, visit the hall, and mix with the young ladies there. I see nothing in the Bill to deal with intoxicated young men under such circumstances, yet the Government would have the public believe that they are going to protect young women and that everything in the garden will be lovely. Despite this, it would seem that young men and some older men—I know some old men who enjoy dancing—will be able to mix with young ladies in an intoxicated condition after 10 p.m. with impunity. I ask the Minister to consider, if he has not done so already, including in the Bill some provision to deal with these persons.

Mr. Collins: Have not the police got some power?

Mr. DART: The police had a good deal of power in the past but did not exercise it, as the hon. member well knows. It would seem from his interjection that the matter will be left to the police to handle as they did before—have the power but not exercise it.

I am pleased to see that it is proposed to deal with persons who have liquor in motor cars outside dance halls. Whilst there may be some danger of unpleasantness as a result of having liquor in motor cars outside, I believe that there is an even greater danger of nuisance from the liquor that persons may take into dance halls inside them. A young man who has been drinking in a hotel until 10 p.m. may find that his head is affected by the liquor when he leaves at 10 p.m., and when he arrives at the dance hall his company will be obnoxious to the young ladies with whom he may attempt to dance. If this Bill is carried into effect in its present form—which it will not be on my vote, although it will be on the vote of the Treasurer and the Secretary for Mines and other hon. members opposite who should be voting with us if they were conscientious—I am afraid it will not be for the good of the community. I know that hon. members opposite have the right to vote as they please, but judging from their actions so far, it would seem that they do not intend to vote in the interests of the community, as the Opposition will do.

It is difficult to believe that any Government would increase drinking facilities at a time like this. I cannot understand why the Government are giving the people added opportunities for spending their money on luxuries when the present hours are quite

satisfactory. They can get it within the prescribed hours during the day without Sunday trading at all.

We open our Parliament each morning with a prayer and we profess to be Christian people following a Christian faith, but I say that the selling of drink on Sundays is not in accordance with that faith, not in accordance with what is right. The people of South Australia do not open hotels on a Sunday, they do not believe in this Bill, and I would tell hon. members of this Assembly that South Australia does not run trams or trains until midday on the Sunday, because of the wish to allow people to go to church. I am not bigoted and I do not mind to what church a person belongs, but I say that each person should attend church and not go to pubs on Sundays. People to-day are living a lackadaisical life, a life of ease and comfort, and not a life in accordance with the teachings of our forefathers. I say it is a disgrace that we should desecrate the Sabbath by selling liquor on a Sunday.

The use of beverage alcohol is always offensive. It is convincing evidence that politicians are cowardly and that we are not a sane people. It stands unrivalled as a corrupter of politics, as an aggravator of all our depravities, as the supreme factor that increases the dangers of the road, as a burden on industry, as the exploiter of human frailty, as the thing that robs the child of its chances, and besmirches all our beautiful charities. We must not forget that during the late Great War it was proved that 63,000 men were dismissed, deserted, or died, largely if not solely through beverage alcohol. Since the last Great War Australia has spent £660,000,000 on beverage alcohol. This is a sum so colossal that it is impossible to visualise what it might have done in social service or in war preparation.

In Australia we have had in the last five years 250,000 convictions for drunkenness. Now that women are drinking what is a racial poison, it is a question whether we can survive as a nation unless a wave of temperance sweeps over Australia. It is necessary that we pledge ourselves to the patriotic duty of defending our Commonwealth from this most heartless, insidious, law-defying liquor rage.

I say it is not too late to withdraw this Bill in the interests of the people of Queensland, and I humbly ask the Minister in charge of it to give serious consideration to that request. Let him take the matter to Cabinet and let Cabinet withdraw it in the interests of the people.

Mr. GAIR (South Brisbane) (7.39 p.m.): Yesterday and again to-day we have listened to a debate on this very important question, which proposes to amend the liquor laws of Queensland. I think it can be truly stated that many hon. members of the Opposition by their intemperate arguments and by their intolerant attitude on this question have destroyed any case that might have been presented against this Bill.

I feel that Mr. Jack, the secretary of the Queensland Temperance League, who has sat in the lobby of this Chamber yesterday and again to-day, as a very interested listener to this debate, must be sadly disappointed with the efforts of his advocates.

He must feel that by their intolerant attitude and their intemperance in speech they have destroyed any argument that might have been advanced as to why the Bill should not be presented to Parliament or become law.

We have had a great deal of hypocrisy from hon. members opposite. They have received dividends from their investments in the liquor trade in this State, and at the same time they have risen in this Chamber to cry about the curse and evils of drink. The hon. member for Wynnum believes that it is anti-Christian to subscribe to any policy of liquor reform as is proposed in this Bill. We have been told many things regarding the curses and evils of drink, the damaging influence that it has on community life and on the homes of the people, but all these arguments have been advanced by hon. members opposite on their firm belief that one drunkard means that all men who partake of alcohol are drunkards. One swallow does not make a summer any more than the abuse of liquor by some makes it a curse or an evil. After hearing all the arguments advanced by hon. members opposite, I, as a member of a Christian church, stop to think and wonder why our Lord and Master in his omnipotence, unlimited understanding, and knowledge should at the marriage feast of Cana in Galilee choose to change water into wine. If it is the curse and the evil that hon. members opposite would have us believe it is, why did our Lord and Master see fit to give alcohol to the guests at that marriage feast so that they might be cheered and be happy on that auspicious occasion?

The temperance case has been considerably discredited throughout the years by the intemperate attitude of some people associated with the temperance organisation. These people will say that you and I, Mr. Speaker, should not have a drink of beer or a nip of whisky after 8 o'clock at night, but the same people will take unto themselves the right to go into a refreshment-room or cafe and sit there until half-past 11 at night gorging themselves, and thus indulge in intemperate eating and drinking. They see no harm in that, but, according to them, it is harmful for you and me to have a drink of beer. They do not say that it is harmful to keep the waitresses working in the cafes and refreshment-rooms until half-past 11 at night, but it is wrong for the bar attendant to work in the bars until 10 o'clock at night. We have never heard the like of such inconsistency in this Chamber. We have heard many arguments against the Bill, but not one has been worth while or has had any substance in it.

The Bill is long overdue in bringing about much desired liquor reform in this State. I believe that when it has been tried it will be acclaimed by all people, including those who oppose it to-day, as an excellent Bill.

We have heard from hon. members of the Opposition approval of the clause dealing with the prohibition of drink in dance halls. No-one could oppose such an amendment. We all concur as to the growth of this evil of drinking in and around dance halls, and the temptation it puts in the way, particularly of ladies of immature age. That practice is not desirable, and therefore some step is necessary to limit or prohibit it. This Bill proposes to do that.

The Bill contains, in addition, a traveller's clause. I subscribe to this clause, as it is a very necessary one. Queensland is unique in Australia inasmuch as it is a State of vast distances. It has long summers, with high temperatures. Therefore, no-one could justly deny workers or bona-fide travellers, who have travelled long distances in the heat of the dry West, or the tropical coast, a drink of alcohol within prescribed and specific hours. Who would argue otherwise? Only the intolerant and impossible person. The latter say that drink is a curse, and because someone gets drunk it is an evil. Let us follow their contention to its logical conclusion. Would we denounce matrimony because a husband was unfaithful, or a wife committed adultery? The same line of reasoning would apply there. That being so, we should form an organisation to advocate the prohibition of matrimony because someone has broken the solemn vows of matrimony.

These people who cry about the curse of alcohol that we might consume in the form of beer, gin, whisky, or some other spirit, never stop to think that alcohol exists in the vegetable life of our country. It exists in our tea, in our trees, in our fruits, in our grasses, and in our grain. These very people take alcohol into their system through these mediums if they do not do so by the medium of beer or whisky.

It was not my intention to speak on this subject, but the arguments advanced by hon. members opposite were so hypocritical that I felt compelled to make my contribution to the debate. In one voice they were trying to placate and appeal for the support of the cold-tea party, while with another voice they were trying to retain the support of Bung—the breweries and the liquor trade. Hon. members on this side of the House are not concerned with the cold-tea party any more than we are with the breweries or licensed victuallers. We legislate conscientiously for the masses and we have brought down this Bill believing that it will be for the common good of Queensland and in the best interests of her people.

Mr. YEATES (East Toowoomba) (7.49 p.m.): I feel that I can approach this question without any malice or bias whatsoever, and that I can deal with it on its merits in a straightforward, businesslike manner. I have lived at Bowen and at Adavale, at Charleville, and at Toowoomba, and I have travelled almost the entire length and breadth of Queensland. During my travels I have paid heed to how the people lived.

I have been amongst the Western workers, and I have seen beer bottles rolling along the floor towards me when I was addressing a meeting at Quilpie. I realise this is a very contentious matter, and one that has more than two sides to it. I maintain that the Government have no mandate to bring in a Bill to alter the hours of trading in hotels, clubs, and winchshops. I feel that before doing so a referendum should have been taken. I maintain this is, without any doubt, the wrong time to bring about an alteration in the hours of liquor trading. There has been no demand from the people for such a Bill. I approve, however, of certain provisions in the Bill that I will refer to later in Committee.

I take exception to the statement by the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs that the Government in office between 1929 and 1932 were lackadaisical in respect of the liquor laws. I do not know exactly what that Government did—I was not here at the time—but in the 17 years during which there has been a lackadaisical operation of the liquor laws, this Government and other Labour Governments have been in office, and there has been no tightening up of those laws until last year. All this talk about naked women being found in the streets at all hours of the night would apply to the periods when any of the several Governments during the last 17 years were in office. I had hoped to keep party politics out of this question. The representatives of the liquor trades union in Toowoomba were on the same platform as the temperance people demanding that this Bill should not be brought in.

I do not speak as a puritan or a wowsler. I have always thought that if I wanted a drink I would go and have it.

Mr. JESSON: I shouted for you once and you cost me 4s. 6d. (Laughter.)

