

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 25 OCTOBER 1945

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

QUESTIONS.

DUST NUISANCE, COUNCIL DEPOT, FORTITUDE VALLEY.

Mr. MANN (Brisbane), for **Hon. S. J. BRASSINGTON** (Fortitude Valley—Mr. Speaker), asked the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs—

“1. Is he aware that the dust arising from the City Council depot in St. Paul’s terrace, Valley, is a menace to the health of and a nuisance to the people living nearby, and also to the children attending the State school at Fortitude Valley?”

“2. If so, with a view to overcoming this very unsatisfactory position, will he request the State Health authorities to investigate it and take the necessary action?”

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby) replied—

“1. Yes. As a result of requests from the union of employees concerned, this matter was investigated by an officer of the Department of Health on 18 October 1943. At the time of inspection a dense cloud of very fine dust (sand) was being carried by the wind over a large section of the residential area in the immediate locality of the depot. The verandas, rails, window-sills, walls, &c., of the residences opposite the depot were found to be heavily coated with fine dust. Plant life in the front garden plots were also heavily coated (specimens obtained). The occupants of these dwellings had all their windows and doors closed. The dust is from the heated sand used in the manufacture of bitumen for road work. The plant, buildings, and surroundings were covered with a thick heavy coating of this dust, which can be carried in any direction in which the wind blows. The Valley State School is adjacent. This longstanding nuisance is a very definite danger to the health, welfare, and comfort of the people living in this locality, as well as to the operators of the plant, and other employees who have no protection whatever.

“2. An officer of the Brisbane City Council has advised that a dust elimination plant would be installed at an early date.”

PREFERENCE TO RETURNED SOLDIERS.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Acting Premier—

“In view of the following facts—namely, (a) that the Minister for Post-War Reconstruction has decreed that service trainees will not be accepted for

various trades where existing employees, including dilutees, are considered to be sufficient for the purposes of such trades, and (b) that such decision nullifies the intentions of the War Service Preference in Employment Act of 1944 in regard to employment in the trades in question—will he make representations to the Minister concerned, pointing out that this decision amounts to giving preference to persons who were not members of a fighting force?”

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs), for **Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca), replied—

“This question involves both expressions of opinion and questions of law. Moreover, as the matter constitutionally is one entirely within the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth, the State has no standing in the matter. However, inquiries will be made.”

WATERSIDE LABOUR FOR “MUNGANA.”

Mr. MORRIS (Enoggera), for **Mr. WAN-STALL** (Toowong), asked the Acting Premier—

“1. Is he aware that on Tuesday morning, 16 October, when the vessel “Mungana” called for labour at the wharf in Brisbane, the Waterside Workers’ Federation reported that no labour was available, whereas in fact approximately three gangs of second-preference men were available for work at the time, and were turned away without work; and that when calls for labour were made on both Wednesday and Thursday mornings, the union again reported that no men were available, whereas in fact thirty-seven second-preference men were turned away on Wednesday and seventy-one on Thursday, and that the vessel did not obtain labour until Thursday night (18th)?

“2. Will he investigate these matters with a view to preventing this practice of withholding labour from ships by the union, resulting in unemployment as well as delay to essential transport?”

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs), for **Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca), replied—

“The Stevedoring Industry Commission, Sydney, controls the engagement of labour through its waterside employment committees in the various States. Therefore, I would suggest that the question be directed to the Employment Committee, Brisbane, or to the Stevedoring Commission, Sydney. The work is controlled by a Commonwealth award.”

LABOUR SHORTAGE, EGG BOARD.

Mr. BRAND (Isis), for **Mr. MAHER** (West Moreton), asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“As there are many hundreds of returned men awaiting discharge at Wacol and elsewhere near Brisbane, could not urgent arrangements be made to release sufficient men temporarily, at least, to tide over the labour shortage at the Egg Board, in order to get eggs away to the requirements of the Army and for export to Britain?”

Hon. D. A. GLEDSON (Ipswich—Attorney-General), for **Hon. T. L. WILLIAMS** (Port Curtis), replied—

“The manager of the Egg Board has advised that no additional male labour is required at present to handle eggs for Army orders and/or export. Strong representations have, however, been made to the Department of Labour and National Service for the supply of additional female labour for candling and grading.”

COTTON PLANTINGS AND PRODUCTION.

Mr. MACDONALD (Stanley) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“1. What area has been planted for cotton in the Callide Valley in the years 1943, 1944, and 1945, respectively?”

“2. What was the production of cotton (unginned) for the years 1943-44 and 1944-45, respectively?”

Hon. D. A. GLEDSON (Ipswich—Attorney-General), for **Hon. T. L. WILLIAMS** (Port Curtis), replied—

“1. 1942-43, 24,156 acres; 1943-44, 12,787 acres; 1944-45, 7,346 acres.

“2. 1943-44, 8,515,581 lb.; 1944-45 (to date), 1,802,230 lb.”

BRANDS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. D. A. GLEDSON (Ipswich—Attorney-General), for **Hon. T. L. WILLIAMS** (Port Curtis)—Secretary for Agriculture and Stock): I move—

“That the House will, at its next Sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Brands Acts, 1915 to 1941, in a certain particular.”

Motion agreed to.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—ESTIMATES—SEVENTH AND EIGHTH ALLOTTED DAYS.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Mann, Brisbane, in the chair.)

ESTIMATES-IN-CHIEF, 1945-46.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS.

HOSPITALS.

Debate resumed from 23 October (see page 1047) on the question:—

“That £359,244 be granted for ‘Department of Health and Home Affairs—Hospitals.’”

Mr. PIE (Windsor) (11.8 a.m.): This vote is perhaps the most important one in this department because it is directly under the control of the Director-General of Health and Medical Services. I want to clarify the position in relation to a recent statement in regard to Sir Raphael Cilento, the Director-General of Health and Medical Services. First of all, I want to make it quite clear that I do not desire to associate myself in any way whatsoever with the personal attack made by the hon. member for Mundingburra on Sir Raphael Cilento, but arising out of that attack the Acting Premier made, in my opinion, one of the most damaging and defamatory statements ever made in this Chamber. I should like to refresh the minds of hon. members in regard to that statement, and therefore I quote—

“Regret that the Army had not used the services of the Director-General of Health (Sir Raphael Cilento) in the fight against tropical diseases in the Islands was expressed by the Acting Premier (Mr. Hanlon) in Parliament yesterday.”

Then it goes on to say—

“To my mind it was one of the most inexcusable things that happened during the war, said Mr. Hanlon.”

“Perhaps if he had been,” said Mr. Hanlon, “Many of those who are lying up there now,—”

I take it those who are dead, who made the supreme sacrifice—

“the victims of malaria and other tropical diseases, might have been safely back in their homes to-day.

“The Acting Premier added that ‘Sir Raphael Cilento had not been used because of opposition in certain quarters.’”

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is out of order in discussing Sir Raphael Cilento on this vote. He dealt with him under the vote for Chief Office, which includes his salary, but the question before the Committee is “Hospitals.”

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I rise to a point of order.

Mr. PIE: Mr. Mann, I rise to a point of order before the hon. member. I do not want the hon. member taking part in anything I have to say. I take the point that “Hospitals” do come directly under the control of the Director-General of Health and Medical Services. Therefore, I must disagree with your ruling.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I want to remind the hon. member that I ruled that he cannot deal with the Director-General of Health and Medical Services on this vote. He has already dealt with him on the vote for "Chief Office," which provides for his salary. He can, however, deal with him so far as his administration of hospitals is concerned.

Mr. PIE: This is not only an important matter in regard to the administration of hospitals but is one that affects the health of the community in this State. When the hon. member for Mundingburra attacked a certain Director-General of Health and Medical Services here I viewed with disgust the attack that he made on him, but the statement made by the Acting Premier dealt with the lives and deaths of those gallant sons of ours in the A.I.F., particularly when he said that their deaths were directly attributable to the fact that the services of the Director-General were not utilised by the Commonwealth. Therefore, I should be failing in my duty if I did not place before this Committee the knowledge I obtained in other parts of the world in an endeavour to ascertain the truth of the statement made by the Acting Premier in relation to the Director-General of Health and Medical Services.

The Attorney-General: It has nothing to do with it.

Mr. PIE: It has a lot to do with the health of this community.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. PIE: The statement of the Acting Premier was a damning indictment not only of the Commonwealth Government but the whole of the personnel of the medical services in this State, and the whole of the personnel of the medical services of the Army throughout Australia. Do you think, Mr. Mann, that anyone in this Assembly, except perhaps one or two, would allow one gallant life to be lost without disclosing to the Premier the knowledge he possessed of the Director-General? Would not you or I, if we believed the statements that were made, put up a case to the Commonwealth authorities to prove that the Queensland medical services for years had been directed on a proper basis, and that therefore the Director-General was a fit and proper person to be employed by the Australian Army authorities? The direction from the top is the very basis of existence of our hospitals. No-one can alter my mind in that respect. If the hospital services are not directed in a proper manner then those services will not function satisfactorily. I know that it was under pressure of political criticism that this startling information came out. This information was that our Director-General of Health and Medical Services, who is responsible for the whole of our hospital services in this State, was not utilised by the Commonwealth authorities, notwithstanding his possession of great knowledge with

respect to tropical diseases and their treatment. On the word of the Acting Premier—and I do not doubt his word—our Director-General of Health and Medical Services is one of the greatest authorities in the world on tropical diseases. Where did he get that knowledge? In our hospitals and throughout the State in studying tropical diseases.

It was mentioned here that he had gone north and investigated in the hospital in Innisfail the question of Weil's disease. I see no reason why the Acting Premier at that time, when he knew of this criticism, did not come out into the open and expose the position to the public in relation to the man controlling our hospitals, and perhaps save the lives of some dear sons or daughters of this country who may have been affected because the services of Sir Raphael Cilento were not utilised. The exposing of this position would be from his party viewpoint political dynamite. The Acting Premier must know the Australian Army intelligence holds a folder in its possession that high on our Director-General. (The hon. member gestured to indicate the height of the file.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am afraid the hon. member is getting away from the matter before the Committee. I have already ruled that the Director-General has been discussed under this department and I ask the hon. member to keep to the vote, that is, the matter of public hospitals.

Mr. PIE: I am trying to prove that this matter of public hospitals is the most important responsibility in this State, and therefore we must have a man directing these public hospitals who is above reproach, a man about whose standing in the community there is no doubt. I am not attacking Sir Raphael Cilento. If there is any doubt about the man in the direction of these services he should not be in that position.

A Government Member: He is not directing the hospital.

Mr. PIE: He is controlling the hospital.

A Government Member: No.

Mr. PIE: He is the Director-General of Health and Medical Services and controls the whole of the medical services of this State. I know that folder was even before the American Army Medical Services and as a result of that—the same as with the Australian Army—they were not prepared to utilise his services in a battle area. The Acting Premier said that the Director-General could be made available to the American authorities at any time, but they would not utilise his services. Those are statements of fact. In bringing this matter before the Committee I am only trying to protect the whole of the hospital services and the health of the community by seeking the truth. I feel the public are entitled to know and have all the facts put before them. I do feel that this matter must be brought before the public gaze. I want to be fair in every way to

our Director-General of Health and Medical Services who controls our hospitals. I want to be very fair to him and I want to be able to say that there is no reason at all why he should not control our medical services. Therefore I think such a matter is of such importance to the people of this State and to the hospitals under his control that we should have a public inquiry into the whole of this matter so that the cloud there at the present time can be lifted for all time. I want to make it quite clear that the questions I asked were asked only with the desire to seek information, to stop these rumours that are going about, and with a sincere desire to bring to the people both in the hospitals and outside a proper service. It is not a personal matter. I bring it to the public gaze in order that we may get a public inquiry on the matter.

Mr. J. F. BARNES (Bundaberg) (11.19 a.m.): It was made clear by the member for Windsor that the chief Government medical officer controls the ordinary medical officers of the State, who in turn control the hospital administration of this State. I have a dual object. One purpose is to enlighten these illiterate doctors—and in particular I refer specifically to Dr. Cilento—and as I also have a case to continue on another vote I am taking advantage of the opportunity of giving this enlightenment to Dr. Cilento and the Government medical officers throughout Queensland who are connected with hospitals as well as doctors in general who are ignorant on this particular subject.

I am also taking advantage of the opportunity of proving a case, and the case is that the hon. member for Baroona said that I did not bring forward any confirmation of a particular statement I made the other evening. It will thus be seen that my object is dual. I am connecting my remarks with the vote before the Committee and I take it the Chairman will give me the consideration I am justly entitled to. I intend to read for the benefit of all those in charge of hospitals and for all doctors in hospitals and in medicine generally a paragraph from a book entitled "Viewless Winds" by Dr. Moran, which I quoted the other evening from memory—I had read this book some years ago—and I might add that I quoted very correctly from memory. However, to clear up the matter I will read the full chapter. When I quoted the other evening I specifically mentioned that this writer was a good Catholic, thereby proving that I was not endeavouring to bring the sectarian issue into the debate. The hon. member for Baroona implied that I was bringing in the sectarian issue because in my statement I mentioned two instances referred to in the book, one the case of a nun and the other the case of a prostitute.

Mr. POWER: I rise to a point of order. I did not at any time accuse the hon. member for Bundaberg of having attempted to introduce the sectarian issue in his reference to the book he is about to refer to, and I ask the hon. member to accept my denial.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I accept the hon. member's denial. If that is true, words have no meaning. I will proceed to read from the book. On page 212—

Mr. HILTON: I rise to a point of order and it is that the quotation that the hon. member for Bundaberg is reading has no relevance to the vote under discussion.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Bundaberg to connect his remarks with the matter before the Committee and I would also quote Standing Order No. 120—

"A member shall not digress from the subject-matter under discussion, or comment upon expressions used by another member in a previous debate of the same session; and all imputations of improper motives, and all personal reflections, shall be deemed highly disorderly."

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I am quite aware of that rule, Mr. Mann. I have been in this Parliament for five years, and for that reason went to no end of trouble to explain to this Committee my purpose in rising to speak and my reason for quoting what I am about to quote. I went to no end of trouble to explain to this Committee, but apparently the member for Stone Fruits has not got the power of understanding what I have told the Committee. I am quoting, as I said previously, a statement by Dr. Moran, one of Australia's eminent doctors, for the benefit of all doctors in Queensland connected with hospitals. I am also quoting for the benefit of all doctors in Queensland who are ignorant on this particular subject.

A Government Member: We are not discussing doctors.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: We are discussing hospitals, and in those hospitals, strangely enough, doctors work. I do not know whether the hon. member knew that. That was my reason for rising. On page 212 of Dr. Moran's book "Viewless Winds" under the head-note of "The Artifice of a Novice" it is stated—

"Two elderly sisters, from a religious order in the country, once brought to my rooms a novice."

Mr. HILTON: I repeat my point of order, and it is that the quotation the hon. member for Bundaberg is reading from a book has no connection whatsoever with hospital administration in this State.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I rise to a point of order.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have already given a ruling to the hon. member and he has said he is connecting his remarks with the hospital administration of this State, and until he gets away from that I am not prepared to stop him on the point.

Mr. Aikens: Hear, hear!

Mr. J. F. BARNES: The hon. member for Stone Fruits anticipates what I am about to say.

Mr. HILTON: I rise to a point of order. I request the hon. member for Bundaberg to refer to my electorate in proper terms.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Bundaberg to address the hon. member for Stanthorpe in a proper manner. The hon. member should be referred to as the hon. member for Carnarvon.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: At the time I could not remember the hon. member's electorate. He is not a very prominent member in the House as far as I am concerned, and for the moment I did not recall his electorate. You made a similar mistake, Mr. Mann, when you first addressed him as the hon. member for Stanthorpe. I identified him by referring to him as the hon. member for Stone Fruits.

If he referred to me as the hon. member for Sugar I should be complimented. However, I refer to him as the hon. member for Carnarvon. You do not often hear that name in the Chamber. The quotation to which I have referred reads—

“Two elderly sisters, from a religious order in the country, once brought to my rooms a novice, some 20 years old, who had sores on her hand and forearm. A number of other doctors had already seen her without an effective treatment having been found. For nearly a year these ulcers had been coming and going. When one healed another appeared, always on the same upper extremity. At the moment of her coming to me there were six deeply punched-out circular sores, irregularly distributed but all presenting the same characters.

“The patient was a soft spoken reserved young woman with a perfect Madonna face and large childlike eyes. Her general health was excellent; there was no sign of any constitutional disease. Neither the history nor the appearance of the lesions suggested that they were tuberculous or syphilitic. A blood test had already been done—and found to be negative. More than anything else the ulcers resembled patches of local and superficial gangrene.”

Mr. HILTON: I move—

“That the hon. member for Bundaberg be not further heard.”

Mr. J. F. BARNES: The gag!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Standing Order 107 reads—

“A motion may be made that a member who has arisen ‘be now heard’; or that a member who is speaking ‘be not heard’ or ‘be not further heard.’”

The question is that the hon. member for Bundaberg be not further heard.

Mr. Aikens: Are we allowed to speak to this motion that the hon. member for Bundaberg be not further heard?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (11.27 a.m.): I think this is the most disgraceful motion that has ever been moved in this Assembly. I think the hon. member for Carnarvon ought to hang his head in shame here and in every corner of this country because I believe—and I throw it right in his teeth—that he is actuated by sectarian motives in moving the motion. That is my honest and considered opinion.

Mr. HILTON: I rise to a point of order. My motive in moving this motion was to preserve the decency of debate in this Assembly. It was not moved with any sectarian motive whatsoever and I ask that the hon. member for Mundingburra accept that assurance.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Mundingburra to accept the assurance of the hon. member for Carnarvon.

Mr. AIKENS: In accordance with Standing Orders I must accept the assurance of the hon. member for Carnarvon, but I read the “Hansard” report of the debate that led up to this incident. The other night the hon. member for Bundaberg quoted from a book that was written by one of the greatest doctors that Australia has ever known.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: And one of the highest lay Catholics Australia has ever known.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the hon. member that the motion is—

“That the hon. member for Bundaberg be not further heard.”

A discussion of what led up to the motion is not in order. I ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to his reasons for objecting to the motion.

Mr. AIKENS: I am sorry that this has developed because I abhor, I detest sectarianism in its every manifestation and relation, irrespective of the particular brand of sectarianism. I believe in the right of any man to worship, and I would gladly die on the doorsteps of any church to give any man the right to enter that church, irrespective of its denomination, but the moment that man drags his church into politics I shall be opposed to him.

I am opposing this motion because it is the nearest approach to Gestapo tactics that we have ever seen in the history of this Parliament. The hon. member for Bundaberg, as I have stated very often, is not coherent at times. He does not make his meaning clear to me, but he is the elected

representative of the people of Bundaberg, democratically elected under a system that was extolled, and rightly extolled, the other day by the Minister for Transport, a democratic system that gives the people of this State the right to send their representatives to this Parliament in order that they may voice their opinions on every conceivable subject that arises in this Chamber from time to time. The hon. member for Bundaberg is responsible only to the people of Bundaberg for his utterances in this Chamber. To them and to them alone is he responsible. He is not responsible to the hon. member for Carnarvon or to anyone else in this Chamber.

It is absolutely necessary that certain laws of debate be laid down in order that the conduct of debates in this Chamber should not get out of hand and you, Mr. Mann, have the right to administer those laws of debate and of conduct that have been set down from time to time. However, it is also necessary that we, as members of this Committee, should see that those laws of conduct and of debate that have been set down are not prostituted in the personal interests of any member of this Assembly.

It is obvious to me that the hon. member for Carnarvon, in moving his motion that the hon. member for Bundaberg be no longer heard, is not actuated by any sense of fairness or justice, but moved it simply because of the fact that he personally does not like the statements being made by the hon. member for Bundaberg. I know that when the division bells are rung we shall see another disgraceful example of Gestapo Labour Party tactics. We know that most of the members of the Labour Party will absolutely detest the motion moved by the hon. member for Carnarvon, but urged by the whiplash of their party they will walk into this Chamber and vote for the suppression of the voice of another member in this Chamber.

I think this is the most disgraceful motion that has ever been moved in this Assembly. I say it speaks ill—very ill—and casts a grim foreboding shadow of what we more or less Independent members can expect, not when we violate the rules or the Standing Orders of this Assembly but when we stand up here from time to time and say something that might not just fit in with the personal ideas of any one member of the Labour Party.

I want to know from the hon. member for Carnarvon whether he has been instructed by his party to move this motion. Is he merely the tool of a certain section in the Labour Party, or has he moved this motion of his own volition? If he has moved the motion of his own volition, I say the whole thing is disgraceful and will be branded for all time as the worst example of Gestapoism I have ever seen.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs) (11.33 a.m.): May I offer a suggestion at this stage to the two hon. members concerned in this

matter? Seeing that the subject matter that has been raised by the hon. member for Bundaberg is definitely objectionable to the hon. member for Carnarvon, and possibly to other hon. members because of its implications and suggestions with regard to sexual matters—

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I rise to a point of order. I have not yet made any suggestions, innuendoes or references of any description that could be classed as sexual, and the Minister has not the power of contemplating what I am going to say.

Mr. Foley: I heard the quotation, and I know the implication contained in it. I suggest at this stage that as that quotation—

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I rise to a point of order. I have not made the suggestion mentioned by the Minister, and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr. Foley: In the interests of discipline and decorum of this Assembly I desire to make a suggestion. If one hon. member objects to what another is saying he has the right, under certain circumstances, to move that that hon. member be no longer heard. I suggest, in the circumstances, that the hon. member for Carnarvon should withdraw his motion and that the hon. member for Bundaberg should discontinue his quotation, which is apparently objectionable to other hon. members.

Mr. PATERSON (Bowen) (11.34 a.m.): I support the stand taken by the hon. member for Mundingburra. I fully agree with him. This is probably the most disgraceful state of affairs that has ever existed in this Assembly. It is certainly the most disgraceful motion that has been moved since I came into this Parliament. It is actually tantamount, Mr. Mann, to a vote of no confidence in the manner in which you are conducting the affairs of this Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member not to continue in that strain as it is a reflection on the Chair. Standing Order 107 gives any hon. member the right to move such a motion.

