

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 8 AUGUST 1944

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. S. J. Brassington, Fortitude Valley) took the chair at 11 a.m.

DEATH OF MR. H. WILLIAMS.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

Hon. F. A. COOPER (Bremer—Premier) (11.1 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

“1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this State by the late Herbert Williams, Esquire, 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 in the loss they have sustained.”

Among the number of papers I had on the opening day I unfortunately, mislaid one slip having reference to the late Mr. Herbert Williams who was a member of this House for some years and in the motions of condolence that were moved I omitted one having reference to the late Mr. Williams.

Mr. Williams was elected member for the electoral district of Windsor at the general election on 8 November, 1935. He was in the 27th and 28th Parliaments but was unsuccessful at the general election in 1941. He died on 29 December, 1943.

Mr. Williams was well known to most of us. He was a very energetic and very competent man, doing his work in his own way and doing it thoroughly. Possibly we on this side of the House had better knowledge of him than had members of the Opposition because he was associated more closely with us. We know he was very earnest and he was devoted to his work. He suffered considerably from his illness and that restrained him very much indeed in the House. He wished he could have done much more but unfortunately his state of health would not allow him to do so. He carried on valiantly notwithstanding his disabilities and discharged his duty to his constituents and to his State very capably and well. After all, a member of parliament has a wider duty than his obligation to his constituency; he has the duty that moves him to do what he believes to be best for the State. We can say of Mr. Williams that he was very earnest and sincere and very desirous of getting at the

truth. Above all he desired earnestly to do that which was right, knowing that in the end right will prevail. Naturally, we all very much regret his passing.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumbidgee) (11.5 a.m.): I second the motion moved by the Premier with a considerable amount of feeling. During the two Parliaments the late Mr. Williams was associated with he earned the respect of all of us, and made many friends. He was a quiet and unassuming man but very popular. As the Premier has said, he was a conscientious member and a man who did much for his electorate. His contributions to the debates in this House involved a great amount of preparation; much thought went into them. We regret his passing and the Opposition join the Premier in expressing our deepest sympathy with his relatives.

Mr. PIE (Windsor) (11.6 a.m.): As the elected representative for Windsor, I should like to support both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in their expressions of sympathy with Mr. Williams's family. As hon. members know, Mr. Williams was to have been my opponent at the last election. I had known him for many years and I knew his popularity in the electorate. Knowing that popularity, I can say that I might not have been the hon. member for Windsor if he had opposed me. I desire to express my deep sympathy and regret at his passing.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

BUTTER USED IN PARLIAMENTARY REFRESHMENT ROOMS.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Cairns gave notice of a question on Thursday last in regard to the butter used in the Parliamentary Refreshment Rooms. This is a matter under the control of the Parliamentary Refreshment Rooms Committee, and, as chairman of that committee, I take this opportunity of dealing with it. The question was—

“As little children are compelled to live on 6 oz. of butter a week, will the Premier take action to see that the unlimited quantity of butter supplied to members of this House in the Parliamentary dining room (coupon-free) cease immediately?”

In reply, I wish to say that we do not have an unlimited quantity of butter supplied to the refreshment rooms but that in common with other catering establishments we have a quota based on actual food served. As a matter of fact, consequent upon the reduction of the ration from 8 to 6 oz. a week, the quota of butter allowed was reduced by 25 per cent. on 1 July last.

QUESTIONS.

TUBERCULOSIS IN CATTLE.

Mr. BRAND (Isis), for **Mr. CLAYTON** (Wide Bay), asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“1. In the districts adjacent to Brisbane, how many herds providing milk for

metropolitan consumption were tested for tuberculosis in 1943-44, and what was the total number of cows tested?”

“2. What was the total number and the percentage of reactors?”

“3. How many cows were compulsorily slaughtered because of tuberculosis infection?”

“4. What was the total compensation (if any) paid in respect of such slaughtering?”

Hon. T. L. WILLIAMS (Port Curtis) replied—

“1. Eight herds, totalling 889 cows.

“2. 287; 32.4 per cent.

“3. Nil.

“4. Nil.”

STICKFAST FLEA IN POULTRY.

Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“Referring to his answer to my question on 25 August last year that there would be ‘a concentrated effort to eradicate the stickfast flea in the Boonah district,’ will he kindly advise (a) what progress (if any) has been made, (b) how many officers are engaged on this job, (c) what has been the total cost to date, and (d) when it is expected that the quarantine will be lifted?”

Hon. T. L. WILLIAMS (Port Curtis) replied—

“(a) The survey in the Boonah district to date indicates that 201 out of 761 properties are infested. Of this number, 18 have been cleaned and released from quarantine, and 55 are apparently clean but are still under observation. Seventy-five other properties are being subjected to weekly treatment. The control and eradication measures adopted have confined the area of infestation to the Boonah district. (b) Five. (c) £3,078. (d) The quarantine of infested properties will not be lifted until the area can be definitely declared clean. The period of time during which this quarantine will be imposed will partly depend upon the co-operation of owners of infested properties with departmental officers engaged in eradication work.”

REPORT OF COMMISSION ON FRUIT AND VEGETABLES.

Mr. BRAND (Isis), for **Mr. MAHER** (West Moreton), asked the Premier—

“1. How many copies of the Royal Commission's interim report on Fruit Vegetable Marketing have been printed?”

“2. Is it true that difficulty has been experienced by some members of the public in procuring copies?”

“3. Is care exercised to prevent persons whose actions were adversely referred to in the report from buying up the bulk of the issue to prevent its free circulation

amongst the members of the public generally?"

Hon. F. A. COOPER (Bremer) replied—
"1. Three hundred."

"2. and 3. The report has been out of print since 17 July, 1944, but since then only about six inquiries have been made of the Government Printing Office for copies of the report. There is no intention to limit the number of copies that may be printed, but it is most difficult to forecast with any degree of accuracy what demand is likely to be made by the public for reports of Royal Commissions. The type for the report has been kept standing, in order that, if the public demand warrants it, further copies can be printed. So far, the public demand does not justify a reprint being made."

GOVERNMENT KINDERGARTENS, TOWNSVILLE.

Mr. SMITH (Carpentaria), for **Mr. JESSON** (Kennedy), asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

"Will he give consideration to the request of the Townsville City Council for the establishment of Government kindergartens in the various State schools in Townsville?"

Hon. J. LARCOMBE (Rockhampton) replied—

"1. It is not a practicable proposition to establish kindergartens in the State schools of Townsville. Such a policy would require additional accommodation at such schools which is not available. It would also conflict with the fundamental principles of kindergarten training, which postulate that children of pre-school age should be segregated and treated as independent units.

"2. The Education Department has acquired in a number of centres (including Townsville) sites for kindergarten purposes which the State is not able to utilise at the present time. At several places the local residents have asked for and have been granted the use of State sites, and they intend to erect thereon buildings for creche and kindergarten purposes, under local management. The residents of Townsville may have the use of the site in Townsville on similar terms. Probably the Townsville City Council would assist in the matter."

RACING DATES, CAIRNS HACK CLUB.

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

"1. Has his department received an answer from the Federal Government in reference to the Cairns Hack Club's request?"

"2. If not, will he try to expedite the matter?"

Hon. F. A. COOPER (Bremer) replied—

"1 and 2. At the instance of the Honourable the Secretary for Public Works

and the hon. member for Cook, and other representations from the racing clubs concerned, I have submitted a full statement to the Commonwealth Government, outlining the anomalous position in which such clubs are placed in the allotment of racing dates on account of the effect of the Commonwealth National Security (Racing Restriction) Regulations, and of which I informed the hon. member for Cairns in my letter to him of 19 June last. I am awaiting the decision of the Commonwealth Government in the matter."

DR. LANGER, ASSISTANT CITY PLANNER.

Mr. CHANDLER (Hamilton) asked the Premier—

"1. As many weeks have elapsed since the Government conducted an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the appointment of Dr. Langer as Assistant City Planner by the Brisbane City Council, and as the report has not been made public nor has the Brisbane City Council received a copy—(a) Will he lay the report upon the table of the House? (b) Will he have a copy of the report furnished to the Lord Mayor or the Town Clerk of the Brisbane City Council?"

"2. As a delay of four months has already occurred in connection with the taking up of his duties by Dr. Langer, and as the progress of City Planning is of vital importance to this city—(a) What steps (if any) have been taken to publicly advertise the position in order that Dr. Langer might be released? If so, in what mediums? (b) Has every opportunity been given to enable returned soldiers to apply for the position? (c) Is it the intention of the Government to release Dr. Langer; if so, when?"

Hon. F. A. COOPER (Bremer) replied—

"1. I hope to table a statement in the House this week containing the result of the investigations.

"2. I suggest that the City Council should communicate with the Commissioner for Railways on these aspects."

D.D.T. INSECTICIDE.

Mr. THEODORE (Herbert), for **Mr. COLLINS** (Cook), asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"1. Has he noticed in the Press the statement that a new wonder insecticide known as D.D.T. has had excellent results in the control of buffalo fly on cattle and blow fly on sheep?"

"2. Will he endeavour to have this insecticide made available to primary producers for the control of pests?"

Hon. T. L. WILLIAMS (Port Curtis) replied—

"1. Preliminary experiments to test the value of D.D.T. in the control of the buffalo fly are now being conducted, and the results, so far, have been highly satisfactory. It is now intended to carry out

extensive investigations in regard to its value in the control and/or eradication of the buffalo fly and the cattle tick."

"2. Yes, in the event of the results of investigations definitely establishing its efficacy."

SUPPLIES OF GALVANISED BARBED WIRE.

Mr. THEODORE (Herbert), for **Mr. COLLINS** (Cook), asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"1. Will he make representations to the Federal Government for the release of galvanised barbed wire for the northern farming areas, as the present release of black wire has such a limited period of usefulness to be too expensive for farmers to use?"

"2. Will he make further representations to the Federal Government for the release of wire gauze for buffalo fly traps?"

Hon. T. L. WILLIAMS (Port Curtis) replied—

"1. My latest information is that no galvanised barb wire is being manufactured in Australia at present. Enquiries have been directed to the relevant authorities to ascertain whether steps can be taken to resume manufacture for supply to areas where black wire is unsuitable because of climatic conditions.

"2. Following frequent representations made by my Department, information has just been received that a quantity of wire gauze is being made available for the construction of buffalo fly traps, and will be despatched from Melbourne at an early date."

INSECTICIDES FROM BRAZILIAN PLANTS.

Mr. THEODORE (Herbert), for **Mr. COLLINS** (Cook), asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"1. Has his attention been drawn to a statement in a recent periodical that certain plants growing in Brazil, namely, Pyrethrum flowers and the Brazilian Timbo, are being used for the purpose of killing insect pests on plants and animals?"

"2. Will he have the report investigated with a view to growing the plants in Queensland?"

Hon. T. L. WILLIAMS (Port Curtis) replied—

"1. My attention has not been drawn to a statement in a recent periodical in regard to the efficacy of Pyrethrum flowers and the Brazilian Timbo in killing insect pests on plants and animals. However, Pyrethrum flowers are grown in quite a number of countries for insecticidal purposes, and the South American Timbo is used for the preparation of rotenone-bearing sprays and dusts.

"2. Pyrethrum has been introduced to Australia and grown in small quantities in Queensland, but no attempt has been made at commercial production in this

State. Cuttings of two members of the genus to which Timbo belongs have also been recently introduced to Australia, and enquiries will be instituted as to what progress has been made with their propagation."

ALLEGED WASTE OF MILK.

Mr. PIE (Windsor) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"1. Is he aware that milk produced on farms located near Brisbane is being thrown away—proof of which can be submitted?"

"2. If the Government can guarantee the milk which is being dumped to be free from T.B. infection and is not prepared to arrange distribution—will he authorise the Queensland People's Party to take such steps as are necessary to eliminate this waste by delivering the milk in question to mothercraft hostels, charitable institutions, and the poorer people throughout all metropolitan electorates?"

Hon. T. L. WILLIAMS (Port Curtis) replied—

"1 and 2. If the hon. member will indicate the properties from which he claims that milk is being thrown away, the Government will undertake the necessary steps to eliminate the alleged waste."

EXPENSES OF NURSES.

Mr. KERR (Oxley) asked the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs—

"Will he take action to ensure that nurses being directed by man-power to the various hospitals throughout the State are recompensed their travelling expenses?"

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby) replied—

"The Nurses' Award (State) provides—'Fares—A registered nurse appointed to a hospital or other institution shall have full first-class railway, coach, aeroplane, or steamer fares (including first-class sleepers where the railway is used and such are provided) and reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred by her in reaching the position, refunded after six months' continuous service in the hospital or institution.' Every hospital is bound to strictly observe these provisions as directed by the National Security (Man-power) Regulations."

ADVERTISEMENTS, REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN.