Mr. YEATES: I am against shouting, but I will speak on that later. I can approach the subject with an unbiased mind. I have travelled among all classes of people, not only in Queensland but in Australia, and as I informed the House on a previous occasion, having half a day to spare in Sydney on one occasion I went to the police office with a view to looking into the slums of Sydney and things like that. I have still to make further inquiries as to how those people, the underdogs, so to speak, live, always with the idea of uplifting them.

I realise that the Premier is very intelligent and I always respect him, even though I may differ from him. That remark applies also to the other Ministers. I feel that the great majority of the Ministry just do not like this Bill. I desire to be fair and honest about it. I know the difficulty. I realise their difficulties just as if I were in their position, especially on two points of the Bill. I respectfully suggest that even at this late hour the Premier, who is a strong man, will delete at least two clauses, the first being the alteration of the hours of trading—extending them further into the night—and the second the two hours' trading on Sunday afternoon between 5 and 7 o'clock for travellers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, permit me to refer to another man of high intelligence, a big man, measuring him from the shoulders up. William Morris Hughes measures from the shoulders up. The advice of Archbishop Duhig to young people at confirmation is, "Do not touch liquor until you are 25." That is sound advice. I give the same advice to my boys—to keep away from drink until they are 25 and then they will have sense enough to do what they think is proper. I know ever so many policemen. I am well known to the police. (Laughter.) The average policeman, from those about to retire to the youngest constable, contend that the trading hours should be left as they are. Their advice is worth while.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Will the hon. member deal with the Bill?

Mr. YEATES: The Prime Minister, Mr. Curtin, is reported as follows:—

"The Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) made an appeal to-night to the people to spend as little as possible on Christmas gifts and urged them to give instead war savings certificates or war savings stamps. Normally, in peace time, all would be commencing to purchase gifts, but this year Christmas would be celebrated by a country many of whose sons were away fighting against oppression and the enemies of freedom, and nothing that diverted their energies from the fullest possible war effort should be permitted, and that meant that money could not be spent in the usual manner."

Irrespective of whether it is Mr. Menzies, Mr. Fadden, or Mr. Curtin, we should take heed of that advice from the Prime Minister of Australia and pass it on to others.

I have travelled during week-ends to Charleville, Roma, and other places, whilst this Parliament has been in session, and I have not yet been able to find any specific demand from the people for this amendment of the liquor laws. That makes me feel that the moneyed interests and the breweries—and I say this with all respect to the breweries, who are conducting legitimate businesses—have brought some pressure to bear on the Government. How this has been done I do not know, but I believe that to be so, and so far as shares are concerned, they make no difference. If I had 2,000 of them, which I have not, I should still be of the same opinion. When I first came to this Parliament I was told to be careful as I should learn to drink here, but I was agreeably surprised. This is a very moderate and temperate House. It sets an excellent example to the people. In my opinion, every hon. member of this House is temperate.

In Queensland there are about 1,340 hotels altogether, or one to every 808 people, or if we exclude persons under 21 years of age, one to about 300 people. That is far too many, and I desire to compliment the Licensing Commission on the work it has done in reducing the number of hotels and in other ways. The personnel of that body is good, and here I respectfully warn the Minister to

be careful about its personnel in the future. The Licensing Commission might be a good place in which to make money, but any suggestion of that kind about the present members is far from my mind. No American tactics are creeping in with the present members of the Commission.

I realise that one of the Government's greatest difficulties is sly-grog selling, and I sympathise with the Minister in many ways. I should like to take this opportunity of complimenting him upon putting up a clever case yesterday when introducing the measure. Even though I do not agree with much of what he said, both his introductory speech and his reply were outstanding and he deserves credit for that.

The Leader of the Opposition also put up an excellent case against the measure, especially when dealing with the men in military camps. I do not propose to make a big mouthful out of the war, but as hon. members opposite have ridiculed the suggestion put forward by the Leader of the Opposition, I desire to support what he has said. He stated that the later hours would be putting temptation in the way of young men in the camps. I take this opportunity, and I do it reluctantly—I never thought of mentioning such a thing in this House, but I do it so because I have five sons, all of the family, in the war services.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. YEATES: They are in the A.I.F., the Navy, and the R.A.A.F., and I do not want anything more said about that; they went in as youngsters, and I am trusting them to carry on—I also reluctantly take the opportunity of mentioning certain riotous behaviour that occurred in Brisbane last year. I took particular stock of these unfortunate and troublesome incidents. I am not making a big song about it, nor am I blaming the Government for it, but I want to say that I went amongst these men and was close to the movement of the people concerned. There were certain young people about this city who were leading the others on, so to speak. I call them louts. They are not young men, but a lazy lot of louts of Brisbane, and I hope there are not many of them. They were leading them on, saying, "Go on, get into it," causing a riot, so to speak. They were saying, "We want this grog selling." It was a most unfortunate incident, and, as I said, I am reluctant to mention it.

The Government have put up some smoke-screens, at which the Minister, in particular, is very clever. I know he is troubled with a big job and I would not go running after it now. The smoke-screens I see in this Bill are, first, the clause relating to the great emergency and, secondly, that regarding dance halls, of which, by the way, I heartily approve. It is what we might say webbed into it, because the emergency clause is really not necessary. I can trust the Governor in Council at any time, but we have the machinery with which to deal with riotous behaviour and tumultuous behaviour by calling upon two justices of the peace, or a

stipendiary magistrate. This riotous behaviour could be dealt with in quick time if it occurred, and I do not see any real necessity for the clause. I regard it as a smokescreen, so that the people who judge the Bill hastily will say, "This is not half bad, after all," and will let it slip through.

I earnestly ask the Government at this late stage—the eleventh hour, so to speak—to delay the clause regarding the alteration of hours at least until one year after the war. If they will do that I will not get up and cry, "I told you so." I will shake them by the hand and say, "Good men, you have done the right thing." After the war is over, we can talk this matter over again quite seriously.

The hon. member for Bowen, my native city, mentioned something about wharf labourers having the right to get a drink at 2 a.m. I have yet to learn that it is necessary for young men who are working. I am not a total abstainer, I am one of the workers of Queensland, and I will take second place to nobody in any job. I have not found in my experience of something approaching 60 years, during which time I have had to earn my own living, that it is necessary to have spirituous liquors to help you on.

Honestly, that is the fact. I know it of my own knowledge and I know it from medical men, too. I have three doctors in my family and I have discussed the matter with other doctors.

I favour the zoning system if it is possible, but I realise the difficulty in drawing a line of demarcation between one district and another. It may be better, more business-like and practical, to allow the hotels to trade until a later hour in the country than in the city, but the great difficulty is to draw the line in the right place because people would cross the line to go to places where the trading hour was later than in their own areas.

We should give consideration to the practice of breaking down the strength of the alcoholic contents of beer and possibly spirits. In some countries it is very much weaker than in others. Let us talk about that earnestly. I am strongly against the practice of shouting. I believe that everyone who wants a drink should pay for his own, and if ever I should go into a hotel to have a drink with the hon. member for Bowen we will each pay for our own.

As to the traveller's clause, I think it would be far better to stick to the existing hours of 12.30 p.m. to 2.30 p.m. or 12 noon to 2 p.m. only. Those hours are applicable to Sunday, Good Friday, Christmas Day, Anzac Day, and election day. Let us stick to those hours for bona-fide travellers only, but let us delete the proposed additional hours of 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Even if we fall down on the rest of our job, let us remove those hours. If the Government will do that, I shall be the first to shake the Premier by the hand and say, "You did good work." I hope the Premier will adopt one of my suggestions, because they are in the interests

of the nation, and particularly of the rising generation. Perhaps the debate can be adjourned and we can go on with some other matter to-night. I do not care how it is done. Let us defer consideration of the Bill now until to-morrow.

I understood the hon. member for Merthyr to say—and I speak subject to correction—that the workers were the chief men in carrying on the war. What did he mean by "the workers"? I have given hon. members my definition of a worker. Did he mean that the great work of prosecuting the war was being carried on by the supporters of the Labour Party?

Mr. Devries: He did not imply that.

Mr. YEATES: I am glad to have that explanation; I want it to be clear. The hon. member for Merthyr, when referring to our young soldiers, said that the mentality of the Queenslanders was superior to that of people in any other country in the world, and he went on to say that the rising generation could look after themselves in matters concerning drink temptation. I do not agree with all that he said, because I know that there are people of other nations who can do as well and sometimes better than we can. We have been going along in a lackadaisical way in a democracy that has been very lazy at times. It needs stirring up to a proper sense of its responsibilities.

The Labour platform—I am now going back to 1918—stated—

"State manufacture, importation, and sale of intoxicating liquor, with ultimate view to total prohibition, subject to local or State option."

Provision was also made in the platform for an amendment of the Liquor Act to provide for the further limitation of the hours of trading. I think it was intended to submit the question of restricting the hours of trading of all liquor bars and wine shops from 6 to 6 to a referendum.

The Premier: Six o'clock closing—the latter part of the platform you referred to—was never on the Labour platform.

Mr. YEATES: Very well, I will leave that out. (Laughter.) The platform definitely contained the provision I read out.

The Premier: We had a referendum on that.

Mr. YEATES: The Liquor Acts provided for a State poll on prohibition up to 1923 and local option polls up to 1936. The principle of the referendum on the liquor question was recognised in law.

The Premier: What are you quoting from?

Mr. YEATES: I remember the Labour Party's platform. I knew the late David Bowman well, and we often went into these matters. I have mentioned my personal views on the liquor traffic, and there is no need for me to recapitulate them. My idea is so to frame the law as to have less drunkenness. Every reasonable man in the community must

be seized of that desire, but we have different methods of attaining it.

I will not go over my personal liquor-reform suggestions which I announced to this House on a previous occasion, for it is not likely I shall have them included in the Bill. But under those rules I believe that within the next 10 years we should have hotels finding cold collations at any hour of the day, even on Sundays, for travellers, and that all bars will be open to the street in continental fashion. I appeal, at this eleventh hour, to the Minister in charge of this Bill and to the Premier, to redraft the Bill. He will be doing right if he does so, and I shall be the first to compliment him and say, "Good man." I am very hopeful that something will be done in that respect. I repeat, in case that should happen and someone will say, "We forced it on you," that I shall be the first to shake the Minister by the hand and say, "Good man."