Mr. PATERSON: I am not objecting to the right of any hon. member to move such a motion but I say that the fact that it is moved is tantamount to a vote of want of confidence in the manner in which you are conducting the affairs of the Chamber. I regard it as an attempt to stifle the right of free speech. I have had to sit here and listen to the most vicious attacks upon the Soviet Union and my party. I could have got up and moved that the hon. member who said these things be no longer heard because his remarks offended me personally, but I would not exercise that right. Apart altogether from the fact that I know that such a motion if moved by me would not be carried, I would not exercise that right because I believe that every hon. member has the right to express

his own views on a matter provided they are relevant to the subject under discussion. If such remarks offend the religious susceptibilities or the moral susceptibilities of any hon. member, it is his duty to walk outside the Chamber and so prevent his susceptibilities from being offended and so maintain the right of free speech.

The hon. member for Bundaberg is the constitutionally elected member of the electors of Bundaberg. Irrespective of whether his views are correct or incorrect, he has the right in this debate to express his views, provided he keeps within the rules and the Standing Orders of the Chamber.

There is no suggestion that what he was saying was not within the Standing Orders; so when the hon. member for Carnarvon gets up and moves that the hon. member for Bundaberg be no longer heard he is really moving that the constitutionally elected representative of the people in an electorate should be deprived of the right of free speech. Only a few weeks ago this very Chamber spoke about what we owed to the soldiers, what we owed to the ex-servicemen and of the great debt of gratitude we owed to them because they went away to fight for us. Some of them lost their lives, others were maimed and wounded and incapacitated for the rest of their lives. Others were fortunate enough to come back.

Mr. Power: And some were called six-bob-a-day murderers by Communists.

Mr. PATERSON: I ask for a withdrawal of that statement. It is a lie. I challenge the hon. member for Baroona to name one Communist who said it.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member for Baroona to accept the denial of the hon. member for Bowen.

Mr. Power: I accept the denial.

Mr. PATERSON: They went away to fight and one of the things they went to fight for was the right of free speech, the right to express one's opinion. All that the hon. member for Bundaberg is doing is to exercise that right. It would be a sorry state of affairs if this Chamber or any other Parliament or any other democratic institution should reach such a stage that another man could suppress a man or gag him because what he was saying offended that man's particular susceptibilities.

Mr. Macdonald: The Atlantic Charter.

Mr. PATERSON: As the hon. member for Stanley points out, the Atlantic Charter affirms the right of any man to express his opinions. The people of the Bundaberg electorate have elected one of their number to represent them in Parliament and that elected representative is today exercising that right to speak for them. I am not saying one word against the susceptibilities of the hon. member for Carnarvon. I am prepared to

admit that they are sincerely felt. They may be deeply founded. But if the remarks of the hon. member for Bundaberg offend the susceptibilities of the hon. member for Carnarvon then the hon. member for Carnarvon should walk outside of the Chamber so that he will no longer be offended by the remarks.

I hope that this motion will not be carried. Indeed, I hope it will never be put to the Chamber. I hope that hon. members in the Government Party will not be placed in such a position that they will have to crush what I know is really their own Labour consciences so far as many of them are concerned. I am quite satisfied that there is not one genuine Labour man in this Chamber, and indeed not one genuine man in this Chamber who would conscientiously support the motion. I therefore urge the Chamber to reject it or, better still, I urge the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs, who at present is in charge of the House, even at this late stage to take such steps as are necessary to have the motion withdrawn, so that the Committee will be able to conduct its business in the proper manner.

Mr. HILTON (Carnarvon) (11.40 a.m.): When I rose to move the motion I was prompted only by a sense of decency in regard to standards of debates in this Assembly.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: Mr. Mann, I rise to a point of order. That is a reflection on my integrity and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. J. F. BARNES: It is offensive to me and I ask that it be withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member for Carnarvon not to indulge in any personalities. If his remarks are offensive to the hon. member for Bundaberg I ask him to withdraw those offensive remarks.

Mr. HILTON: I did not reflect on the hon. member.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: I brought up the debate. You did.

Mr. HILTON: In moving my motion I was not prompted by any desire to limit the right of free debate in this Chamber. I, as an hon. member, am in fullest accord with the principle that the fullest right to expression and free speech should be exercised here, but I do submit that there is a standard of decency that should be observed by all hon. members, and, actuated by a desire to see that standard of decency maintained, I moved the motion now before the Committee. However, as hon. members have taken the attitude that if it was carried it might be taken as limiting the right to free speech I will in deference to that attitude withdraw my motion, with the consent of the Committee. At the same time I take the liberty of registering my strong emphatic

personal protest at the conduct of the hon. member for Bundaberg in reading this filthy literature.

Mr. NICKLIN: I rise to a point of order, Mr. Mann. Is the hon. member for Carnarvon within his rights in speaking twice to this motion? He moved the motion.

Mr. HILTON: I withdrew the motion.

Mr. Nicklin: You have not withdrawn it yet.

Mr. HILTON: I have.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I will first reply to the Leader of the Opposition. There is nothing in the Standing Orders that says that the motion before the Committee shall not be debated. There is nothing in the Standing Orders either that states a time limit for speeches on a motion of this kind. As we are in Committee, and as hon. members in Committee are allowed to speak for 25 minutes I think each hon. member should be allowed to speak for 25 minutes on the motion before the Committee. The hon. member for Carnarvon in moving his motion exhausted his first 15 minutes. Therefore, he still has the right to speak for five minutes, and then another five minutes if he desires. As he now asks leave to withdraw his motion I ask hon. members: is it the pleasure of the Committee that the hon. member for Carnarvon be allowed to withdraw his motion?

Hon. Members: Hear, Hear!

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the hon. member for Bundaberg to resume his speech.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: At least I have to thank the hon. member for Carnarvon for having the decency, when he found he had committed a colossal mistake on the impulse, to withdraw his motion. It is obvious from his trip west and south-west, that is, to the room where the Acting Premier was sitting, that the influence came from the Acting Premier. I thank the Acting Premier for exercising that influence. I was about to read at the time I was interrupted—

“But the more I looked at them the more convinced I became of the diagnosis. Their unilateral distribution, the fact that they were all within reach of her right hand, their curious punched-out character, the perfectly normal skin around them—all forced me to a single conclusion: they were artefact. The patient herself was producing them.

“Straightaway then I called a very experienced dermatologist to my rooms. I told him nothing in advance, so anxious was I not to prejudice him. As soon as I saw him, after fixing his eyes on them. take a piece of phenol phthalein paper, I knew that the same thought was taking shape in his mind. When the phenol phthalein paper reddened on contact with the base of the ulcer he exclaimed softly: ‘An alkali.’ We two, thereupon, adjourned

to another room to talk it all over. With a positiveness which is very characteristic of him, he affirmed that there could be no possible shadow of a doubt; this was an artefact condition of the skin.

“After he went off I asked permission to see the patient alone and the elderly nuns withdrew. Then in sympathetic tones I explained our medical opinion. I told her that since she was still a minor I regarded these nuns as being in the position of her parents, but that I should not tell them provided she made a clean breast of it and promised not to do it again.

“I was anxious to ferret out what was the motive which had inspired this simulation, so that I could attack the real cause. Since it was obviously a psychological condition I told her I was prepared to call in a reputable nerve specialist. Did she have any grievances within the convent? Had she wanted to attract more attention from her superiors? With cast-down eyes, demurely, but not resentfully, she answered: ‘Doctor, you are making a big mistake.’ There was a simple sincerity and dignity in the way in which she firmly denied the insinuation, but never the slightest heat. Since there was nothing else left for me to do, I called in the old nuns and laid the whole case before them. The poor religious were terribly taken aback and looked at one another in anguish silently. Yet, sharp as was their reaction, they maintained a sort of cold politeness. The novice in that monotonous tone of voice I, later, got to know so well, quietly repeated her denial.

“My next move was to send the young sister out of the room and to explain to the senior religious the matter of artefact diseases so far as I, in my limited experience, could speak of them. According to some authorities the practice of causing self-inflicted rashes or wounds proceeds from a craving for sympathy. There are usually other signs of hysteria present: areas of anaesthesia, for example. The modern psychologist attributes to it a sexual origin. It is, they say, associated with both sex-starvation and sexual exhaustion. I have a great admiration for the acuity of observation of those who have made psycho-analysis so important a subject today, but I retain a profound distrust of many of their fantastic theories. I have no doubt that most psychological and nervous disorders are due to conditions interfering with a creative force of life within each of us.”

I want hon. members to take particular note of this point.

“How this occurs is quite another question. But concerning the actual case, experience has taught clearly enough one point: Such patients are a menace in any congregation of people. They are incorrigible liars. With complete serenity and perfect equanimity they are capable of swearing a person’s life away. In a convent their presence must be regarded as a calamity of the first order.

"Finally, to convince the nuns I said, not only could I heal these sores but I could also prevent others from coming on any particular area, merely by rendering that area inaccessible to the patient. They agreed to the test. I, therefore, put the novice's arm in a light plaster of paris bandage. Within three weeks all the ulcers had completely healed. Nor was there any new ulcer under the plaster; but up near the shoulder, just outside the plaster casing, a new lesion had meanwhile appeared. It was all so palpable, now, that I began to lose patience with the good women."

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will connect the matter he is reading with the matter before the Committee. Under the Standing Orders the hon. member is not allowed to occupy the whole of his time in reading from a book.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I am connecting before this Committee the most scientific and the most modern means of physical treatment, and that is endocrinology. I have proved that our chief medical officer does not know anything about what Dr. Moran says about the creative force, the power of production in the sexual organs, in other words.

Mr. Foley: He has limited experience.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: He is sure of that part. I can quote other authorities as well on endocrinology. They attribute many things to it, but our medical science is particularly ignorant in reference to endocrinology. These are the specific cases from which we could get some idea of diagnosing correctly. In another debate I will go more into detail on endocrinology. This is a very important subject, yet before the Sex Crimes Commission there was not one word of endocrinological treatment, despite the fact that at a Rotary luncheon I attended in Perth, the head of a reformatory—a parson—complained bitterly that in his case inherited endocrine trouble was the basis of most trouble with his children.

There are cases in London. Dr. Rowe, in the British Medical Journal of 31 December 1938, said endocrine trouble was the cause of 53 out of 68 criminals he had examined. I am endeavouring to instruct the Committee, but when they do listen they turn round and tell me I am wrong. If ever I was right, I am right in this particular case. There are world authorities to prove that what I say is correct and that some of the medical men here in relation to endocrinology know nothing. That was illustrated by the Dr. Michel case.

Mr. Foley: The doctors will be classing you as a victim also.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. J. F. BARNES: The Minister by his interjections and his statement the other evening on this matter proved conclusively his ignorance, which should have been hidden under a bush. I will deal with that later.

I have been paid the compliment of being the first person in this Assembly to ask a question on sexual matters. I was told that by asking this question I should lose my seat. It dealt with the statistics of venereal disease, both syphilitic and gonococcal. That was a pre-Victorian idea and is foolish. We are still in a well of ignorance as far as sexual medicine is concerned. The Chinese knew about endocrinology 2,000 years ago. You will not see in China a woman with endocrinal trouble. The disease is typified by extended hips and the hips extending down to one-third of the thighs. You never see a fat-hipped Chinese woman. The Chinese themselves knew about endocrinology about 2,000 years ago, but in this country, because orthodoxy says so-and-so, we have to do so-and-so. I am endeavouring to draw attention to two perfect examples, thus confirming the statement I made recently. I am doing that by quoting from this book.

Mr. Foley: Where did you get your diploma?

Mr. J. F. BARNES: From the same place as you got your diploma on the cases you quoted the other night. You made a complete fool of yourself and that I will prove later.

I was about to give a further example showing that what I am saying is correct and how the hospital doctors deal with this particular matter, but I was interrupted. (Laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I do not know where I finished reading when I was interrupted, but I will make sure and go over the paragraph—

"Yet even this did not convince the religious authorities. They could not bring themselves to believe that a young woman of so admirable a character, the very pattern of virtue for all the other novices, could be guilty of such deceits and yet go day after day to communion with a clear and untroubled conscience. For she showed not the slightest sign of any mental perturbation. No spiritual conflict ruffled her nightly sleep. Her face was a painter's dream of perfect innocence.

"With us medical men, however, this carries little weight.

"Some weeks later the Mother Superior of the whole order came to see me, sweeping into my room in a cloud of great majesty. She was very conscious of her exalted position and she wore an air of exaggerated humility, masterfully. The telephone message which announced her coming had sounded something like a royal command. When she had deigned to sit down she commenced to cross-examine me—"

The CHAIRMAN: Order! What the hon. member is now reading can have nothing to do with the matter before the Committee.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: This is the important part of the story. I am trying to prove conclusively these things have been ridiculed—the subsequent happenings, which are of most importance. I am getting to my real point. The mother superior comes back to cross-examine him. I am coming to the proof of my real point, the part with which I am most concerned. I read—

“When she had deigned to sit down she commenced to cross-examine me as if I were the complainant in a criminal allegation against some innocent citizen. I stated the facts brutally, irritably, impatiently. I had had, by now, more than my fill of the whole business: let them take her elsewhere. The last question put was this: Supposing what I said was correct, what would I say as to the suitability of this novice for a religious vocation? This young woman had been with them seven years. They could not lightly put her out into the world. I answered bluntly, as doctor and co-religionist, that she was most unsuitable, that she should be treated, however, as one psychically ill, but that for her sake and the order’s, she should be sent back home.

“The trouble was her people were very poor.

“The ulcers, I heard, continued to come in crops, and the novice to live for hours in the chapel—an edifying example for them all. I never saw her again. That doctor, they all agreed, had an evil mind.

“Some six months later came the epilogue. The two old nuns, humble and harassed looking as always, came once again to see me but this time unaccompanied. With that admirable control of voice which comes from long discipline, they told me that searching in the locker of the novice they had recently found a little tin containing pieces of caustic soda.”

You will remember that the dermatologist analysed it and found it to be alkaline. In other words, all soda is alkaline. It goes on—

“The novice, faced with this evidence, had finally confessed the truth. What explanation she offered for her action I never heard. There must remain therefore many gaps in this medical history. The old nuns had come to make amends for all they had thought and said harshly. I wondered how they themselves felt about the novice’s daily communions during those long months of lying. But the patient herself did not leave the convent.”

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member, in all decency, to connect his remarks with the matter before the Committee. All that rigmarole he is reading has nothing to do with hospitals.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: It has a lot to do with hospitals. What I am pointing out is conclusive proof of what I say. In the early

part of my statement I pointed out that Dr. Moran said she had been to several doctors. That is the point. Despite the fact that she had been to several doctors, they all failed to diagnose her trouble. I wanted to point out how this doctor diagnosed it, and I have done that. I pointed out that he had his suspicions and that a dermatologist confirmed them. Now I am pointing out that the nuns came back to him and admitted they found caustic soda in a locker. In other words, by using an instrument she was cutting holes in her own left arm and putting caustic soda in, and by the introduction of caustic soda caused pain in that region, giving her the equivalent of sexual intercourse.

There are cases lying in hospitals everywhere. There are cases in this House who should be in hospital as endocrinists. There are cases known to science in which endocrinist people have sexual intercourse by taking a common hair from a woman’s head and rubbing it across the penis. There are cases known to scientists of women endocrinists who experience no sexual pleasure except when another person rubs a shoe on the pelvis. This has developed because when the woman was a baby the nurse soothed it in that way. There are thousands of other instances too gigantic for hon. members to conceive. These are known facts to scientists, and I am trying to bring a simple fact before this Committee, but it is something that is too great for hon. members to understand, and they have tried all possible ways of sabotaging my speech.

Mr. Foley: You are a bad case yourself.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: If that is true and I deny it then at least I am trying to do a service to the world by exposing it.

As I will explain later, endocrine cases are affected by the endocrine gland, in other words the glands of the body, and I am referring specifically now to the hormone glands. If what Dr. Moran said is true, then I am entitled to say what I am saying, because Dr. Moran is an eminent man.

Furthermore, I am not going to stop at this. When the appropriate debate arrives I shall bring evidence before this Chamber of what the medical world knows of endocrinology. I have the whole thing in brief for use when the suitable opportunity arises.

The quotation continues—

“When I remember that childlike face with those clear steady eyes which looked so candidly into mine, I always think of another woman, not innocent or of sweet virginal beauty. She, too, had a madonna face and a simple disarming way. She was single and 22. I first saw her when called in to see her with her ninth miscarriage. She declared archly that she had been only ‘slightly in the family way’—it was merely ‘a touch of pregnancy.’ She seemed as innocent as any child. But

actually the little minx was a common prostitute and told her sordid story with complete moral unawareness as a wilful little girl might describe some trivial naughtiness.

“She, too, was an unconscionable liar, living detached in romantic castles. She still had a face of virginal loveliness, though for some years she had been selling her body on a street corner at public auction and by the hour.”

They were the two cases I quoted from memory the other night, when I was accused of being unable to produce evidence of what I was saying. In other words, the innuendo was that I was composing my own story. What I have just quoted not only proves the correctness of what I said then, but is an object lesson to many doctors and, in particular, the Director-General of Health and Medical Services. During the course of evidence in the Michel case, Dr. Michel contended that a certain woman had endocrine disturbances. Sir Raphael Cilento should have known something about endocrinology. I have read the evidence taken in that case, and I know that in cross-examination counsel asked Dr. Michel whether a woman could have nerves without being endocrinally disturbed. The doctor said, “No.” Further on in cross-examination counsel asked him if a woman could have endocrine trouble without nerves, and the doctor said, “Yes.”

Endocrine-gland trouble is the foundation of nerves and a patient can, in the first place, have endocrine trouble without having nervous trouble, but uncreated endocrine-gland trouble will set up nervous trouble. The Medical Assessment Tribunal ridiculed the evidence given on that occasion, although the witness was a man of international fame who had attended a conference in Paris in 1926 and in Stockholm in, I think, 1925. His theories on X-ray therapy are now in common use throughout the world. However, a lot more lies behind the story than just that. Sir Raphael Cilento at that time—he himself a Fascist, by the way—was doing everything possible to hinder Dr. Max Michel, as I explained the other night. Dr. Michel’s X-ray plant was taken from him a week before his appeal and an unsuccessful effort was made to have him interned. The Act was amended to the effect that evidence that had been heard before the Medical Board previously could not go before the Medical Assessment Tribunal. That was done especially to get Dr. Michel. They have done everything to get him, in the same way as an effort has been made to sabotage my speech today.

(Time expired.)

The CHAIRMAN: Before this debate proceeds, I should like to remind hon. members that it is not my desire as Chairman of this Assembly to stifle speeches. I believe that the hon. member for Bundaberg felt that I was endeavouring to stifle

him in his attempt to state his case, but that is not so. I have a duty to perform in seeing that hon. members speak in a relevant manner on the matter before the Committee. The practice of quoting long extracts from books is not in keeping with the practice of this Assembly, and I ask hon. members, in fairness to the Chair and also to themselves, to conduct the debate in that manner.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. POWER (Baroona) (12.4 p.m.): I should find it very difficult to associate my remarks with the vote under discussion if I were to attempt in any way to deal with the remarks of the hon. member who has just resumed his seat. He has referred to endocrine glands and he has implied that as the result of an examination by Dr. Moran a certain novice in a convent was suffering from that complaint. I have that book before me and I challenge the hon. member to produce the quotation to which he referred and show me where the expression “endocrine glands” is used. Not at any one stage was it used.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I rise to a point of order but I regret that I have to do it. The hon. member for Baroona is ignorant. He does not know what endocrine glands are. The whole suggestion by Dr. Moran was that the trouble was endocrinal. If the hon. member will not read that part I will read it for him.

Mr. POWER: I am certainly not ignorant. I claim to have had as much education as the hon. member for Bundaberg. I have pointed out that in not one part of the book is there any inference that a certain person was suffering from endocrinal trouble. That is only the assumption and the interpretation of the book by the hon. member for Bundaberg. It is not the expressed opinion of Dr. Moran.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I rise to a point of order. The whole purpose of the book, according to Dr. Moran, is to show the curative force of endocrinal glands. I ask the hon. member to accept my statement.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a matter of opinion. I think the hon. member for Bundaberg in making his speech put it forth that Dr. Moran was an authority on endocrinal trouble but whether an hon. member accepts Dr. Moran as an authority on the matter is one for himself. I ask the hon. member for Baroona to connect his remarks with the vote.

Mr. POWER: I propose to do that. I can assure the hon. member for Bundaberg that I am not accepting him as a medical authority on this matter. I do not propose to go into it at any great length. At least I think I should quote this part—

“My next move was to send the young sister out of the room and to explain to

the senior religious the matter of artefact diseases so far as I, in my limited experience, could speak of them."

Dr. Moran himself admitted that his knowledge of the matter was limited. The book goes on—

"According to some authorities the practice of causing self-inflicted rashes or wounds proceeds from a craving for sympathy. There are usually other signs of hysteria present: areas of anaesthesia, for example. The modern psychologist attributes to it a sexual origin. It is, they say, associated with both sex-starvation and sexual exhaustion."

Not a word about endocrine trouble. These are the remarks of Dr. Moran.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: Read the next chapter.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Bundaberg not to interrupt when another hon. member is speaking. The hon. member for Bundaberg was allowed the ordinary courtesies when he was speaking and I ask him to extend similar treatment to other hon. members.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: I rise to a point of order. I interrupted to get the hon. member to read the point. He is avoiding the point.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not allowed to interrupt.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: I know that.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to be decent and allow the hon. member for Baroona to proceed without interruption.

Mr. POWER: I am reading from Dr. Moran's book.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: Read the next chapter.

Mr. POWER: If the hon. member will be patient I will read the next chapter. It says—

"I have a great admiration for the acuity of observation of those who have made psycho-analysis so important a subject today, but I retain a profound distrust of many of their fantastic theories." That is the statement by Dr. Moran himself.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: That is not the complete statement.

Mr. POWER: The hon. member for Bundaberg has placed his own interpretation upon the statements of Dr. Moran and has given it out as the opinion of Dr. Moran himself. Dr. Moran himself says that he is not prepared to accept the opinions of other people in this connection.