Mr. PATERSON (Bowen) asked the Attorney-General—

"1. Has his attention been drawn to the following advertisements appearing under the name of E. G. Eager and Son Pty. Ltd.:—(a) the advertisement on page 3 of the 'Courier-Mail' of Wednesday, 26 July, 1944, headed—'A Name or a Number'; (b) the advertisement on page 3 of the 'Courier-Mail' of Wednesday, 19 July, 1944, headed—'You are the best judge of where your ability lies'; (c) the advertisement on page 3 of the 'Sunday Mail' of 30 July, 1944, headed—'A Name or a Number'?"

"2. Is the expenditure of any money on the said advertisements or any of them within the legal powers of the said company, in view of the fact that they are obviously advertisements having the effect of urging readers to vote 'No' in the forthcoming referendum, and therefore of a political nature?"

"3. If the answer to Question 2 is 'yes'—(a) within what legal powers is the said expenditure lawful? (b) will he advise the Government to amend the laws of this State making it illegal for any company registered under the Companies Act to incur expenditure for political purposes?"

Hon. D. A. GLEDSON (Ipswich) replied—

"1. Yes.

"2. The purposes for which a company may expend its moneys depends upon the rules of the company governing the internal economic system of the company in question.

"3. (a) and (b) This has not been considered for the present legislative programme."

V.D. HOSPITAL, BOGGO ROAD.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba), for **Mr. YEATES** (East Toowoomba): I desire to ask the Secretary for Public Works whether he has an answer to the following question which was addressed to him by the hon. member for East Toowoomba on 3 August:—

"What quantity of (a) timber (superficial feet) and (b) galvanised iron (sheets) was used in their construction?"

Hon. H. A. BRUCE (The Tableland) replied—

"(a) 150,000 superficial feet; (b) 2,695 sheets."

VOTING AT GENERAL ELECTION.

RETURN TO ORDER.

The following paper was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Return to an Order made by the House on 3 August showing the complete details of polling at the State General Election held on 15 April, 1944.

PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council (2) and Regulations under the Fruit Marketing Organisation Acts, 1923 to 1941.

Proclamations (2) under the Sugar Experiment Stations Acts, 1900 to 1941.

FORM OF QUESTIONS.

Mr. SPEAKER: I draw the attention of hon. members to Standing Order No. 69, which reads—

"In putting a Question, no argument or opinion shall be offered, or any fact stated,

except so far as is necessary to explain the Question."

I am sure that all hon. members will take notice of this Standing Order.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—SECOND ALLOTTED DAY.

Debate resumed from 3 August (see p. 54) on Mr. Ingram's motion for the Adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. CHANDLER (Hamilton) (11.31 a.m.): First of all, I desire to give notice to the House that I have been appointed Leader of the Queensland People's Party and Mr. Bruce Pie has been appointed Deputy Leader. I should also like to point out that that party at the last State election obtained the largest number of votes of any other organisation outside the Government. In the metropolitan area, it received a considerable number of votes in excess of the number polled by Government candidates, and consequently I suggest that any proposals put forward by this party are worthy of consideration by the Government in the interests of the people who elected us to this Parliament. At the same time, I would make it quite clear that the Queensland People's Party is in no sense an obstructionist party. It has only one interest, and that is the better government and the greater development of this great State of Queensland, and it will support any proposals put forward in this House that in its opinion have these objectives in view. However, I would make it quite clear, of course, that it will oppose anything that it thinks is not in those interests.

Already there are indications that the activities of this party have had the effect of rousing the present State Government from that state of listless apathy in which they have been browsing for many years past.

Hon. Members interjecting.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. CHANDLER: Referring now, Mr. Speaker, to the Governor's Speech, I notice that the Government claim considerable credit for co-operation with the Commonwealth Government. It may be that they are entitled to some credit for that, but I would point out that it is clear to a very large number of people that, so far as Queensland is concerned, the relationship between the State Government and the Commonwealth Government has not been one of co-operation but of subordination. There are many who think that in their subordination to the Commonwealth Government and their haste to do the bidding of the Commonwealth Government this Government have almost completely neglected the interests of Queensland. (Government interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. CHANDLER: This Government rushed through the Commonwealth Powers Bill. They did not first take the opportunity

of ascertaining whether it was the opinion of the people of Queensland that the Bill should be passed, and at the present time there is every indication that on the 19th instant the Government will be told very bluntly that it was not the opinion of the people of Queensland. (Government interjections.)

Apart from that aspect of the matter, I wish to draw attention to one very grave defect of that Bill—that this State Government did not have the foresight or judgment to include in it a provision that there should not be any alteration unless and until a similar Bill was passed in all of the other States of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Cooper: That is the most foolish statement you have ever made, and you have made many.

Mr. CHANDLER: I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier will take every opportunity to tell me so when he replies. In the alternative, there should have been a provision to delay proclamation of that Bill so that the rights of Queensland were protected in the event of its not being passed by the other States.

What will be the position of this State if the referendum proposals are not carried—and I expect that they will not be carried? I do not know, and I doubt very much whether the Government know; in fact, I doubt very much whether anyone knows. The passage of that Bill so hastily and so foolishly might easily result in placing Queensland more or less in a state of chaos until the matter can be remedied.

I am very glad to know that the Government have included in their proposals the re-classification of the Public Service. That is one of the matters that were also advocated by the members of this party. Might I suggest that the Government go further and establish a completely independent Public Service Board? The establishment of a Public Service Board, independent of ministerial control, would give a great deal of security to members of the Public Service. In addition, it would prevent a repetition of those abuses of power that have been so notorious in past years under Labour Governments. For years past we have had the spectacle of former Labour members who have been unsuccessful at elections being appointed to good jobs in the Public Service. We have had the experience also of seeing former aldermen, similarly defeated, appointed to the Public Service, and to positions for which we might very well doubt their fitness. The appointment of a Public Service Commission would do a great deal to prevent that very serious abuse, which is and has been for many years one of the greatest forms of abuse of power that the Labour Government have exercised.

Mr. Cooper: You have ample opportunity to prove that. You have no proof of it.

Mr. CHANDLER: One has only to look at the former hon. member for Sandgate and the former Vice-Mayor, both of whom, immediately after the elections, were

appointed to jobs for which they were entirely unsuited. It would take very little time to turn up a number of similar appointments and I am extremely sorry that the Premier does not appear to be able to take his own medicine. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that you will bear me out in the contention I voiced the other day that the debates in Parliament are deteriorating, especially when we see the Premier himself indulging in a running fire of interjection.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the hon. member for Hamilton address the Chair and not hon. members on the Government side.

Mr. CHANDLER: I am sorry. I am glad, too, to see that the Government have at long last—and again spurred on by the recent election controversy—decided upon the re-classification of teachers. I am exceedingly sorry, however, that there were no proposals in the programme placed before us for an investigation into our educational methods generally, with a view to their improvement. Education in this country as I think most intelligent people will agree, lags very far behind that of all other countries. Unfortunately, not only is no attempt being made to remedy the situation but, what is far worse, there appears to be a complete lack of realisation on the part of the authorities in power that there is anything wrong with the system. I commend to them the suggestion that a Commission be appointed to inquire into the educational facilities in Queensland with the view at least of seeing that we do not lag behind other countries if not of putting Queensland in the forefront of education, the place where it should be with a Government who boast of having socialistic tendencies.

I commend the Government, partially at any rate, on their decision to abolish hospital precepts from local authorities. I would point out, however, that when the Government first introduced the iniquitous system of compelling local authorities to pay from their very limited resources large sums of money for the upkeep of hospitals they were advised—and well advised—by the then Opposition that the system was wrong and that ultimately it would break down. The Government, of course, in their usual manner, refused to take any notice, but it has now discovered that what those men in their wisdom and experience said has come true. At this very late hour they have decided to abolish that imposition, which never should have been imposed. The imposition of those payments has had a very serious effect on the development and prosperity of local-authority areas. It has been responsible for the creation of a big load of debt that otherwise probably would not have been incurred.

I express my satisfaction at the fact that the Government are going to continue to subsidise certain local-authority works, but I think we should regard that decision not so much in the light of a favour the Government are extending to those authorities as in the light of a repayment of something that is their just due and that the Government

extracted from them over a great many years past.

I notice that the Government are giving consideration—I presume of a favourable kind—to the Commonwealth hospitals scheme, but I wonder if there is any real need for the Commonwealth to enter this field now covered by State Governments. Is there any real reason why the Commonwealth Government should extract revenue from the people of Queensland by way of taxation or in some other way, and then distribute it, with various strings attached to it, for the purpose of providing hospitals or maintaining them? Do the present State Government say they are able to control hospitals adequately? If so, why invite the Commonwealth to enter that field or agree to the Commonwealth's entering it?

There is a very important aspect to this question. The entrance of the Commonwealth Government into the hospital field must inevitably bring about either dual or triple control, with a host of additional civil servants, whose functions will not be clearly defined. We have had much experience during past years of this duplication of control. In the civic sphere we have had a good deal of overlapping by the State Government. Now, apparently, it is proposed that there should be considerable overlapping by the Commonwealth and State Governments. We all know what inefficiency and additional cost that must result in. I question very much whether, even at this late stage, it would not be a great deal better for the States to manage their own hospital affairs. They are quite able to collect the money necessary for their upkeep and the Commonwealth Government should refrain from interference and allow the States to manage their own legitimate affairs.

Housing is another matter of considerable importance about which we have heard a great deal recently. During the election campaign the Premier made a grandiloquent promise to supply 10,000 houses a year. I notice that the 10,000 already has been watered down to a number about 4,000, and, quite frankly, I express very great doubt whether even that number will be reached.

In view of the State Government's acquiescence in the Commonwealth's proposed plan for dog boxes at Rocklea might I be permitted to express the hope that the Government will see to it that all homes that are to be built in Queensland in the future are of a very much higher standard than those at Rocklea and very much better designed than those as to which the Government made their recent announcement to the public of Queensland.

Mr. Power: Every one of them complete with a Chandler refrigerator.

Mr. CHANDLER: I am sure that nothing would give the people of Queensland more pleasure than to feel that they were living in houses that were adequately equipped with electric appliances supplied by Chandlers.

I suggest that a great deal more consideration should be given to the planning and

designing of homes which it is the intention of the Government to construct. One might reasonably expect that having had such a great deal of experience the Government housing department should by now have been able to design homes suitable for the Queensland climate, distinctive in appearance, and usefully functional in design. But what do we find? We find that the department is dull and unimaginative and that the homes it is offering to the people have no distinctive features whatever—just ordinary bits of wood plastered together. And there is no attempt either to modernise or make them really comfortable or to make them suitable for the conditions under which the people are expected to live. Again this Government follow well behind advanced thought; in conformity with their practice they simply lag behind, indifferent to and unconscious of what is going on around them.

Mr. Cooper interjected.

Mr. CHANDLER: May I point out to the Premier that neither his Government nor the Commonwealth Government take the slightest notice of the City Council by-laws? I could quote a case if necessary in which this Government erected a septic tank in a place that never would have been approved by the City Council if it had been approached, so the very last thing this Government should talk about is the City Council ordinances because the Government have always flagrantly abused them.

I notice that the Minister for Transport takes credit for the reduction in railway freights and fares but I should like to point out that to a very large extent these reductions mean only giving the people something that the Government took from them in the past. However, whatever is the case in that respect reductions are welcome because railway freights and fares in this State are particularly high. Hon. members all know what a serious effect high railway freights and fares, freights in particular, have on the development of the country. The average freight per ton mile in the United States of America is about 1 cent. That is, it costs about 1 cent to carry 1 ton of goods for 1 mile, whereas the average in Queensland, I believe, is somewhere in the vicinity of three times that amount. It is admitted that a State with a small population cannot compete with a highly industrialised country such as the United States of America but what I am regretting is that there is no mention in the report of any serious intention on the part of the Government to carry out a progressive scheme to modernise our railway system. I know that when the Minister rises he will tell me that the State railways have done a magnificent war job. I admit that they have and I admit also that the State railway employees have done a splendid job, that they have been loyal to a degree and that they have rendered a splendid service to this country during the war period, but how much better able would these men have been to do that if they had had better tools with which to do it?

It is only a few days ago that I read a little paragraph in a metropolitan newspaper—and I have no doubt most hon. members read it—in reply to an inquiry. In that paragraph it was stated that one express attained the amazing speed in some places of 30 miles an hour, and the Sunshine Express travelling to North Queensland in some places actually attained the fearsome speed of 40 miles an hour. What a humiliation the antiquated railway system we have is to those people who have had the privilege or opportunity of seeing what railways do and are capable of doing in other parts of the world! Again this Government appear to be completely indifferent; and I suggest it is high time they abandoned the spirit of fatuous self-satisfaction with which they have surrounded themselves for so long and really woke up to the need for the development of this State along proper, sound, and progressive lines.

Referring a little further to railways, may I commend to the Government the suggestion that I put forward in my policy speech—the sending of a number of engineers abroad to study railway conditions elsewhere, so that when the war ends and the opportunity comes for us to do something with railways, the Government may be adequately equipped to embrace it?