Mr. MARRIOTT (Bulimba) (8.20 p.m.): This debate will go down in history as one of the most interesting that have ever taken place in this House. Four years ago, from my place in this House, I referred to the failure of the responsible parties to enforce the liquor laws.

It took three years and a good deal of agitation on the part of many people to bring about an enforcement of the Liquor Act as we find it at the present time. The argument used to be advanced that the Act could not be enforced, that it was not possible to police it. I very soon put my viewpoint before a number of people who expressed that opinion to see whether it was possible to enforce it or not, and we found afterwards it was possible to enforce it. My way of thinking is that the publican and his boss—the breweries—became so arrogant that some action had to be taken. That was a very definite statement made in some of the arguments I had with certain people, and we had the Act enforced. Now, people have become used to the 8 o'clock closing, and why all this hurry to bring about an extension of hours? All the hurry evinced in this difficult time in our national history has yet to be explained. I had hoped that Cabinet Ministers generally would have got up en bloc and said something about the necessity for altering the Act.

Various speakers have said that it is not an extension of hours. Say what we will, it is an extension of the trading hours, at any rate, because from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. does not matter a tinker's cuss to the publican—he may just as well keep his bar closed during that period.

I had it put to me some four years ago by a gentleman of the cloth that he favoured 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. closing, and I opposed it. He pointed out to me that one reason why the Act should be altered to change the starting hour from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. was that certain people were able to get a drink before they went to work; therefore, if the opening hour was 10 a.m., they would not be able to get a drink before they went to work. My reply

to that was that the man who would drink before going to work at 8 o'clock in the morning would be able to get a drink after he had gone to work—he would be able to go out and get it, and probably some do go and have a "spot" occasionally. However, it was strange to find a gentleman of the cloth holding those views. I rather knocked him over when I offered to take him round and show him what was going on in Brisbane—to take him into hotels on Sunday night. I suggested that he turn his collar back to front, of course, and come with me and we would show him the special bars fitted up three storeys up from the ground—you had to get to them by devious ways—private bars with beautiful cabarets fitted up alongside. He was rather staggered when I said that sort of thing went on. Why should they be allowed to go on?

Getting back to the Bill, we find it contains a provision similar to the one I experienced when I made one of my rare visits to Melbourne some years ago when 6 o'clock closing was operating there. I went to visit one of my colleagues who was staying at a licensed house. We had to sign the lodger's book and I was allotted room No. 20, and told not to forget the number of the room.

Mr. Collins: If your friend was staying there, there was no need to.

Mr. MARRIOTT: That was the order of the day; the publican wanted to make doubly sure. We find in the Bill before the House that provision is made for the lodger and his guest to have a drink at any old time they like.

The unseemly spectacles we have had in the past on election days and Anzac Days of the law being broken and licensed houses being crowded—one could not get near the bar if one tried; I had occasion to try myself when going past to see what was going on—will not be necessary when this Bill becomes law. The Bill specially exempts the lodger and his guests from its operations. There will now be an opportunity for the lodger to bring in a team of guests. I do not know if there is any limitation of their number. I suppose we shall get that in Committee. It will be very interesting to see.

As I understand the position, from the Press reports, the Labour Party in its party meetings was not anywhere near unanimous on the desirability of amending the liquor law. The Press reports indicate that opinion was very nearly evenly divided. I regret I was not present last night to see how matters went. One cannot just fit in one's ordinary engagements when the House is sitting. I had another engagement and I gathered from the Press reports this morning that I am rather scared that I had left the Chamber before the vote was taken and so I feel it incumbent on me to express my view this evening.

Like some hon. members on the opposite side of the House, I think the measure is like the curate's egg, good in parts. There is the good part, the attempt to remedy some evils. The prohibition of liquor from the vicinity

of dance halls is a good part. Much has been said of the need for this, and there is no necessity to labour the question. We have had our own experience of it. We do not like our womenfolk going to the ordinary dance in the little village because drink is there. Boys go out and get it from motor cars or the travelling bar, the utility truck that comes along, and return to the dance hall reeking with it. The girls, who do not like the smell of it, have just to put up with it or keep away from those dances, and keep away they do unless they have acquired the cocktail habit in some of the cabaret dance halls about the city. Some of them frequent these places and they get used to it.

It appears to me that some of the liquor interests have invested a deal of money in establishing lounges and drinking saloons in which the sexes can mix. The clamping down on the 8 o'clock closing somewhat upset these people. Trade was not as good as it was when 11 o'clock trading was in operation. They invested these moneys in the lounge system in which mixed parties can be held in hotels, and it appears that somebody has to make an attempt to get their money back, and now that the measure before the House provides for 10 o'clock closing there is the opportunity for the full use of those lounges and all that that indicates, despite the statement made here, particularly by the Minister in charge of the Bill, that he has no desire to get back to the undesirable state of affairs that existed years ago when, as he mentioned, naked women were discovered in motor cars or the sidecars of motor bicycles being whisked along the road at all hours of the night and until the morning as a result of drunken orgies. There is no need to go back over that, but I want to point out that every opportunity is still provided by the extension, or as some hon. members like to call it, the alteration in the hours of trading till 10 p.m.

All the opportunity is being given for a continuance of those bad customs that so many of our young folk, unfortunately, have contracted. I should like the Minister in charge of the Bill to reconsider the question with his colleagues with a view to seeing if it is not possible, even at this late stage, to remove from the measure that clause which provides for an extension of the hours of trading at night. Let us have the other good clause, certainly. I refer to it as a good one, because I have had experience during the last three years of the difficulty of trying to control drink round dance halls, and I have had to put up with the disadvantages of it. I should like that clause to be retained in the Bill.

When replying to the Opposition yesterday the Minister said that some hon. members opposite seemed to think that because a publican had put his name down on the subscription list at election time for some particular candidate—it might be a Labour candidate—the liquor interests were contributing to the Labour Party's funds.

Mr. Barnes: That is only petty cash!

Mr. MARRIOTT: Yes, it is just petty cash, if it was done. Personally, I have not had experience of it, but I well remember debating this question some years ago. Some of the present hon. members of this Assembly were present on that occasion, and at least one of the present Cabinet Ministers took exception to my remarks as to the opportunities for assistance given to candidates for Parliament by the liquor interests. He possibly remembers the challenge that was then thrown out to me. However, the thought has occurred to me that the reason for the efforts made four years ago to prevail on a Labour candidate to interview the chairman of a certain brewery so that he would get a substantial donation to his campaign fund is apparent now if nobody else knew it at the time. I knew it, at any rate, and all the efforts that were made to induce the candidate, in the person of myself, to go and interview that chairman failed. I told them I would see them as far in the hot place as they were out of it before I would go near him to get any donation.

The Premier: Who asked you to go to anyone?

Mr. MARRIOTT: Who asked me to go?

The Premier: Yes.

Mr. MARRIOTT: I am not going to give names. No names, no pack-drill! My campaign officers asked me and they even got to members of the Queensland Central Executive and wanted to know from them why I would not go.

The Premier: I never heard anything about that before.

Mr. MARRIOTT: There was no occasion to hammer it in then, but I am just connecting it up now.

A Government Member: You have been worrying about it for four years.

Mr. MARRIOTT: I have no occasion to worry about it, because I won the election and reduced the election expenses by £80 as compared with what they were previously, and on the next occasion, when funds were still scarce, I reduced the election expenses in my instance by another £30, and I did the same when I was running election campaigns for other people in the electorate in the interim, without having to go to any chairman of directors of any brewery company asking for a donation. I refused to do it then, and I refuse to do it now. I wonder if the Minister remembers the statement he made yesterday when he said that because some local publican put his donation down on the candidate's campaign funds subscription list that was likely to influence in any way the member of Parliament who was candidate at that time?

Personally, I am not beholden to anybody on the question. I have a perfectly open mind. I am sorry that Cabinet was not in the position to make this a non-party question—

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MARRIOTT: And debate it on the floor of this House as a non-party question so that every man could vote according to his conscience.

Mr. Devries: You can.

Mr. MARRIOTT: And who is going to stop me? I am speaking for myself and I say that I am sorry that the Cabinet was not in a position to make the question a non-party one, seeing that we were not prepared to put it to a referendum.

Mr. Devries interjected.

Mr. MARRIOTT: We do not want to talk of other secrets, brother.

Mr. Devries: You should vote as you like.

Mr. MARRIOTT: And so can you. Hon. members on this side of the House and hon. members opposite know my views now on the liquor question. One would have thought from the statements made here this afternoon, and particularly from the biblical quotations that have been made, that there was nothing wrong with drinking. Yet we have been busy arguing for two or three days whether we shall hamstring and how far we shall hamstring conditions, and we have even discussed the insertion of a clause to give Cabinet the right to close hotels if a state of stress suddenly comes upon us in this country. What does that indicate? It indicates that liquor is not good for us. I am not one of those who say that a man should not have a drink. Some hon. members know that I can have a drink if I want one, and many have expressed surprise that I do occasionally have a drink if I think fit.

Mr. Devries interjected.

Mr. MARRIOTT: I am not talking about Russia; I am talking about Brisbane, right here and now, and what has happened in Queensland. I am applying my remarks to Queensland conditions. The hon. member reminds me of something that I should have reminded him of. I was in Cairns two years ago and I found that the liquor interests were making their own laws, laws to suit themselves. They were making their own hours of trading, and on Sunday mornings everything was quite open.

Mr. Barnes: What about Townsville?

Mr. MARRIOTT: I did not stop there. Everything was open for the world to step in, and at 12 o'clock the windows and the doors were closed, locked, and bolted, and everybody shut out.

Mr. Barnes: Since the 8 o'clock closing?