I have some knowledge of Dr. Moran. At present he is dying from cancer in England. After he left Australia he went to Italy, where he was decorated by Mussolini for some service. I have no desire and will not be associated with the sectarian side of this matter. I rose on this occasion to show that the hon. member for Bundaberg quoted something from the book that was not there.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: I rise to a point of order. That statement by the hon. member for Baroona is offensive to me. He deliberately misquoted a paragraph and put some of it onto me. I ask him to withdraw that statement. Ask him to be a man and complete the paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Bundaberg made full use of Dr. Moran's book and quoted extensively from it. I do not think it is within my province to stop the hon. member for Baroona from quoting any part in the book that he cares to quote. I ask the hon. member for Bundaberg now to let the hon. member for Baroona make his speech without interruption.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: I still take my first point of order—that his last statement is offensive to me, and I ask that he accept my denial.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member for Baroona has made any statement that is offensive to the hon. member for Bundaberg—I do not know what the statement is—(laughter)—I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. POWER: I do not know that I made any statement that was offensive to the hon. member for Bundaberg. I should like the hon. member for Bundaberg to say what statement I made that was offensive, so that I may know what I have to withdraw. I cannot withdraw in a general way. I said that the hon. member for Bundaberg had placed his own interpretation on this book, and in my opinion the basis for that interpretation is not there. Furthermore, I charge the hon. member for Bundaberg with having said that two sisters later on interviewed Dr. Moran and said the nun in the case we have been discussing, as introduced by him, had been using certain things for the purpose of getting sexual pleasure. I say that is not contained in the book.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: That is implied in the book.

Mr. POWER: Implied! It is not implied either.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Bundaberg to obey my call to order. I would remind hon. members that we are discussing the vote for hospitals in the Estimates of the Department of Health and Home Affairs. The matter that has recently been the subject of discussion before the Committee has been fairly well debated.

Mr. POWER: I bow to your ruling, Mr. Mann, but I submit that the hon. member for Bundaberg made statements on the matter that are not in the book he quoted from. I am entitled to the privilege of pointing that out. Nevertheless I bow to your ruling.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Baroona said I made a statement that is not in the book. I did not. I ask him to accept my denial.

Mr. POWER: The hon. member for Bundaberg said he did not make the statement, but he did say that the statement he

made was implied in the book. I do not want to go into this matter any further. I just wanted to reply to the hon. member in order to show that the statements he made are not contained in the book, that what he said was merely an implication, an implication that the hon. member himself desires to place upon certain passages in the book.

I want to pay my tribute to the Mothers' Union District Nursing Association, whose headquarters are situated in my electorate. I have the greatest respect and admiration for the excellent work performed over a number of years by this very fine organisation. For a long time they have been at work and during the war years they have been labouring under great difficulties, but nevertheless have been doing a very fine work. Their work has saved the Government a considerable amount of money as well as effort. I know that the Acting Premier, like myself, appreciates all that has been done by it.

Mr. Hanlon: Hear, hear!

Mr. POWER: Quite a number of people are bedridden in many parts of Brisbane. It is impossible to get them into certain homes, but the nurses of the association are available day and night without charge to attend them. They go along and attend to the sick and unfortunate who are confined to bed as a result of illness. I want, too, to pay my personal tribute to the assistance these nurses rendered to my mother quite recently. Unfortunately she lost an eye and found it difficult to obtain the services of a nurse. It is fitting that I should take this opportunity of publicly testifying to the very fine work performed by the Mothers' Union District Nurses' Association. The nurses go out at any times and render what assistance they can, and they seek no fees. Naturally, the Mothers' Union at times is paid, as in my own case. I know that the Minister and the Acting Premier appreciate the good work done by this organisation. I am very pleased to know that the very fine matron of this organisation, Matron McElnea, who was serving with the forces overseas and was made a prisoner of war, is now on her way home to her relatives in sunny Queensland, and that Sister Muir, another member of the staff, also is on her way home.

They did a very fine job in Queensland and on the other side of the world and they experienced terrible privations as prisoners of war. I am happy to know they are on the way back. Their work is excellent and I urge the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs now he has the Treasurer alongside him, to whisper in his ear and see if it is possible later on to have the grant to the association increased. I know that any request I have made on its behalf has met with a ready response; both these gentlemen have given every possible assistance to that very fine institution and now I should like them to give consideration if possible to increasing the grant. I know my request will receive favourable consideration by the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs and the Treasurer. I again thank the district nurses for the work they have done.

I feel that I have exposed any canard raised by the hon. member for Bundaberg in his recent speech.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (12.18 p.m.): I hope the "Viewless Winds," and very many other winds that have been rushing about in this Chamber for the last hour or two have died down. I agree with your ruling, Mr. Mann, that only matters connected with hospitals and hospital administration should be debated on this vote. I want to make this clear: Sir Raphael Cilento is the chief of staff of the hospital administration for the State and is the very pivot round which the whole hospital system is built, and he is open for debate so far as his official or medical affairs are concerned, because it is obvious that if the head of an organisation is corrupt and disloyal there is a danger that the whole of the organisation itself may become corrupt and disloyal. I do not intend to confine myself to generalities because you have ruled against it, I do not intend to indulge in any personalities against Sir Raphael Cilento because you have rightly ruled against that also, but I intend to prove here to-day that the hospital system of this State is in danger of corruption and disloyalty while Sir Raphael Cilento remains at the head of it.

The Acting Premier said the other day that Sir Raphael Cilento was a world-renowned authority on tropical diseases. That statement is merely an exemplification of the gullibility of the Acting Premier and the salesmanship of Sir Raphael Cilento. I challenge the Acting Premier to quote any world-renowned medical authority who has written or stated or even hinted that Sir Raphael Cilento is a world-renowned authority on tropical diseases. Because Sir Raphael Cilento's conception of tropical diseases has been imposed on the hospital system of this State, it is competent for me to consider on what basis Sir Raphael Cilento's reputation as a tropical-disease man is founded. We know he graduated in 1918.

Mr. FOLEY: I rise to a point of order. For the benefit of the Committee I point out that Sir Raphael Cilento is not in charge of our hospital system or administration in this State.

The CHAIRMAN: That is so. The Minister has intimated to the Committee that Sir Raphael Cilento has nothing to do with the control of hospitals. Taking that as an authority, I ask the hon. member for Mundingburra to confine his remarks to hospitals. He has already dealt with Sir Raphael Cilento on the Chief Office vote.

Mr. AIKENS: I will. I can only suggest that the Minister does not know his Health Act. The Health Act provides that before any doctor can be appointed as superintendent or medical officer in any State hospital in Queensland—and we are dealing with the vote that covers all those hospitals—he must first be accredited by Sir Raphael Cilento.

Mr. Foley: By the board.

Mr. AIKENS: By the board, which Sir Raphael Cilento dominates. If he is not the head of the hospital administration in this State he is at least an important cog; and I am going to prove here that Sir Raphael Cilento attempted to use the hospital administration set-up in this State in order to establish a Fascist spy ring in this State. If that does not concern the hospital administration of this State then tell me what does?

The Acting Premier said the other day that he had heard Cilento called a Fascist. I have stronger evidence than that. I have in my hand a photograph of the Fascist Judicial Committee of Australia, and this proves Cilento to be not only a Fascist but a prominent Fascist.

Mr. Foley: It has nothing to do with the vote.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I will not allow the hon. member for Mundingburra to continue in that strain. I have intimated to the Committee that Sir Raphael Cilento has nothing to do with the control of hospitals, and we are discussing hospitals. I ask him to confine his remarks to the matter before the Committee.

Mr. AIKENS: I fail to see how I can confine my remarks any closer than I have been doing. I said I hoped to be able to prove by documents in my possession to-day that Sir Raphael himself was a notorious Fascist and attempted to use the—

Mr. HANLON: I rise to a point of order. Are the rulings of the Chair to be taken notice of by all members of the Committee, or only by a section of the members? Certain members here are making a riot of this Chamber.

Mr. AIKENS: It is obvious that the Acting Premier, in attempting to defend the indefensible, has been badly hurt.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: This surely is within the ambit of the vote. At the conclusion of my speech I will lay both of these photos on the table so that the Acting Premier and any other defender of Sir Raphael Cilento can peruse them at their leisure, and then if they care to do so, stand up in this Chamber later and attempt to defend this Fascist spy.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: Now having wounded the Acting Premier—and it is not often I wound him—

Mr. Hanlon: Simply spite, that is all.

Mr. AIKENS: In regard to the interjection that the Acting Premier makes that I am actuated by spite against Sir Raphael Cilento—and I think I am entitled to reply to that interjection—for his benefit and the benefit of other defenders I would mention

that I have never met Sir Raphael Cilento. I should not know him if I met him.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have already asked the hon. member to connect the matter of his remarks with hospitals. The Committee is discussing hospitals, and I have already ruled that the hon. member cannot discuss the Director-General of Health and Medical Services, Sir Raphael Cilento, because we have discussed him on the Chief Office vote. We are confined now to the discussion of hospitals.

Mr. AIKENS: I will leave the Acting Premier to go away and lick his wounds, and go on to some other aspect of the debate. I take it that if I get away from Cilento's notorious politics, I shall be entitled to deal with his medical conception of the treatment of various diseases; that conception is interwoven and tied up with hospital treatment in this State.

Mr. Foley: That is health services.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The vote before the Committee is that for hospital administration.

Mr. AIKENS: That is so. The Medical Act of Queensland, which was passed by this State Parliament at the instigation of Sir Raphael Cilento, places certain legal obligations on every doctor who is in charge of every hospital in this State. Doctors control the hospitals, and we are debating hospitals, and are bound by the laws of this State, the same as you and I are bound by the laws of this State, Mr. Mann, and I find it impossible to deal with the matter with which I was dealing if I am not allowed to deal with the duties of medical superintendents who have been appointed by the Medical Board from time to time and who work in accordance with the law as laid down from time to time.

Mr. Foley: Dealt with by the board.

Mr. AIKENS: If the Secretary for Health and Home affairs has as much knowledge of medicine, because he got his degree in the same place, as he did selling scented soap in Sydney, I wish to have nothing to do with him. He is as ignorant of medicine as he is of the treachery of Sir Raphael Cilento. Sir Raphael Cilento has been classified by the Acting Premier as an authority on tropical diseases, and his authority is exercised over—

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member continues along those lines I shall have to ask him to resume his seat. I ask him to confine his remarks to the matter before the Committee.

Mr. AIKENS: The hospital set-up of this State is such that at the present time it does provide a fine service within the limits of its financial resources and within the limits of the medical knowledge of its staff and the nursing capacity of its staff for many sick and injured people of the State. I agree in part with the remarks made here the other

day by the hon. member for Merthyr, in which he contended—and I think he was on the right lines—that we should not try to herd all patients, slightly sick, seriously sick, and incurably sick into the one institution. Anyone who has had any practical knowledge of the working of any public hospital in this State will realise the amount of time that is taken up by the doctors and nurses in our big institutions in dealing with those who are only slightly sick, and I commend the hon. member for Merthyr for his suggestion that certain suburban dispensaries or clinics should be set up so that people who are only slightly sick or who feel that they may become very sick could go to those clinics and receive at once the treatment that is necessary. Not only will these clinics serve that useful purpose but they will serve the further useful purpose of preventing serious disease from manifesting itself in many cases. The average working man and woman who may feel a little bit off colour, and who lives in a suburb far away from a central hospital, does not feel inclined to go to all the trouble of going to the hospital itself. Consequently, they remain at home for two or three days, waiting for the disease to get worse, or, as they hope, to get better. In a couple of days' time, when they find the disease is becoming progressively worse, it is sometimes too late for the hospital authorities to do anything for them, or, if they do get to the hospital in time, they find they may have to spend quite a long time there in order that a cure may be effected. I believe that if these clinics were set up in the various suburbs or towns, such people would avail themselves more readily of medical treatment and the early clinical attention that will be tendered to them there by the doctors and nurses who have been appointed there.

Persons who are more or less seriously ill should be accommodated in a hospital specially set apart for that purpose. I contend that general hospitals should, as soon as it is possible, be set aside for the purpose of treating and curing those who are curable and those who are more or less seriously ill so that the medical staff can devote their whole attention to them and so that the nursing staff can devote their whole attention to those patients who have a chance of recovery. In that respect I suggest that these big hospitals for those who are curably ill could work in close co-operation with the Institute of Medical Research that will be established as a result of the legislation that was introduced during this session.

At the other end of the scale of human sickness, and perhaps the most tragic end of the scale, are the people who are incurably ill. At the present time these are housed at the General Hospitals. The doctors themselves can do nothing except prescribe drugs and treatment that deaden the pain or perhaps make their last few hours or weeks as comfortable and as painless as possible. The nursing staff also give them the courtesy and attention for which the nursing staff of this State have become renowned, but they do at times occupy beds and require the attention of the medical and nursing staff, especi-

ally when man-power is short that could well be used in the treatment of the curable patients.

Any doctor in charge of a public hospital will tell you that primarily his job is to save life. Of course, according to the oath of Hippocrates, he is also required to prolong life. However, there is a great difference between the saving of life and the prolongation of life, and I think the hospitals should divide the two services. You and I, Mr. Mann, may some day be afflicted with an incurable disease, and if that should ever occur I should not like to go into the bare atmosphere of a general hospital. I should feel I was using a bed and being given treatment that could perhaps be used for a curable patient. I should much prefer to be sent to some home with congenial surroundings where I could receive the care and attention necessary to make my last weeks, days or hours on earth as comfortable as possible.

It has been said, of course, that the psychological aspect of sending a man to a hospital set aside for incurable patients may hasten his end. I know that in certain countries there are hospitals for incurables and it has been suggested to me that the very thought of having to be transferred to one of those hospitals may hasten the end of such a patient. I should be very averse, Mr. Mann, to suggesting anything that might hasten the end of any man or any woman on this earth. Irrespective of how much I may like or dislike certain people, I think they have the right to hang on to that little thread of life as long as it is humanly possible for them to do so. The trouble with those hospitals in other parts of the world that deal only with incurable cases is that they are established as hospitals. They have the old ward or barrack-room system in operation and the unfortunate patients sleep in rows or tiers of beds. I think that homes and institutions for incurable patients should be set up on the lines of Dunwich or Eventide, with of course alterations, additions and improvements. I really think that these incurable patients should be taken out of general hospitals and placed in homes built among fine and beautiful surroundings so that they may end their lives as comfortably and as peacefully as possible. To do that would be to confer an immeasurable benefit on the patient himself and also on the doctors and the nursing staffs at every general hospital, because it would allow them to concentrate their attention on the curable patients in their institutions.

I hope the suggestion made by the hon. member for Merthyr is acceptable to the Government. If it was put into practice, together with mine then in the future hospital set-up of this State, instead of congregating all our sick, all our slightly sick, all our seriously but curably sick and all our incurably sick in the one big barrack-like institution, we shall have three separate institutions. The first institution suggested by the hon. member

for Merthyr is the suburban clinic where the slightly sick could be treated and advised as to the possibility of their disease becoming worse. Then there would be the big general hospital where the seriously but curably sick could be housed and treated and cured. Then, of course, follows my suggestion of homes for the incurably sick, but homes that do not in any way resemble the ward-room or the barrack-room atmosphere of the general hospital today.

I should like to bring a small matter before the notice of the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs today. In various hospitals working under various hospital boards it appears to be the practice to use a standardised type of uniform for nurses and sisters. In most institutions I think the uniform worn by a sister is the most hideous sartorial adornment that any woman has ever been compelled to wear.

The only thing that recommends it is the tradition associated with it, the tradition that it is the uniform of a sister of mercy. If a nurse is required to wear a blue uniform, and a sister is required to wear a white one, why not make them decent and attractive uniforms? Why must they go round the wards wearing a one-piece garment with a belt round the middle? It has been said, jocularly I think, but with a good deal of truth perhaps, that if the boy friend of a nurse or sister happened to see her in her uniform she would lose her boy friend. Although it may be only a small matter, I think the State would be well advised to indent in bulk all the material required for nurses' uniforms from the manufacturers and send it to be made up into attractive and useful uniforms for the nurses at the general hospitals, and so remove once and for all the one-piece reach-me-downs in which you see the sisters and nurses attired today.

I lay upon the table of the House the photographs that I referred to.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) (12.37 p.m.): Recently the Prime Minister of Australia congratulated Queensland on its policy of decentralisation. I now ask the Minister in charge of these Estimates to keep that principle in mind in the conduct of certain activities of his department. I believe that the Brisbane General Hospital is too big, that two hospitals instead of the one we have in Brisbane would give a better service to the people. I suppose that contention is open to serious controversy. I go further and say that so far as the country is concerned—and in that I am vitally interested—I hope the Government will not be carried away with the idea of building a great big hospital in one centre, whereby another outlying centre gets no hospital facilities at all.

Mr. Devries: It has been a godsend to the people of the West.

Mr. SPARKES: I can understand that interjection from the hon. member who comes from the West and is sincere. My idea is to establish a big central hospital with all the facilities, implements, and everything to deal with major illnesses, but with small subsidiary hospitals some distance away,

because this would give greater benefit to the people of the West. The most important matter we have to face is the bringing into the world of the children of tomorrow, the future people of Australia. Does anything give greater satisfaction to any mother than to know that there is a hospital for the purpose only a few miles away? Even if there are good roads over which the mother would have to travel to a centrally situated hospital some distance away, she always has the fear of travelling over that distance. By way of example, there could be a big institution, say, at Charleville, but there should be another hospital at Cunnamulla, and at other outlying centres.

Coming in closer, Toowoomba is a city that is likely to grow and grow as Brisbane has done, until it becomes too big. I am of the opinion too that even the Brisbane City Council is too big, that the area over which it has jurisdiction is too big. I think the Brisbane General Hospital is too big.

I do not know—the Minister can tell me—whether there is a bigger hospital in the southern hemisphere than the Brisbane Hospital. The personal touch is lost when a hospital reaches such dimensions. There is a possibility that a great big hospital will grow up in Toowoomba, and as a result the small outlying centres will be deprived of their local hospitals. There is no hospital between Toowoomba and Dalby, a distance of 50-odd miles and in addition to that distance we must consider the radius of the district from which patients are drawn. A resident 20 or 30 miles north of the western railway between those two towns has first to come into Oakey. He would be 50 miles from Toowoomba. We should have small subsidised hospitals throughout a closely-settled district like the Darling Downs. The Minister may tell me that I should be the last to talk like this as there is a very fine hospital and staff at Dalby. I know that the present building will be replaced by a modern building in the near future and that all its appointments will be brought up to date, and that there is another hospital at Jandowae, 30 miles away. I am sure that the Minister was surprised at the settlement in the district when he visited it recently. There should be a hospital situated between Toowoomba and Dalby, somewhere about Oakey. Oakey is the centre of a big district, including a coal-mine to the north and a sawmill at Cooyar. Accidents frequently occur at the coal-mine and sawmill and serious cases have to be taken all the way to Toowoomba. Most expectant mothers prefer not to go any great distance from their homes to enter a hospital. We hear much talk of settling people on the land. If land settlement is to be successful we must give people on the land similar amenities, including facilities for hospital treatment, to those provided in the cities.

Mr. Devries: You cannot overcome isolation in some instances.

Mr. SPARKES: Is the hon. member for Gregory going to get the same outlook as the Commissioner for Railways?

Mr. Devries: I believe you should be reasonable.

Mr. SPARKES: I am not going to adopt that outlook.

Mr. Devries: You are becoming unreasonable.

Mr. SPARKES: The day must come when country people will have a service similar to that given to the people in the city. If not, how can you keep them on the land?

Mr. Devries: You cannot give all the people similar service, especially in isolated districts.

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. member is adopting the same attitude as the Commissioner for Railways, who thinks we shall not be able to run the trains unless we have higher freights.

At 12.44 p.m.,

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba) relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. Walsh: You leave that until you come to the Railway Estimates.

Mr. SPARKES: I will deal with the hon. gentleman when his Estimates come on. What will happen is that his Estimates will be like his trains, too damn slow to come on. We shall never get them.

Let me get back to the vote. Here is the Darling Downs, one of the greatest districts in Australia. Nature has endowed that district with some of the finest country in Australia. It is very closely settled. No-one knows better than you do, Mr. Duggan, that the closer—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The interruption in the Chamber denies me the pleasure and privilege of listening to the hon. member for Aubigny.

Mr. SPARKES: As I was saying when I was so rudely interrupted, the Darling Downs carries an enormous population.

It is intended by this Government and the Federal Government to further develop that country by closer settlement. Right in the midst of the Darling Downs we have untold coal wealth and yet we have no electricity plant. I know only too well what you think, Mr. Duggan, and that you agree those people should have electricity throughout the length and breadth of the Darling Downs.

Mr. Smith: Where are your local authorities? You are chairman of one; what have you done for the people?

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. member has just awakened. The hon. member knows there is a State Electricity Commission.

Mr. Smith: You, as chairman of the shire, have power to install electricity for the people.

Mr. SPARKES: I suggest to the Minister for Transport that he get the hon. member for Carpentaria to help him to run the railways, and they will make a proper mess of it.

Mr. Walsh: I am anxious to know whether we are on the Railway Estimates at the present time, or what Estimates are under discussion.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask for the co-operation of hon. members in the Committee if this is not going to become a bear-garden. Consideration of the hospital Estimates is a very important matter affecting Government departments, and a proper presentation and consideration of the arguments advanced are essential; that can only be achieved in an atmosphere conducive to a proper reception of hon. members' remarks.

Mr. SPARKES: I think even the hon. member who interjected will admit that hospitals in those closely settled areas are essential, and electricity also is essential. I point out to hon. members that in the centre of this district there is a coal-mine with an untold wealth of coal. Even in America, with their water power and snow rivers, a great amount of electricity is generated from coal. What do we find on the Darling Downs? We are taking power from Ipswich to the Darling Downs, passing through Toowoomba. Despite the frivolous interjections, this is a serious matter to the people in the country.

Mr. Devries: Do you not think the flying-doctor service will cover the isolation?