I watched with considerable interest the suggestion by the Government of decentralisation of traffic control. I should like to call attention to the Government's startling discovery that town-planning and zoning are matters that affect transport. The idea of a body of Government advisers going into session and ponderously discovering something that any intelligent schoolboy of 14 could easily have told them is to say the least amusing; but for the Government to admit that such an elementary matter had escaped their attention by putting it in the Governor's Speech is almost amazing. I am glad the Government propose consultation with the local authorities in these matters. May I suggest that had the State Transport Commission consulted with the Brisbane City Council before that report was sent to the Government a very great deal of time and energy and labour might have been saved to the people who were employed on that work. We must all realise that State planning and transport go hand in hand, and the Brisbane City Council has made very considerable progress with its town-planning scheme. The progress, I admit, has not been as great as the council wished. Some time ago the council at the request of the Commonwealth Government allowed the Town Planner to go to Darwin to carry out important work there. On his return he was taken over by the Commonwealth for very important defence work, and he was engaged on that for nearly two years. In addition an assistant who was particularly valuable in the planning section was, much against the wishes of the council but at the urgent request of this Government, made available to them and was engaged for many months at a huge expense in the preparation of a milk-zoning scheme which never materialised. All that time and I do not

know how much money was completely wasted. Then, when the council some time ago decided to appoint a further assistant in Dr. Langer, what happened?

This particular Government, for purely party-political purposes, interfered and held an inquiry, with the result that the council could take no action. The Government have not even had the courtesy or decency to furnish to the Brisbane City Council a copy of the report that was submitted to them and, but for my insistence, would have refused to submit to it the charges made against the council by a deputation that at the instigation of politicians waited on the Premier in connection with the matter. In addition the Government have for months past refused to release Dr. Langer and in consequence his services have been lost to the Brisbane City Council. In other words, the Government have put party politics completely in the forefront irrespective of the welfare of the people of Brisbane.

Again I say that the city's traffic is a very important matter and if there is to be any alteration in the control of that traffic, as is suggested by the programme the Government have submitted, then I submit the proper authority to control the surface traffic, other than railway, is the Brisbane City Council. If the council is not to be designated as the proper authority I sincerely hope that it will be adequately represented on any body that may be created. We already have the spectacle of the City Council being denied the right to run its busses to serve the people under very difficult circumstances. We have even had the spectacle of the Brisbane City Council being forced to pay £1,000 for a bus, the value of which at the most would not exceed £200 or £300, in order that it might render service to the people. I admit that if traffic runs are interfered with the owners are entitled to compensation but I suggest that compensation should not be based merely on the profits they are able to make, but on the services given to the people. If the compensation decided on in that case had been assessed on that basis the council would not have had to waste the ratepayers' money in paying an excessive price for goodwill in order to serve the people in that area.

There is one clause in the Speech of His Excellency that must have been written by an unconscious humorist and that is the one in which reference is made to the Government's developing a plan—and I remind you, Mr. Speaker, of the word "developing"—for supplying machinery for war-time production. This is five years after the war began. Could there ever be any greater indication of how this Government trundles along years behind the van of progress?

But perhaps one of the most serious omissions from the Speech is a promise of the Government to do something about the supply of pure milk to the city of Brisbane. If there is one thing more than another that has indicated this Government's sloth, indifference and neglect it is their failure to take the most elementary precautions for the health and welfare of the citizens so far as their

milk supply is concerned. I raised this question some year or so ago and the Government assured me that everything was well—first of all that the herds were all right, secondly that human beings did not contract T.B. from them, and thirdly that the herds were being tested. I have since found that all those statements were incorrect. Subsequently, in reply to a statement I made the then Secretary for Health and Home Affairs, now the Treasurer, made a public statement that all reactor cattle discovered were immediately destroyed. Subsequently, again I found that statement was completely false.

Mr. Hanlon: When did the Treasurer make that statement?

Mr. CHANDLER: In one herd of cattle in which approximately 200 cows were tested, approximately half were found to be reactors but the owner of the cattle said that he could not afford to destroy 100 cows and he wanted some compensation before he destroyed them.

This Government regarded the shekels in their Treasury as of far more importance than the lives and health of their people, refused to compensate the owner, and allowed the milk from those cows to be mixed with the milk from the rest of the herd; and this filthy disease-laden milk was distributed for weeks, in fact months, around Brisbane without the slightest attempt to purify or treat it in any way. I am told that at the present time some or all of that milk is being pasteurised, but for many weeks, in fact months, that milk was allowed to be supplied to the people, to the children in Brisbane in particular. Is there any wonder that there is a great prevalence amongst children at the present time of T.B.—

Mr. Hanlon: There is not.

Mr. CHANDLER: Which is reasonably believed to be caused by the consumption of milk from diseased herds? The Government are guilty of criminal negligence in that respect. They are guilty men. I tell you now, Mr. Speaker, that the sorrow, the suffering and perhaps the deaths of numbers of these children lie at the door of these men. If the members of the Cabinet, who are primarily responsible, have any conscience, the thought of their crime will haunt them to their dying days.

The Government also have been extremely negligent in the discharge of their duty to take measures to combat something that is likely to prove a menace to this State. I refer now to the buffalo fly which is causing fearful decimation to our herds in North Queensland. For all we can say to the contrary, before very long that menace may spread to the south and attack our dairy herds here. Not only is this an economic matter; the question of cruelty also is involved. I have seen in North Queensland buffalo-infested cattle, that are in such a condition that if one of them was driven down Queen street, the owner would be prosecuted and convicted for cruelty to animals. Moreover, the damage being done to the hides by this pest is having a serious effect on the leather industry in that the hides

from fly-infested beasts cannot be used for making leather.

Mr. Williams: You have never been near me to give me any advice as to how to eradicate it.

Mr. CHANDLER: The Minister has a department at his disposal. It is the job of that department to advise me. The trouble is that the Government are so mean and niggardly that they refuse to give any information.

(Time expired.)

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba) (12.11 p.m.): It is three years since I have had the privilege of participating in the debate on the Address in Reply in this Chamber. During that period many things of importance have occurred. One of the things of magnified importance has been the birth of the Queensland People's Party and the assumption of its leadership by the hon. member for Hamilton. I read in an address that this new People's Party promised to improve the political levels in Queensland, to improve the standards of debate in this House, and to remove the domination of the Government by alleged Queen Street interests in favour of a bigger and better Queensland. After listening to the contribution this morning by the Leader of the People's Party, which was confined to the needs and requirements of Brisbane, I no longer wonder at the fact that the people of this State saw the wisdom of rejecting the candidates who were put forward by that party at the last State election.

Three things stand out in the Speech His Excellency was pleased to deliver here recently. The first is the continued good health of His Excellency and the fact that he continues to maintain a lively and healthy interest in the growth and development of this State.

The second thing is that His Excellency has been pleased to receive some very sound advice from his advisers about the future development of this State. More important still is the news that comes from day to day—and to which His Excellency referred—that His Majesty's armies and those of our allied nations are day by day rolling back the forces of evil to the places from which they came and in which places they will be finally and utterly destroyed.

During my period of nine years' representation in this Parliament, I have acquired some general knowledge of the responsibility of a private member. In addition, I have had the extreme good fortune in recent times to make contact with many members of the armed forces in very many branches and I have learned of some of their difficulties and of their magnificent contribution to this nation. I have learned too something of their hopes and aspirations when this war is over. It is because of that privileged opportunity, which gave me a field for wider observation and I hope maturer judgment, that I propose to take advantage of the time afforded me this morning to speak about the experiences of those people and of some of the

most important problems confronting this Parliament and this nation.

Fortunately, there is abundant evidence that this terrible war of such cataclysmic proportions is drawing to an end. It is therefore appropriate that we should pause and consider whether the legislative machinery, its operations, and the people who make its functioning possible, are ready, willing and able to solve those questions that await solution today. I list them for the sake of convenience as follows:—

1. The size of our armed forces; the theatres of war in which they should be used; whether or not we should take part in the war until its end.
2. A speedy and efficient transition from war to peace, observing in the process our obligations to those people who, either by voluntary enlistment or compulsory direction, have assisted either in the fighting services or in the war industries in the prosecution of this war.
3. The provision and maintenance of full employment and improved economic, social and cultural conditions in the post-war period.

Before elaborating or dealing with those problems, I propose to engage in a brief retrospect of Australia's part in the war and the way our people have reacted to war-time regulations and control.

Australia's prompt declaration of war in 1939 was considered by many unthinking people to be merely a formal action that was incumbent upon the central government by virtue of its membership of the British Commonwealth of Nations and it was thought that the obligation entailed was to send a token force of voluntary soldiers overseas, but that the chief role should be that of a benevolent neighbour, willing to sell to the allied countries our products at the highest possible prices, with a minimum of inconvenience to ourselves.

The unexpected and catastrophic fall of France and the imminent danger to Great Britain caused most people—the most thoughtful—in this country to pay much closer attention to the possibilities of an extension of war to the Pacific. Those people who because of our geographic isolation would not accept the possibility of war in the Pacific thought that we should remain aloof. But suddenly, without warning, the might of the Japanese army struck southwards. There was a quick envelopment of Malaya and a powerful thrust in the South-west Pacific, so that a grave danger to Australia presented itself. With the enemy at our gates, Australians generally woke up. We became acutely aware of the dangers that confronted us. It was necessary for the Government to take very vigorous action to bring about a quick mobilisation of forces, to introduce certain controls, certain restrictions, certain regulations and other things that were rather irksome to the ordinary person, particularly an Australian.

It is true that mistakes were made in those initial stages. Men were directed to the armed forces from the land. People who were in what is now known as protected industries were taken from them and sent to training camps merely because we did not have the resources of a first-class fighting nation to meet a possible attack. Fortunately, as the result of this mobilisation of our resources and its skilful use by our military, naval and air commanders, with the magnificent assistance of the American army and its auxiliary forces, we were able to throw back the invader from our shores.

Now that the war has receded from our shores, I think we should look back to see just what the impact of war has been on our nation and our people. We have seen Australia's reputation for hospitality, honesty, and fair-dealing dimmed by the racketeer and the black-marketeer. We have seen petty and irksome tyranny. We have seen rudeness by some minor and in many instances temporary officials in various public departments. We have seen the replacement of courteous service in our departmental and other stores by conduct that is unpardonable. We have seen too many of our citizens engaged in a frantic search for easy money and some members of our community seeking to avoid their national obligations.

I mention these things not because the majority of our people engage in these practices, but because they are the outward manifestation of the fact that we have felt the impact of war if not fully, at least to a greater extent than ever before in our history. It is only natural that people who have been subject to such interference with their normal peace-time mode of living are rather concerned with what plans are put before them at present and in the future as to their place in the scheme of things. In this and in other English-speaking countries, we accept the parliamentary system of government without question. And, as I mentioned a few moments ago, I believe that there are many people who are casting searching glances at the achievements of our parliamentary form of government and will expect from it something more substantial and something more enduring than it has been possible to achieve by these means in the past. Parliament is the evidence of our democratic faith.

I think that the aspirations of the common person cannot be better described than in the French Declaration of the Rights of Man. That document suggests amongst other things—

“The aim of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man; these rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.”

I believe that the crucial problem of the Government to-day is to see that whatever measures are introduced and whatever policies are implemented we maintain balances between necessary suppression of liberty on the one hand and the denial of justice on

the other. The responsibilities of government in a modern State are very great indeed and particularly so in times of war with all the controls, regulations, and directions that are brought into being and are incompatible with all those elements of justice and liberty I have quoted. It is the function of this Parliament and the responsibility of us as members to be ever watchful to see that there is no undue encroachment on these privileges by Parliament in its desire to do its best for the State by this particular form of control and by those regulations.

Let me return to the question I posed in the beginning—the size and employment of our armed forces, and whether or not we should continue in this war until the end. I put that question not to trespass on the preserves of our military leaders, because the employment of our forces is essentially a matter for the High Command—and too much idle thought and talk have been given to the question where our people should be sent—but because a tremendous duty is involved and because there is some public opinion abroad in this land that we should do one of several things. The first, for emotional and sentimental reasons, is that we should consider the sending of a sizable force to the European theatre of war. Fortunately, the events that are unfolding themselves with such rapidity in Europe today make that course less desirable or necessary than a few weeks ago. There are some who suggest that we should withdraw the greatest part of our troops and engage exclusively in pastoral production to provide foodstuffs for Allied forces and bring back our economy to a state of normalcy.

I say that there is truth in the statement that we should continue the war in the Pacific theatre until the end, and my reason for making that assertion is that Australia has a very great stake in the Pacific and that the obligation of Australia in the future is wrapped up in the conferences or at least the decisions of the conferences that will be held after the peace.

Unless Australia indicates to the people who will have the power that she has been not only a willing participant in the world-wide struggle, but that she has given in proportion more than most other countries and given on a very generous scale, and that particular military problems have been given to her to solve that only troops of great gallantry and determination could solve, we shall have a better chance of gaining from the conference justice and the prospect of a better future than if we adopted the policy of withdrawing our troops as soon as the menace to Australia receded. We must have the right to be heard at the Peace Conference.