Mr. MARRIOTT: It was prior to that. Again on Sunday afternoons they were open. Who said that those particular people should make laws to suit themselves? One would have thought that.

I am sorry I was not here yesterday evening, and I am sorry that somebody took the point that because I left the Chamber I deliberately left it instead of taking part in the debate and the vote.

Mr. MOORHOUSE (Windsor) (8.39 p.m.): I thought, having voted against the Bill yesterday, that that was all that was necessary, but I have been informed that it is necessary that if I oppose the Bill I should do so on the second reading. I opposed the introduction of this Bill because it is introduced in an undemocratic manner, and I say that because it is against the wishes of the people. If it were not against the wishes of the people, then the Forgan Smith Government, as stated in this pamphlet, would have included liquor reform in their election policy. By not doing so, they have shown fear to face the people honestly. The alteration in the hours can only be in the interests of those people who own Australia.

This pamphlet, issued by the liquor trades union, says—

“A bigger sale of draught beer and less bottle beer means increased profits and less labour.”

If the Government do not wish to put the measure to a referendum of the people because of expense, then this little pamphlet gets over the difficulty by saying—

“A referendum is the only democratic way to get a true expression from the people on this question—therefore, demand a referendum and make the people who want the hours altered pay for it—the breweries.”

I notice that the breweries were interested in the Bill, because yesterday and to-day, during the whole of the introductory stage, and perhaps a little longer, a very high official of one of the breweries sat in the gallery of this Assembly.

When the Minister introduced the Bill, he led us to believe that the employees in the liquor trade were not exactly opposed to it, but again this little pamphlet says—

“Mr. Public, we ask you to analyse the following:—

What the 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. alteration of hotel hours will mean to those men and women in the industry and to you.

Five late nights a week! We will not get home until midnight or later.

Loss of health due to loss of regular relaxation and rest before midnight. (Quoting all good medical authority.)

All social life will be eliminated. Our members would be unable to visit theatres, socials, parties, and would not be able to indulge in outdoor recreation.

It will reduce employment in all sections of the trade—bar attendants, brewery workers, bottle-yard workers, aerated workers, transport workers.

“Mr. Public, in whose interests is this being done? The breweries.

“For what reason?

“Is it payment to party funds?

“Backhanders to politicians?

“Or is the Government altruistic?”

These are the questions that the pamphlet asks. Obviously, the breweries have benefited during the period 1932 to 1941, because I have here a balance-sheet taken from the "Wild Cat Monthly," which says that in 1932 the value of the breweries, plant, and warehouse of Castlemaine-Perkins Limited was £300,488, and the value of hotels was £426,691, and that by 1941 the value of breweries, plant, and warehouse had jumped to £486,931, and the value of hotels to £1,525,879. The Queensland Brewery Limited lumped its breweries, plant, warehouses, and hotels, and in 1932 they were worth £286,433, and in 1941 they were worth £1,641,595. Since 1932—that is, during the period of the present Government—brewery ownership of hotels has increased in value from approximately £500,000 to nearly £3,000,000.

Obviously this Bill is not introduced in the interests of the people, notwithstanding that it has been asserted by certain hon. members that it is. The employees in the liquor trade strongly object to the extension of trading hours, and in this pamphlet, which has been freely distributed, they say—

"United action by every decent man and woman in the community can and will defeat all undemocratic measures—whether social or political."

I have completely exposed the reason for the introduction of this Bill. The Minister yesterday read information which he said he had received from the liquor trades union in support of an extension of trading hours, but this pamphlet, which has been issued in the last few weeks, is the very latest information from that organisation, and I am prepared to lay it on the table of the House.

Mr. TAYLOR (Enoggera) (8.47 p.m.): I believe that this measure, which has been brought down by the Labour Party, had its birth in the rank and file of the caucus party in a motion moved by the hon. member for Bowen. I am going to be perfectly honest. On that occasion, after listening to Cabinet Ministers telling caucus that it was inopportune from the point of view of political manoeuvring to bring the Bill down, particularly when the nation was at war, I, as a member of the party, loyally supported the Cabinet, and voted against the motion moved by the hon. member for Bowen. To-night I intend to vote against this Bill because I believe in being consistent.

I am not concerned so much about the trading hours as I am about the hours of labour and conditions that will apply in the industry. The Industrial Court has on more than one occasion demonstrated its ability to make the employees in hotels work over a stretch of hours. A clause might be inserted in this Bill providing for a penalty on the conviction of any hotelkeeper charged with a breach of the industrial regulations and conditions applying to the liquor trade. There is this to be said, that we should not allow the employees of any industry to be used in a manner not conducive of the best interests of the Labour platform. Comparisons might be made between shop assistants who work

eight hours daily and a stretch of 44 hours a week and employees in this trade who work with a break of hours in a variable manner. The conditions in a necessary calling should be applicable to a luxury calling. That is one of the reasons why I am going to oppose this Bill.

I regret very much that the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs saw fit to introduce the aid to Russia subject when introducing this Bill. I regret he saw fit to do that, because at the moment I want to say that the Bill logically would not help aid to Russia at all. Logically speaking, there is nothing in the Bill connected with the war from any Russian point of view.

The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs: Yes, there is.

Mr. TAYLOR: Nothing at all. But, in regard to the aid to Russia question, I have here a letter that was sent to the Premier by John Curtin on 8 November last. In it he deals very effectively with the question of aid to Russia. He said—

"The question of raising funds for medical supplies to the Soviet Union has recently been raised and the Soviet Government have indicated that they would welcome any action to be taken"——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I cannot allow the hon. member to continue on those lines. The question of aid to Russia is not involved in this debate. It may have been mentioned yesterday, but it has not been mentioned to-day.

Mr. TAYLOR: The Minister, in his introductory remarks to this Bill——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I am not concerned about his introductory remarks—I was not in the chair at that time—but I am concerned about the present debate in the House.

Mr. TAYLOR: The fact remains that the question was introduced, and, unfortunately, I had to leave the House to attend another meeting yesterday afternoon.

The Premier: How did you get that letter alleged to have been written to me by Mr. Curtin?

Mr. TAYLOR: That is my business.

The Premier: We might have an investigation about that.

Mr. TAYLOR: The fact remains that I have that letter and that letter indicates that the Prime Minister of Australia is in accord with the work that I and my colleague, the hon. member for Bulimba, have been doing.

DOCUMENT LAID ON TABLE OF HOUSE UNDER
STANDING ORDER No. 298.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay) (8.52 p.m.): Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 298, I move—

"That the hon. member for Enoggera be ordered to lay the letter on the table of the House."

Mr. TAYLOR (Enoggera) (8.53 p.m.): I am going to oppose the motion. I feel that at this juncture this letter is my own private property and at the moment I have not read the whole of the letter—I only read a part of it.

The Premier: You allege you have the letter and that is enough. You would not say how it came into your possession.

Mr. TAYLOR: It came into my possession as president of the Australian-Russian Association, and was forwarded to the Australian-Russian Association by the Repatriation authorities. There has been an attempt made over the last few weeks by the Prime Minister to get certain people out of a very bad tangle they got into on this question of aid to Russia. This motion is trying to force me to table a letter, which at the moment is not the property of the House.

The Premier: You would not say how it came into your possession.

Mr. TAYLOR: It came into my possession—the original—

The Premier: What date?

Mr. TAYLOR: The 8th November. I read the date.

The Premier: You read more.

Mr. TAYLOR: The fact remains that in that letter are statements made by the Prime Minister that not only verify the action the hon. member for Bulimba and I have taken, but also guarantee to go further on the question of Government assistance in regard to medical aid to the Soviet. I will read the letter if you, Mr. Speaker, wish me to table it. It is only a copy, and I can get another copy myself.

The Premier: You seem to have facilities for getting those letters.

Mr. TAYLOR: The letter is as follows:—

“Provision of Medical Supplies for Russia.

“Dear Sir,—The question of raising funds for medical supplies for the Soviet Union has recently been raised and the Soviet Government have indicated that they would welcome any action that could be taken in this direction.

“In the United Kingdom an appeal is being made by the British Red Cross, which has received official backing—a second is centralised through the Trade Union Congress.

“Australia is not in a position to make any substantial contribution of medical equipment from its own resources as most of the requirements sought are imported from other countries, and limited stocks only exist in the Commonwealth. There is, however, a surplus of some items of medical equipment such as sera, certain anaesthetics, and catgut ligature and suture material.

“It has been decided that the Commonwealth Government will supply at Common-

wealth expense, items of medical equipment required by Russia, of which a surplus exists in Australia, and that it will recognise public appeals for funds to provide other items of medical supplies to be purchased abroad. Permission will be given for money so raised to be sent outside Australia.

“It is clearly desirable to co-ordinate the arrangements for the provision of these supplies in order to ensure that wellwishers in Australia and the United Kingdom do not concentrate on supplying too much of any one particular item and that the best use is made of the limited transport facilities to Russia.

“It is proposed, therefore, to request the committees in the various States to submit joint proposals for the expenditure of their funds.”

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have allowed the hon. member a considerable amount of latitude, but under the Standing Orders I must put the question now that the paper he read be laid on the table.

Question put; and the House divided—

In division—

Mr. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, may I make an explanation? I did not say I got it from the Prime Minister, I said I had in my possession a letter from the Prime Minister to the Premier of this State.

The Premier: I asked you how it came into your possession if it is a letter addressed to me. I never gave it to you. It is my property. You never got the letter from me. That is my property.

Mr. MAHER: Do I understand the hon. member to have said that he has in his possession property belonging to the Premier of the State?

The Premier: Yes.

Mr. MAHER: Then, I ask that my vote be not recorded.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to be seated, please. I want to point out to the hon. member that his explanation covers the matter.

Mr. MAHER: Is the letter the property of the Premier?

The Premier: Of course it is. He said it was a letter addressed by the Prime Minister to me on a given date—therefore, the letter is my property.

Mr. Sparkes: He said a copy of a letter.

The Premier: I never authorised anybody to make a copy of it.