Mr. SPARKES: No-one has greater respect for the flying-doctor service than I have; it is a marvellous service, but does the hon. member think if there is a maternity case at Cooyar the flying doctor should go out and attend to it?

Mr. Devries: They will not go out.

Mr. SPARKES: No, I know. I do not think the hon. member would suggest they should.

Mr. Devries: Why not? I say they should be made to go out.

Mr. SPARKES: Well, all I can say is we should need a fair few flying doctors.

Mr. Devries: We are talking about the health of the nation.

Mr. SPARKES: If the hon. member comes in there we might agree even on that. It would probably be an easier way to establish hospitals—not great big hospitals like the one the hon. member for Toowoomba would like to have in Toowoomba—but small hospitals.

Mr. Devries: You would still have people travelling 50 and 100 miles to attend that hospital.

Mr. SPARKES: That might happen in the electorate of the hon. member but not in my area.

Mr. Walsh: We are dealing with Queensland, not with your electorate.

Mr. SPARKES: Yes, and we are dealing with other parts of Queensland as well.

Mr. Walsh: You are.

Mr. SPARKES: Exactly. I am dealing with a part of Queensland that is very closely populated and deserves recognition by having a hospital established at the centres I have in mind. That is the attitude I take. The hon. member who has been interjecting suggests that the flying doctor might come down. The place for the flying doctor is in the vast spaces, unless we can obtain a sufficient number of them to put them in other places too. I daresay there would be room for two or three or half a dozen more in the hon. member's area. That is the area where the flying doctor should operate—where a 100 miles or so separates medical attention and the patient—and not in the closely settled areas. The far West, where the flying doctor is doing such wonderful work, is the place for such services.

Mr. Devries: Wherever it is necessary he should go, regardless of what district or area it is in.

Mr. SPARKES: I fail to see how it would be economic for a man to come in from Charleville, Blackall or Cunnamulla to attend to a case at Oakey or Toowoomba.

Mr. Devries: It might be.

Mr. SPARKES: I have the instance of a man injured on a property in the Taroom area, in which I am interested. The Minister pricks up his ears because it is in his own electorate. This man was badly injured by a fall from a horse on Hornetbank station. The injury was so severe that the local hospital was unable to treat it. I was telephoned in Brisbane to endeavour to get an ambulance plane to pick up this man but there was no place to land the plane. Further, there is no specialist in Brisbane at the present time who could spare sufficient time to travel all the way to Taroom by car. One medical man pointed out that I was asking him to save the life of one man when in Brisbane he had dozens of lives depending on him. That is a logical argument. We were at our wit's end as to what we should do. The patient could not be moved by car because the injury to his spine made it too risky. Eventually we got the flying doctor. He came to Taroom and picked up the patient there and he is now progressing favourably at St. Helen's Hospital, Brisbane. Had we a central hospital somewhere closer at which specialists attended it probably would not have been necessary for that patient to come to Brisbane.

Mr. Foley: You will have those centres when we can get services. We cannot get them now.

Mr. SPARKES: I appreciate the Minister's assurance but I should like the hon. gentleman to go a little further and establish hospitals here and there in the closer-settled areas of this State.

Mr. Foley: Within reason.

Mr. SPARKES: That is right. Although the Minister may think it reasonable for a

hospital to be distant 50 miles in a straight line in the back country, it is too far in the more closely-settled areas. For instance, instead of one person per square mile, as in the electorate of the hon. member for Gregory, we should probably have 100 people to the square mile. I have great sympathy with the hon. member for Gregory and the people of the vast areas of the West. I know the type of country there only too well, but that is the area in which the services of the flying doctor are necessary. Of course, I should like to see that service extended, and in a State of the vastness of Queensland, instead of one flying doctor there should be at least six. There is ample work for them to do and there is no other way of coping with the situation. No doubt the hon. member for Gregory will agree with me that there in this vast area is no other way of getting medical attention to these people.

Mr. Devries: It is the only way.

Mr. SPARKES: It is the only way at the present moment. The hon. member appears to think I am unreasonable because I ask for another way to deal with them when one gets to the more closely settled areas. The hon. gentleman will realise that there is more likely to be a sick person in 100 people than in only 10. That is only common sense. That is why I ask the Minister to give serious consideration to the need for decentralisation.

Our State was complimented the other day by the Prime Minister. I hope that instead of allowing Brisbane to grow into a Sydney, we shall have another Brisbane at Gladstone and so on throughout the State. All hon. members must admit that that would be far better for Queensland. No-one wants to see great cities growing up. Sydney is an absolute drag on New South Wales. Everything has to go to and come from there. We must have services in the country. We intend asking young people to go back to the bush and we cannot expect them to return to the old conditions of the outback.

Mr. Devries: You cannot eliminate them.

Mr. SPARKES: I do not agree with the hon. member. There is no such thing as "cannot" so far as I am concerned.

Mr. Devries: Those conditions can be eliminated only by having a compact community.

Mr. SPARKES: You can do anything.

Mr. Devries: I wish you would do it out my way.

Mr. SPARKES: Now the hon. member is beginning to agree with me. Even electricity may extend to his district. Certainly it must come in the closely settled districts of the State. It should be there now. Are the people in the country getting the same treatment as people in the cities today? They certainly are not.

Mr. Devries: We are not getting the same amenities but I cannot say we are not

getting the same treatment. We are getting the same consideration but not the same amount of amenities.

Mr. SPARKES: It is up to any Government to provide benefits for the people in the country if they wish to have the backblocks populated. I realise that we cannot expect to have trams running on the by-roads in the out-back in some vast electorate but we could have busses running along some of the roads of our closely settled areas. Today even in closely settled areas the women and children cannot get into and out of town to do their shopping, because there is no service. We all remember the great hubbub in the city when Mrs. Jones was asked to go perhaps a quarter of a mile or half a mile to buy her own beef and bread. In the West they would think it was Christmas if they had to go only half a mile for bread. At the moment some of them have no bread delivered at all. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley must know the difference in conditions. He is now a city man but for many years he was a Westerner and he knows the conditions under which the people live out there. If we are to encourage people to settle in the outback we must provide every possible service for them. We should have refrigerated cars on trains and even air-conditioned trains for them to travel in. The day is coming when we shall have to have these things in Queensland.

At 2.15 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Vote (Hospitals) agreed to.

FIRE BRIGADES.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs): I move—

“That £59,000 be granted for ‘Fire Brigades.’”

The estimated expenditure is an increase of approximately £7,355 on the amount expended last year. The main reason for that is that during the last financial year a committee was set up to decide on the allocation of the large amount of material left over from the Civil Defence Organisation, such as fire-fighting apparatus. Local authorities throughout the State were informed that this material would be made available to them at a very nominal price. They were also informed that where no fire-fighting facilities already existed it was desirable that a fire-fighting organisation as provided for under our legislation should be set up. As the result, applications for the constitution of fire-brigade boards have been received from Aramac, Blackall, Chinchilla, Clermont, Jandowae, Miles, Mitchell, Mt. Isa, Springsure and Wondai. In addition, certain existing fire-brigade districts will absorb other areas, and as the result fire-fighting services throughout the State will be considerably enlarged and expanded and advantage will be taken of much of the fire-fighting equipment, such as trailer pumps and other apparatus of a like nature, that it has been decided to allocate

to those centres at a very nominal charge. As time goes on, of course, a number of those local authorities that are still making up their minds will, no doubt, also participate in that allocation.

Mr. POWER (Baroona) (2.19 p.m.): As the Government representative on the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board, I should like to say a few words on this vote. The board is very appreciative of the work the Government did during the war period, when it was thought that Australia would be bombed and when it was necessary to have available a large amount of fire-fighting equipment. The Government made that material available to the board, and some of it is now in the hands of local authorities.

The Minister has referred to the setting-up of fire-brigade boards throughout Queensland. A request was made to the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board for the services of an officer to make a report on behalf of certain local authorities that were interested in the formation of fire-brigade boards, and Mr. Moore, a competent officer of the board, has reported to the Minister as a result.

I desire to sound a note of warning on the establishment of fire-brigade boards throughout Queensland. I do not think it is much good having a fire-brigade centre unless there is an adequate flow of water. I suggest that the Minister seriously consider the question of preventing the establishment of brigades in centres where there is not an ample water supply. The board had a number of water fire-fighting appliances, which have now been handed over by the Government, and the board is giving consideration to the future use of them.

There was some industrial trouble and the firemen were out on strike for a brief period. The matter was taken to the Industrial Court and later the men decided by ballot that no further action be taken. Everything has now settled down and the members of the brigade and the board are working harmoniously together.

It will be necessary to increase the number of firemen in Brisbane. Since man-power authorities have relinquished their control over the men a number have resigned and others have been put on in their places. I want to assure the Committee that every application for such a position is carefully scrutinised and that the board strictly adheres to the policy of preference to returned soldiers. Due consideration will be given to that policy in any replacements that take place. It is important that we should obtain the right type of man for the position of firemen because the life is not an easy one. A number of people have the mistaken notion that all that a fireman has to do is to play a hose on a fire, whereas there are drills, training and examinations to be thought about. The men must pass the examinations before they can be promoted to the various grades, 2nd-class, 1st-class and officer. The board has endeavoured to help some of the older members of the brigade who have not been able to make the grade in the matter

of promotion. A tutor has been appointed to coach the men who submit themselves to the various examinations and the utmost attention is given by the men to this teaching. An examination will be held in the near future. It was contended by some of the men that the period allowed before the examination was not long enough. The matter was referred to the Government and eventually it was agreed to extend the time.

I thought that this Committee was entitled to have this information, seeing that the Government have a representative on the board. The industrial trouble has passed away, the men are working happily and contentedly, and in future we shall be able to make further improvements in the working conditions generally.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (2.24 p.m.): I know it is not competent for me on a vote such as this to criticise the basis on which fire-brigade boards are financed. I know at present they are financed by contributions of three-sevenths of the expenditure by insurance companies, two-sevenths by the Government, and two-sevenths by local authorities but I really think that justice would be done if nine-tenths were contributed by insurance companies, as they are the people who benefit mainly by the existence of fire-brigade boards.

However, the important matter that I wish to raise is that of extending fire-brigade services if possible to towns like Ayr. So far it has no reticulated water supply but it has, shall we say, a good mobile supply of water that would enable the fire brigade there to combat a fire and prevent it from spreading and doing serious damage. I want to give some small idea of the parsimonious manner in which the Fire Underwriters' Association has viewed the matter and of its rapacity in other directions.

The combined insurance companies contribute their quota to the upkeep only of fire-brigade boards. A little organisation in Ayr formed itself into a volunteer fire-brigade. Its members gave their time and their labour, they made their own uniforms, they paid their own expenses, and they did everything they possibly could at their own expense to form and work the Ayr volunteer fire-brigade. So paltry were the fire-insurance companies in dealing with these men, despite the fact that by their little organisation they may have saved them a considerable sum of money, that on one occasion they refused to contribute the small amount of £12 10s. for some small fitting that was considered necessary. The only water supply in South Ayr is the railway water tanks. The Railway Department agreed that this organisation should draw water from these tanks, and further agreed to pay £12 10s., half the cost of £25, for a fitting required to make some connection to the tanks to enable the brigade to fill up the mobile tanks they carry with them to combat fires. Despite the fact that this brigade is working primarily and solely in the interests of the people, but mainly in the interests of the rapacious insur-

ance companies and Fire Underwriters' Association, they had the temerity and nerve to refuse to contribute this £12 10s. for the necessary fitting for the Ayr Volunteer Fire Brigade Board.

I then took up the matter with the Minister, and received courteous consideration. Some deficiency in the Act prevents him from declaring Ayr a fire-brigades board within the meaning of the Act. Because Ayr has not a reticulated water supply, the township of Ayr cannot be declared a fire-brigade district within the meaning of the Act, and consequently we are unable to make the rapacious, greedy insurance companies pay their part of the upkeep of this efficient organisation, with the result that the shire council, which like all other shire councils has its expenditure governed from time to time by the various calls made on its general revenue, could not wholly maintain the service, notwithstanding its sympathy with the brigade. Although the shire council has helped the board to the utmost of its capacity, nevertheless much more should be done. I do not suggest this much more should be done by either the shire council or the Government, but some means should be devised to force the insurance companies to bear their share of the expenditure of such organisations as exist at Ayr and other centres.

I had the opportunity quite recently, in Ayr, of attending the annual meeting of this organisation. I never in all my experience saw a body of men more intent on its work and so eager to do good to the community in their own time and at their own expense as its officers and men. It is a tragedy that such an organisation should have to rely on the good nature of its citizens. I know that the Minister's hands are tied by the Act as it stands, and it is not competent for me to suggest amendments to the Act during such a debate as this, but I do know that a horse and cart can be driven through an Act at times, and an Act would have to be pretty water-tight for one not to be able to do so, or to circumvent it. If that is not so, I hope that the Minister will bring down an amendment to the Act to make the insurance companies pay their share of the expenditure necessary to enable this gallant little band in Ayr to carry on its good work.

Mr. TURNER (Kelvin Grove) (2.30 p.m.): I have had some experience in fire-brigade work. I have been terribly disappointed in the work of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade during the last 12 months. I have spoken on this matter on a previous occasion. Some years ago the board made inquiries in the South, seeking officers of better qualification and skill than the local men possessed.

I regret they have not succeeded in their mission. They brought a man from South Australia with a reputation as long as your arm who they contended was going to bring about efficiency and discipline within the brigade. I regret to say he has had neither efficiency nor discipline since he came here. I refer to the Chief Officer. We had several serious fires during the last 12 months that

resulted in total losses. When one considers that the brigade has the most modern fire appliances available in any part of the world, and over 200 men—or they had during the year—there is ample reason why we should expect some saves in the fires that have taken place, particularly the timber-mill fires, during the last 12 months. There has been a definite shortage of timber and it is regrettable to see timber mills totally destroyed.

I agree with the hon. member for Mundingburra as far as voluntary fire brigades are concerned. As a young fellow I was a member of a volunteer fire brigade, and we could never get anything out of the mean grabbing insurance companies. We had to go round from house to house and collect from the workers' homes enough money to buy equipment to keep the fire brigade functioning.

Mr. Brand: Does not the State Government Insurance Office give you something?

Mr. TURNER: It was not in existence in those days. I sincerely hope something will be done shortly about the fire brigade in Brisbane. There are rumours that it is going to build a new station in the vicinity of the Story Bridge. I hope the Minister will give the matter serious consideration before he commits himself to such a project. I think we should decentralise the fire brigade instead of centralising it. The idea behind this move is to centralise the brigade, to have an enormous station there with a number of units. I say very definitely that those units should be spread in a circle round the city so as to converge on to the city rather than go out of the city. I saw several turnouts within recent months and I saw as many as five vehicles chasing each other along the road. If the fire stations were distributed in small units, in a circle round the city, I think they would be of greater service to the community and they would give that service to workers' homes in the suburbs, which is very necessary.

Mr. Pie: You have suburban fire brigades.

Mr. TURNER: We have very few suburban fire brigades; we have not sufficient for my liking. I think they should be spread at every half mile radius out so that the workers' homes would have the same protection as the big business houses in the city. Today, if a fire happens at Indooroopilly the unit has to leave Toowong near the railway station, and if a fire occurs between there and Ithaca a vehicle has to be sent from Ithaca or from Toowong. If anything happens at Ashgrove the vehicle has to come from Ithaca, and if anything happens at Kelvin Grove the same thing applies.

Mr. Pie: It would be a pity if two fires occurred at once.

Mr. TURNER: It would be a greater pity if a worker's home caught fire and was burnt before the brigade unit got to it because there was no fire brigade within its area. I am not suggesting there would be a fire at all those places. If a fire brigade is sta-

tioned every half mile in a circle round Brisbane we should have a more efficient service; and there would be a unit or two within the city boundary.

Mr. Pie: You would have a lot of fire stations if you had them every half mile.

Mr. TURNER: I said, "every half mile radius." You would not have them all together. It would be far better to have fire brigade stations spread out like that than having a team of 100 men stationed in the city.

The units stationed there have to race out to help the small units already stationed in the suburbs. I sincerely hope that before an enormous amount of money is spent on a large station to house 11 units in the city proper, additional units be stationed in the suburbs.

My suggestion would also enable the men engaged in fire-brigade work to gain promotion. A man does not want to be a fireman all his life. If he has initiative he wants to become an officer or be placed in charge of a station. I know of some men in the brigade today who have been in it for over 30 years and because of the limited number of opportunities they are still first-class firemen. They are quite capable and without any hesitation I say that a number are more capable than the present Chief Officer although I know that is a big claim to make. Their experience and knowledge of fire work generally are very much greater than his and again I say without hesitation that if he would stay away from the big fires and let them do the job the loss would be considerably less.

I agree with the hon. member for Mundingburra that if the Government insisted that a larger share of the profits of the insurance companies, on whose behalf fire brigades principally operate, should be paid to the brigades, stations could be increased in the suburbs, that is, if it is finance that is the trouble. A better service would thereby be given to the people who keep the insurance companies going financially; 90 per cent. of the workers have their homes and furniture insured with these companies.

Mr. Aikens: I would say 99 per cent.

Mr. TURNER: I was being generous. I agree that the percentage would be higher but I never like exaggeration. I prefer to underestimate. The rake-off of these fire insurance companies is tremendous.

The hon. member for Isis mentioned the State Government Insurance Office. Had it not been for the establishment of that office the insurance companies would today be sitting behind a huge financial pile. The establishment of the State office and its reduction of the premiums on both fire and life insurance compelled insurance companies that wished to remain in the business to reduce their premiums. Moreover, had it not been for this action of the Government, people who insure their homes and furniture would be in a very sorry plight today.

Mr. Morris: How do our premiums compare with those of other States?

Mr. TURNER: They are considerably less in Queensland than in the other States, because of the competition from the State office.

Mr. Brand: Are you sure of that?

Mr. TURNER: The hon. member can study the Commonwealth Year Book, which is to be found in the library. I commend my suggestion to the very serious consideration of the Minister.

Mr. THEODORE (Herbert) (2.38 p.m.): It must be realised that the fire brigades rendered a wonderful service during the war. I am not in a position to judge of the capabilities of the Chief Officer of the Brisbane fire brigade or compare him with others but I know exactly what happened in my own area during the critical war years, particularly in the war-zone areas such as Innisfail and Tully. The people there were told they had to make adequate provision to cope with any emergency that might arise at any moment and they got very great assistance from the board in Brisbane. It assisted in every way possible. The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs did everything he could to help the brigades in these districts to put themselves in a position to cope as far as possible with anything that might arise, and it was no easy matter.

The districts are widely scattered. Should anything have happened in some of the areas about 15 or 20 miles from the fire station the position would have been serious. With the assistance of the department and of Mr. Stephens, Chief Officer of the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board, adequate safeguards were taken against serious outbreaks. I must give credit to Mr. Stephens for the way in which he helped our people. I pay tribute also to Mr. King, the Chief Officer of the Innisfail Fire Brigade. He has invented an appliance that would have proved invaluable in the event of emergency caused by enemy action. It is an arrangement that assured him of an adequate water supply at all times by damming drains and using pumps. His invention has been adopted in many parts of the State. By retaining some of the fire-fighting equipment such as trailer pumps and other appliances that were provided by the Civil Defence Organisation we have an adequate fire-fighting service in outside centres.

I agree with previous speakers who said that the insurance companies enjoy greater benefits as a result of the higher efficiency of fire brigades, and therefore should bear more of the cost.

Mr. POWER (Baroona) (2.43 p.m.): I wish to correct the hon. member for Kelvin Grove on one or two matters. He has referred to the appointment of officers from Southern States. The Acting Premier, who was then Secretary for Health and Home Affairs, pointed out at the time of the appointment that it was not a result of any conflict between

the officers and the board that southern applicants were selected. He pointed out that it was thought that a more efficient service could be given. Certain members of the board—I was not then a member—went south and selected two officers who are now doing an excellent job. I must contradict the hon. member for Kelvin Grove and say that there are both discipline and efficiency in the fire brigade now. The efficiency of the brigade was never higher than it is now.

The hon. member referred to fires in timber yards. He should know that it all depends on the time when the board is notified of the fire whether the timber yard is completely destroyed. I do not think we can blame the brigade or any member of the board if a timber yard is completely gutted.

The hon. member also referred to the building of a new fire station. I might point out that the plans have been approved by the Government. It is proposed to erect a new fire station at Kemp Place. The property has been bought out of loan funds obtained for that purpose. Approval has been given by the Government, plans have been prepared, but the work was delayed because of the war. No doubt it will have to be delayed still further because priority must be given to housing. It is essential that a new central fire station be erected because the present one is obsolete.

I cannot agree with the hon. member for Kelvin Grove about decentralisation. We have decentralisation now. We have fire stations at Sandgate, Nundah, Albion, Hamilton, Wynnum, South Brisbane, Ithaca, Toowong, in fact we have one wherever it is possible to put a station. Each station is equipped with suitable machines and an adequate number of men.

Immediately a call is made, if the officer of the district calling wants another appliance, the man in charge of the control room sends one from the nearest station, if he thinks it is necessary. If a large number of stations are set up with the idea of decentralisation, the amount that it will cost the Government will be out of all proportion to the benefit.

Mr. Aikens: Why make the Government pay it? Why not increase the quota payable by the insurance companies?

Mr. POWER: I assure the hon. member that I have no brief for the insurance companies, but whatever precept the insurance companies have to pay the Government have to pay too. The Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board, with the equipment it has, is quite capable of controlling any fire that might occur, provided it has reasonable notice.

Mr. Pie: You would not put fire brigades every half mile, would you?

Mr. POWER: No.

The most modern equipment is available to the fire brigades in Brisbane as the result of the action of the Department of Health and Home Affairs in connection with A.R.P. work. As a matter of fact, the board in

Brisbane has a surplus of material. We have investigated many items of new equipment that have been referred to us, but we know that the equipment we already possess is quite capable of doing the job and we do not intend to spend the money of the board—we are only trustees of public moneys—in buying some new, fancy equipment. We do not want fancy goods. We want something that is solid and capable of doing the job.