There are other matters mixed up with the question of continuing to play an active role in the Pacific theatre. Unfortunately, Great Britain, because for some time she was obliged to a great extent to fight the war virtually alone and because other nations could not be dealt with through the channels of lease-lend, was obliged to sacrifice many overseas investments she had accumulated over

the centuries. It has been estimated that as a result of the disposal of British assets because of the loss of investment in shipping lines, insurance and other monetary investments, Britain is losing interest at the rate of £200,000,000 a year and that she has lost overseas assets of approximately £1,800,000,000. In the over-run countries of Europe those assets have gone, never to return. We have £500,000,000 invested in Argentina, which has revealed Fascist tendencies, and that is in jeopardy. Great Britain is in a most parlous position so far as the post-war period is concerned. She will be obliged to produce goods on a more competitive level. She will be obliged to embark on radical monetary and trade policies, not only to remain an important nation but in order to preserve necessary living standards.

We shall find a tremendous development in Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and Canada, and a tremendous potential output of these things in the post-war period. It will not be possible for us to send our goods to Great Britain unless we are willing to take certain goods from Great Britain. That is a problem our Governments will have to solve—whether they will make Australia self-contained or whether Australia shall become a participant at the various trade conferences. Whether the trade will be bilateral, multilateral or omnilateral, if you prefer that term, the chief thing is that if we become participants in the Pacific theatre of war we shall have established some right to alternative markets. It is no good gainsaying the fact, however, no matter how idealistic the peace-time conference declarations may be, the people who wield the power at the present time, Great Britain, America and Russia, particularly the two latter countries, will exercise tremendous power and influence at the peace conferences. I doubt very much whether countries that have contributed much to the successful prosecution of the war will meekly surrender those things to countries less important and that have made less important contributions to this war.

Mr. Macdonald: It would be incompatible with their dignity to do so.

Mr. DUGGAN: Possibly the term "incompatible with their dignity" may be one reason—there are many others—but the fact remains there is a tremendous potential market in China. But what do the Chinese people propose to do for money? We hope their opportunity to buy our goods will be determined by the recent monetary conference held in the United States of America. It is no good having 300,000,000 or 400,000,000 people capable of using our goods if they have not the wherewithal to pay for them. We have not only great obligations to continue the war as a member of the United Nations but also our future interests in the Pacific and our future protection from Japan depends on a vigorous campaign. The particular place where our forces shall be used is the sole prerogative of the military authorities; we will conform with the requirements

laid down by those to whom we have deputed the task and responsibility.

There is only one thing more I wish to say about the armed forces of Australia and that is that adequate publicity should be given in this country particularly to their magnificent achievements in the various theatres of war.

MARCH OF THE 7th DIVISION, A.I.F.

At 12.30 p.m.:

Mr. SPEAKER: I propose to leave the chair now to enable members to witness the march past of the troops.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. SPEAKER: I shall resume the chair at 3 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the chair at 3 p.m.

Mr. DUGGAN: My concluding remark at the adjournment was that I hoped adequate publicity would be given here and abroad to the feats of our armed forces. During the adjournment we have all witnessed an inspiring spectacle, the march through the streets of Brisbane of the famous 7th Division. My hope is that the thousands of people who witnessed this march will not be content merely to applaud these men when they pass through the streets—they have been very well trained and they have participated in past campaigns and this division and others similar to it are undergoing further training at the present time to be launched into battle at some future date. I can only hope that when these men come back to engage again in the pursuits of civil life the citizens of Australia will do something more than cheer them, they will see that they are effectively rehabilitated in our midst.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. DUGGAN: Earlier in my speech I posed three questions. I have dealt with the first. The second question that this Parliament and others throughout Australia will have to deal with is a speedy and efficient transition from war to peace, observing in the process our obligations to those who by compulsory or voluntary enlistment have been engaged in the fighting forces or in war work. This is a problem of great magnitude and on its success will depend whether certain current economic policies and political philosophies will survive. When we consider that we have something like 1,250,000 people who are either members of the fighting forces or engaged in munition production or some other avenue of war work and it will be necessary at the cessation of hostilities to transfer these people to gainful employment, I feel sure we shall have some idea of the magnitude and difficulties of the undertaking. Whatever divergence of opinion there may be between representatives of the various political organisations and between members of the Governments of the world, at least there appears to be unanimity if we take

1944—D

the pronouncements of our Allied leaders of the obligations resting on all Governments of seeing to it that men and women have the opportunity in the post-war period of getting a good education and a good job, with a good house and good cultural opportunities. These aspirations have been embodied in various political documents, perhaps not in those words but in similar sentiments. In the Atlantic Charter, and the decisions of the Casablanca Conference and of the Teheran Conference we find a Conservative Prime Minister, a Democratic President and the President of the Soviet Union representing the three great and powerful nations differing in the ways of stating these economic problems but agreeing that there is a responsibility to see that measures are introduced to deal with them. What is the extent of the responsibilities of Governments in this matter? It is the primary function of Governments to introduce laws having for their object the benefit of all the people as a whole; does this responsibility of finding employment for 1,250,000 together with other members of the community, therefore, presage interference in private enterprise or the undertaking of forms of Government enterprise? Does it envisage a new economic system in the post-war period or merely the continuation of Government expenditure on public works and other capital works? I think the answer is that in the post-war period we can expect the Governments in this country to lay down some form of positive control over private enterprise. Not that I suggest any Government at this stage, at any rate, should unnecessarily shackle private enterprise because it is in private enterprise that we expect about 80 per cent. of our people to be placed in employment. Obviously, if employment is being found for this percentage of people by private enterprise it would be suicidal to kill the means whereby these people could be absorbed, but there are too many in the community who think that the moment that these war-time controls lapse—and they suggest that they should lapse immediately hostilities cease or an armistice is declared—we should revert to the old order of things and that private enterprise, because it is more highly skilled, as they allege, than public service, is better able to organise the resources of this country and so provide full employment.

They say that there are sufficient repair work, maintenance work, and delayed capital projects to ensure prosperous times for many years to come, but the point is that all the evidence available seems to indicate that private enterprise is concerned only with seeing that its resources are used in the industry or sphere for which those resources are peculiarly fitted. For instance, in Toowoomba the Toowoomba Foundry, which employs 1,000 persons, makes windmills, Diesel motors and other things of that kind, and so long as it can find markets for those products it is willing to employ a large number of employees, and possibly an increased number of hands, but it has no responsibility to the people as a whole to find them employment

if those markets vanish; it is willing to conduct that enterprise only so long as it can return profits to those engaged in it. That is the very basis of private enterprise.

Unfortunately, private enterprise has never, in the pre-war period, as far as I can judge, however laudable the desires and aims of the various members of these big industrial organisations may be, accepted the responsibility of providing employment for our people. That responsibility rests upon the Government. Therefore, if it rests upon the Government it follows logically that the Government must remove anything that will impede the full employment of the people.

What is the position with regard to the measure of Government control that will be exercised in the post-war period? I crave the indulgence of the House to quote some extracts from an article prepared by Mr. Geoffrey Crowther, Editor of the London "Economist," a man who is regarded very highly by men in private enterprise, and a man who has consistently condemned the policies of the Curtin Government. I mention those facts merely to show that he is not favourable to the party to which I have the honour to belong. He says—

"Most Englishmen have very serious doubts whether private enterprise can any longer be regarded as the sole or even the principal determinant of economic activity. The dominant doctrines of the 19th Century, if not dead, are so battered that they will not serve us any longer as our main props. The trend away from liberal democracy has been a trend towards totalitarian dictatorship. The trend away from individualistic capitalism has been a trend towards rigid State control exercised in the interests of war economy. The trend away from the sovereignty of the nation-State has been a trend towards the concentration of aggressive strength in the hands of a few great powers. I remain obstinately sceptical about the possibility of making appreciable headway against the menace of recurrent depressions except by the road of Government action."

He indicates very clearly that this responsibility of providing full employment for our people in the post-war period will be primarily the Government's responsibility and therefore certain controls—not these petty irritating irksome controls that are a necessary concomitant of war, such as permits to effect repairs to your home, permits to buy wireless sets, permits to buy petrol or tyres, not these irritating things, which are purely the result of shortages and are introduced because it is essential for those and other articles to be allocated by some method of priority, but certain controls—will be necessary. I believe that in the post-war period we shall see Governments interesting themselves more and more in the question of determining economic policy by virtue of their control, particularly that over finance.

No-one in this Chamber or elsewhere can, in my opinion, successfully contradict me when I state that the only limitations that have been imposed upon Australia in this war are physical limitations. There has been no

question but that we have had the necessary finance to undertake the financing of this war. Our shortages have been materials, our shortages have been labour, and at no stage has the Treasurer or any member of the Government or any member of the Opposition indicated that we could not make a full and effective war effort because of the limitations of finance. It may be possible that hon. members of the Opposition will assert that we have relied too much upon bank credit for the financing of these undertakings.

Mr. Brand: You are putting up your own Aunt Sallies.

Mr. DUGGAN: These Aunt Sallies have been dealt with in quite a deal of literature that has been prepared by those who support the hon. member, and because of the fear that these things will be introduced by the Government we find the hon. member and his supporters somersaulting and advocating a "No" vote in the coming referendum. Is it not true that these people, the lords of private enterprise, the people with large holdings, these people who have substantial assets in the community, said to the Government when the Japanese menaced Australia, "Impose all sorts of controls as long as you throw back this aggressor from our shores"? Now that the Government have thrown back the aggressor they say to the Government, "Hands off these large possessions."

Mr. Plunkett: Who says that?

Mr. DUGGAN: We read it in the Press every day. Let hon. members read the various articles prepared by the Constitutional Association in New South Wales. Read the editorials of the people who support the party hon. members at present support, and you will find confirmation of what I say.

The chief criticism I have seen directed against the Federal Government's conduct of the war has been that it has pandered to the people on low incomes—it has not taxed them severely enough. If hon. members want confirmation of that let them read "Hansard." If they deny it, I will accept the challenge and produce the evidence to them in subsequent debates. The Commonwealth Government have relied upon taxation to a higher degree than in other countries, with the exception of New Zealand, and it has taken advantage of credit expansion less than in the United States and less than in Great Britain. Therefore, I say that if the only limitation to the provision of full employment in the post-war period is to be physical and material, wise planning will solve the problem. I am going to resist with all my energies all advocacy that says that we must embark upon a deflationary policy.

I met a banker in Toowoomba the other day who told me that at the beginning of the war there was £1,250,000 in savings-bank deposits and it had increased to £2,500,000. He said the only way was to let the people spend after the war so that the necessary corrective to any deflationary policy would be set in motion.

This transition from war to peace must be effected not by permitting the laws of the jungle to operate, and not by permitting those who have most money to take advantage of the shortage of materials. It must be accomplished by the exercise of the principles of social justice. The orthodox doctrines of the past must be accepted no longer. There were people not so many years ago who fought strenuously against the introduction of a Bill in the Federal Parliament known as the Fiduciary Issue Bill, by which means it was proposed to make available £18,000,000 for the relief of unemployment and for assistance to wheat-growers in the Commonwealth. There were many persons who immediately rose in their places on the Opposition side to criticise that Bill, and I question if they even knew the meaning of the term "fiduciary," let alone understood the implementing of such a Bill.

Mr. Brand: What Opposition are you talking about?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DUGGAN: The type of interjection made by the hon. member for Isis seeks to indicate that I am endeavouring to bring forward in this chamber some theories that have no regard to the rights of anybody. I resent such interjections which seek to convey that he is the only person competent to engage in some research on this problem. What I am saying is that the opposition to that Bill brought about the downfall of that Federal Government. The proposal was subsequently submitted to the people at a general election and the people, unfortunately, did not return the Government to power.

That Fiduciary Issue Bill was based largely on the scheme prepared by John Maynard Keynes, as the financial adviser to the British Treasury. Its purpose was to create reserves for the central Government. At the present time, Great Britain is taking advantage of such credit facilities for the financing of the war, and what is more important, it has accepted the recommendations of the same John Maynard Keynes for the financial reconstruction of Great Britain.

I mentioned earlier the contribution our armed forces made towards victory and subsequently we were privileged to see the members of the 7th Division marching through our streets. I say that I do not believe such members of the fighting forces or those other members of the community who have suffered the inconveniences of war will permit a return to the old methods after the war. The Government must accept responsibility for schemes calling upon public credit, and by that I do not mean a mere policy of inflation. They will continue certain regulations and certain controls to prevent a wild scramble for markets after the war is over. So far as houses are concerned, people who are on low incomes, those who have had increases in their families and those who have been obliged to change their employment, should have priority. I hope that no member in this Parliament will rise, as did Mr. Boyce in Toowoomba at a recent meeting in that city, and say that the

only people who are entitled to houses after the war are those who have demonstrated their good citizenship by saving enough to own a house. These and other problems will be the responsibility of this Parliament.

A Government Member: And he is a Country Party man too.