Mr. Marriott: And he told you whom he got it from, too.

Mr. Hayes: He did not.

Mr. Marriott: He did.

The Premier: No-one has a right to give him a copy of that letter.

Mr. Brand: The man who wrote it to you has.

The Premier: No, he has not.

Mr. Brand: Of course he has. It is done every day in the week.

AYES, 30.

Mr. Brassington	Mr. Hilton
" Brown	" Jesson
" Bruce	" Larcombe
" Clark	" Mann
" Collins	" O'Keefe
" Conroy	" O'Shea
" Cooper	" Power
" Copley	" Riordan
" Devries	" Slessar
" Dunstan	" Smith, W. Forgan
" Foley	" Walsh
" Gair	" Williams
" Gledson	
" Hanlon	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Hayes	" Farrell
" Healy	" Moore

NOES, 18.

Mr. Brand	Mr. Nimmo
" Dart	" Pie
" Decker	" Sparkes
" Edwards	" Taylor
" Luckins	" Walker
" Macdonald	" Yeates
" Maher	
" Marriott	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Moorhouse	" Barnes
" Nicklin	" Massey

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Bulcock	Mr. Müller
" Jones	" Clayton

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member for Enoggera to table the letter, please.

Whereupon the hon. member laid the letter on the table.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay) (9.4 p.m.), in reply: There is not much to which I need reply in this debate, except to comment on one or two phases that became apparent as the debate proceeded. It was quite obvious, when the measure was introduced yesterday, that hon. members of the Opposition realised that the Bill was a serious one, as it dealt with matters affecting public interest. They split in their views on it, and if they split any more, then, as one of my friends pointed out, they will be able to fill a number of jars of toothpaste.

The vote that was taken indicates very clearly where hon. members stand. I desire to admit, as I did yesterday, that the Bill was initiated in the party room. What is wrong with that? Can anyone argue that a member of Parliament has no right at a meeting of the party to suggest legislation?

As a matter of fact, quite a number of Bills have been initiated in debate of that kind. When the motion was carried, the Government prepared a Bill and the Government's Bill was approved by the party without opposition. That is the position. The hon. member for Enoggera was not full-time at the party meeting to which he referred. He left me an open proxy, which is the invariable practice when you leave a party meeting or for some reason are unable to

attend. Over a number of years he gave me this proxy vote to exercise, and I exercised his proxy vote against the motion, as I did with regard to the hon. member for Bulimba. That hon. member's proxy was not an open proxy, and so the hon. member for Enoggera cannot claim any merit for having left a proxy that was open. That means, Mr. Speaker, I could have placed any open proxy vote as I liked. It is worthy of note that the hon. member for Enoggera, who now objects to that method of initiating legislation, himself in 1932 or 1933 moved a motion to extend the hours of liquor trading. There was a full debate on that occasion.

Mr. Taylor: There was no war then.

The PREMIER: He was the mover of a similar motion; it was defeated.

I want to deal now with this Bill in regard to the war effort. I said yesterday that I did not believe it would affect the war effort at all, and that the hours between 10 a.m. and 10 p.m. were reasonable hours, whilst ordinary and normal circumstances remained. But we put a clause in this Bill under which, if an emergency arises, we can take action to close public-houses earlier than 10 o'clock but not later, and the reason should be apparent. Under the proposed law a hotel-keeper is bound to keep his hotel open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. No other class of business is so bound, and consequently there must be a legal authority to limit hours or close hotels down altogether, according to the nature of the emergency. An emergency might arise suddenly, and what is known as the Riot Act could be used. I am not anticipating using the Riot Act in any circumstances that might arise. It is an obsolete method, and goes back to the village green, and cannot deal with modern conditions at all. There is, however, a reserve power in the hands of the Government, under which they can take unto themselves an authority to deal with an emergency in the public interests. Cabinet discussed the full matter, but we thought it was eminently desirable to have a clause taking such power in the Bill itself. It is good, sound legislative practice to do that. Where you are taking power to do a thing it should, as far as possible, be in a Bill that comes before Parliament, so that Parliament, particularly in the Committee stage, may discuss the powers that are being given. There should be no objection to that.

There can be no objection to it, and that is the chief reason why it is in the Bill. If an emergency suddenly arose in Australia this year, next year, or three years or more hence, it might be desirable not only to close down hotels in certain places but also to close down other businesses—we have ample power already to do it in the latter cases—but this being a minor instead of a major matter we have put it in the Liquor Acts Amendment Bill for the purpose I have mentioned. The idea that it will interfere with the war effort is not supported by the practice that obtains in other countries. The Agent-General for Queensland has cabled to me that the law in

vogue in England relating to the liquor question is the same as it was prior to the war. He also said that he was sending by air mail the new regulations dealing with the opening of canteens and bars at works where shift work was carried out.

Obviously, the drink traffic must be under control. Everyone realises that if it was allowed to get out of control abuses are liable to occur, and so Parliament must strike a happy medium in dealing with these things, and take the responsibility for approving a law which in its opinion will give the maximum protection to those who require it and at the same time give normal persons the right of a service which is at present and probably will continue for some time to have recognition by law. That is the complete answer, and it is logic.

With regard to the things mentioned by the hon. member for Cooroorra, all I can say is that I have never witnessed any of those things myself. I have been on many of the well-known South Coast beaches of Australia and on the beaches of other countries, but I have never seen that class of behaviour. I have seen bad behaviour in many places in the world, but that is not normal, and in a Liquor Bill we are dealing with normal and not abnormal situations. People who behave in an abnormal fashion can be dealt with only by a special measure, and that is recognised by law and has been on many occasions. In a general measure like this we can deal only with normal conditions and normal persons. If women run about undressed and other people do certain things on the beaches that hon. members know about, then all I can say is that it has not been my experience. I have not seen any of these things.

Mr. Sparkes: The Minister said, when he was introducing the Bill—

The PREMIER: The Minister, in introducing the Bill referred to a particular case. I am going to take this opportunity of saying that I resent the innuendoes that have been cast by a number of hon. members on the youth of this country. I see as much of the youth of this country as anyone. I visit the schools and the technical colleges, and I see the boys and girls passing my office at night going to the University and the technical college. I say that on the average those children are such that any father should be proud to have reared them.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: That is where you want to see a fair sample of the growing youth of this country. If you go into places looking for certain things probably they can be found, but it has not been my experience to witness those things related by the hon. member for Cooroorra this afternoon. If he will indicate to the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs where those things took place we will have the beach patrolled and the situation dealt with.

The traveller's clause of this Bill will not mean that hotels will be opened all the afternoon. It will be very unprofitable for

anybody to break the law in relation to the traveller's clause. The traveller's clause, in conjunction with other clauses of the Bill, will be carried out and adequately policed. If it is necessary to take further powers Parliament will be asked for those powers. I take the view that anything that is contained in an Act of Parliament should as far as is humanly possible be carried out. We cannot make people 100-per-cent. law-abiding. We cannot make people moral who have an immoral tendency. We cannot make abnormal people normal. The power of performing miracles is not in the hands of Parliament.

Mr. Dart: The power to make laws is.

The PREMIER: That is what we are asking hon. members to do. This is a good law. If you think you can rear a strong, self-reliant race by taking everybody by the hand and not letting him go out after dark at night then you have a different idea from mine. I cannot see Australia raising an army, but rather a population of cissies, if they are to be frightened of their own shadows or if they cannot be trusted out in the dark.

I want to deal for a moment with the amount of beer it is said will be consumed by the alteration of trading hours. That is a direction in which hon. members opposite have been most illogical. Hon. members must realise that since the 8 o'clock closing was enforced there has been a great increase in the bottle trade. There has been a great increase in the manufacture of the cocktail cabinet. It also has become the habit of a large number of people to buy spirituous liquor and have it on tap in their own homes. As a matter of fact, some people have private bars of their own, and open and close them as they like. That does not apply to the great majority of people; it applies only to people who can afford it. Normal men who desire a drink in the evening after work will have their desires acceded to under this Bill and under decent conditions.

The closing down of the beer trade in dance halls will, without doubt, do away with a great amount of drinking. Hon. members on the Opposition benches cannot have it both ways. They want to play with a double-headed penny in connection with everything. They want to take this which is favourable to them and reject that which is unfavourable to them. I am putting forward a case that the normal time for a man to have a drink is between 10 a.m. and 10 p.m. If we were commencing entirely afresh those are the hours that, if I had any say in it, I would pick for the purpose.

So far as the staff is concerned, that is a matter of awards of the court. The awards of the court should make provision for the hours that are allowed under the Act. To put an industrial clause—and this is important—to put an industrial clause in a Liquor Bill would not be in the interests of men who work on wages, because an offence against the Liquor Act is dealt with in the ordinary Magistrates Court, and an appeal lies to the Supreme Court and the Full Court of Queensland and the High Court of Australia, so that

the protection that is given in the industrial law might be frittered away by putting an industrial clause in this Bill.

To put forward the idea that an alteration of hours is going to increase drunkenness is against all the facts. The hours the hotels are open do not determine the volume of drunkenness. If hotels were open for an hour, the man who wanted to get drunk and had the money could get drunk. That would be an abnormal situation. Men get drunk for a variety of reasons. With some people, it is from a sense of frustration and defeat. They have lost confidence in themselves and, for a brief moment, they may think they are the men they would like to be. That, of course, is an illusion, but men feel that way. Then, there are people who think it is a way of escape. People who suffer grief that is too hard for them to bear seek relief and try to forget. All these things are matters for a proper education. There is no way of escape in alcohol; there is no way out of any sense of defeat by the use of alcohol, and people should be trained as to those fundamental facts. Men have to live with themselves always, and, as a consequence, any one of their actions is continually in their mind. Men can only lead their lives and attain happiness to the extent to which they are able to build up control of their own desires. Where the will controls the body and the body is healthy—with a sound mind and a sound body, there is nothing to fear.