I desire to tell the hon. member for Kelvin Grove that whoever his informant is as to the alleged conflict between the officers and the board, he has been sadly misled. As a matter of fact, the board cannot get enough officers. We are short of officers now and have been for a number of years. Many men who are quite capable firemen have not been able to pass the qualifying examination to enable them to become officers. As a matter of fact, the board requested permission from the Government to shorten from five years to three the period a man must serve as a fireman before being eligible to sit for the officers' examination. The department gave the request due consideration, but was desirous of helping the men who had given the board long service. It said to the board, "You must have a look at the examination paper that is set. Are you giving these men sufficient time to pass the examination?" The Government of course, neither could nor would instruct the examining board, but it said, "We think it would be a good idea if you considered giving these men more time in which to pass the examination." The examining board readily accepted the suggestion. In addition, the board even appointed a tutor to coach these men in order to help them to qualify as officers. A number of them will sit for the examination that is being held in November and I believe the time for the completion of the paper has been extended from three hours to nine. That has been done in an effort to help these men who have given years of service to the board to qualify as officers.

Whoever gave the hon. member for Kelvin Grove his information has been wrongly advised. That statement is not true and I regret to learn that one of my colleagues has been misled by information supplied to him by some irresponsible person.

Mr. TURNER (Kelvin Grove) (2.49 p.m.): I anticipated that the hon. member for Baroona would have something to say in reply to me. I do not know what his object is. However, I say very definitely that before he had anything to do with the board conflict existed between the board and the officers. Mr. McKenzie and Mr. Moore were then Acting Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer, respectively. With the exception of Mr. Kent, Chief Officer of the Melbourne Fire Brigade and Commonwealth Fire Officer, Mr. Moore has higher credentials than any other man in Australia.

The board would not back him up in 1942 when an American sailor took a 5-gallon keg of beer on his shoulder and walked into the fire-brigade station. He ordered him to take it out, and the man refused. When Mr.

Moore rang up the chairman of the board the chairman did not have the courage to do his job. He is a very fine man personally, but as chairman of the board he was a hopeless failure. He said to Mr. Moore, "Forget all about it; it is Christmas time." Here was an officer in charge of the organisation, the Metropolitan Fire Brigades, trying to get discipline, and the chairman of the board lets him down. That was the root of the evil at the fire-brigade station, and it went from bad to worse, and then it was reported to the Government that the two officers at the brigade did not get discipline. They could not get discipline because the board would not back them up. The board advertised for a chief officer and a deputy-chief officer all over Australia. Certain members of the board were sent south for the purpose. The hon. member for Baroona was not then a member of the board.

Mr. Power: I made that quite clear too.

Mr. TURNER: Yes, but the hon. member tried to camouflage the position. There is no man in this Chamber who can give me any advice on fire-brigade work or the conduct or control of fire-brigade boards, because I served under the most capable chief officer that ever put on a uniform. It was one of the most efficient fire brigades in Australia at the time, and we worked with one-tenth the strength and equipment they have today. Let anybody go down to Brabant's building in Charlotte street and see what happened there. If he can say that the Chief Officer has justified his position, then I say there is something wrong with him. No matter how efficient the men are, if they are not directed correctly they become inefficient. They have very capable men there, but if the Chief Officer does not direct them in an efficient manner they cannot do their job efficiently. If anyone went down to Brabant's building today and saw that place he would never believe that a fire brigade existed in Brisbane. There you would see only the four walls standing, although there is a 12-inch salt-water main running past the door to which modern pumps could be attached. Then there is the city water supply running past the door as well. There were plenty of men, but they were not applied properly. I say that very definitely.

Mr. Pie: Were not what?

Mr. TURNER: Not applied properly. Several officers were virtually court-martialled because of the fire that occurred in R. M. Gow's. That is where the trouble started, because three firemen lost their lives. They did not do what they were instructed to do in their training.

Mr. Pie: That is a strong indictment.

Mr. TURNER: I have said it all before. I have said it outside, and I do not want any directions in this matter from the hon. member for Windsor. The first thing a fireman is taught is that the hose is his life-line. They went into the fire at R. M. Gow's, and then an officer went in to see how they were getting on. Just then the debris came down on them, or about where they were, and

fumes overcame them. They lost control of themselves apparently, and instead of getting down on the floor, where the fresh air was, and crawling along the hose, they apparently walked out, and instead of walking straight out they walked into the manager's office and could not get out. That was the cause of their losing their lives. They tried to tack that on to several officers of the brigade, but they failed, fortunately. That is what happened. Today they have a man who goes to the fires in a separate motor car. Hon. members know what happened here when several men were nearly killed in a collision between the Chief Officer's car and the first reel. He went one way and the reel went another. They collided at the corner of Creek and Adelaide Streets.

Mr. Pie: How should the superintendent go to a fire?

Mr. TURNER: He should certainly be on the first reel. That is his job. Instead he goes out in a sedan car.

Mr. Brand: You are fairly practical in saying that.

Mr. TURNER: That is only sound sense. The chief officer advises and directs, yet this man rushes to a fire in a sedan car. On this occasion, the reel went out before him and took one course and he went out in his car and took another, and they collided at the corner of the street. I differ with the hon. member for Baroona as to promotions. If half a dozen smaller stations were established their cost would be no greater than a big station.

Mr. Power: We cannot get the officers.

Mr. TURNER: If the proper incentive were there the board would get the officers. The incentive may be present at the moment. It may have been there since the hon. member for Baroona has been on the board. I hope that his being there made the change. I do want to emphasise that if the right incentive exists there will be ample opportunity for the board to obtain officers.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs) (2.57 p.m.): I should like to emphasise that under the Fire Brigades Acts a specific organisation is prescribed for fire-brigade boards. The boards consist of an adequate representation of the interests concerned. Practical experience over a period of years has gradually laid down fire-brigade policy, particularly with respect to by-laws and regulations. On the whole that policy is working fairly efficiently throughout the State. The Government look to the board to manage its own business. Occasionally, the Government have assisted, as in meeting the request from a section of the employees that the hon. member for Baroona mentioned, when after an investigation an endeavour was made to give a reasonable opportunity to many of the older firemen who otherwise would not be able to do so to get the assistance of a tutor to pass the examination.

Mr. Power: The Government did a good job there, too.

Mr. FOLEY: Many of the men said that the period set for the theoretical examination was too short, while others said they required more coaching. As a result of the Government's intervention and advice, the board supplied a tutor for the men and extended the time for examination.

Mr. Power: A lot more time.

Mr. FOLEY: That is so. It is now possible that these older men may pass the theoretical side of the examination and thus become very fine officers. Time alone will tell.

I want to emphasise that whether the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Board should establish more sub-stations and adopt a policy of decentralisation is entirely one for the board in its wisdom to decide. It has to consider whether it can equip the sub-stations, whether the increased expenditure is warranted, and whether it is giving a fair measure of service to the community under the present set-up.

As the hon. member for Mundingburra indicated, he has been very active on the question of the board in the Ayr district, but I am afraid he has tackled the matter slightly from the wrong angle.

He has made an effort, for instance, through representations to the Department of Health and Home Affairs for assistance to the voluntary fire brigade, but it is not the policy, where we can get a board established under the Fire Brigades Act, to help a voluntary organisation in the way in which we would help a properly established board. Although he has made representation for the setting up of a board in that district I should like to point out that is not his function. The matter of recommending to the Government that a board be set up is really a function of the local governing body in the area concerned.

Mr. Aikens: Is that what is holding the matter up?

Mr. FOLEY: That is what is holding it up.

Mr. Aikens: Thank you very much.

Mr. FOLEY: There is also a misconception on the part of the council in thinking it must have a proper reticulation system or water-supply system before a board will be established. That is not so. A number of places that have already applied for the establishment of a board, such as Springsure and Clermont, have no reticulated water supply; they will have to organise a mobile system. The same should be done at Ayr. I think eventually, when this misunderstanding is cleared up, an application will be made.

I might mention for the hon. member's information that we have indicated to the Ayr council that if we set up a board in that place we have available three trailer pumps,

1,600 ft. of hose and six branch fittings to enable the board to attach more hoses thereto. At Home Hill we offered the board two trailer pumps, 2,000 ft. of hose and four branch fittings. So there is no danger as far as equipment is concerned; we have plenty of it, and if they feel a little more is necessary in those places, and they are willing to fall into line, as other districts have done, we see no difficulty of providing fire-fighting facilities.

Mr. Brand: Do you sell it or give it to them?

Mr. FOLEY: We sell it at a nominal charge, a peppercorn charge.

Mr. Brand: What is the charge?

Mr. FOLEY: Very small indeed.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (3.3 p.m.): I thank the Minister very sincerely for clearing up that matter, and I am confident that the job will be gone on with. As I mentioned, I did take the matter as far as I thought I could possibly go. I was under a slight misconception. I thought the shire council had applied for the gazettal of Ayr as a fire brigade district and I had been told that such request could not be granted until they had a reticulation water supply there. I am pleased that the misconception was only slight. I believe the council itself was under the misconception that the board could not be gazetted without a reticulated water supply. I shall be only too pleased to make urgent representation both to the board and the Ayr Shire Council to have Ayr declared a fire brigade district.

Like the hon. member for Kelvin Grove I purposely divided my speech into two parts today, as provided for under the Standing Orders because I wanted to differentiate between two things that I wished to touch upon on this vote. I want to say this in connection with fire-brigade boards in general: while there was a danger of air attack the fire brigades were a part of the Civil Defence Organisation. I think Townsville was the only city of Queensland that was actually bombed and had first-hand experience of the debt we owe to the fire brigades. The work of the Civil Defence Organisation in Townsville was magnificent. Every man and every unit, no matter how small, worked magnificently. The fire-brigade board started off under a tremendous handicap. I did not get an opportunity last year to speak on this vote because it did not come before the Committee and this is the first opportunity I have had since I have been a member of Parliament to pay my tribute to the Townsville Fire-Brigades Board as one unit in the whole A.R.P. set-up in Townsville.

During last session I asked the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs who had put the saltwater mains and cocks in the streets of Brisbane and at what cost. The Minister replied that the Government had borne the whole of the cost of these saltwater auxiliary fire-fighting mains and the whole cost of the pumping equipment and that the total cost

was £57,000. It has been said more than once—because we in the North felt we had been neglected during the early years of the war—that not only had the Menzies-Fadden Government declared the Brisbane line as far as the military defence of Queensland was concerned, but that the State Government had declared the Brisbane line as far as the civil defence of Queensland was concerned.

Mr. Foley: That is not correct.

Mr. AIKENS: When one considers these hard solid facts given to me by the Minister himself, that the Government alone, on their own volition, spent £57,000 to provide auxiliary water mains in the streets of Brisbane and not one half-penny to provide auxiliary water mains in the streets of Townsville, which was the only city bombed, and incidentally was 830 miles closer to the Japs than Brisbane—

Mr. Foley: They contended that they had an adequate supply.

Mr. AIKENS: They contended nothing of the sort. As a matter of fact, on one occasion they went into the question of incurring the expense of providing a float to be put into Ross Creek so they could pump water from Ross Creek and the Department of Health and Home Affairs, I am informed by the members of the board, repudiated its share of the expenditure in connection with the auxiliary fire-fighting supplies of Townsville.

Mr. Theodore: What good would they be to you now?

Mr. AIKENS: As the hon. member for Herbert suggests, they would not be any good to us now. They would not be any more use to us now than those 12-inch and 15-inch mains in the streets of Brisbane, but they would have been of inestimable benefit to us in those days of 1942 if those bombs, instead of falling into the sea, had fallen on the centre of Townsville and set Townsville alight, because at that time not only did we not have an auxiliary fire-fighting water supply but the city of Townsville had been called on to supply water not only for its 40,000 civil population, but for 100,000 military personnel. For that reason we were vitally and tragically short of fresh water, not only for drinking and domestic purposes, but for fire-fighting purposes. We had only two reservoirs until about the middle of the war, and on some occasions one was empty. We were hard put to it to keep enough water in our two reservoirs—we have three now, one having been constructed since—to keep enough water in one to provide the domestic supply for civilians and troops, and had a fire occurred any distance from Ross Creek it would probably have wiped out a considerable part of the city. If a fire occurred providentially close to Ross Creek I know the Townsville Fire Brigade Board could have run a suction hose into Ross Creek. But there are 40,000 people in Townsville, spread all over the place. Probably it is the best-spread city of its size in the world. Only a very small part of Townsville is adjacent to Ross Creek,

or adjacent to this surface saltwater supply, and consequently we should have been at the mercy of the flames if those bombs landed on Townsville instead of landing in the harbour, and we should have been at the mercy of the flames because the Government did not see fit to give us the auxiliary water supply that they gave to Brisbane.

As I say, all these things are over. Providentially we were saved. We did not have the fire, nevertheless the wounds that we thought were inflicted on us by the State Government are still raw and tender, and it remains to be seen whether time will completely heal the wounds and remove the tenderness.

I should be lacking in my duty as a citizen of Townsville if I did not pay my tribute not only to the war-time efficiency of the Townsville Fire Brigades Board but to its peace-time efficiency. It is an old saying among the cognoscenti in Townsville, "If you want to set your house on fire then do it in any city in Queensland bar Townsville." The Townsville Fire Brigade does not give the arsonist any chance at all.

Mr. Devries: Neither does the Longreach brigade.

Mr. AIKENS: I have no experience of the fire brigade at Longreach but I am willing to take the assurance of the hon. member for Gregory that it is as efficient as the Townsville brigade and if the Longreach brigade is as efficient as the Townsville brigade then the people of Longreach are very fortunate indeed. I remember the time at Cloncurry when a fire was set and when the firemen went to get the fire engine out they found that not only had the spark plugs been removed from the fire engine but that the hydrant holes in the main near the fire had been filled with bitumen and sand so that even if they could have got the engine going and got it to the scene of the fire they would have been unable to sink the hydrants into the main. Those things do not happen in Townsville.

I do not know that it is necessary for me to stand up here and indulge in a flamboyant panegyric of the superintendent of the Townsville Fire Brigade and of the firemen, but as an alderman of the Townsville City Council and because a substantial portion of Townsville comes within my electorate I take this opportunity of placing on record the fact that I stood in this Chamber and paid my humble tribute of gratitude to the efficiency of the Townsville Fire Brigade.

Mr. YEATES (East Toowoomba) (3.11 p.m.): I agree with this vote and hope that it will soon be passed.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs) (3.12 p.m.): I cannot allow to go unchallenged the charge by the hon. member for Mundingburra that the Government neglected Townsville so far as fire-fighting equipment was concerned. As an alderman of the Townsville City Council and as the representative of the Mundingburra electorate in this Parliament he should

know better than that. He should have some idea of what the Government have done. Auxiliary fire-fighting equipment was granted not only to Townsville but to every town on the coast and to every town and city in what was then regarded as the vulnerable area.

Mr. Aikens: What is the good of equipment without water?

Mr. FOLEY: The fact that there were no pipe lines through the streets of Townsville is no argument whatsoever. With the up-to-date trailer-pump equipment that was supplied there was no need for a pipe line. That equipment could have dealt with any emergency that arose. It cost the Government hundreds and thousands of pounds during the war period to endeavour to give the population of this State the fullest possible protection. It so happened that a pipe line was necessary in Brisbane to provide an additional water supply for efficient fire-fighting purposes. At Townsville a great part of the city could have been protected simply by tapping the Ross River with trailer pumps and using fire-fighting equipment of the highest possible order as supplied by the Government. The points made by the hon. member are not in accordance with fact. The Government provided equipment not only for Townsville but for every city and town in the vulnerable area of the State.

Vote (Fire Brigades) agreed to.

MENTAL HYGIENE.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs) (3.14 p.m.): I move—

"That £414,659 be granted for 'Mental Hygiene.'"

This sum is approximately £72,000 greater than the amount that was expended during last financial year, and the amount expended last financial year was about £40,000 less than the sum appropriated. This was due mainly to two causes. First there was a shortage of man-power, with a consequent saving of salaries and wages amounting to £12,472. Then there is the fact that a number of proposed works could not be undertaken, and certain equipment purchases could not be made owing to war conditions. This meant a saving of £28,513 in maintenance and incidentals for the five institutions concerned.

The increase in the amount required for this financial year in comparison with the amount expended last year is accounted for by salaries and wages, £42,569, and maintenance and incidentals, £29,636.

The reasons for the estimated increase at the Brisbane Mental Hospital are—

- (a) Increased salaries consequent on a new award;
- (b) A small increase of 13 in the staff required, the additional positions included being one consulting medical officer (psychiatrist), one clerk-typist, two cooks, two kitchen men, one gardener, two grave diggers, one apprentice blacksmith, two laundrymen and one seamstress;

(c) The anticipation of a normal staff in place of the present depleted one.

Owing to the shortage of man-power the staff at that institution, as well as others, has been very much depleted. I believe that condition has been more marked at the Brisbane Mental Hospital than in other institution, and I desire to pay a tribute to the sacrifices of the members of the existing staff for the way they have co-operated, from the Medical Superintendent down to the labourer, in helping to carry on the institution during a difficult period.

At the Ipswich Mental Hospital the increase is due to increased salaries consequent on a new award and provision for the employment of three additional female nurses and a painter. There again we have been in difficulty through the shortage of staff, and it is hoped that before this financial year is over we shall be able to provide a normal staff, thus improving conditions for those who have had to carry on during a very difficult period.

At the Toowoomba Mental Hospital also the increase is due to increased salaries consequent upon a new award, and to provision for the employment of one additional female nurse and a carpenter, and the anticipation of a normal staff in place of the present depleted one. At that institution what is called a regulation strike has been carried on for a long period, and as a result the matron and the sub-matrons on certain days have virtually had to carry the whole of the burden of looking after wards left without attendants. However, in spite of this regulation strike, which has been carried on more as a protest against the grave shortage of staff than anything else, the members of this staff have, on the whole, done a very fine job. The department was utterly helpless in providing a normal staff. Repeated applications were made to the man-power authorities, who in turn went out of their way to meet the position by directing certain employees to the institution. Unfortunately, however, they had to adopt what was more or less a haphazard method and many persons directed to the institution refused to obey that direction. Further, many of the people who complied with the direction were not at all suitable for the duties that had to be performed.

At the Townsville Mental Hospital, an additional male nurse, who was previously paid from maintenance and incidentals, has been provided for in this vote.

At the Epileptic Home one additional attendant, a wardman, has been provided for.

I think I have given a fairly clear outline of some of the reasons for the increased amount required in this vote this year, and I take this opportunity of complimenting the members of all staffs generally for the splendid way in which they have carried on during the war period.

The Government have been handicapped in getting staff and buildings. In many instances we have had to crowd the wards, compelling patients to mingle under conditions that would not have been allowed in normal times. We

have not been able to provide for any extensions or do even repairs in many instances, yet we have had to accept the patients as they came along. Despite all this, the Medical Superintendent and the staff generally have carried out a very fine service to the community. Even today we are short of doctors. We have asked the Commonwealth Government to release certain men from the Army and the Air Force so that we might increase our medical staff and we now await their reply. Even now, when the war is supposed to be over, we are still meeting with difficulties and we shall not finally overcome them until the medical staff is increased to normal levels.

Since last session we have endeavoured to extend our operations by the establishment of a psychiatric clinic that would enable many people to avoid the necessity of having to go to a mental hospital. Various methods of treatment are adopted. The clinic consists of one of our best physicians as a psychiatrist and a psychologist in Professor Kyle. Each case is different from the others. A proper examination must be made to determine whether advice only is necessary to put a patient on the right track to health or whether some form of treatment is required. However, we are confident that by the establishment of this clinic many forms of mental illness will be corrected in their early stages and the patients thus prevented from drifting on as many have done hitherto, only to develop into incurable cases to be sent to one of our mental institutions.

Mr. Morris: Has that clinic been established yet?

Mr. FOLEY: It is operating at the present time. It is situated in the old premises of the Commissioner for Railways in George street, facing Adelaide street. The place is now being renovated and the best advice will be given by medical men. At the hospitals themselves there has been much development in recent years in connection with shock treatment. I had an opportunity of observing the application of these methods, which are practised by private mental practitioners, too. They are yielding very fine results in cases that are amenable to that form of treatment. People suffering from hallucinations have after a period of appropriate shock treatment left the mental institution cured and with no danger of ever becoming a permanent charge upon the community.

Naturally as time goes on the work will progress. Very fine scientific work is being engaged in by the medical profession, not only in this but in other countries. There are no misers in the medical world. That is to say, particulars of any success achieved anywhere are published in the medical journals. If that success is achieved in Australia the rest of the world thereby benefits and conversely, if some scientific discovery is made in Europe or America, Australia benefits. Dr. Stafford, as a result of his trip round the world on the advice and at the expense of the Government, naturally is now better able

to conduct this big organisation successfully than hitherto. As time goes on and as more tradesmen and material become available to enable us to proceed with repairs and improvements, and when more medical practitioners and skilled nurses become available too, we can look forward with a good deal of hope to the results of the treatment patients will receive in the future.

Mr. YEATES (East Toowoomba) (3.28 p.m.): Although I have observed that the vote this year is an increase of £72,000 as compared with that of last year I am not worrying so much about it. It is unfortunate that mental hospitals have to be provided. The number of patients affected with mental disturbances and diseases in Queensland is on the increase. Possibly that is so in other States too but the fact remains that there are far too many patients. We should adopt a policy of prevention rather than one of bricks and mortar. In 1938 I asked the Government to appoint a psychiatrist and spend more money in the prevention of mental diseases. I honestly believe that a great deal can be done in that direction with the aid of medical science.

I want to pay a tribute to the medical profession, notwithstanding the fact that some hon. members have cried them down, so to speak. That is by the way; we had a sufficiency of party politics yesterday. I look upon this department as being non-party. As the Minister said, whatever scientific discovery is made from study is passed round through the various medical journals for the benefit of the suffering world. That is in contrast with the work of an inventor. When he achieves success he takes out a patent for his invention and derives a great income from it. That is not so in the medical world, notwithstanding what is said in this Chamber. Therefore, the medical profession are to be congratulated very heartily.