Mr. DUGGAN: He has been all sorts of things. The very political philosophy of the party to which I have the honour to belong best fits it to accept the responsibilities of the post-war period. I believe that the aims and inspirations of our movement and the very experience of the members of this Government, despite the allegations of the Leader of the Queensland People's Party that many of us are unfitted to accept the responsibility of parliamentary representation, are such that we are the people best able to serve the people. Because we come from the people we are best able to serve the people.

Mr. Pie: You are not the only party that comes from the people.

Mr. DUGGAN: I heard the hon. member for Hamilton speak at Mackay in the recent election campaign where he made serious allegations about the composition of members of the Australian Labour Party, and I propose to answer his allegations at some appropriate time. That is why I have made brief reference to it. We, by our temperament and because our political philosophy embraces the needs of the people to a greater degree than all others, are best fitted to undertake these responsibilities in the post-war period and to see that social justice is done to the deserving people in our community.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McINTYRE (Cunningham) (3.20 p.m.): In rising to address the House for the first time I am not unmindful of the great honour that has been bestowed upon me by the electors of Cunningham in enabling me to enter this Parliament in succession to the late Mr. Deacon. Mr. Deacon represented the electorate of Cunningham for a long period and he achieved much for its people, who again and again reposed their confidence in him. His is a splendid record of achievement, an example to all Australians of what can be done by diligent application to duty. I have no higher ambition than to follow worthily in his footsteps. I realise that in undertaking that obligation I assume a great responsibility, but I accept it in order that through the electors of Cunningham I may discharge my duty to the people of the State with benefit to them and through them to the nation. The electorate I have the honour to represent is one of our great rural electorates and has done such splendid work in the development of this country not only in times of peace but also during this unfortunate period of war.

Before proceeding further it is my purpose to offer my observations regarding the impression made upon me by my experiences in this House. At the outset I must say

that I have been keenly disappointed. I listened with anxious expectation to the Speech made by His Excellency the Governor, the contents of which I shall refer to a little later on. Then we elected you, Sir, as Mr. Speaker; and in passing I should like to congratulate you on the high position of public honour and responsibility that you have undertaken. We have heard much about the assistance that would be given to you to enable you to uphold the dignity of this Parliament. My dictionary tells me that dignity means—

“True worth, excellence, elevation of manner, proper stateliness, etc.”

I say that we have experienced something that is the very opposite of dignity in this House and therefore I have been disappointed. I have listened to a display of class politics of the worst possible form. I know that outside this House that type of class politics has been responsible for much of our political and industrial upheaval throughout the length and breadth of the land. I believe that with the war on our hands we should endeavour to do better than that. With our brothers fighting and dying to preserve for us our great heritage of democratic government we as representatives of an enlightened people can do something more than that, something that is more in keeping with the dignity of our position. I have been obliged to listen to a display of party politics, class sectional politics of the worst possible type. It is the more regrettable too that much of it should have emanated from Ministers of the Crown, from whom we have had a display of self and party glorification in condemning everybody and everything outside that party and the suggestion that there is nothing of any value except what is within that party. I believe that our policy should be to endeavour to foster a spirit of co-operation, political co-operation, so that we may gather together the best thoughts from the various political parties, weld them together so that we may make a more helpful contribution to the great and important problems whose solution lies ahead. I believe that is possible of attainment, and I believe that should be our ambition. I believe that only through political co-operation shall we have an opportunity to give a true expression to the will of the minority.

As to the affairs of State, although I do not wish to be over-critical, I must say that I was disappointed with the answers that have been given to questions. We have listened to questions asked by members who were seeking to obtain information, but the replies given were more by way of suppressing information than giving it, and some suggested a veiled insult to the questioner. As a representative of the dairy industry, if I were to adopt that method of answering questions at some of my meetings my shareholders and supporters would dump me.

I regret I felt obliged to make these observations, but it might be beneficial to members to know what my reaction has been since I have been here.

The Darling Downs, part of which I represent, has made a splendid contribution to the wellbeing of Queensland, particularly in the dairying industry and in the fostering and developing of the great co-operative movement. It is well to remind ourselves that the land is the basis of all wealth and that the economic and social wellbeing of this nation depends ultimately in peace as in war on the prosperity and stability of our primary industries. On Saturday last, when addressing a meeting in Brisbane, Mr. Bulcock said: “The basis of national prosperity is in the soil.” I believe that is so. When we look at the history of the State we find the dairying industry had a very small beginning. The livestock brought to Australia by Captain Phillip in 1788 comprised a bull, four cows, one calf, and seven pigs. From that small beginning this great industry has grown and developed until today it has reached enormous dimensions.

Today there is a great demand to provide food for the Australian and Allied Forces and the people of Great Britain, as well as our civilian population. What do we find the position is in the primary industries? We find declining production everywhere. I happen to be in a position to know something about this matter, and notwithstanding anything said to the contrary, I know that all is not well on the food front. Declining production tells its own story. Unfortunately the advice of arm-chair critics has been taken instead of the advice of practical men with a thorough knowledge of the requirements of the industries. We know what has happened as a result. Today production is regarded as Priority No. 1 by all thinking people but we find that man-power and other requirements made necessary by the war have been diverted to other branches of industry. When the war broke out what did we find? We found ourselves with a surplus of almost every primary product and a dearth of the requirements of war. We had to swing over from primary production to manufactures. The result of that swing is that we find the production side of our activities in a very bad state. The problem is to effect a swing back to primary industry, and it is not going to be an easy job. If we can make the necessary diversions, however, I believe we can get effective results. The job is a matter not only of price but of man-power and essential requirements of industry.

It may not be out of place to note that the substantial financial assistance that has been extended to the primary producing industries has not been given because of sympathy with those industries, but rather as a belated effort to try to stem the calamitous downward trend in production. While the war lasts production should have Priority No. 1 and all the essential requirements for primary production should be made available to it. If that is done we can get somewhere.

I was disappointed in the Speech of His Excellency, too, inasmuch as I found that his advisers had not made any plans for assistance to our great primary industries. The first thing we should do is to establish

a price for our primary products based on cost of production plus a living wage for employer and employee. Until that is done it is folly to talk of putting soldiers or anyone else on the land. We must have a stable industry before it is desirable to divert any further people into land industry. In the post-war period rural requirements will be of major importance and one of the most important things to aim at is decentralisation of population and of industries. It is generally admitted that our country has become top-heavy. Far too many are living in the towns and far too few in the out-lying areas. It is not my purpose on the occasion of this my first speech to weary the House with any figures to substantiate my remarks in that regard but our big problem today is to endeavour to bring about a system of decentralisation not only of population but of industry. Before we can get our people back to the land we must make the land sufficiently attractive to induce them to go and stay there. We all agree that it is a matter not only of earning a living but of living a life, and therefore it is necessary that we give to rural areas the amenities of life to make living conditions there comparable with those in the more closely settled areas.

One of the major problems we have to contend with in our country areas and a matter that requires immediate attention is better roads and transport. Rural local authorities have been put in such a position that they are no longer able to effectively discharge the function for which they were constituted. It is true—and I compliment the Government on it—that hospital precepts have been removed from the shoulders of the local authorities. Although belated, that act is commendable. I am in a position to know something of rural activities, and I know that in many instances it is costing local authorities as much as 10s. and 12s., even up to 15s. in every pound to keep their doors open. The balance of the pound is all they have from which to give the ratepayers services by way of road construction. In rural areas there are primary producers who have over the years paid hundreds of pounds and in some instances thousands of pounds in rates but nevertheless still get bogged between their holdings and the place at which they do their ordinary business—even after a moderate fall of rain. The local authorities are in conference in Brisbane this week, and we shall find many representatives going down on their hands and knees before the powers that be seeking greater financial aid to enable them to carry out their road-construction programme effectively. It is the duty of the Government to create a new set-up in local government and to extend to local authorities more liberal financial and other aid to enable them to make road improvements, a major problem associated with primary production.

I was pleased to note in the Governor's Speech some mention of rural electrification. I hope that the Government will see to it that that is an accomplished fact as far as rural areas are concerned. My knowledge

of politics suggests to me that people living on the land get very little consideration until before a State election. After the election that consideration experiences an interment, to be resurrected just prior to the next election. Rural electrification is essential. It not only brings to the homes of the farming community some of the amenities they need but it provides a cheap power for the carrying on of all the activities on farm lands.

Another thing that requires immediate attention in the country is the war-housing scheme. We have heard much about this, but again our outlook does not seem to extend beyond the city limits. I have found that too many of the people who direct the activities of this country suffer from the city outlook. The responsibility of deciding just where the houses will be built and what type of house is to be erected rests with the State. If the Government intend to induce our men to go back to rural life when the war is over, they must provide houses for them to live in. The housing problem in rural areas is just as acute as it is in the city. Recently one man who came back from the war seeking employment in a rural area was obliged to live in a shed. When the rest of our boys come back they and their wives and children will have to live under trees if they wish to go back to rural life or they must flock to the cities and take their chances with the others of getting a job. It is very important that the Government allocate a certain number of houses to the country areas because that is an essential requirement if our boys are to go back to rural life.

Another important matter to which the Government should give every consideration is the encouragement of the co-operative movement in every sphere of primary production. In the past this has not received the Government encouragement and aid to which it was entitled. In some cases there was Government apathy, even definite departmental opposition, which is wrong. The development of the great co-operative movement will be the means of solving many problems, not only for primary producers, but also for industrial workers.

During the last week the following appeared in our local paper:—

“A co-operative society, which is one of the three official pillars of the Labour movement in Britain and one of the biggest buyers of Australian dairy produce exports, has bought into the richest shopping centre in the world.

“The London Co-operative, after negotiations which had been going on for a year, has bought one of the blocks owned by Peter Robinson Ltd. paying £500,000 for the property, on a 99-years (the English Property Law way of saying ‘permanent’) lease.

“The premises, which at present are requisitioned by the Government, will be occupied by the Co-operative at the end of the war.”

I suggest that we should give very serious and favourable consideration to fostering and developing the great co-operative movement, not only among primary producers but also among industrial workers.

I come now to the wheat industry, which in Queensland requires a complete overhaul. I know that to a large extent we are subject to the Australian Wheat Board, but this Government have a definite responsibility to discharge. Apart from the disabilities suffered by the wheat producers, the latest figures show that in this State we are threatened with an acute shortage of wheat and flour. Yesterday it was reported that some hundreds of the by-products will have to be imported from Southern States. That being so, there should be no restrictions on the wheat industry in Queensland, especially under war conditions.

Another disability that hampers rural production is the lack of adequate education in the country. We hear much about our standard of education and what is being done, but I suggest that the major effort in this direction has been concentrated in the larger centres of population. In the country we find widespread dissatisfaction about our education. There are not enough opportunities for our country children to be educated above a certain low standard. Farm life has become so complex that a more technical knowledge is required if it is to be followed successfully. Farming has become the job of an expert and we should endeavour to develop a higher standard of rural education so that men may be trained to engage successfully in the most important industry in this country. I believe that we must develop secondary industries also, but primary production is the foundation upon which every other industry must be built and therefore it must be fostered.

If the foundation is not secure, the structure will not stand. We have heard a great deal about the swing over of factories engaged in war production into all kinds of other production. I believe we must be very careful to keep the balance between primary production and secondary industries on a correct basis or we shall have no end of trouble. Every aspect of rural activity should be encouraged. Every help should be given to increase production which is essential under war conditions and is a national necessity. Economic production will not only reflect the prosperity of the country but it will have the effect of reducing the assistance that is required or has been granted to subsidise this great industry.

One thing I want to suggest should be seriously considered by the members of this House is the question of broadcasting Parliamentary debates. It would be making a contribution towards the dignity of the House. It is a common practice in New Zealand to broadcast the debates from the Houses of Parliament. I believe that if we were to do it here it would assist in restraining members and it would have a good effect in improving the dignity of the debates in this House.

In conclusion, I would say that I have been sent here by my primary producers to preach in this House the gospel of the open spaces. I believe that therein lies not only our economic but our national salvation.

Mr. THEODORE (Herbert) (3.44 p.m.): I desire, Mr. Speaker, to extend my congratulations to you on your elevation to your high office in this House. During the course of your duties you will be called upon to make decisions impartially and I feel confident you will do so with satisfaction to all.

I also extend my congratulations to the mover and the seconder of the motion upon the manner in which they delivered their addresses. I believe that as time goes on both of those members will make valuable contributions to the debates in this House.

I am sure everyone agreed with the sentiments expressed by His Excellency the Governor when he referred to the deeds performed by our fighting forces. Today we have witnessed a spectacle that every Australian would be proud to have been privileged to see. The men who marched had done great deeds and rendered great services to this country. They responded to the call, they served their country, and today we saw in the march those who returned. There are many who will never return; there are others who returned incapacitated for life. It is our bounden duty to see as far as is humanly possible that promises that have been made to those men and women are honoured. During the last few weeks we have listened to discussions of the plan of the Commonwealth Government to meet the position that will arise when the war ends, particularly for the purpose of seeing that the men who served this country so well may receive the just treatment they are entitled to.