But a great deal will have to be done in research into the problem of drunkenness; it is one of those things that at one time were not regarded as at all important, and, in recent years, it has diminished very materially in every part of Australia and in every part of Great Britain. As you improve the conditions of the people you reduce the amount of drunkenness. There can be no doubt about that. One only needs to compare Brisbane to-day with the Brisbane of 30 years ago, or the conditions in any of the Northern towns with what obtained there 30 years ago. Where decent homes are available, where wages are built up and are being continually built up, and the conditions of labour are being made more humane, men are not so liable to seek a way of escape.

In Soviet Russia the manner of controlling liquor has undergone a number of changes. At one time there was total prohibition. There was also a system of State control. Of course, under their system everything was under control. That did not solve the problem. Now they are discouraging drunkenness on the basis that it indicates lack of fidelity to the Soviet Union. Drunkards are treated as patients who require medical aid. Sometimes they are photographed in various postures, and in the morning the photographs are shown to them. I am informed that has had a very salutary effect.

Be that as it may, the Bill is an honest endeavour by the Government to deal with a very difficult question, and I am satisfied that it will work out in the interests of the public.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time (Mr. W. Forgan Smith's motion)—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 33.

Mr. Barnes	Mr. Hilton
„ Brand	„ Jesson
„ Brassington	„ Larcombe
„ Brown	„ Mann
„ Bruce	„ Moore
„ Clark	„ O'Keefe
„ Collins	„ O'Shea
„ Conroy	„ Pie
„ Cooper	„ Power
„ Copley	„ Riordan
„ Devries	„ Smith, W. Forgan
„ Dunstan	„ Walsh
„ Farrell	„ Williams
„ Foley	
„ Gair	<i>Tellers :</i>
„ Gledson	„ Healy
„ Hanlon	„ Slessar
„ Hayes	

NOES, 15.

Mr. Dart	Mr. Sparkes
„ Decker	„ Taylor
„ Edwards	„ Walker
„ Maher	„ Yeates
„ Marriott	
„ Massey	<i>Tellers :</i>
„ Moorhouse	„ Luckins
„ Nicklin	„ Macdonald
„ Nimmo	

PAIR.

AYE.

NO.

Mr. Bulcock

Mr. Müller

Resolved in the affirmative.

CO-ORDINATION OF EMPLOYMENT FACILITIES BILL.

COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Gair, South Brisbane, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 to 10, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 11—New section 2c; Powers and duties of council—

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) (9.34 p.m.): I move the following amendment:—

“On page 10, after line 21, insert the following paragraph—

“(a) Make recommendations to the Governor in Council as to the measure of preference in employment which should be given to returned members of the Commonwealth Naval, Military, and Air Forces, and as to the training facilities in land occupations and in skilled trades and callings which should be provided for them.”

The object of this amendment is to make it clear that the Bill will give to members of our fighting forces that measure of preference to which they are justly entitled.

I discussed this matter very fully last evening and I do not wish to reiterate the arguments I used. I feel that this is an amendment that will meet with the approval of the Minister because, during the last war, the Queensland Government as well as other Governments in Australia recognised the principle of preference to returned soldiers. It is only right that we should recognise that principle on this occasion.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. T. A. Foley, Normanby) (9.36 p.m.): I think, had the hon. gentleman read and studied the Bill over the week-end, that he would have found that in the preamble it is set out what the intentions of the Bill are. It says, amongst other things—

“ . . . in order to meet the various problems which are at present arising and which will continue to arise during the present war, and also those problems which will concern the post-war era, it is desirable that measures should now be devised for establishing a definite plan, by means of the co-ordination and collaboration as between governmental, semi-governmental, and general community interests of the State, conducive to the proper organisation of the employment-placing agencies of the said State on a sound basis, thereby enabling better provision being made during the aforesaid periods for placing in employment the citizens of this State, including returned members of the Commonwealth Naval, Military, and Air Forces . . . ”

It will be seen that the question whether preference is to be granted to returned men of the Commonwealth Naval, Military, and Air Forces, is one that will eventually come before the State Employment Council, and naturally that body in its wisdom would make recommendations to the Governor in Council. We have also made provision for a representative of the returned soldiers selected by the Governor in Council to be on the State Employment Council, and he, knowing the needs and requirements of returned men, would place the case for them before the council, in an endeavour to induce it to move along the lines on which the Leader of the Opposition is moving to-night.

I might point out that it is to be hoped that the success of this measure will mean that the question of preference to any section will not be necessary. We are aiming in the Bill at providing work and income for every citizen in the community. We are making no distinction or considering whether they are ordinary citizens of the community who have worked and helped to provide the sinews of war or whether they have been instructed by the Man Power Committee to remain at home notwithstanding their desire to go overseas, or whether they have gone or go overseas.

I would also point out that after the last war the Government were not failing in their duty to returned men because in the Industrial Arbitration Act of 1916 we made provision that the court might give preference to any section in the community, either unionists or any particular organisation that might come before it for an award or for a decision as to labour conditions.

That provision was taken out of the measure by the Legislative Council, which had an anti-Labour majority at the time, but notwithstanding that, the court, in the exercise of its inherent power under the Act, gave a measure of such preference in many of its awards.

I mention these facts to the Committee to explain that in this Bill we provided for the consideration of preference as a natural thing. It is not only provided in the preamble but is also set out in the powers and duties of the council, which are laid down in clause 11 (3) (i.), which says that one of its functions shall be—

“The carrying out of any other duties as may be prescribed or directed by the Minister.”

There, power is given to the council to deal with any matter that may be prescribed and placed before it either by a member of the council or by the Governor in Council.

However, the attitude of the Government is such that if it is the desire of the Opposition to have the position thoroughly clarified so that there will be no misunderstanding I am quite prepared to accept the amendment.

Amendment (Mr. Nicklin) agreed to.

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton) (9.42 p.m.): I had intended to speak on the Bill last night but I went on strike when the sitting was prolonged till nearly midnight. I did not feel like taking up another 40 minutes of time, particularly as the Bill has been on the stocks for four weeks. It is rather surprising, having regard to its ambitious nature, that the Minister did not give the Opposition an opportunity to consider its far-reaching consequences and worthy objectives. It is astounding that the consideration of such an all-embracing measure should be left to the dying days of the session.

Mr. Riordan: You had the Bill four days ago.

Mr. MAHER: That is not ample time in which to discuss a Bill of this kind. If the Minister is sincere in what he proposes to do in the Bill it is one of the most important that has been introduced this session if not one of the most important I have ever seen introduced into this Parliament. It is just a question whether any credence can be placed on what the Minister has had to say. Apparently he puts a high value on the Bill because he spoke at considerable length on the introductory and second-reading stages, but to give proper thought to a Bill of this kind and to understand it in all its ramifications would take 10 days. It is a very important subject—the problem of co-ordinated employment and planning for post-war requirements. This Bill was thrown at us yesterday, the House was forced to sit until nearly midnight, and it is almost impossible for hon. members at the rag end of the day to give proper thought and consideration to an important Bill of this kind. On past experience and on the same basis of reasoning I doubt whether the Minister is sincere.

The Leader of the Opposition last night pointed out that we have had similar Bills with high-sounding titles passed through this Parliament that were to remedy our economic ills and create employment, but these Bills are merely cobwebbing the statutes and have

never been effectively applied. The Bureau of Industry Bill was brought down into this House with a great flourish of trumpets. It was stated that it was a Bill to "provide for the encouragement of employment and the rehabilitation of industry, to constitute and establish a bureau of industry, and for other purposes." Nothing marvellous has been achieved by it.

Then the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act of 1938 was introduced. It was designed "to improve the general economic welfare of the State and encourage employment generally, by providing for an orderly planned system of public works and constructional utilities by means of the marshalling and co-ordinated organisation and control thereof, and for other purposes."

Hon. members will see that this Bill by its title would lead any person to believe that the Government were desirous of trying to solve this problem. As I interjected last night, all that glitters is not gold. We have had these Bills on the statute-book, yet this ever-recurring problem of employment and provision for the economic welfare of the people has not yet been solved. One of the purposes of the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act was "the evolving of schemes for providing employment and/or improving the general economic welfare of the State."

Clause 11 of this Bill is a very wide one. It envisages the right to work, which the Minister said was the theme of the Bill, like the theme running through a grand opera. It is the right to live, work, and enjoy. I do not want to throw cold water on the proposal. No doubt a great deal of work has been undertaken in the compilation of this Bill, and those officers to whom the Minister paid a tribute have certainly undertaken a big task in trying to group all the provisions of governmental activities that have something to do with employment problems into one co-ordinated whole. They have discharged their duties extremely well in that respect. We have to ask ourselves, however: where is the money coming from to provide the expenditure necessary to implement an ambitious Bill of this kind? Anyone who studied the Financial Statement will understand that it will not come from consolidated revenue, while there is only a limited amount of money in Loan Fund Account and Trust and Special Funds. To carry out with any degree of success all that is envisaged in this Bill would involve the expenditure of millions annually in order to establish the principle of the right to work.

Nobody will disagree with such a splendid objective; but it is one thing to have an idea like that before us and quite another thing to make it effective. Under normal conditions there is usually a surplus of men in competition for the right to work at a payable rate of wages, but the problem is to find a volume of employment to accommodate those wanting employment, and our task will not be any easier when we have exhausted our credit when the war is over. Nevertheless,

we have to tackle these problems. I want to be helpful to the Minister, but at the same time I am hardheaded enough, practical enough, and realistic enough to ask the Minister where the money is coming from to amplify this fine proposal.

Mr. Collins: Where is the money coming from to provide the sinews of war?

Mr. MAHER: How long can the pace be maintained? The war costs are increasing from month to month and year to year, and that is imposing an added strain upon the people, and the question is how long the war will last and how long the strain on the present basis of outgoing can be maintained without going deeper down into the pockets of the wage-earner.

Mr. Collins: If it goes on for a long time there would be no money to keep anybody—is that the trend of your argument?