If the Minister follows up my suggestion of adopting a policy of prevention I will congratulate him. Our method of treatment of mental disorders should be more along the lines of prevention. It is unfortunate that we have so many mental patients in our institutions; therefore, we must take care in treatment. The time is opportune for the creation of an intermediate or half-way institution. There are certain people, particularly older people, in the community who should not be sent to an ordinary mental hospital to mix with patients suffering from all types of mental disease, as the Minister stated a little while ago.

I knew it before the Minister mentioned it and I was glad he mentioned it. It shows that the Government realise the seriousness of the position. It is absolutely wrong to have these people placed in rooms and cells and mess rooms with bad cases. The half-way house that I spoke of should be built on the lines of a clinic; it should comprise several buildings, which should be surrounded by beautiful flower gardens. It is the duty of Dr. Stafford to work out the details. I pay a compliment to him; I believe he takes a great interest in all these matters. I ask

the Minister to speed up the work and grant more money for the provision of study facilities for young medical men in scientific research.

In the course of half an hour we shall be into the eighth day of the Estimates, although we have dealt with only one and a-half departments. I will not delay the Committee because there are several other Estimates—three in particular—that I think should not be shelved. I will mention them, whether the Caucus takes advantage of it or not—Lands, Railways and Agriculture and Stock.

Vote (Mental Hygiene) agreed to.

LAZARETS.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs) (3.32 p.m.): I move—

“That £26,901 be granted for ‘Lazarets’.”

The amount represents an increase of approximately £10,000 on the amount expended for the last financial year, 1944-45. The increase required for 1945-46 is due to salaries at Peel Island £530, and salaries for Fantome Island £928, making a total of £1,458; and under the heading of ‘Maintenance and Incidentals’ there is an amount of £8,838, which make the total of £10,296.

Mr. Brand: Does that include Dr. Reye?

Mr. FOLEY: He may be included in the Chief Office vote.

The increase of two in the staff required at Peel Island, compared with the staff employed during 1944-45, is due to the employment of a gardener and a housekeeper. An additional labourer takes the place of an attendant.

The whole of the staff at Fantome Island (Lock Hospital and Lazzaret) were previously provided for under the salaries vote for the Lock Hospital. As the last-mentioned institution has now been closed, a superintendent and an assistant for the lazaret have been provided in this vote. Last year, six employees in all were provided for the two institutions. What is known as the lock hospital was situated at one end of Fantome Island and the lazaret at the other end. As a result of the work that has been carried out by medical men in the head office, we have cleaned up most of the venereal cases there.

Mr. Brand: Through penicillin?

Mr. FOLEY: By penicillin principally. They have been virtually closed up.

Mr. Brand: Will Dr. Reye be doing full-time work on leprosy?

Mr. FOLEY: Virtually full-time work. He may occasionally relieve elsewhere if there is a shortage, but on the whole his work in the future will be definitely with the patients and in research work into this disease.

Mr. Brand: He will be giving attention by personal visits to the island?

Mr. FOLEY: Definitely; he has been doing that all along. At the request of the patients on one visit I made, I interviewed Dr. Flora Innes, who is in charge of the Elizabeth Kenny Clinic in George street, and she visits the place occasionally and also gives attention to the patients. She has done some very good work in the improvement of diet of certain patients, which has been to their benefit. She will continue to work in co-operation with Dr. Reye.

Mr. Brand: Can you say if you propose to move the lazaret from the island to the mainland?

Mr. FOLEY: I could not say at this stage. The matter has not been decided. It is rather a difficult problem to solve, because of the outlook of the public on this disease. I have discussed it with the patients and pointed out to them that if they did come to the mainland they would have to put up with what might be described as prison conditions. They said they did not mind that. They felt that they would be closer to their relatives. Unfortunately, their outlook might be different if they were removed to the mainland and put into what might be termed an internment camp.

Mr. Macdonald: They would have to be segregated.

Mr. FOLEY: That is so. The matter is still receiving thought from our officers and the Government. It is a very difficult thing to overcome the feeling of the public towards this disease.

I might point out that even if they do not leave the island Government policy is gradually to make their conditions such that the greatest degree of comfort will prevail for the patients on the island. For the information of the Committee I will indicate some of the engineering requirements to be provided this financial year. To improve the water supply £200 will be expended on a 5,000-gallon tank on a 30-ft. stand. Supplying water for the women's quarters will cost £175; providing water to all places on the lazaret settlement will cost a further sum, and the total cost of these works will be in the vicinity of £580. A complete pumping plant will run into £25. Hot water to the hospital and to the bathrooms that are being built will cost £600. According to the estimate of the Department of Public Works electric lighting would cost £3,400. Twenty electric light poles are estimated to cost £100. A portable saw bench and engine running into £100 has been ordered. The total to be expended in engineering works alone this financial year is £5,180.

Mr. Brand: There is no provision for a new hospital?

Mr. FOLEY: The present hospital meets all requirements. Since my last visit certain improvements have been suggested to the Department of Public Works and already much work has been done on the lazaret. The greatest trouble is to get men to go to the lazaret to do this work. It is very diffi-

cult to get a painter to take on the job of painting, for instance. Most men in Brisbane when approached simply turn the job down. We have supplied the patients with the materials and they are doing the work of renovating and improving their huts where it is possible. For instance, a fire occurred there. One of the patients, I understand, was responsible for the burning down of the recreation hall a few years ago. We have replaced the burnt hall with a rather good building. Fortunately we were able to get sufficient men to go there to do that work.

To improve the surroundings we have employed an extra gardener.

Mr. Morris: Is there any provision for telephone accommodation for the patients?

Mr. FOLEY: There is a single line, which is used mainly for departmental purposes. We have strongly opposed the use of the line by patients.

Mr. Morris: Can they not have an extension to their quarters?

Mr. FOLEY: As yet we have been unable to find a way of doing it. We are afraid that congestion might be caused if the patients made too great a use of the line.

I come now to Fantome Island, where we intend to provide extra comfort for the good sisters in charge. These sisters are Franciscan nuns, most of them being Canadians. They are a fine body of women who do excellent work for the aboriginal lepers, of which there are some bad cases on the island. Recently they were confronted with a problem. Certain of the nuns were given a course of intense training in dentistry before they left Brisbane, in order to enable them to extract teeth. As a result of their work on some of the patients who were in a bad way, they were confronted with the difficulty of providing dentures. We prevailed upon the retired dental superintendent of the Brisbane Dental Hospital to spend six or seven weeks there instructing two of the sisters in the taking of impressions. These sisters have carried on ever since. They take impressions, set up the teeth required and forward them to the Townsville Dental Hospital, where the dentures are made. In their own little workshop on the island they make all necessary adjustments.

We are endeavouring to have certain necessary buildings erected, but find it difficult to get men to go to the island to do the work. The building programme has been held up for a considerable time because of that, although we are hoping that as tradesmen become available we shall be able to induce four or six of them to go to the island and do this work.

Our general policy is to make the position of the patients as comfortable as possible, at the same time giving them the best medical service we can provide.

Mr. Brand: Do you have any cures during the year?

Mr. FOLEY: I should not like to discuss that because some patients might read what I say. My views on the matter might not increase their feeling of hope. We have a policy under which any patient who shows 15 consecutive negative tests is allowed out of the lazaret on parole.

Occasionally, a case shows promise of a cure. For instance, one patient recently had 14 consecutive negative tests but the fifteenth test, which was held in the laboratory in Brisbane, was positive. Naturally, that patient's hopes were dashed, but the test was definitely positive and he will have to go through the same thing all over again.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: Were those tests held at different periods?

Mr. FOLEY: Fifteen tests were taken over a period of 15 months. I am informed that although from time to time a patient goes through the tests successfully and is allowed out on parole, if he does not follow up the treatment he has been receiving it is not long before he is back again in the lazaret. It would therefore appear that the finding of a cure for this dread disease has so far baffled the medical profession. Of course, there is still hope that through medical research some method of combating it will be discovered. The information given to me by my medical officers is that it is possible to get a patient to the stage where approximately 15 tests will show that to all intents and purposes the organism causing the disease is absent, but if there is any neglect in the treatment that has brought the patient up to that stage it is only a matter of time before he is back again in the lazaret.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: Many of them come out and have to go back again.

Mr. FOLEY: That applies to almost all of them. There may be an odd person who has been very careful to continue the treatment after leaving the institution and who has not had to return.

Mr. J. F. BARNES (Bundaberg) (3.47 p.m.): I have been trying to speak on this vote for approximately two years. It is approximately two years ago that I went over Leper Island to see the conditions existing there but unfortunately, this vote was not discussed last year so that I did not have the opportunity of saying anything on this matter. At last, however, we have an opportunity of speaking about it and I say that that island is an absolute disgrace to any Government, despite what the Minister has just said. These lepers are unfortunate people. They have not committed any crime. They have contracted a disease that has baffled the world for thousands of years. The penalty inflicted on them is ten thousand times worse than that inflicted on prisoners in a gaol. I emphasise the fact that the conditions on Leper Island are absolutely shocking. They are a lasting disgrace to any Government. I saw the conditions and I also saw the conditions at Palen Creek. The people at Palen Creek are criminals—they have done something wrong—yet they have

complete freedom and the conditions they enjoy are about ten thousand times better than those at Leper Island. If these lepers were criminals I might have expected to see the conditions that prevail at Leper Island.

The Minister, in answering the hon. member for Isis, offered the very weak excuse for the fact that the lepers cannot use the telephone service, although there is a telephone line from the mainland to the island—all that is needed to give the lepers the advantage of using the telephone is an extension from the office—that the department wants to use the telephone and could not afford the time that would be taken up if the lepers were allowed to use it. Does the Minister think we are all kids or all dills? The lepers, without causing any interference with the activities of the department, could use the telephone from, say, 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 5 p.m. till 9 or 12 p.m. The Minister gave a weak excuse in the hope of glossing over the matter. The conditions at Leper Island are a shocking disgrace to any Government.

I paid a visit to the lazaret in Sydney for the purpose of making comparisons with the one at Peel Island and I say that the lazaret in Sydney is ten thousand times better than the one at Peel Island. I am not saying that we should do as they are doing in Sydney. The lazaret in Sydney is associated with a public hospital, and one has to go through the public-hospital grounds to get to the lazaret, which opens out onto the bay or the ocean—I forget which, but I think Botany Bay. Down there the ordinary hospital nurses and the doctors swim only 300 yards away from the leper patients. I am not interested in whether Sydney is right or we are right. I am not qualified to say, but I say that both cannot be right. In Sydney the patients are allowed to have six clean smears in six months to qualify for their discharge, but at Peel Island they must have 15 clean smears in 15 months. Is Sydney right or are we right? I do not know which is right, nor do I care, but I do care to see that the Government find out which is right.

In the various lazarets throughout the world the lepers are not segregated as they are here. In England they get about like any other patient. I am not saying that we should let them come to the mainland, but I am justified in asking the Government to make a full and complete inquiry on behalf of these poor unfortunate people, who should have every consideration.

Peel Island is a very suitable place for the installation of a septic system and there is nothing to prevent it, but there is no septic system there. I wrote to the Government asking them to give these unfortunate people some facilities and amenities, including a recreational hall. When I was down there the recreational hall was such that you could swing only two dogs and a cat in it. And the Government expect these lepers to be satisfied with those conditions. These inmates are unfortunate people. Their illness has baffled science down through the ages and it is our duty to give them whatever comfort we can. When I was there a committee of

them asked me to make certain requests to the Government, which I did by letter. The requests included the benefit of a picture show. We know that in the course of time certain films get out of date and are not shown anywhere, but I know that these lepers would be mighty grateful to have these films shown to them. That can be easily arranged and it is our duty to do it.

Mr. Foley: We have that on our programme.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I am very pleased to hear that. That also was in my letter. I do not know whether the recreation hall has been completely furnished, but I hope that it has. It is nearly two years since I was there.

I hope that the Government will remove the boat landing from its present site. If my memory serves me correctly it is about two miles from the living quarters. I admit that it is in a convenient working place in relation to Dunwich on Stradbroke Island. However, I am sure that the boat landing could be placed nearer the living site, near the home, especially as it is contemplated that Dunwich will be removed to the mainland. The inmates are entitled to this concession. It is a mighty effort for a sufferer from leprosy to walk from his home down to the boat, as they frequently do, and back again. Indeed, it is a physical effort for anyone in the best of health. That also was contained in my request to the department.

Mr. Foley: A utility truck is being provided.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I asked for a utility truck for the use of the lepers there. They are entitled to those privileges, as they are unfortunate people. On the occasion of my visit the male lepers asked me to try to get the Government to give them a bed-sitting room with kitchenette attached to it, for the plain and simple reason that at times the tucker is frightful. The day I was there I had dinner with the matron and the tucker was very good. Of course, it was a well-known fact that I was coming to the island that day and the fact that the member for Bundaberg was coming along could start them working pretty quickly. But I heard lots of complaints about the tucker. These unfortunate people want a bed-sitting room and kitchenette so that they can cook their own tucker and have little novelties when they desire. I hope that the Minister, who has not said he has granted this request, will extend to them this privilege too.

In each of the rooms in the lazaret the Government should provide a wireless set. This would help to give these people the comfort that should be theirs. They are not prisoners; they are unfortunates. It is unfortunate we have to segregate them. I am fully in accord with their segregation until evidence is placed before this Committee that it is right to do otherwise.

I interviewed the staff also who complained bitterly about their tobacco supply. They are entitled to it and the Government are

in duty bound to see that they get it, for the plain and simple reason that it is difficult to get a staff for that institution. There must be a fair staff to look after the number of people on the island. The matron herself was an old darling, but she could not be a matron in any hospital in Australasia on account of her age and also on account of her affliction. She had a disease which I diagnosed as creeping paralysis; it may not be that, but the symptoms were similar. The patients on Leper Island are cast there and treated more or less as lepers were treated in the days of old when no-one wanted them and occasionally half a bullock or other food was thrown over the fence and they had to do for themselves. There is not much improvement today on those conditions.

How can a woman who is an invalid give the necessary treatment to these people? She is not in a fit physical condition to do so. Then there is the psychological effect of the medical condition of the matron. It is sufficient to make those lepers believe that it is impossible for her to give them the service required. I realise that the department has the usual difficulty in getting a matron for that place. While I say that she is an old darling the position of matron of that hospital is beyond her, and it is psychologically impossible for her to control the patients.

When the Minister was speaking he was asked whether patients who were discharged from Leper Island ever returned, and he said in almost every case they returned again to the island. That is not surprising to me. They have to get 15 clean smears before they are able to leave, and when they do leave the island they are pushed out into the world on a lousy invalid pension. They cannot live on that pension. The result is that they are compelled to work. The effect of their having to work is that they return again to the island. Therefore, their return is caused through their financial insecurity. Each and every patient who leaves the island should have at least the basic wage so that financial insecurity will not be a factor in bringing about his return to it. That financial insecurity leads to worry and retards recovery is a well-recognised fact in medicine. Economically it would be cheaper for the Government to subsidise the pensions of these patients to bring them up to the basic wage so that when discharged from the island they would be able to live in reasonable comfort and be free from financial worries and not return to be an expense on the Government. The Minister has made no provision in that direction.

There are a couple of other things that I should like to speak about. One is the statement made by the Minister that they are putting in a 5,000-gallon tank and it is costing £200 to put in it. If that is true somebody is robbing somebody. A 5,000-gallon tank costs about £23—at least it costs less than £25—and the timber is procurable on the island with which to make the stand.

Mr. Foley: About £300 all told.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: That makes it worse still. If a tank costs £23 and the stand is to cost the balance—

Mr. Brand: Is it a concrete tank?

Mr. Foley: £200 the tank will cost.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: Is it concrete?

Mr. Foley: It is a water-supply tank.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: The Minister implied in his speech that it was a galvanised tank. I congratulate the Government on taking notice of the several requests submitted through me. I hope that next year there will be no complaints from Lazaret Island, except the complaint that the patients want to come to the mainland. I told the people there that I would not be in favour of that until it was proved that they would not spread the disease. It is recognised that there are some areas of infection and some places where you cannot contract leprosy. As it is known in Queensland, the infected area runs from about Gympie north. There is another patch in the Beaudesert district, and another patch close handy on the Northern Rivers, which is the only part of New South Wales where there is an infected area. In the North leprosy is quite common. I am not going to ask the Queensland Government to move this lazaret to the mainland until we are convinced that there would not be any chance that these poor unfortunate people would spread the disease.

I should like to hear the Minister state next year that public rooms, lounge accommodation, wireless equipment, a septic system, a motor utility, and the phone were all at the service of the inmates.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (4.3 p.m.): I had intended to speak on the matter of facilities afforded to those unfortunate men and women on Peel Island, but in view of the excellent address by the hon. member for Bundaberg I feel I should be more or less covering the same ground.

Before I deal with the vote I want to bring up something that I think concerns the integrity of myself, the hon. member for Bowen, the hon. member for Bulimba, and the hon. member for Albert. Only a week or two ago I rang the Department of Health and Home Affairs and told them I was arranging a visit to Peel Island for myself and the three members concerned, together with the hon. member for Mackay; and I also stated that it was expected the hon. member for East Toowoomba might be able to come with us.

At 4.4. p.m.,

Mr. DEVRIES (Gregory) relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. AIKENS: I made that request quite openly. I would have made it through the Minister himself but for the fact that the Minister was absent from the House that day. The day before the visit the hon. member for Mackay came to me and told me that because he had just got word some friends of his were coming down from Mackay he

was unable to make the trip. That was unfortunate but unavoidable. Next day, when we got on the Peel Island boat, we found that an officer of the Health Department had been deputed by the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs to accompany our party. We found to our astonishment also that the pass made out for the officer of the department, Mr. O'Shea, contained also the name of Mr. Turner, the hon. member for Kelvin Grove.

Mr. O'Shea made the trip for the simple reason that the hon. members for Bowen, Bulimba, Albert and I made the trip. I can only assume that the hon. member for Kelvin Grove did not make the trip because he found out at the last minute that the hon. member for Mackay was not making the trip, and I think I should be right in coming to the conclusion that the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs for some reason best known to himself had thought to send Mr. O'Shea to Peel Island in order that he might keep tab on us and watch where we went and hear what we said. I think I am right too in coming to the conclusion that the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs instructed the hon. member for Kelvin Grove also to come to keep tab on the hon. member for Mackay. These are only my conclusions. I do not wish them to be confused with facts, because I have no facts other than the fact that the pass was made out for Mr. Turner and Mr. O'Shea to accompany our party.

There was nothing secret in my making the trip to Peel Island and taking my fellow politicians down there. A man who is the husband of an inmate of Peel Island told me he would make his car available to take us as far as Cleveland, and I went round the House and asked several hon. members on both sides to make up a party of six. The hon. member for Oxley and other hon. members of the Opposition in the House now will remember that I asked them. I asked many members of the Labour Party to accompany us. There was no secrecy in our visit. I merely wanted to go down and see what Peel Island was, because I think it is the duty of every parliamentarian to acquaint himself first-hand with the conditions under which various State institutions are run. I went to Palen Creek and I took almost the same party there, but the Attorney-General did not send anyone to Palen Creek to keep tab on us. I must say, in fairness to Mr. O'Shea, that when we got there he made no effort to hinder us. He answered all the questions we asked him as truthfully as possible, and he arranged for us to see all we wanted to see, I have no objection whatever to Mr. O'Shea's accompanying us. I have no objection whatever to his conduct while he was so accompanying us, but I do object to being tabbed on or spied on by the Minister or anyone else when I am visiting Government institutions.

I believe that the medical service of this State in respect of lepers is one of the most backward in the whole of the civilised world. It is only a State Government who were bound hand and foot by men like Cilento,

steeped as he is in superstition and ignorance, that would perpetuate the system of segregation of lepers. Leprosy, it has been contended by medical men who are competent to speak on the subject, is a mild form of tuberculosis. The tuberculosis germ in its virulent form produces tuberculosis and tuberculosis, as we know, is highly contagious. It can be transmitted from one person to another and unfortunately is readily transmitted from one person to another, but we allow tuberculosis patients to go free in the community and risk infecting all with whom they come in contact. We do not know whence cancer comes, but we know many cancer patients, unfortunately—I have only the deepest sympathy with all cancer patients and all patients afflicted with any disease whatever and I do not make my remarks about these patients in any derogatory way at all; they have my heartfelt and sincere sympathy, because I do not know the day, neither do you, Mr. Devries, when we may be afflicted with one of these dread diseases—and we know that many cancer patients look worse than lepers, and yet cancer patients are allowed to roam at large, but when an unfortunate man or woman becomes afflicted with leprosy, the milder form of tuberculosis and distinctly non-contagious, he or she is immediately seized like a prisoner and sent to a semi-civilised community such as Peel Island. There is no known medical record of leprosy's having been transmitted from one person to another, no known record of its having been transmitted by contagion or infection. From time to time doctors have injected into their own arms and have implanted in their own skin the leprous tissue from patients in the last stage of leprosy, and they have been unable to contract leprosy by contagion or by infection.

Yet, because the medical service of this State is in the hands of a man who is steeped in medical ignorance and medical superstition—I refer to Sir Raphael Cilento—these unfortunate lepers are seized and thrown into a compound on Peel Island. In this respect we lag far behind other parts of the British Empire. We know that leprosy is prevalent in many of the countries controlled by the British Empire, and that it is prevalent among the dark races, but we find to our astonishment that while the British Government will not segregate the black leper in his own country, this Government have no hesitation whatever in segregating the unfortunate white lepers in this country.

I read from the annual report of the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association, the highest medical body on leprosy in the world; what I quote refers to black lepers in their own country—

“We treat the victims as human beings and not as mere economic chattels; we endeavour to convince them that we do not regard them as outcasts, and we ever maintain that spirit of freedom which is the essence of our empire and which has contributed so much to the United front which our empire shows to-day.”

We know, of course, that Cilento is not very much concerned with the British Empire unless he can get an opportunity to smash it and build up a Fascist Empire in its place, but there is an example of the British Empire preserving the freedom of movement of those black people afflicted with leprosy, and because this Government are in the hollow of the hand of a man like Cilento, we lock up our unfortunate white men, women and children who are infected with this disease.