The Leader of the Opposition took exception to this Government's post-war planning of large-scale public works. He said that first consideration should be given to the rehabilitation and expansion of industry. We understood the muddle and mix-up of our opponents that we witnessed during the election, but we could understand it still more easily when we heard the leader of another party in this House this morning saying that the Government had delayed action too long and that they should have started five years ago.

It is our duty to devote consideration to these all-important matters at the very first opportunity and it will be noted that the Government passed legislation a few years ago to deal with these very matters. What was the attitude of hon. members opposite towards the Bill introduced by the then Secretary for Labour and Employment, the Hon. T. A. Foley? Did they not say that at such a period in our history it was a waste of time dealing with it because the war was on? No-one can justly accuse this Government of having failed to do everything possible to prosecute the war to a successful issue.

Mr. Macdonald: You are so mixed up in your arguments that you do not know what the Leader of the Opposition actually said.

Mr. THEODORE: I am quite sure of my facts and if the hon. member would turn up "Hansard" he would see that strenuous objections were raised by the Opposition against the Bill on the ground that such legislation should not be considered while the war was on. The Leader of the Opposition objected to the giving of any consideration to a plan for post-war development and public works but I say with emphasis that future planning for purposes of development should be considered concurrently with the rehabilitation and expansion of industry. Both those things have been and are still receiving the close attention of the Government. Indeed, Queensland is far ahead of the other States in its preparedness for those tasks and time will disclose that the promises to the electors made by the Premier in his policy speech will be more than empty words and that they will be translated into action. During the course of his speech in support of the Bill introduced by the then Secretary for Labour and Employment, he pointed out that undeveloped areas should be opened for settlement, that opportunities in partly developed areas should be widened, that there should be planned works and transport facilities including water conservation, irrigation schemes, road and railway construction, rural electrification and hydro-electric schemes. The Bill was introduced with the deliberate purpose of allowing the Government to collate all the necessary information so that a start could be made with the various jobs as soon as it was possible, and those matters are receiving the attention of the Government now. How would it be possible to carry out these undertakings unless a plan was laid down beforehand so that they could be undertaken immediately the thousands of men were discharged from the fighting forces?

In the course of his criticism of the measure and particularly that aspect of it relating to investigation with the object of planning post-war public works the Leader of the Opposition suggested inferentially, if not directly, that the Government should not grant subsidies or otherwise make financial assistance available to local bodies, which however could not possibly undertake these works without it. We can draw only one conclusion from his remarks—that his was a short-sighted policy and one that certainly will not be followed by the Government. Perhaps it would be in the political interests of hon. members opposite if the Government were to dilly-dally with these things and were caught napping when the time arrived and thus be unable to do the jobs that should be done. But the Government will not be caught in that way. They are prepared and will be ready as soon as the work is required to be done.

I realise the tremendous task that is ahead of us in regard to our land settlement. Preparations will have to be made to see that those members of the fighting forces who desire to be settled on the land are provided with areas of suitable land to enable them to establish themselves. I do not believe that we should put these men on the land and

then not help them sufficiently because if we did we might have a repetition of the spectacle that we saw after the last war. The men who are put on the land should be of a type suitable to undertake that form of life and should have every assistance to enable them to make a success of it. I believe we have greater possibilities in this than in any other State for the settling of a large number of soldiers on the land.

I agree with every statement that has been made by hon. members as to the need for encouraging decentralisation, but why send men thousands of miles out into the country where there are no amenities when they can be provided with land in more settled areas? I have in mind an area that is within 30 miles of Brisbane. I know a few people who took up land in this area 30 years ago and although they had a great struggle before the war broke out they have since improved their position remarkably. The improvement in prices brought about by the war enabled these people to obtain a living commensurate with that enjoyed by people in other walks of life. I have no hesitation in saying that if I were looking for a job I would not go and work for wages, but I would take up one of those blocks of lands that are so handy to Brisbane. One or two hundred farmers could be settled on that area where two or three people have succeeded by fruit-growing and poultry farming—provided the prices that have ruled during the war are maintained.

The Commonwealth Government should ensure that these men who are put on the land get the necessary finance to enable them to develop it, thus eliminating the necessity of undergoing the period of five or six years of virtual starvation. It is the duty of the Government to see that these men receive a fair and reasonable remuneration for their labour.

The sugar industry has gone through a bad period. It has had a very severe reverse and many of the farmers have suffered considerably. The industry is in a peculiar position because other agricultural industries point to it and say that it has been spoon-fed and enjoys conditions that do not obtain in other industries. Those engaged in other industries feel disturbed because they can see no hope that their industries will ever be as well organised as the sugar industry. It is because the industry was well under control and thoroughly organised that it has been able to do the job for this nation that we find it doing to-day. Nevertheless, the growers are having a bad time.

Mr. Macdonald: Through no fault of their own?

Mr. THEODORE: Because of the incidence of war. That industry, like many others, has felt the impact of war but it has felt this impact harder than other industries. The Government are fully seized of the difficulties that beset it during the war years. In 1939, at the beginning of the war, the industry had reached a stage of very high efficiency and until Japan entered the conflict it was

facing such a serious problem of over-production that a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the industry. This had the result of establishing what is known as a peak-year scheme. That is an indication of how the industry had progressed, expanded and produced until it was producing sugar in such a volume that there was much sugar for which there was no market. The war has resulted in a considerable fall in production. The northern canefields were virtually in the front line and a large number of people evacuated the sugar districts. Many of the men engaged in it offered their services to the nation or were called up for military service. The industry had produced a large number of skilled technicians and these made themselves available to the Government for the period of the war. These actions indubitably reduced the number of skilled workers, cane-cutters, and other essential men necessary to carry on the industry, the result being that for the last crushing only 3.45 tons per acre was obtained. In 1942 Queensland produced 605,000 tons of sugar, and in the last season, 1943, the tonnage dropped to 482,000 or little more than half the production of 1939. This will give hon. members some idea of the tremendous decrease that has taken place in the industry and the disastrous effect it has had on a large number of the smaller growers particularly.

The average declared price, which has certainly increased, has not nearly compensated for the loss in production. The increased price is due to the increased percentage of sugar used for home consumption as compared with the percentage exported, the home-consumption sugar last season being 84.45 per cent. and the export sugar 15.55 per cent. Those percentages have not been achieved for very many years, in fact almost since the time of under-production. That has played a very large part in bringing about the increased price, and is apt to give a false impression to those who do not understand what the considerable drop that has taken place has meant to the industry.

Mr. Walsh: Actually the gross income is much less.

Mr. THEODORE: Yes. The home-consumption price for this year is £22 10s. 6d. a ton, the export price £13 2s. 6d. a ton, and the declared average price £21 1s. 6d. a ton.

In addition there are other difficulties, such as shortage of man-power, fertiliser, and of tractors because of impressment. Many other problems face the growers, such as the inability to obtain tyres and tubes and spare parts for motor vehicles, and the decrease in the number of men engaged in the motor trade in towns in sugar areas.

The farmers did not complain, because they appreciated that the war effort came first, but the position deteriorated so much that until recently it was impossible to have anything done to a tractor and I do not know that the position has improved since. It must be remembered that up-to-date equipment and

expert mechanics are required to effect repairs to modern tractors.

Mr. Brand: You do not blame the State Government for any of those disabilities?

Mr. THEODORE: We cannot blame them, for the simple reason that the war comes first.

Mr. Brand: Actually State control has been a good thing.

Mr. THEODORE: State control, combined with Commonwealth co-operation, has been of more benefit than anything else to the Queensland sugar industry. I would point out that the Queensland sugar industry has not achieved its present high standard through any action of an anti-Labour Government. I think it was Sir Edward Macartney who said on one occasion—

“If I were to do the things you are asking me to do—introduce legislation for the protection of growers—it would shatter every plank of the Nationalist platform.”

Had it not been for the wise legislation of the Labour Government in 1915 we should not have had our present surplus above home requirements of sugar, yet the hon. member for Hamilton continually says that we are browsing, that we are doing nothing.

Mr. Brand: When control was handed back to Queensland it was a good thing for the sugar industry.

Mr. THEODORE: But we must not forget that it was essential that we come to an agreement with the Federal Government in order to dispose of our surplus sugar.

Mr. Pie: Do we need sugar rationing?

Mr. THEODORE: I think it has been wise, and I do not think anyone has suffered from it. By rationing sugar we have been able to help the starving countries of Europe. I remind the hon. member that Great Britain has a shorter ration than ours, and the Commonwealth Government are to be commended for their action in rationing not only sugar but other commodities in the interests of the nation and in order to help others.

Mr. Brand: During the last war the Commonwealth Government controlled the sugar industry.

Mr. THEODORE: But at that time Queensland did not have a competent State Government. During this war that was not necessary because Queensland had a Government experienced in controlling great industrial organisations. By the application of sound methods to the sugar industry this Labour Government have set an example that might well be followed by other countries.

Mr. Brand: The Queensland State Government have done very well for the sugar industry, but why hand it back to the Commonwealth Government?

Mr. THEODORE: My main reason for referring to these matters is to disillusion those who may feel that the cane-growers are prosperous. They are not. The increased

prices received by the farmers this year have been offset by the reduced crops they have harvested. By the time they meet their commitments and pay taxation, many farmers will be in a worse position than previously. I can speak from experience.

Mr. Pie: It is the same everywhere.

Mr. THEODORE: It is not the same everywhere. Other farmers previously suffered from low prices as the result of fluctuating markets and that kind of thing, but during the last two years of this war they have had better times than they ever had before. I know that because I have been speaking to some of those men, who have depended for their prices on the operation of the law of supply and demand. They have told me they have never experienced such prosperity as they have enjoyed during the last two years. I admit that I believe that in the fruit and vegetable industry the agents are getting more than their share, but the Commonwealth Government, through their price-fixing regulations, are endeavouring to control that position. Certainly it is necessary that they should have an increased price to meet their requirements. However, at the moment I am mainly concerned with the sugar industry. Previously you could buy cowpea seed and that kind of thing for £1 5s. a bushel but now it is £2 10s. or £3 a bushel.

Mr. Kerr: Who fixed the commission on those lines?

Mr. THEODORE: I will discuss that point with the hon. member on another occasion; because I have something more important to deal with now. If the sugar industry is to be maintained and a further decline prevented, attention will have to be given immediately to the important problems affecting the industry. Mr. Curtin has realised the important part played by the industry in the national set-up of this State. Mr. Curtin agreed that the sugar industry would continue to play an important part in the post-war development and planning of this nation and I believe it will. No-one can say what will happen to the sugar industry after the war, but I believe there are possibilities for it and that we may be able to find markets for all the sugar we can produce above our home requirements.

I want to refer to an article from "Saturday Night" headed "The Science Front" because it is particularly applicable to this country. If what is stated in it is correct it may be responsible for expanding the sugar industry. This is the article:—

"With chemists' help, the farmer of the future may grow his own oil."

"Grow your own oil! Grow it on the surface of the earth rather than search for it in the depths below. That, in effect, can now be accomplished, making oil from plants, 'hydrocarbons from carbohydrates,' according to an announcement made recently (April 2 1944) by the American Chemical Society. Dr. E. Berl, research professor at the Carnegie Institute of Technology at Pittsburg has evolved the

process of taking plant growth and producing therefrom oil or coal at will, telescoping into a few hours what it took nature millions of years to accomplish. It is said that a mere 2 per cent. of the available crop lands of the United States would grow annually sufficient plant life from which enough gasoline could be 'manufactured' to run the 32,000,000 automobiles that were on the roads of that country in the last year before it entered the present war. The waste from present farm products, if it could all be gathered together, would also produce enough gasoline to do the same thing."

I will not read it all. I am content to read only the part of it that is of extreme interest to those engaged in the industry with which I am associated, one that has been successfully established in Queensland and will I believe be considerably extended if effect can be given to the ideas set out in this article. It goes on to say—

"The Berl process makes porous coke for blast furnaces or dense coke for foundries or solid coal at will. When only the oxygen is cut out and oil is formed the process is equally flexible. Gasoline, kerosene or lubricating oils can be produced as desired. Dr Berl claims that any country that has land upon which plants will grow need never again be a 'have not' nation as far as coal and oil are concerned. These can now be 'manufactured' from plant growth as required.

"Sugarcane is cited by Dr. Berl as being an excellent raw material because of its very rapid growth, the stalks sometimes reaching 15 feet or more in length. Oil can be made from the carbohydrate of the sugar or from the carbohydrate of the cellulose of the stalks and leaves, but practically any kind of plant growth may be used, be it from the farm, the forest, or the sea.

"While no details of the process are available, beyond the fact that heat and pressure are used, the method is said to be quite simple and much cheaper than the German methods of producing oil from coal by means of either the Bergius process or the Fischer-Tropsch process. Both of these are highly complicated and necessitate high capital expenditures. The Berl method is quite simple, requires no highly technical knowledge for its operation and has low capital costs. The farmer of the future even may have an installation of his own to make his own fuels to run his tractor and heat his home.