Mr. MAHER: I am not suggesting that, but there are limitations. There is abundance of work to be done, and no doubt when the war is over, whatever remains of our economic structure will be applied to the problem of reabsorbing men into industry and starting them afresh. I am prepared to say that the Bill, taking this clause as a basis, is a notable contribution to the solution of an important problem; but at the same time I am so used to Bills of this kind that I might be excused for doubting whether it will ever achieve any greater measure of success than some of the Bills that could be regarded as its predecessors and from which a number of clauses have been lifted and placed in this Bill.

At the same time, there are many important provisions outlined in the clause we are considering now. The clause says—

"For the purposes of this Act 'employment-placing agencies' mean the State employment exchanges, private employment exchanges, as well as any Crown corporation or Crown instrumentality, local bodies, industrial unions of employees, industrial associations, unions and organisations of employers, and individual employers generally."

It also provides that the council may—

"inquire into and consider what are the most effective measures to be taken for temporarily or permanently reducing or eliminating employment and/or encouraging employment within the State or any part thereof."

Those are highly important objectives.

It also contains the following as a purpose of the council:—

"to obtain and disseminate information on all matters connected with industrial occupations and the callings of workers with the view to improving the industrial relationship between workers and employers, lessening the evils of unemployment . . ."

Those are important things.

The council may also—

“consider and report to the Governor in Council upon the industrial efficiency of the community, the organisation of the labour market, and opportunities for employment and all matters and questions relating to unemployment.”

It also provides that the council may—

“submit information or suggestions to the Chief Secretary in respect of national works projects for consideration by the Commonwealth Government;”

Mr. Jesson: What are you stonewalling for?

Mr. MAHER: I am endeavouring to visualise the effect the Bill is likely to have, the effect stated by the Minister. There is, for instance, the question of the placing of minors, apprentices, and female labour. An important aspect of this clause is: “to give consideration to the question of the introduction of a system of a classification of unskilled labour, and also providing short-course training or necessary training courses in certain callings where deemed advisable.” Our unskilled labour has been overlooked in the past. Our unskilled labourers are forgotten men. There is a great army of unskilled labour, and it is a big problem to find a sufficient volume of employment to absorb men who are absolutely unskilled, so to the extent that the Bill proposes to classify unskilled labour and to provide short-course training to enable our unskilled men to become skilled is, in itself, very good. That very subject has been stressed time and again from this side of the Committee. We have emphasised the importance of vocational training, and this is another phase of it.

Another important provision in the clause relates to the placing in employment of workers who, although advanced in years, are still useful because of their ability and experience. If this State Employment Council is able to give consideration to individuals who wish to have employment, and if it can link a man of that class with a job on a wage basis, mutually acceptable to employer and employee, it will be doing something for a very important section of the community.

The Secretary for Labour and Industry: Many of those experienced men are often better than young men.

Mr. MAHER: Age militates against them. The Minister knows full well that it is well nigh impossible for them to get employment in competition with young men. I know of a man who at one time worked for me on my property at Yelarbon. He was a splendid worker. In the course of time he reached the age of 50 and was obliged to come to Brisbane. He had to take a job in a labouring gang in the city, but could not keep pace with the younger men, and had to quit. That man, in his time, was a first-class man at his work. To the extent that there will be a body that can draw out the merits of an individual of that kind and have before it information as to how that class of man can be absorbed, much useful work will be done.

There are other aspects with which I am not able to deal under this clause, but which are highly important if the Minister means business. If this is not to be just another statute that will become dusty among the archives of the State, its provisions never implemented, then it will only be regarded as having a political-propaganda value. If, however, the Minister really means business, it is a very important statute, and very good work can be done under it. It means the setting up of a directive body that will be capable of looking over the whole field of trade and industry and that of unemployment, and over the various points of apprenticeships and employment that have been debated in this Chamber year after year.

All this is to be co-ordinated under one direction. The State Employment Council will be able to advise the Governor in Council. I am sure that with sympathetic administration and if the Government are able to get sufficient funds to implement the recommendations of such a body the Bill can achieve much good.

At any rate, I think we are entitled to accept the Minister's word that he does mean business in the matter and that he has his heart in the job. Therefore, I think we are entitled to support the Bill in the expectation that the high hopes of its author will be realised.

Mr. COLLINS (Cook) (10.1 p.m.): I agree with the hon. member for West Moreton as to the importance of this Bill. To my mind, the Minister is to be complimented upon bringing down one of the most important Bills that have been before this Parliament for the last 20 years. I do not think I am saying too much when I say that—provided, of course, the council is composed of men who have a full realisation of the importance of the position and can visualise the great resources of the State.

In post-war planning in particular we have to consider the putting of men and materials to use. We have no end of raw materials in this country, but they cannot be looked upon as wealth until they are converted into something that can be used. We are expecting a tremendous number of men to be coming back into civil life from the war and war occupations, and if something is not done along the lines suggested in this Bill, chaos will result.

Paragraph (o), which sets out one of the functions of the council as being—

“To give consideration to the question of the introduction of a system of the classification of unskilled labour and also providing short-course training or necessary training courses in certain callings where deemed advisable and, if necessary, the co-operation with the Department of Public Instruction in this regard”;

is very important. Of course, it provides really for what we are actually doing to-day in training men for war industries. Just as it is essential to train men in war industries to-day, so it will be essential to train them

for another type of life when the war industries come to an end, and let us hope that that will happen before very long. This provision to give necessary training is to be commended.

The latent talent amongst unskilled men is remarkable. I was speaking to the manager of a tannery the other day and he told me that one of his unskilled labourers who had joined the Air Force and went to Canada obtained, as a result of study and training over there, the highest pass of all the Australian airmen in Canada at his examination. This shows that there is often great latent talent in unsuspected sources.

Then, subclause (p) setting out that another of the duties of the council is—

“To give consideration to the placement in employment of workers who, although advanced in years, are still useful and efficient owing to their long and varied experience,”

is also to be commended. Anyone who has travelled through the State must realise the value of that provision. We often see very good and able men entirely neglected so far as employment is concerned, merely because of their age. These men may not be able to do hard work the same as young men can, but there is a place for them in the scheme of things if they are selected for the type of work they are capable of doing. Of course, they must be given a certain amount of preference, otherwise they may not get the work. A great number of what we look upon as old men are relegated to the ranks of the unemployed simply because no effort has been made to fit them into useful spheres of life.

Subclause (l) which makes another of the duties of the council—

“Co-operation and consultation with the Director of the Bureau of Industry and Government Statistician in regard to the furnishing of statistics to the Council by the said Director and Statistician, and without limiting the generality of the provisions of this paragraph, as to information and statistics concerning the economic conditions of the State, including such matters as income production, industrial efficiency of the community, and generally”;

is a very important one, because I believe there is a good deal of industrial inefficiency at the present time. I think that the council would be well advised to call for a report in such industries as the dairying, meat, and wool industries, because in them I believe much inefficiency exists. I believe that the well-established industries could probably be improved out of recognition. I have often said in this Chamber that I believe the production of butter could be doubled in Queensland without using another acre of land or milking another cow. This could be done by improving the quality of our cattle and the class of farmer.

The hon. member for West Moreton asked where the money was coming from. That is

to pre-suppose that as soon as the war is over we are going back to the old story that money cannot be found for useful work. If that should be so then our efforts in this war are being made for no purpose at all, and I think that that story should be relegated to the forgotten things of the past. Unless we are prepared to find money, civilisation is going to go by the board. We should look forward to a better civilisation, but we should be willing to do things and not simply talk about them. We cannot put up the excuse that we cannot do this for that reason. Work and wages have to be found, and every man willing and able to give service to the community should be placed in work. I believe that if we review the money spent in relieving unemployment, probably subsidised by loan money, we could give permanent employment to many men, whereas in the past relief has only been given as a substitute for work. There is food for thought in that direction. Looking back over the years we find that the State has spent approximately £30,000,000 in the last 15 years in subsidising idleness. That sum has been greater in other States. It is only by putting money into work that permanent work has been created. I think it might be possible for us to do better in the future than in the past.

I regard this clause as a charter, something like that given under the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act introduced in 1926. That Act gave a charter to the primary producer, and so this Bill will give a charter to the industrialist and otherwise unemployed men. As it was necessary to select an officer capable of putting the marketing scheme into operation in the person of Mr. L. R. Macgregor, who was a great source of strength to the State, so I believe we shall have to select an officer as capable as he to give effect to the provisions of this measure. I use Mr. Macgregor as an excellent example of what a capable officer can do in handling a measure of this kind.

If the members of the council are selected because of their knowledge, ability, and imagination, I am sure the Government will give full consideration to their recommendations and that, as a result, much good work will be done and considerable wealth created thereby.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. T. A. Foley, Normanby) (10.10 p.m.): The hon. member for West Moreton has emphasised the importance of the measure, and I appreciate his remarks in that respect. I regret that circumstances did not allow him an opportunity over the week-end—a long week-end, too—to give the Bill the study that it merited; but it is interesting to note that the hon. member for Hamilton had ample time to study it thoroughly and prepare a splendid contribution to the debate.

Mr. Maher: I had a second-reading speech prepared last night, but I was cramped because of the shortage of time.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I take exception to what I

regard as an implication that there is no sincerity on the part of myself and the Government in connection with the measure. There is no justification for the hon. member's imputing a lack of sympathy on the part of this Government. From 1916 till the present time, Labour Governments have made history. They have shown plenty of sincerity and action over that period, and they have been responsible for improving the standard of living, comfort, and security of the people as well as business and trade relations. We have made history during that period.

Mr. Edwards: And so have every other Government in Australia.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Other Governments have not. Queensland has led ever since 1916, and her progress has become the envy of every other Australian State and, indeed, of other countries in the world. So we shall continue. Our policy has culminated in the measure before the Committee. That is to say, we started off in 1916 with a definite objective, and, as circumstances have warranted and permitted, additional legislation has been passed until we have arrived at a point at which we can foresee what might arise in the future, and we are preparing to meet those circumstances by a co-ordinated measure that lays down the machinery required to cope with the new circumstances.