Let me read again from the same report of the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association, which again deals with black people—

“Compulsory segregation, at least in its most rigorous forms has been or is being discarded in favour of voluntary methods in all the British Territories visited. The abandonment of compulsion in Zanzibar has been followed by a distinct improvement of morale among the patients without any diminution of numbers. Steps are already being taken towards putting into force the recommendations in the Somaliland report, which include the gradual transformation of the present system into one on a voluntary basis.”

So that the great heart of the British Empire believes in the voluntary segregation of black lepers while we alleged intelligent progressive people in Queensland still hang to the mediaeval idea of the compulsory segregation of lepers.

Here is another section of the report dealing with the incidence of leprosy in the Sudan—

“It is considered that the permanent eradication of leprosy will only come with a general improvement of the standard of living, which should be the objective of every public health service and administration. Much has already been done to raise this in the Sudan and care must be taken to resist the medical and humanitarian urge to spend money on direct medical work which could be better spent on improving nutrition, water supplies, housing, and village sanitation.”

One might almost think that that was written of Peel Island, because it says—

“Care must be taken to resist the medical and humanitarian urge to spend money on direct medical work which could be better spent on improving nutrition, water supplies, housing, and village sanitation.”

The hon. member for Bundaberg dealt with the deplorable conditions that exist at Peel Island, the little shacks stuck up there for men and women who were reared in decent surroundings, the primitive non-reticulated water supply, the old-fashioned and insanitary stinking dirty pan system, no sewerage, and the old three meals a day of beef and vegetables that are sent over from the mainland and have lost most of their vitamin value by the time they are served up to the patients. Here are the British Government doing more for their black lepers than we in Queensland are today doing for our white lepers.

When we talk about authorities, unlike the Acting Premier I will not fall for the salesmanship of Cilento nor do I claim, as he claims for Cilento, to be a world-wide authority on leprosy or any other branch of medicine. Therefore, I quote from men who are recognised as authorities on this subject. I shall now read an extract from the "Sydney Morning Herald" of 28 September 1937. This is an article by Dr. Molesworth, who was lecturer at the Sydney University on skin diseases, a member of the International Leprosy Association, and the author of many papers and books on leprosy and other diseases. This is what he says—

"It is useless locking up white lepers and making virtual prisoners of them. It is futile and has no justification whatever, and I advocate the abolition of segregation and the granting to the leper of freedom of movement among his fellows. Lepers should be treated, not like criminals, but as private individuals, with the right to live in their own homes and the right to have hospital treatment like any other sick person.

"A leper could live in a house without other people in that place running the slightest risk of infection. He should have his own room and should keep away from children, who have greater susceptibility to the disease. This is done in Europe, so why not here?

"There is absolutely no danger from leprosy yet the public, wide open to infection with tuberculosis and other dangerous diseases, still clings to its primitive belief that leprosy is a horrible scourge. While our ideas are back in the middle ages, lepers in European cities are not segregated and are allowed complete freedom.

"There are many free lepers receiving treatment in London, and there are more than 150 domiciled in Paris. In the whole of Australia there are about 60 white lepers."

This article, as I have said, was printed in 1937. It continues—

"Dr. Molesworth said that the greatest danger of segregation was that if a person discovered that he had contracted leprosy he immediately did his best to conceal the fact, because he knew that if he reported to the authorities he would be taken immediately to a lazaret, there to live as a prisoner, forgotten by the world. The result was that most of the cases reported were far advanced. Only a few days ago a woman had died a week after she had been admitted."

I do not think I need read the whole of the report, but it is all along those lines, and written by a prominent Australian doctor with a world-wide reputation for his knowledge of leprosy. He roundly condemns the segregation of lepers, yet we find that in this State lepers are segregated, treated as outcasts, and flung into Peel Island.

When I was at Peel Island I met a deputation from the inmates there. The hon. members for Albert, Bowen, and Bulimba and I were there at the same time. Mr. O'Shea, of

the Department of Health and Home Affairs, was there, too. I do not know whether he thought his presence would overawe the inmates and prevent them from saying something they might otherwise have said, but I can assure you it did not. What they had to say, they said frankly, firmly and openly. Some of their statements, I believe and frankly admit, were exaggerated. I used to make that mistake myself in the early days. In order to press my case I over-stressed it and exaggerated the unimportant things.

For instance, the inmates told us their food was rotten four or five days a week and that there were always cockroaches in the soup. I know it is possible at times for food to become bad and I know, too, that it is possible for a cockroach or a fly to get into one's soup. If you and I, Mr. Devries, as westerners, had had to throw out our soup every time a fly got into it, we should have had very little soup indeed. I believe that those things might happen at Peel Island on occasions, but not as often as the patients said they did. However, that does not alter the whole basic truth of what they put up to us.

They are housed and treated like prisoners. They are incarcerated on a small island of almost virgin bush. Even where the settlement is it is virgin bush. Each patient has a dilapidated hut with a small room off it, a kind of kitchenette, and a little dining room, a dining-roomette, I suppose you would call it, for the womenfolk, and huts only for the men. It all reminds me of the sign that used to be over that famous leper settlement founded by that magnificent Catholic, Father Damien, of Molotai. Over the gateway of the settlement was the sign, "Abandon hope all ye who enter here." Father Damien courageously and fearlessly went in amongst the lepers of Molotai. If anyone wants to read a defence of Father Damien, let him read that book by Robert Louis Stevenson entitled "Father Damien." Father Damien went there because at the time he believed that leprosy was absolutely incurable and that lepers should be segregated.

Medical science has progressed many miles since that day, but we still have in Queensland the Department of Health and Home Affairs that still believes along the lines of Father Damien. Father Damien believed it because he was honest and sincere, and because at that time medical science knew no better. Father Damien was abreast of medical science of his day, and he gladly gave his life in order to become segregated himself with the lepers of Molotai. A number of very fine nuns went with him and gave their lives, too. They, too, segregated themselves with the lepers on that island. No greater example of self-sacrifice, I suppose, exists in the history of medicine, and it was only because segregation was the only way they then knew of dealing with leprosy in those days, but it does not follow that segregation is necessary today. The whole trend of medical opinion is against the segregation of lepers. If the Minister intends to get up and reply to my remarks and attempts to justify segregation

of the lepers, let him submit one concrete fact in support of his case. I have asked in this Committee not to be fobbed off with generalities, not to be fobbed off with the opinions of Ministers, and not to be fobbed off with the opinions of private members of the Labour Party, but to be given the one fact to prove that leprosy was transmitted from one person to another by infection or contagion.

I want to say this, however, that the lepers on Peel Island told me that the present Secretary for Health and Home Affairs has done much more for them than was ever done in the past. He has instituted many little reforms and given them many little extra privileges that they did not have before, for which they are extremely grateful. I should be unjust if I did not tell the Minister here what the lepers on Peel Island told me in respect of his administration of the department. They are very grateful to him for these little concessions, although they are only palliatives. Much more must be done.

The lepers on Peel Island submitted to me the proposal that the lazaret should be transferred to the mainland, and I told them that while I did not believe in segregation myself, unfortunately the Government believed in it, and if they were transferred to the mainland they would go behind a wall. I asked them whether they would sooner remain on Peel Island without a wall or go to the mainland behind a wall. They tried to argue, of course, that they should not be behind a wall at all. I agreed with them, but I pointed out that Government policy would be to put them behind a wall if they came to the mainland. They assured me that they would prefer to be on the mainland behind a wall to being on an island in the middle of Moreton Bay forgotten by all except their unfortunate relatives.

At 4.23 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. AIKENS: If the Government in their stubbornness decide to keep Peel Island for this purpose they should alleviate the sufferings of these miserable people. I believe with Dr. Molesworth that the establishment of the lazaret on Peel Island mitigates the chances of eradicating leprosy in this State, because if I were to contract leprosy tomorrow or you were to contract it, Mr. Mann—and you are as worldly a man as I am—if your doctor told you on the side that you had leprosy, you would hide the fact, you would shield it because you would know that the moment you went to a Government doctor and told him that you had leprosy you would be seized like a felon. You would be looked on as something unclean and transported to Peel Island and left there to rot for the rest of your life.

So Mr. Mann, while segregation is in operation it defeats the very purpose for all early treatment of leprosy. It prevents the patient from going to a clinic and getting treatment in the early stages of the disease. It is also known that thanks to the Gestapo system introduced by Sir Raphael

Cilento, the segregation here is unlike that in other States. The unfortunate lepers at Peel Island have to get 15 consecutive monthly negative tests before they are released on three months' probation. In other States, as long as they get three consecutive monthly negative tests, they are released on probation. Unfortunately at Peel Island they can go up month after month, have a smear taken, and have it tested at the Department of Health and Home Affairs. For 14 months a patient may get a negative result, but on the 15th month, if he happens to get a positive, despite the fact that he had 14 negatives, he is still kept at Peel Island for another 15 months. One positive smear puts him right down at the bottom of the ladder again. I know no more inhuman or bestial practice than that. It can only be conceived in the mind of that monster of bestiality, Sir Raphael Cilento.

The other matter I want to touch on is the question of visitors to Peel Island. Patients' visitors are treated in a scandalous manner. A patient at Peel Island is allowed only one visitor twice a month. Fancy, one patient is allowed to have only one visitor twice a month! So if a father is a patient at Peel Island and has a wife and three children they have to take turns to go over and see their father twice a month. Previous to Sir Raphael Cilento's coming here and adopting his Gestapo Fascist tactics, previous to his coming here as a spy of the Italian Government, previous to his coming here and putting into operation tactics for which Mussolini had become infamous, there was a boat plying to Peel Island once a week and as many friends of patients as were able could go over and visit them there. If, as Sir Raphael Cilento claimed, leprosy was infectious, would it not infect one person as much as it would five? What a terrible thing that a decent white human being, with no other sin against him than that he has contracted leprosy is sent to a prison and denied the right of seeing his own relatives or friends!

(Time expired.)

Mr. TURNER (Kelvin Grove) (4.29 p.m.): I regret that the hon. member for Mundingburra should stoop so low as to accuse the Minister—

Mr. J. F. Barnes: Make him apologise. Don't take it from him.

Mr. AIKENS: Mr. Mann, I ask for a withdrawal of that. I do not stoop any lower in this Assembly than some of the colleagues of the hon. member for Kelvin Grove.

Mr. Farrell: You could not stoop lower than what you are.

Mr. Aikens: God forbid that I should stoop as low as some of you fellows.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member for Kelvin Grove to withdraw his remark, as the hon. member for Mundingburra considers it offensive.

Mr. TURNER: In deference to the Chair I withdraw, but I regret that any hon. member of this Committee should accuse the Minister of such insidious work as the hon. member for Mundingburra has done. Long before he came into this Chamber I was urging the Minister to give me an opportunity to visit Peel Island. It is the only institution within the environs of Brisbane that I have not visited. I wanted to visit the lazaret because I take a keen interest in the institution. I wanted to see what was going on; I did not want to see a circus or entertainment.

The Minister himself, some months before that visit was arranged, invited me to go with him and I arranged to go, but at the eleventh hour an elector called on me to do something—they come first always—and I told the Minister I could not make the trip. When this trip was arranged the Minister said, "Would you like to go to Peel Island?" I said, "Yes." He said, "There are a number of members going down; there will be two cars and there will be a seat for you." I said, "Right, I will go." At half past 4 the day before I had to ring Mr. O'Shea and tell him I was unable to meet him next morning as arranged because I had to do something for an elector. There was no suggestion that I should spy on him, the hon. member for Mundingburra, the hon. member for Mackay, or anybody. It was my desire to go to Peel Island. I hope it will not be long before I shall be able to make a visit to the island. I have an elector there. At the time an elector of mine, a member of my A.L.P., a foreman carpenter, was building additions there and he wished me to go and that was one reason why I wanted to make the trip. I was grateful to the Minister for giving me an opportunity to go. I regret I could not avail myself of it; that opportunity will come later.

Mr. BRAND (Isis) (4.32 p.m.): I regret that I was not able to make the trip with other hon. members to Peel Island recently. From time to time I have had a number of complaints from patients on that island. From experience I have always found that members of Parliament generally are prepared to extend the utmost sympathy to those who are unfortunate enough to be inmates of the lazaret. I believe that generally speaking all hon. members agree that the department should spend whatever money is necessary to provide modern conveniences for those unfortunates who are suffering from that disease and who are inmates of Peel Island. I was under the impression, until the Minister spoke this morning, that the Government did have some policy in regard to the future of the lazaret in this State, and that the Government were considering the building of a modern building, and had given consideration to the possibility of removing the lazaret to the mainland. I regret that my belief was wrong, because the Minister informed me this afternoon, in reply to an interjection, that the Government had made no move in the direction of considering the removal of that lazaret to the mainland.

Mr. Devries: If you have not seen it how can you pass judgment on it?

Mr. BRAND: The remarks I have made deal with the removal of the lazaret to the mainland.

Mr. Devries: Have you seen it?

Mr. BRAND: There is no need for me to see the lazaret on Peel Island to know whether it would be right to shift it to the mainland. I have had quite a number of letters from patients on that island as to the conditions there. I have taken the matter up with officers of the department. I have read many articles on leprosy throughout the world, and I believe, from what I have read and what I have been told, that it is possible to have a lazaret on the mainland without the danger of infection to other people on the mainland.

Mr. Walsh: That is pure bunkum.

Mr. BRAND: The hon. gentleman can speak for himself. Judging by some of the most eminent people who write on these matters it is not contagious. It is possible today for visitors to visit Peel Island, so the officers of the department must believe that the risk of contagion is not so great that they should not allow visitors to the island.

If the departmental officers hold that view I think there is something in the contention of those who say it is possible for a lazaret to be on a mainland without endangering residents of the mainland. Of course, we know that in other parts of the world a lazaret is not placed in an isolated locality like the lazaret of Queensland and if it is possible to remove the lazaret to the mainland it would be a great boon to those who unfortunately suffer from this disease and would bring some pleasure at least into their lives, a pleasure denied to them today.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: None of the staff contract leprosy from the patients.

Mr. BRAND: I know a young man who has had the unfortunate experience of being sent to Peel Island as a leper. He is a splendid young man who has a wife in Brisbane. They have been married only a few years and have a small family but her appeals to be able to visit her husband once a week have been refused. I took up the matter and found that it is impossible for the department to allow a weekly visit to the patients on the island. If it is transport that is the disability, we should vote the money to provide transport to enable people to visit their loved ones more frequently than they can today. I am sure hon. members will be willing to vote that money.

The hon. member for Bundaberg brought up a matter on which I wish to support him—the right of a patient to the use of a telephone on that island at certain hours. I hold, with the hon. member for Bundaberg, that it is not necessary for the administration of Peel Island that the department should have the telephone for the whole day.

I understand there are 40 or 50 patients and surely it could be used by inmates who wish to communicate with their relatives or their loved ones at least twice a week.

Mr. Devries: I know of a grazier who conducted his business from Peel Island by a special telephone line.

Mr. BRAND: With the consent of the Department of Health and Home Affairs?

Mr. J. F. Barnes: There is only one telephone.

Mr. BRAND: The patients on the island have not that right. They should be able to ring their relatives or loved ones on the mainland at least twice a week. They wish to know how their families are getting on. It is wrong for the State to incarcerate people in a lazaret without providing them with the conveniences that science has given to us to permit of their being in constant touch with their loved ones. The Minister could do much to help those unfortunates on the island and also their relatives by providing much freer use of the telephone than is permitted now.

If it is impossible for the department to give that privilege to the inmates of that institution surely it is not beyond us to provide telephone service from the mainland for them. I support the recommendations that have been made by the hon. member for Bundaberg and the hon. member for Mundingburra that the inmates of Peel Island be given the benefits of what modern science has to offer for the relief of the burden of their complaint.

Some inmates who have returned to their homes have had to return to the island, and they contend that the reason is that the hard work that they were compelled to undertake while away from the lazaret brought on a fresh visitation of the complaint. Amenities should be provided for these people who are suffering from a disease that is caused through no fault of their own. We representatives of the people should use all our endeavours to see that the Government of the day, whoever they may be, provide the best possible service for these people in their isolation. I believe that the Minister will be generous to them and I hope he will give greater attention to their needs than has been given in the past. If the inmates of any institution deserve every consideration at the hands of the Government those of the lazaret on Peel Island certainly do.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs) (4.43 p.m.): After listening to the points raised by the hon. member for Mundingburra I am satisfied that he would misinterpret the good intentions of his own mother if he thought he could capitalise that misrepresentation to his own advantage. When I received an intimation that a party intended to visit the lazaret I instructed Mr. O'Shea, who is the officer at head office in charge of the administration of Peel Island, to accompany the party so that every facility might be accorded its members to investigate any

aspect of the institution they wished. After doing that I find that my action is misinterpreted and it is suggested that I was responsible for sending Mr. O'Shea to act as a watchdog and to intimidate the patients so that the true position of the settlement would not be placed before the party.

The Government have nothing to hide with respect to the administration of the lazaret. Conditions, even in institutions on the mainland where they are in much more favourable circumstances than the lazaret, which is isolated in Moreton Bay, have deteriorated during the war years. It has been an utter impossibility during the war period to have certain work carried out even in our institutions on the mainland, let alone at the lazaret on Peel Island.

For instance, we cannot get painters to take on the job of cleaning and painting huts that have been used by lepers because of the fear of the possibility of contracting this disease. What can the Government do under such circumstances? Immediately paint is available—and for a long period during the war it has not been available—we shall procure sufficient for the lazaret and give the patients an opportunity of doing their own renovating.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: In 1941 when I entered Parliament 21,000 people were unemployed.

Mr. FOLEY: If the hon. member inquires from the hon. member for Cooroora he will tell him that during that time conditions at the lazaret were very favourable. The only thing that has been responsible for any deterioration down there has been the inability to obtain tradesmen and material.

Mr. Macdonald: Do you offer extra wages to painters and carpenters to go to Peel Island?

Mr. FOLEY: Yes, yet the Department of Public Works has virtually to go down on its knees to get tradesmen to go to the island and do this work. We were successful in getting a few carpenters to go down recently, but we could not get any painters. We are endeavouring to give the patients some additional recreational facilities, and as the result of getting those few tradesmen to go down we have had a new recreation hall built. Provision is being made in that hall for a projection room and when the opportunity offers a projector will be bought and facilities provided for the showing of films. That will, to a large extent, help to break down the boredom that is always associated with such institutions.

With regard to the segregation of these people, the hon. member for Mundingburra quoted what he claimed to be authorities. However, what is the condition of lepers in other parts of the world where they are allowed out at large? They are living under the most deplorable conditions and are forced to beg alms from the people in their communities. What is the condition of the leper in such places as India, the Philippines, Java,

and other parts of the world? He lives in the lowest depths of degradation because other people will not go near him except to throw him a small coin out of sympathy. Although we do segregate, on the advice of our medical men and not because of any decision of the Government itself—

Mr. Sparkes: It is done purely and simply to protect other people?

Mr. FOLEY: It is done purely and simply on the advice of medical men, in order to prevent any possible spread of the disease. It is true that attendants at the lazaret have not contracted the disease, but that is only because they are continually aware of the possibilities and use the strongest possible antiseptic solutions to prevent any possibility of infection. Anyone who has a meal at the settlement will notice that a wash basin and deodorants are provided so that the necessary precautions can be taken. What would happen if these people were allowed to wander at large and to mingle with and fondle children? There could be only one result. A percentage of those children who were susceptible to this disease would eventually finish up in the lazaret. Therefore, Governments have to take notice of the advice of their medical advisers.

I might mention, too, that notwithstanding the obsession of the hon. member for Mundingburra in regard to Sir Raphael Cilento, the conditions at Peel Island were much harsher before he took over the position of Director-General of Health and Medical Services than they are now. The position has improved since he took over.

Every possible precaution is taken with the laboratory tests. I am informed by Dr. Derrick that the organisms responsible for leprosy differ from those that cause other diseases. You may take two smears from the same leper patient, place them under two different microscopes and only one will disclose organisms responsible for the disease. That is how difficult it is for our medical experts to keep a check on the patients. However, segregation has proved a safeguard against the spread of the disease and for that reason its incidence in Queensland is not great.

Reference has been made to the splendid work of Father Damien and the staff of good sisters who went with him and sacrificed their lives at the lazaret with which they were associated. I would ask the hon. member for Mundingburra: how was it that Father Damien contracted the disease? Did he have it before he went to the lazaret to look after the patients? The fact is that he contracted it but whether it was in there or outside no medical authority will be able to say.

It was also suggested that there should be better roads and a better boat landing for the lazaret on Peel Island. A few years ago just on £500 was spent by way of a survey in an endeavour to provide a suitable road from the shores of the island to the settlement and eventually it was decided

to leave the landing jetty in its present position. To give greater facilities to the patients, at one time we had a horse and buggy in which they could ride backwards and forwards to the jetty but today we are providing a motor-truck for the patients in addition to the motor-truck that is used to convey the goods and equipment landed at the jetty.

On the subject of wireless, let me say that there was a period during the war when no civilian could buy a wireless set; they were not available, they were not being made. There was great difficulty too in having an old one renovated or improved. But recently the position has eased and we have bought wireless sets. It is our intention—if it has not already been done—to see that every person on the island has a wireless set for his convenience and entertainment. Provision will be made for the batteries to be recharged by the department. Extra tobacco has been supplied in recent months though we have had great difficulty in procuring it.

The hon. member referred to the matter of nurses and he led the Committee to believe that there was only one old matron in charge of the lazaret. As a matter of fact, there was a matron and two nurses. The inference from his remarks was that there was only one matron and that she was not giving service.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: Mr. Mann, I rise to a point of order. There was no such inference at all. I said there was an old matron in charge. There was no such inference and the hon. gentleman has only read that into my remarks. I ask him to accept my denial.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the Minister to accept the explanation of the hon. member for Bundaberg.

Mr. FOLEY: I accept his explanation but I think hon. members could have come to no other conclusion than that the hon. member for Bundaberg was endeavouring to convince the Committee that suitable nursing facilities were not provided.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: I never mentioned nurses.