"Revolutionary Process: Stage one of this revolutionary process produces a material that is jelly-like at room temperature. Even without further treatment this semi-jell can be used for diesel engines. For fluid oil, hydrogen is added by the hydrogenation method converting the jell into gasoline, kerosene, lubricating oils, &c., as desired.

"Generally speaking, the weight of the oxygen in all carbohydrates is slightly over

50 per cent. of the total, the hydrogen and carbon being slightly under 50 per cent. In practice under the Berl process about two-thirds of the hydrogen and carbon can be converted into oil or about 33 per cent. of the total original weight of the plant growth. Thus, from, say, 100 tons of sugarcane, about 11 tons of gasoline and 22 tons of oil can be produced. If the sugar is first extracted and sold as sugar then the oil from the stalks and leaves only would be about 15 per cent to 20 per cent. less.

“Such is a brief summary of the possibilities of the Berl process. No longer, says its inventor, need the spectre of a world exhausted of its natural oil reserves haunt the industrialist and the automobile driver. In Churchill’s last speech he outlined post-war plans especially in housing. It is believed, however, that British post-war economic policy involves also the ‘manufacture’ of oil from carbohydrates with a huge carbohydrate development in tropical and subtropical Africa.”

That article is of extreme importance, I suggest, to this country. The writer is a man of wide repute. We must progress, we cannot go back, and as we advance inevitably the new discoveries that have been of untold benefit for purposes of war will serve us as well in peace-time industries.

Mr. Macdonald: So long as it is economic.

Mr. THEODORE: It is, according to this man, one of the most economic productions yet discovered. Indeed, it can be produced by a farmer with a small plant on his farm. It occurred to me that it was something of intense interest to the people in the future development of this country.

My time is almost expired and I will reserve any further observations until another occasion.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (4.23 p.m.): Let me before making my speech, Mr. Speaker, congratulate you on your elevation to the chair. Like myself you are a Westerner and like myself you look it. Fortunately for ourselves we were not transplanted to Parliament early enough to acquire that look of supercilious shrewdness that disfigures the faces of some of the metropolitan hon. members. I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that during my stay in this House—which no doubt will be a long one—I will do all I possibly can to uphold the dignity of your office and maintain the prestige of Parliament.

I was amused to read in the Press that the Australian Labour Party, the Queensland branch of which is responsible for the government or misgovernment of this State, held a post-mortem on the recent election. I think that some remarks of mine may be pertinent to that matter. I really hope the Labour Party in this State and the Commonwealth will never be defeated. I hope that for all time a party truly representing Labour may reign not only in this House but in the

Federal House. I feel sure that only thus may you give the people and the real working-class and farmers the legislative justice that is theirs by right. I know the people of this State at least are fundamentally Labour in their politics, and they want a Labour Party they can respect and revere; it is necessary in their own interests to return such a party. I do not say this in any spirit of provocation. I understand a new member is by unwritten law allowed to make his speech without interruption but I do not claim any concession under that law. I always invite any interjection that contains any semblance of wit, originality or common sense. So I say it is necessary, in order that the right thing be done by the people and farmers, that the Labour Party purge itself of the elements that are bringing it to ultimate destruction. I was working for the Labour Party many years ago when many of the younger members who now sit in judgment on me on the Q.C.E. were merely twinkles in their fathers’ eyes. When I was a member in my young days it was a party revered, respected and trusted throughout the State. Today it is shot through with corruption and sectarian bigotry; and no-one knows it better than yourself, Mr. Speaker. So in order that the party can progress, in order that the workers may be assured the Government benches will be occupied by the men who come from their own folk and men who will legislate for them and the working farmer, it is necessary that the Labour Party take stock of its political position.

An Opposition Member: You believe in class legislation?

Mr. AIKENS: I do, and I make no apology for the fact. I represent the workers—I represent the useful people of Mundingburra. I told them I did not want men like the hon. member to vote for me, that they could go and give their votes to the man who carried the banner of the People’s Party. I did not want at any time the support of a man who lives by the exploitation of his fellowmen. I seek to represent the workers and the working-class farmers, such as the hon. member for Cunningham. They are the men who are the backbone of this country. The Queensland People’s Party is a party that has come into existence purely and simply because of the fast industrialisation of this State; and its members know they are the representatives of profiteers, racketeers, slum landlords and black-marketeers.

Having said so much in general—and I deplore the tendency of some members of Parliament to indulge merely in generalities and platitudes which may go down with the ignorant minority but not with the intelligent majority, I pass to particularities. I think in my career I have addressed many meetings of aggregate intelligence higher than that in this House—if you can judge by the conduct of members—but nevertheless I give members credit for being able to understand solid facts. In the visitors’ gallery is one of the best stalwarts the Labour Party ever produced—Mr. Jack Gardiner, who with me and other older members worked for the Labour Party.

Then it was a party of free speech, a party of freedom, a party of tolerance, and a party that embraced all sections of the working class. We can never endure as a Labour Party unless we get down again to the solid basic principles of Labour—the right of free speech, toleration, the right of everyone to express his opinion wherever they may be except on important questions of party policy.

What do we find in the Labour Party today? Do we find that unity? Instead of unity we find disunity. We find people adhering to its policy out of sentiment—because their fathers voted for the Labour Party and because their grandfathers were Labour men. You can see the tide flowing in the North—the cradle of Labour.

The North has always led the militant section of this State in working-class politics. In the North one can see the unrest arising out of the men who are sent to power by the ballot-faking, crookedness and corruption of the present Labour Party. I pay tribute to the Premier. I believe him to be an honest and sincere man. At least he is a gentleman by manner and by instinct, but he leads in this House a motley crew, some of them absolutely Francoites, some Fascists and some genuine “dinky-die” labourites. He has with him some who are absolute Tories in their outlook and some who only a few years ago would not have been allowed in the A.L.P., much less allowed membership in that organisation. Their rightful place is on the opposition benches with the Tories and the hon. member for Hamilton. Of course, I know a few who are just plain ratbags. They may not be able to help themselves, on the other hand they may and with your wise guidance, Mr. Speaker, may grow out of that condition.

Let us examine what the Labour Party is today. There was a time when every unionist or man who claimed to be a unionist was proud of the fact that he belonged to the A.L.P., a day when the large unions in the North belonged to the A.L.P., when the strongest and most militant sections in Queensland, although not in numerical strength, belonged to the Labour Party. But do the Australian Railway Union, the Carpenters' and Joiners' Union, the A.M.I.E.U. belong to it now? And the A.F.U.L.E., the most conservative union in Queensland today carried the ballot to retain its affiliation with the Queensland Central Executive by only three votes in the whole of Queensland. Is that not an indication that the Labour Party is drifting? Why let this magnificent party sail on to the rocks purely to pander to the personal aggrandisement of corrupters, crooks and ballot-fakers? The only union that has any semblance of any power or perhaps the union that has all the power in the Labour Party today is the Australian Workers' Union. That is a union on which the Labour Party was founded in the good old days. No union can take greater credit for the Labour Party than can the Australian Workers' Union but it is no longer the

union of its founders. It is no longer the union of the older men.

Let me point to the Australian Workers' Union as I knew it many years ago when Ministers of the Crown were first breaking into politics through the medium of the organisation of that union. These men were elected by a “dinky-die” ballot. There were no stolen ballot slips then. No ballot boxes were left underneath the counter. There was no jerrymandering, no ballot-faking nor crookedness. These men won and were respected because they had won. But what occurs today? How does a man become an official of the A.W.U. today? First of all, at the instigation of some official of the A.W.U. he becomes a temporary organiser. His only job as a temporary organiser is to sell tickets and steal as many ballot slips from them as he possibly can. These ballot slips he hands to the district secretary and they are used for the re-election year after year of the almost permanent officials of the A.W.U. After he has served a period of apprenticeship of sometimes three and sometimes four years and he has shown he is going to be a “yes” man for the oligarchy of the A.W.U., he is allowed to use his own stolen ballot slips to elect himself to the first vacancy of A.W.U. organiser. Some men get very low indeed in order to get the right to nominate as an A.W.U. organiser.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: You be quiet. You know no more about unionism than I know about aviation.

I do not want to smash the Labour Party. We are not here to smash it but to cleanse it and disinfect it. We are here to make it the live, vital thing that it was many years ago. A man asked me, “Is Paterson going to practise law in Brisbane?” I replied, “Paterson comes here not to defend crooks but to reform them.” I know of one A.W.U. organiser who sank so low that in order to get permission to run for a permanent organiser's position he drove the district secretary's moll around in the official car to draw attention to himself and divert it from the district secretary. That man today occupies a proud position in the A.W.U. because of his perfidy. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his wife for his friends!

Now to refer to plebiscites. Today very few unionists can exercise a vote in a plebiscite. Very few unionists have even a vote to exercise. The only plebiscites that are likely to be clean are those in the metropolitan districts, because the A.L.P. at one of its conventions had the oversight to pass a rule that in metropolitan electorates every plebiscite voter must attend the booth. I do not think that rule will last very long.

At such ballots stolen ballot slips cannot be used, but in the country plebiscites, where it is an open go, where men go down to the lavatory, which is the only place today, where you can find bundles of the “Worker,” and they bring up bundles of the “Worker,” snip out the voting slips and paste on them stolen ballot slips, you can bet your life

that the A.W.U. pea is home every time. Unless something happens to upset the plans of the heads that will continue.

At the last A.L.P. conference we were regaled with reports that the Premier had led a section of the Labour Party against the A.W.U. autocrat. I do not know whether that was a sham fight or a genuine battle, but if he is genuine in that fight, if that Press report is true, then I can assure the Premier and the gallant band who are out to cleanse the Labour Party that he will have the support of every decent clean-thinking man and woman in this State because at present the party stinks to high heaven. A man in the street said to me the other day, "Why are you so crooked on the A.W.U.?" I said, "I am not crooked on the A.W.U. There is nothing wrong with the union. There is nothing wrong with the rank and file of it. All that is wrong with the A.W.U. is the corruption that is seeping slowly through it down from the top." I told him to disguise himself and to go out. I said, "There is no need to get Frank Barnes's false beard to disguise yourself; go and try to look like an intelligent man—that will be enough disguise for you—but go out into the street and ask anyone you meet what he thinks of the A.W.U. today."

I am here as a Labour man. We were the first men to buck the machine and win.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: That is not true.

Mr. AIKENS: The hon. member is more or less a misfit. If he knew anything about geometry I should call him a political tangent. He is going nowhere, but he seems to be kicking up a lot of noise while he is doing it.

We bucked the machine. We have shown that in the North the feeling is growing. We collaborated with the Communist Party. I told the Press that last October, but the Premier told the party that this story told by Aikens that there was going to be collaboration with the Communist Party in the North was "hoocy." A man who was not known in the Kennedy polled over 2,000 votes. Ask Mr. Theodore, probably one of the most balanced members in the House, the shock he got when his unknown opponent polled thousands of votes against him. Ask Harry Bruce about the Tableland, and George Keyatta about Townsville.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that when he refers to any hon. member in the House he must address him as the hon. member, by the name of his electorate.

Mr. AIKENS: I wish to obey that ruling as much as I can, but I am sometimes ignorant of the electorates they represent. If I should say, "The hon. member for so-and so" I trust that the reporter will put it in its correct form. I thank you also for

the many little acts of tolerance you have shown me as a new representative since I came here.

The first thing that must be done is to clean up the Labour Party, to build anew or to rehabilitate and clean the old. Those who do this will have our aid and I ask them to do it in the spirit of a mother who goes out and grabs her errant and wandering child and drags him screaming and yelling to the bath and forcibly cleanses him of the filth he has collected during the day. Let the leaders of the Labour Party do that. Let them build the Labour Party on the foundation of old, a foundation of unity where every man will have a say, where every man will have the right of free speech. Then there will be no hope for the gentlemen on my right of ever ousting the Labour Party from office. The present Labour Party is dying on its feet. If it is not cleaned up from within we will smash it down and build it anew from without, for the movement in the North will grow and spread. We are willing to co-operate. If we do not get the opportunity to co-operate we are going to fight.

I propose now to touch on what might be a very ticklish point—sectarian bigotry. Unfortunately it is creeping into the Labour Party today. It is manifest in many quarters. I know that in Hermit Park, which is the head centre of Mundingburra, when the Q.C.E. booted our branch out a new Hermit Park A.L.P. was formed under the aegis of the Q.C.E. and a very prominent State servant, who because of his high and exalted position could not take part in politics, went round and helped in the organisation of that new branch purely and simply on a sectarian basis. That is one of the things that we must be careful to guard against. It was because of that that hundreds of decent and devout Catholics voted for me and for Coburn in the recent election. They did that because they are distressed and disgusted at the action of the small clique who are trying to drag their church and the faith of their fathers into the slime and mire of party politics.