It has been said that the Government had passed other measures and nothing had been done to implement the powers they gave. That may be so; many of those powers may still remain dormant. However, if hon. members will read clause 13 they will see that arrangements are made for co-operation between the various Government departments so that some of the powers already on the statute-book will be put into operation if necessary.

Reference was made to the Bureau of Industry Act and to the committees that were to be set up under it. It was provided in that Act that, for the purpose of facilitating and expediting the carrying-out of the functions, objects, and purpose of that Act, there should be established a rural development committee, a roads, mining, and general works committee, and an administrative, finance, and industrial committee. Those committees were appointed and they have carried out very useful work. They made recommendations to the necessary authorities. Eventually, two very important projects that were recommended as a result of the appointment of those committees under that Act were carried out—the Somerset Dam and the Story Bridge.

We find that the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act of 1938 also provided for the co-ordination of certain State facilities. Certain committees were appointed under it, one committee being the Cotton Stimulation Committee. It is doing splendid work throughout the State in stimulating cotton production with a view to getting it up to the level of Australia's requirements. The Central Producer-Gas Committee was another committee that was appointed. It has carried out extensive investigations and has

already supplied information to the public in pamphlet form to help those engaged in transport who cannot obtain enough petrol to change over to gas-producing units. The Artesian Water Investigation Committee was a third committee appointed. It is carrying on investigations in order to advise those in authority as to the best policy to adopt regarding artesian water supplies.

The hon. member for West Moreton pertinently asked how we intended carrying out the many activities essential to achieve our objective. I refer to Sir Alfred Charles Davidson, K.B.E., who, comparatively recently, was invited to Brisbane to deliver the Macrossan lectures for 1941. His first lecture was entitled, "The Economics of Peace," and dealt with the very problems with which we shall no doubt be confronted later on. I attended Sir Alfred's second lecture, which I found very interesting. Sir Alfred said—

"The world could not afford to repeat after the war the terror of not having a definite peace policy. Unless satisfactory economic conditions could be rapidly created, the world might sink into chaos, revolution, and civil war."

Then he proceeded to offer suggestions as to what, in his opinion, would be necessary to meet the position that might arise. I am only taking extracts from his remarks. For instance, he mentioned trade and tariff barriers, and what was necessary in connection with this problem. Then he went on to say—

"In the post-war period, large-scale unemployment may be made a thing of the past."

Those are the remarks of a man with a wealth of experience and associations with a big financial institution. He proceeded to refer to the importance of Government action, adding—

"The essence of the policy needed to maintain full employment after the war was that the Government should endeavour to compensate fluctuations in private business and avoid imparting to them an added impetus when they were approaching either extreme condition."

What he is suggesting there is something this Government already practised after the last depression. When we took over the affairs of this State the business index was at the lowest point known in the history of the State, and we actually put into operation what is proposed here for the post-war period by Sir Alfred Davidson.

The report of his lecture goes on to say—

"Budget policy in the post-war period should be made to conform with the economic situation. It should no longer be regarded as a narrow accountancy problem, but as an important weapon of economic control, balancing the Budget over a term of years rather than annually.

"When the usual symptoms of slackening economic activity appeared, the Government should aim at spending more than

It was receiving from revenue and loans—conversely when boom conditions existed. In bad times expenditure should be increased and taxation reduced, and the opposite course followed when activity was intense. Adjustment of mental conceptions to this idea would mean a great advance in eliminating the extreme effects of booms and depressions.

“The Central Bank should expand or contract the reserves of the banking system, and thus influence the latter’s credit policy. When deficits were being sought in order to stimulate recovery, interest rates should be lowered and conditions made easy to encourage borrowers, and conversely when booms were developing.”

An Opposition Member: Those are our principles.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Some of the principles embodied in that suggestion have been offered by hon. members, but we have already practised many of the principles outlined there. Sir Alfred Davidson went on to say—

“Public investment in a large works programme would be required to help resuscitate peace-time activity and provide for a wide variety of needs. Public works of many kinds were urgently required for transport, water, housing, education, administration, soil conservation, and many other purposes. These should be planned now.”

That is what we are endeavouring to do, not only by the Bill I have outlined, but by other Bills passed by this Chamber. That planning is going on.

Mr. Macdonald: Do you not think you have followed Emerson and hitched your wagon to a star?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: No, we have not followed him. We are adopting a realistic attitude by planning now to meet some of the problems that we shall be confronted with later.

Hon. members have asked for this, and I am giving them an authority and pointing out that this authority made suggestions a few months ago that this Government have already put into practice, and by which they have achieved definite results. I refer to the period following 1932, when we infused new spending-power into the community, which had the result of causing every index to show an upward trend. The result was that unemployment figures were reduced, business conditions improved, and production and every other phase of industrial life showed results from the operation of our policy.

This is not the time for a second-reading speech, and, in any case, I have already made one, but the hon. member for West Moreton went out of his way to challenge the sincerity of the Government and he implied the job was almost an impossible one. I felt bound to make some reply. We recognise the size of the job, and we also recognise that it is necessary to make plans, and those plans

are being prepared as far as is humanly possible by the various committees operating under the control of the Government.

It is pleasing to get a hint from hon. members opposite, but I strongly object to the charge of insincerity levelled by the hon. member for West Moreton. We have shown our sincerity over a period of years and will continue to do so, and we will as the result of our activity “deliver the goods” to the people of the State.

Mr. TAYLOR (Enoggera) (10.26 p.m.): I congratulate the Minister on bringing down what I consider to be one of the best Bills ever brought before Parliament, since I have been a member. I regard it as an honest endeavour to obtain some results in regard to post-war employment. It may be said that, compared with the Southern States, Queensland lags in the matter of secondary industries, but it may be possible to develop primary industry to such an extent that it will prove valuable in the employment of the people at the conclusion of this war. It may be said that this Bill is a co-ordination Bill and will not be able to find actual employment for people, but under it the position will be better than if existing conditions were allowed to continue.

We have to remember one thing that Queensland is subjected to—the seasonal occupational periods and the heavy influx of unemployed from the Southern States. It may be necessary for the Government to consult the Commonwealth Government on the question of dealing with that phase of unemployment—the migratory workers. It must be said that those in charge of war production have not done very much in the way of making a contribution to help solve the problem of unemployment in Queensland in their war expenditure.

The report of the Man Power Committee published in yesterday’s Brisbane “Telegraph” has the heading, “Men and Machinery in Queensland Not Aiding War Production.” It is to be hoped that the Federal Government—and I hope they will be assisted by every person in Australia—will be able to deal effectively with the bottle-necks that are shown by this report to exist. Under this new Bill we should work in collaboration with them. It is to be hoped that the Minister will at least be able to bring into co-operation with him those forces of the Commonwealth operating in the State in connection with employment. I understand the Commonwealth Government have instituted an Industrial Employment Bureau in Brisbane. It is to be hoped that organisation will work in harmony with the Minister in the application of this Bill.

It is quite evident that at the end of this war there will be a large number of partially-trained mechanics, those men who to-day are receiving what may be termed vocational training prior to their taking positions in munition works and the mechanised units of the military forces. Many of these men will return to Australia—I hope the great percentage of them will come back—to swell

the numbers of semi-skilled artisans, particularly in the mechanical trades. The mechanical industries of the State are not large in comparison with the numbers of people offering for employment therein if we take into consideration the number of semi-skilled men who will return from the war.

Therefore, before the clause is put into operation, I think it might be advisable to consider the possibility of drawing the short-course trained men from the sources I have mentioned. Under the circumstances, I do not think it would be wise for the Government to increase the number of semi-skilled men, for to do so would have a tendency to make so many men available to the few secondary industries we have here that it might lead to the lowering of wages and conditions in the engineering industry. It may be that the Commonwealth Government will have to make this a national question in the post-war period and introduce legislation of their own, which may supersede certain of the provisions contained in this Bill. It may be necessary, therefore, to consider the advisability of consulting with the Commonwealth authorities as far as possible.

The principle of co-opting the various labour exchanges is a good one, as is the provision to set up experienced men to collate information as to avenues of employment, but the whole matter hinges on what the actual position of the country will be at the conclusion of the war. Will the present system be operating? If it is, then I venture the opinion that the Bill will not be successful. I believe that there will have to be a change in the system if we are to get anywhere in solving our post-war problems.

Mr. Macdonald: Did you ever hear of elders' hours?

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not know about hearing anything, but I do visualise certain things. I try to use to the best of my ability what grey matter I have in my head. Queensland experienced a pretty hard time as a result of the migration of labour to this State in the years 1932, 1933, and 1934, when the Commonwealth Government had no machinery for co-operating with the State to deal with the problem. And the State had to deal with it itself.

The question of employment should be considered from a national point of view. When the present war-production industries are no longer needed the thousands of Queensland workers who are now employed in them will be coming back to this State. What have we to offer them in the shape of work in which they are efficient? Here again we are brought back to the important consideration of the efficient application of labour to industry. If we are to get the best results from this Bill in the post-war period we shall have to bear this important factor in mind in connection with every avenue of employment upon which it is necessary to expend the nation's income.

If we see, as we do in this report from the Man Power Committee, that timber has been taken from North Queensland, Central

Queensland, and Southern Queensland to Adelaide to build wooden barges and those barges have been towed back to North Queensland and New South Wales, then I say there is something radically wrong with the system operating to-day. What would be wrong in having the job done in Queensland, where the timber is cut? This State could supply the necessary skilled workers and if the skilled men cannot be found in Queensland they could be brought from the South.

I know that hon. members desire to get home, but the position as I see it is this: this Bill is not one to be passed lightly. It is an endeavour to solve a problem that will give future legislators in this State a few headaches. I think the Minister can be congratulated on an honest endeavour to do his best to prepare the way for the facing of the post-war problems, which will be serious and difficult of solution.

Clause 11, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 12 to 40, both inclusive, and preamble, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with an amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

The House adjourned at 10.44 p.m.