I respect and revere the man who openly practises his religion whatever denomination it might be and I hope that I shall never live to see the day when a man will be denied the right to practise his religion, but I detest sectarianism in its every manifestation and relation. I hope the Labour Party will take those words of warning, because we are here to issue a challenge. If they will not have our help, then they will have us as fighters because we believe we are the genuine "dinky-die" Labour men and we want always to see a Labour Party on the Treasury benches in Queensland and the Commonwealth.

I will not touch on the Q.C.E. endorsements because frankly they are almost so foul that even I could not get my fingers into them—metaphorically speaking.

Now, because he is a Christian gentleman, I am going to ask the Premier to do what

Christ did in the temple of his fathers. Christ went into the temple of his fathers and whipped and scourged the moneylenders, the crooks, the grafters, the ballot-fakers, the careerists and the job-hunters. Just as Christ did that 1,900 years ago I am going to ask the Premier to do that to such people who infest the temple of his fathers. I will help him to do it.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. AIKENS: Only I shall be helping him to wipe hon. members opposite out of political existence. The party should take heed of those votes that the Q.C.E. candidates did not poll in the North. There was a time in the North when the Tory candidates, as we refer to them, used to poll a more or less respectable vote, but with the unity we had in the North the Q.P.P. candidate in Mundingburra just saved his deposit. In Townsville he ran last in a field of three. In Kennedy he was last and in Bowen he ran last.

Mr. Pie: We did not have a candidate there.

Mr. AIKENS: The Tories had one if you did not have one. Frankly, there is a distinction between you and I am going to try to draw the line very forcibly. There is a great distinction between you as one leader and the other leader. I believe that in the southern and central areas the Queensland People's Party were responsible for the Government's election. I do not say what I am about to say in a personal sense, because I know it is distinctly bad taste to refer to the personal appearance of any man either in this House or out of it, but merely in a physiological sense. I did not hear Mr. Chandler until today. I never saw or heard him until today and now I know why the Labour candidates polled so well in the Central and Southern areas. Labour got in because of the two evils the electors chose the lesser. I hope that they do not ride on the laurels of the hon. member for Hamilton very long. He may not be here very long after the next election because some of us will be down to attack him and his party.

Now I want to refer to what I shall call the self-sufficiency that manifests itself in the Labour members. They know that all they have to do is to see Fallon—ballot-faker Clarry—and they will have the endorsement fixed up with the Q.C.E. If any candidate is likely to put up a fight in the plebiscite he will be wiped without any explanation being given. Consequently, they get a little bit politically and mentally languid and it shows itself in the campaigns that some of them conduct. In the North recently one Government member conducted his campaign along these lines: he took the A.W.U. organiser round with him—not a bad chap personally, but he was a vocal disciple of Bing Crosby and so the election speeches went something like this. The candidate—not the organiser—addressed the meeting and said, "Well, ladies and gentlemen, you have heard me often enough. I did not come here to make a speech. If you want to get in touch with me at any time you can reach me at Parliament House,

Brisbane. I have brought along Mr. So-and-so, the A.W.U. organiser. He is a singer and I am going to ask him to sing a few numbers." Up gets the A.W.U. organiser and he moans and groans in true Bing Crosby style, "My Bowlegged Baby has got Big Blue Eyes." (Laughter.) That is an absolute fact. I wonder what would have happened in the olden days if the Hon. John Mullan had taken, as he then did, the organiser for the A.W.U., the Hon. the Secretary for Public Works, Mr. Bruce, to address a meeting of miners and he had sung to them, "She was only an Electrician's Daughter." The Minister was probably one of the finest types the A.W.U. ever produced—and they did produce fine types in the olden days. What would have happened if the former Secretary for Public Instruction, Mr. Arthur Jones, had gone to the western shearers to sing, "I left my Panties down by the Shanty." (Laughter.) That shows just how low the average Labour politician ranks mentally the people he has to appeal to. We have infused new blood into the people but if the Labour Party is going to continue with that type of politics and that type of appeal to the people then it is finished as a political force.

With the hon. member for Cunningham, I am surprised at the lack of initiative in this House. I am surprised that the Government are sitting more or less idly by twiddling their thumbs and saying, "It is no concern of ours. The Federal Government are running the country. What can we do to solve the problems of the people and alleviate their distress?" I want to say that there are many things that the Government can do right now without passing the buck to the Federal Labour Party and without waiting for the war to end. They have a definite job to do, and the sooner they get on with it after cleaning up their own party—or while the cleansing and disinfecting process is in operation—the better it will be for them. Let them get on with the job of serving the people and serving them well.

Let me suggest some things that they can do. First of all, put the politician to work. I am one of the most eager of the politicians probably because I am new. I worked for 27 years in the railways where, with my hon. friend from Mackay, I was an engine-man. In that position you work against the clock.

Mr. Walsh: Did you say work?

Mr. AIKENS: Yes, work against the clock. If the hon. gentleman thinks that the railway men do not work then he should not be the Minister for Transport, because he is indicting his own department and he ought to be ashamed to do it. The railway men of this State have carried him and the political loafers like him on their backs for years.

Mr. Walsh: Perhaps you ought to have been sacked long ago and probably if I had been in that department you might have been.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Mundingburra is not using parliamentary language in referring to the Minister for Transport as a political loafer. I ask him to withdraw that term.

Mr. AIKENS: I am quite willing to withdraw it, Mr. Speaker, and I withdraw it.

Mr. Walsh: I will call you worse than that before it is over.

Mr. AIKENS: Don't you ever take me on—let me give you that timely warning.

First of all, let Parliament set up a standing committee without pay. I think we get enough pay as it is. First of all, let us protect our primary industries and prevent them from decaying. One end of my electorate embraces one of the oldest sugar areas in the State, but I have been dismayed at the decay and disintegration of the industry during the war. Towns like Ayr are more or less ghost towns—empty shops, empty houses, the boys away somewhere else, cane crops going down year by year, sugar production dropping year by year, and the farmers' receipts falling year by year. And all the time this Government, who claim to have established the sugar industry, sit idly by and do nothing. Let them set up a standing committee in order to see that the farmers get all that they need, so that the sugar industry can be put back on its feet, to see that it gets the man-power, the fertiliser, the machines, and the implements. Let them do something to rehabilitate the sugar industry and then they might have some claim to be recognised as a Government. Let them cease to be the agents of the C.S.R. Let them once again organise and control the sugar industry in the interests of the men who work in the industry—the farmers and the workers. Let them abolish that pernicious section in the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act that I questioned the Premier about to-day. Let them organise the farmers so that they can take over the proprietary mills on co-operative lines. Let them through the rural bank or perhaps some trading bank take steps whereby the farmer can free himself from the pernicious money-lenders who fatten and batten on his labour, blood, sweat and toil. Let them do something tangible, something concrete to prevent this disintegration and decay, and then they might be able to claim with justice that they have some standing as a Government.

Let them come to the assistance of secondary industries too. This State is becoming industrialised. Factories are springing up and secondary industries are developing, but this Government have done nothing to foster them. With the growth of secondary industries has developed the representatives of secondary industries. With the growth of the sweating shops, the machine shops, there is the growth of the mass exploitation of labour—and the representatives of secondary industries have engaged in the mass exploitation of labour. The Queensland People's Party, to be quite honest, is stepping into the breach.

It has broken away from the other farmers' party led by the Leader of the Opposition and its members now sit in isolation, representing those in the city and slums and factories who exploit the labour of young girls and boys and men and women. Let us foster the secondary industries and so

make this a great industrial State, at the same time seeing as far as possible that there shall be no exploitation of the operatives in those secondary industries.

Let the Government do something to save the meat industry. North Queensland is one of the greatest of cattle-producing countries and today it sits down and watches all its prime stock going down through the Georgina to the southern markets or being taken by the railway past the council meatworks to Cannon Hill. The Railway Department helps in doing that. It does all it can to take North Queensland cattle away from the northern works because it offers a special freight concession if the cattle-grower will take his cattle past the Northern works and bring them to the Southern works. Let the Government set up a system whereby the Northern cattle will be slaughtered in the North and they will aid in the decentralisation of the State and help in the growth of cities such as Townsville, Bowen and perhaps Cairns. If they see that the stuff produced in the North is killed and treated in the North they will be doing what is right.

Mr. Brand: They should be killed in the North.

Mr. AIKENS: Of course they should. Only for the Railway Department they would be killed in the North—only for the monumental intellect of the Minister that guides its destinies.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: Let us go into the fruit and vegetable industry, which since the war has assumed very generous proportions. At one time fruit and vegetables were grown in the North spasmodically; today that industry is more or less organised and farmers are going in for mixed farming even to the extent of turning cane land into farming land. In the Townsville City Council we set an example for all municipalities in order to crush the profiteer and racketeer and give the people cheap fruit and vegetables and to increase the demand for fruit and vegetables. With that object in view we established a municipal fruit and vegetable market in Townsville. That is merely scratching the surface. When you look at the figures you will see what a successful venture it could be and how much assistance it could render to the people who eat and the people who grow those products.

The bigger job is to organise the distribution of vegetables. Today the only distribution is in the hands of the State-created C.O.D. which fell down on its job as soon as the war broke out and catered for the troops in the North and let the people go without the necessary fruit and vegetables, and made huge profits. I have a letter from an Ayr dealer which he wrote to the C.O.D. in Townsville. The C.O.D. were advising the farmers not to send in more of certain commodities and this man sent a money order to Townsville branch and said, "Seeing you have a lot of these commodities on hand send me a consignment." The C.O.D. replied sending his money back and said, "We do not want any more country clients." That

form of organisation was set up and allowed to run itself, with the result it is concerned only with profits and giving munificent salaries to officers, and it has no more concern with the farmer or consumer than many members of the Opposition.

An Opposition Member: It pays no income tax.

Mr. AIKENS: Neither do we of the Townsville City Council. Until that is done and unless the Government do it—and there is no reason to pass this buck to the Commonwealth Government because the State has power to do it—that position will not be improved. The State should immediately set up canning and processing works and have the necessary dehydration works in the farming areas throughout the State so that gluts can be taken care of and freshly canned fruit and vegetables will be available to the people at a reasonable price. Refrigerated cars should radiate from the base centres—from the Ayr and Burdekin districts where the vegetables are grown—to the West and North, and even to the South in order to give to the people in those places refrigerated vegetables at the door at a reasonable price. While the Government adopts the policy of passing the buck to the Commonwealth Government nothing will be done, the North will continue to disintegrate economically and industrially. I appeal to the Government to do something in this matter.

The Government can also establish a wool-appraisal centre at Townsville and put the screw on some of the western graziers to support wool-spinning works in the North. On one occasion a company was formed to establish a wool-spinning mill in Charters Towers but because the graziers were tied up with the big financial institutions they refused to send their wool to the Charters Towers works. It was sent to Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne as greasy wool, with the consequence that a secondary industry that would have been established in the North could not carry on. The Government should do something as regards graziers and the financial institutions to ensure that northern wool is sent to northern works for treatment.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: They cannot do that.

Mr. AIKENS: Fancy talking law to me when I have sitting beside me the hon. member for Bowen.

Another necessity is the establishment of a Government sugar refinery in the North. Why sugar grown in the North must leave the North and go to Sydney to be refined and then come back to the North is a thing that perhaps only the hon. member for Bundaberg would know. I do not know.

The next important step to be taken is to extend the activities of the maternity wards in the various country hospitals and provide that maternity treatment be absolutely free. It is monstrous that a working-class mother, struggling today on the basic wage, has to pay maternity fees to a Government maternity hospital. Much is said of the need for increasing the population of the

country but the Government do everything they possibly can to stultify the desire of the average mother to bear children. First of all, she knows that she will be heavily “slugged” with the maternity fees of the various Government hospitals, and consequently does all she possibly can to avoid motherhood. Not only must maternity treatment be free but this Government should start immediately to organise a domestic army, an army of women for domestic service in the homes of those women who have gone into the maternity wards. The Government should make available to every home a domestic for a month before and a month after confinement, free of all cost to the mother or the family. They should send a domestic into the home to do the work of the wife because half the trouble of the unfortunate working-class woman today, when she is in a maternity ward, is the worry of how the husband and the children are getting on for their domestic needs.

I am dealing in this speech with facts but touching on them lightly inasmuch as I shall have an opportunity to go into them in detail on the various Estimates. The Government should establish a university in North Queensland, such university to be free of charges and books and equipment to be free to undergraduates so that the sons and daughters of working-class parents may be on the same basis as those of the moneyed people who send representatives of the Queensland People's Party to Parliament.

The entrance examination for all faculties at our university should be widened to provide that all students may go straight to our own university in all faculties. It is incongruous that today some of our northern scholars have to go to the Sydney University and there pass an examination to go to the Queensland University. They cannot go straight from the secondary schools into certain faculties at the Queensland University. Why should this not be so? The educational system should be reorganised on the basis of free education absolutely, and secular education, the grants to denominational schools, and the erection of free Government boarding schools should be reconsidered in view of the fact that the Government have established free primary and secondary schools.

(Time expired.)

Debate, on motion of Mr. Cooper, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5.5 p.m.