Mr. FOLEY: The hon. member said there was one old nurse there, and that she had developed some form of creeping paralysis, and was in her old age. The position is that this good old lady he referred to has given yeoman service to the lazaret. She went there in its early stages many years ago. After she went there she slaved like a trojan with very little help, particularly in the early days. She is now some years over the age limit. Again, the whole difficulty is to procure a suitable type of woman to take charge and control that institution. Since June last we have been advertising for a matron for the institution, but up to date the only applicants have been persons we do not consider suitable. We hope eventually to obtain a suitable woman to fill the position.

I mentioned earlier the water supply. Some reference has been made to the absence

of a sewerage system. Here again, the whole difficulty has been lack of water on the island. Notwithstanding years of search by various departmental officers and water diviners, it was only recently, and during the war period, that a suitable supply was obtained. The necessary reticulation system is now being provided for the settlement. That is the first essential. As time goes on, and if the supply is sufficient, I can assure the Committee that steps will be taken to provide a septic or sewerage system.

The hon. member for Bundaberg also complained that patients were deprived of the use of the telephone. It would be very desirable if we could provide a telephone to enable a patient to have a conversation with his friends on the mainland at any time he desired. Unfortunately, it is a trunk-line system in operation only from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or 5.30 p.m. The system has been in operation for some years. When a patient requires any message or telegram to be forwarded to friends or to given destinations the superintendent endeavours to meet his request. That is the best we have been able to do up to date. The line is a single one giving a limited service, and there is a definite departmental objection at present to a patient's having the unlimited use of it.

We have long laid down a policy to give eventually the greatest possible comfort and best treatment that we can for the patients at this institution, but certain disabilities have for years operated against our doing that. There have been the difficult war years. The lack of water supply has prevented certain amenities from being provided. The inability to obtain a suitable type of matron for the settlement has been another. Notwithstanding all these factors we have, wherever it has been possible, given greater comfort to the few patients on that island. That policy will continue, as conditions and circumstances allow, particularly as tradesmen and supplies become available. Every attempt will be made to give every comfort and attention to the institution.

As I pointed out earlier, and as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition mentioned Dr. Reye, a young doctor employed in the Industrial Hygiene Section of the department, has from time to time had occasion to visit Peel Island as medical adviser to the patients. I further pointed out that within the last year we have arranged for Dr. Flora Innes to also visit the island. I want to add that we have also arranged with Dr. Behan, of the department, to interest himself in this work in an endeavour to give the patients a good medical service.

Dr. Reye was so taken by the possibilities of research into this disease that he has read up all the text books and authorities that are available on the subject, and he finds—notwithstanding the remarks of the hon. member for Mundingburra—that very little is known about the disease. He is engaging in research in an endeavour to discover much more than is known today, and facilities are provided for him by the Government, in addition to the amenities we are providing, with the

object of making the lot of the individuals on the settlement brighter than it is today.

Mr. PATERSON (Bowen) (5.1 p.m.): I do not pose as an expert on this terrible and unfortunate disease of leprosy, therefore I do not propose to say anything about the rights or wrongs of segregation, but I do suggest that it would be advisable, for the purpose of enabling hon. members to get a clear picture of the position, if the Minister at some favourable time were to place before the Committee a very detailed statement of the scientific view of the whole position; then we should be in a much better position to discuss this very important and very debatable question.

I do support the remarks of the hon. member for Bundaberg and the hon. member for Mundingburra in regard to the deplorable conditions of the inmates of that unfortunate island. I realise that the Minister has now stated that the Government have plans in hand for materially improving the position, and I am bound to admit that during the visit I made recently in company with the hon. member for Mundingburra, the hon. member for Albert, and the hon. member for Bulimba I saw evidence that something was being done. I saw that a new recreation hall had been completed. I trust that it will not be very long before the whole of the plans the Minister has referred to are implemented. Nevertheless, the question still remains: why was not something done along these lines before the war became so serious and manpower and materials were very difficult to obtain? I agree with the remark of the Minister that within the last few years, owing to the difficult position of the war, it was impossible to get painters and other tradesmen, but the point is that much more could have been done prior to the war to improve the deplorable conditions of the inmates on this island.

I cannot accept the explanation the Minister gave that it was lack of a water supply which prevented a system of sewerage from being installed because, as is well known, salt water is used in order to cleanse the lavatory systems on ocean liners; and I cannot see why salt water cannot be used for the sewerage system on Peel Island. It may be that some of the fittings of the sewerage system would be rusted, but the expenditure necessary to replace the rusted fittings constantly would have been more than warranted by the increase in sanitation and cleanliness of the living conditions of the men and women on Peel Island.

I do want to take this opportunity of supporting wholeheartedly the suggestion made by the hon. member for Mundingburra in regard to visiting. We were told when we went down—and apparently the Minister agrees with the hon. member for Mundingburra on this point—that patients were allowed only two visits a month. That means that if a man or a woman or a child is an inmate on Peel Island, he or she can be visited by only two people each month.

One of the saddest sights I saw when I was there was a young lad inmate of about 14

years of age. That young lad has a father and mother and if the number of visitors is restricted to two a month it means that his mother can make only one visit and his father only one visit a month or if the mother makes two visits the father cannot make any. I urge the Minister to give serious consideration to the need for increasing the number of visitors that these unfortunate people can have.

I came away from Peel Island depressed because I realised the terrible position of these people. I feel sure that every member who comes from the country will appreciate the unfortunate position these people are in because we who come from the country know what separation from our own families means. On account of the difficult housing problem I am in that position—my wife and children in Townsville and I in Brisbane—and I can tell hon. members that it is hard enough to be separated for four months from my family. But I am able to visit them from time to time. I am also able to speak to my wife on the trunk-line telephone once a week or more frequently if I wish, but with all that I miss my family—I miss my children. There are married people on Peel Island. There was one woman in particular to whom we spoke. She is a married woman. Her husband made the visit with us. She has children and I suggest to the Minister that he give serious consideration to increasing the number of visitors the inmates can have. That woman must go through a life of hell separated from her husband and children, as she is. The total number of visitors she can possibly have is two a month. I understand they are not allowed to have children as visitors.

Mr. Aikens: And the visit lasts for only two hours.

Mr. PATERSON: I suggest that the department do something to permit the visits of children. I cannot see how children run any greater risk than other visitors, a father, a mother or even a member of Parliament. We made the visit and as the Minister has pointed out we were given a strong disinfectant with which to wash our hands before we had our meal. But after we had that meal we did not leave immediately. We interviewed the committee. We inspected other parts of the island and we did not wash our hands with disinfectant before we left. If it is dangerous for children to visit the island I cannot see why it was not dangerous for us to be there.

I repeat that the visit was depressing and it would be depressing to anybody who had in him a streak of human kindness at all because with the present institution one might as well say that a person who goes there is exiled. As the hon. member for Bundaberg pointed out, these inmates have committed no crime. They suffer from an unfortunate disease and apparently science and the medical profession are not able to say definitely that they should be freed from exile or released from segregation. The least the Government can do is to improve the position and give these people the best they can possibly give. If it is necessary to segregate them, then

give them the maximum amount of happiness possible and I do not know of any better way of giving these inmates happiness or increasing their happiness than increasing the number of visitors they can have. In this way they will be capable of spending more happy moments and more happy hours than they are at present able to spend.

Mr. MARRIOTT (Bulimba) (5.9 p.m.): My name having been mentioned during the course of the debate, I feel impelled to express my opinion on some of the conditions I observed at Peel Island on the occasion of my visit. Personally I have no fear of contracting leprosy. Thirty-six years ago I was in close contact with an aboriginal leper for a period of five weeks. I was one of the crew of a vessel that frequently had the job of transporting lepers from the Gulf country and other places in the north, particularly from Cairns.

We had one leper handed over to us at Cairns from the back country for transportation to Peel Island. That was in March 1910. On that occasion my sympathies were with the leper, especially when I saw the conditions to which this unfortunate human being was subjected as a passenger on the vessel. The shipping proprietors had been paid £30 to provide accommodation for him on the after-deck of the ship, immediately over our cabin. What I objected to was that although the £30 was provided the accommodation was not weather-proof. On the morning when we were due to sail from Cairns I was embroiled in probably the fourth or fifth industrial dispute in my history. Unfortunately, I did not know enough or I should have made things a bit lively on that occasion. Before I agreed to sail with the ship from Cairns I appealed to the Government Medical Officer to be sent for. The leper's cabin was made of second-class T & G pine, roof and all. The roof was made of T & G pine and the whole thing was roughly put together in a few hours at night by carpenters. The doctor got into the cabin with the leper and said, "I will sleep with him all the way down to Brisbane." I said, "Look, doctor, I am not complaining about the risk of infection; I am complaining of the treatment that poor chap is going to suffer between here and Brisbane." It must be remembered that that was the hurricane season, the year before the "Yongala" was lost. I knew what we were likely to run into. However, with a bit of a subterfuge they managed to get us out of port. We had not gone far down the coast when I was sent for—I was lying on my bunk—to give the mate a hand to put some sheets over the passenger's cabin because he was being flooded out in the heavy weather through which we were going. Things became so bad that we simply had to unlock the door, let him out, and let him dry his blankets. For the rest of the journey we let him have the run of the deck of the ship for five weeks while we were weatherbound behind the islands in Hinchinbrook Channel and abreast of Mackay. Personally, I was not afraid of any risk of infection. We had him running about amongst

us on the deck of the ship and we were particularly sorry for him when, on a certain Sunday morning, after being examined by the doctor at Dunwich, he was taken to Peel Island where he and his cabin were pushed over into a barge to be landed on the island.

Having been in close touch with a former patient at Peel Island during the course of my parliamentary career, I know something of the conditions down there. One of my electors is a former patient of the lazaret at Peel Island and I had told various lepers that I would endeavour to go down there and see for myself what was happening. When this opportunity was offered I availed myself of it readily, and went to see for myself just what was going on and how the lepers are treated.

While there I was impressed with the fact that no transport was provided for the lepers from the settlement to the landing stage. We have been told that originally a horse and buggy was provided for their use, but the old caravan has been burnt and efforts were being made to provide a motor-truck. One of the patients is to be paid an allowance to keep the vehicle in order and it is to be used for transporting patients backwards and forwards to the landing stage. I think the road could be put into better order too. It could be made more like a road in the backblocks of our farming settlements.

Mr. J. F. Barnes: A C class main road.

Mr. MARRIOTT: Yes, a C class road could be put there instead of the present rough bush track. I am pleased to hear the Minister say that he intends to provide a motor vehicle. I was shown a garage that had been built to house a vehicle, but there was no sign of the vehicle itself.

Mr. Foley: Motor vehicles are hard to get.

Mr. MARRIOTT: The Minister says they are hard to get. I know very well how difficult it is to obtain motor vehicles. However, be that as it may, I am pleased to hear him give us the assurance that a vehicle is to be provided.

I want to join issue with the Minister in what he said a few moments ago about the maintenance of the buildings at Peel Island. Some of the buildings I saw were in a disreputable and dilapidated condition. With the exception of those who are very ill and are in the hospital ward, the patients are housed in single cubicles, and I saw one that was not fit to house a pig. It was not even weather-proof. Glass was missing from the windows and bags were nailed over the openings to take its place. The Minister has said it is not possible to get tradesmen to do the necessary repairs, but there are men down there who could do them. I noticed that the women have the concession of a kitchenette alongside the bed-sittingroom so that they can vary their food a little. They are provided with a stove, which helps them to make life a little more bearable. I noticed one of my constituents there and had a chat with

her. She was a seamstress and was making uniforms, for the bandmen. She was a bandswoman herself. I was interested to find that there were handy-men on the island, men who could effect the necessary repairs to these buildings if they were provided with the material. The Minister says he cannot get carpenters and painters to go down there, but if these handy-men were provided with the material they could do the job. They showed me a room that they assured me they had painted themselves and there was nothing wrong with it. If further paint could be provided, they could do the necessary work. Nobody can tell me that you cannot get paint in Brisbane. Paint has been obtainable here for a long time, of good, bad and indifferent qualities. I think the department could get good paint.

Whilst speaking to this constituent of mine in the women's section of the settlement, I noticed that a handy-man was trying to make her quarters weather-proof, but he was using pieces of fibro-cement to fill in the gaps in the windows. I suppose I shall be told that glass is not available. However, many months ago I was able to buy glass to repair the windows in my own home, and quite recently I was able to buy over 100 square feet of glass from a glazier and had it put into a new building. Nobody can tell me that glass and paint are not available. Almost unlimited quantities of both of those articles are now obtainable in Brisbane. If materials of that kind were supplied to these people down there it would keep them occupied and give them something besides their own troubles to think about.

I failed to hear the Minister's remark—if he made it—that a power plant is being established on the island. However, if a power plant is to be established—and I understand that it is—it will be something more for the welfare of the patients.

It will be possible for them to have their wireless sets because the Minister has intimated that they are to be bought shortly and supplied to the patients. If the power plant is installed it will be an easy matter for the patients to have battery sets or even sets connected directly with the power system.

I support the request for a telephone for the use of patients. It need not be the staff telephone, but perhaps a special telephone or extension from the existing system. No-one imagines that the patients are going to use the telephones for, say, three hours on end, nor will they use it every day. They could be allowed to use a special telephone at certain stated periods of the day.

I also support the request for more frequent visits to the patients. It has been explained that they are allowed only two visits a month for a matter of, say, two and a-half hours each. If we are to be considerate to these unfortunate people, who are virtually imprisoned through no fault of their own, and if we are to have regard to their comfort and welfare we should allow them to have more visitors than they have now. If that means a heavy influx of visitors better means of transportation will have to be found.

At the present time the only means of getting to the island is a launch that serves the dual purpose of running to both Dunwich and Peel Island. Naturally, if there is a crowd of visitors for Dunwich they might crowd out the visitors for Peel Island. The present launch is about 50 years old and sooner or later it will have to be replaced. The Minister should consider the purchase of a more up-to-date launch, and while I am on the subject I suggest that he give the crew the requisite materials to keep in it a decent condition. It may be said that that is already being done, but when I went down on the launch I noticed that the glass in the wheel-house window had been replaced with three-ply and on asking the skipper the reason for it he explained that glass was not available although he had asked for it, and as he expected heavy weather it was necessary to put up a piece of plywood to prevent the spray from flying back into the wheel-house and into the cabin. I suggest that the Minister make inquiries of the Government stores to see why glass has not been provided, and why the materials previously sought have not yet been supplied to enable the patients to do small odd jobs about the settlement for their own comfort and for the maintenance of the buildings.

I am reminded of a matter that I mentioned a few years ago in connection with Wattlebrae Hospital. When the patients at Peel Island are required to undergo an operation they are brought to the mainland and taken to Wattlebrae, but they are not segregated there. It is true that they are placed in a small ward outside of Wattlebrae main building, where they are treated.

I know one woman who was taken there; she was not segregated but when she recovered she was taken back to Peel Island and duly segregated. I have already indicated, as other hon. members have done, that there is a fear of infection—that seems common among laymen—but I personally had no fear 36 years ago and neither have I any fear today of contracting the disease by being brought in contact with a patient. As suggested by the hon. member for Bowen, a frank statement, understandable to the layman, of expert medical views of the treatment of leprosy and its incidence should be placed before the Committee by the Minister. I urge the Minister to endeavour to improve the water supply at Peel Island as quickly as possible, to establish a sewerage or septic system there, to improve the road, to provide facilities to enable patients to use the telephone to the mainland, and to allow more frequent visitors to the institution.

Mr. J. F. BARNES (Bundaberg) (5.26 p.m.): I am pleased that I have five minutes of my time left, as it will enable me to reply to the Minister. His reply was typical of the replies of previous Ministers in charge of his department. He evaded the point and implied improper motives on my part. When I made reference to the matron I specifically pointed out that the matron was not capable, by virtue of her age and the fact that she was suffering from some disease which I

thought was creeping paralysis. Creeping paralysis affects anybody who suffers from it by causing the hands to tremble, as it did the matron. I did not speak about the nursing staff.

Then, in reply to my request for increased telephone facilities, the Minister offered the miserable excuse that the telephone to Peel Island was part of a trunk-line service. That is wrong. The Cleveland service is an all night service and embraces Peel Island. Just fancy the Minister evading that request by saying it was a trunk-line service limited as to time.

Then let me take his statement about establishing a septic system. I was the originator of a saltwater flushing system on the Barrier Reef. It has been in operation for seven or eight years. The Minister should have made inquiries about that system and installed it, and if he wants to know anything about it I will tell him.

Then, in answer to the request for improvements, the Minister trotted out the old bogey of the war. He said the war was on. Conditions on the island were rotten before the war started. They were rotten in 1941 when 21,500 people were unemployed in this State and wanting a job. Yet this Government would not give them a job. Now they turn round and say that they are trying to do something!

The Government have improved some of the conditions on Peel Island as a result of my written requests. I am grateful to them for having acceded to some of those requests. The conditions at the institution were so putrid that one man escaped to the mainland and eventually reached Sydney. He got in touch with me at the Sydney lazaret and later came to my hotel in Sydney and interviewed me. That shows the latitude that lepers have there. He consulted the Government Medical Officer in Sydney, who sent him away. He then stayed at a prominent hotel. This man, who was a wealthy grazier from the Territory, knocked about Sydney for three or four days before the medical officer put him in the lazaret. That is how seriously they regard leprosy in Sydney as being contagious. At Peel Island a visitor has to roll up his sleeves and wash his hands and arms in some disinfectant to make it appear that it is a terribly contagious disease.

In the Sydney Lazaret the wardsman shows you round and he pulls up a patient's sleeve or pants and handles the infected part and makes a cigarette and has a smoke afterwards. I said to him, "Are you not frightened of contracting the disease? Shouldn't you take the precaution of disinfecting your hands?" He said, "No, that is rats. Statistics prove that no-one has ever contracted leprosy in that way here." Up here at our lazaret when you have done the rounds all this disinfectant is poured on your hands to make out how great is the danger of infection.

The Minister tried to misquote me, but my case was that psychologically the matron was not capable of carrying out the duties of

matron, as I also suggested that the patients on that island with their affliction would make a mountain out of a molehill. Whether that is so or not does not matter. Psychologically, apart from physically, she was not capable. She was not capable physically on account of her illness and that is borne out by the fact that the Minister is calling applications for a new matron for the island.

Vote (Lazarets) agreed to.

GOVERNMENT MEDICAL OFFICERS.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs) (5.31 p.m.): I move—

“That £2,215 be granted for ‘Government Medical Officers.’”

The amount required is the same as that for the year 1944-45. There was a saving of £115 in expenses in 1944-45 because payment was not made to the Government medical officers of Cooktown and Herberton. It is expected that we may need that amount for this financial year.

Mr. J. F. BARNES (Bundaberg) (5.32 p.m.): This vote provides for the appointment of Government medical officers throughout Queensland, including one in Brisbane who goes backwards and forwards to Peel Island. That would allow anyone to discuss Government medical officers. Likewise Sir Raphael Cilento is the full boss cocky, which will allow us to discuss Cilento. Sir Raphael Cilento’s salary is paid on the Chief Vote, we know, but he has complete control over these medical officers. One of these medical officers could have been an assessor on the Medical Assessment Tribunal, which I am going to speak about. It was ruled by Justice Douglas and Philp in that case that I spoke of that Cilento was wrongly on the Medical Assessment Tribunal. Mr. Justice Douglas said that Dr. Michel had not exercised his prerogative at the right time and therefore his request failed, but Judge Philp stood hard and fast and said that Dr. Cilento—

Mr. FOLEY: I rise to a point of order. There is no question on this vote of the appointment of any medical assessors on the Medical Assessment Tribunal.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to keep to the matter before the Committee, which is the vote for Government medical officers.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I endeavoured to point out to the Minister that the chief medical officer was an assessor on the Medical Assessment Tribunal, but was wrongly there; and the Act provides that he can appoint an assessor who could act if he was an interested party—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to keep to the question before the Committee.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I am trying to point out that I am keeping to it. Dr. Cilento

could have appointed this medical officer in Brisbane who under these Estimates receives £500 or £600. It is fair to point out, seeing he was an interested party in this regard, that he could have appointed a Brisbane medical officer referred to in these Estimates. If that is so, this medical officer could go to the board and do what Cilento did—the wrong thing. Therefore I am entitled to point out to this Committee—

Mr. FOLEY: I rise to a point of order. I should like to point out this vote applies only to Government officers throughout the State, not to Government officers or medical officers attached to the Medical Assessment Tribunal.

The CHAIRMAN: I have already pointed that out to the hon. member. I ask him to confine his remarks to the question before the Committee.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I am trying to argue that this Dr. Cilento had the power to appoint a man in his place on the Medical Assessment Tribunal. I fully appreciate that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The power of Sir Raphael Cilento has nothing to do with the vote before the Committee. This vote deals with the salaries of Government medical officers.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: If that is so, I would point out that these Government medical officers, either in Bundaberg, Brisbane, or throughout Queensland, get their power from Dr. Cilento.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The powers of Dr. Cilento are not under consideration by the Committee. It is the salaries paid to the Government medical officers in the various towns that are under consideration.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I appreciate that and I bow to your ruling, but I am pointing out that these doctors, in receiving those salaries, take instructions from the chief medical officer. They are the medical officers for the State of Queensland and take instructions from the chief medical officer. That cannot be denied. If the chief medical officer gives them instruction he is directly or indirectly connected with this vote, as was the case with the previous vote. In the debate on the leper island, Dr. Cilento’s name was mentioned frequently, for the reason that he was the full boss cocky of the leper island. He sent his understrappers backwards and forwards there. In the vote for the lazaret, Dr. Cilento’s salary was not included; therefore, according to your ruling, Mr. Mann, members could not discuss Dr. Cilento.

The CHAIRMAN: Only in passing.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: Only in passing. I am discussing it from the point of view that he could have appointed a man to sit as an assessor on the Medical Assessment Tribunal. Such a man would have been an assessor. I would point out that in a Bill brought before the House recently, filth was quoted by one of the members. That fact is proved by his

own evidence if one reads the debates. The member concerned said that this particular court case was lost—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have already asked the hon. member to confine his remarks to the matter before the Committee. If he continues to disregard the authority of the Chair I shall have to ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: I am afraid you will have to ask me.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. J. F. BARNES: Mr. Mann, in this Chamber, if the debates do not affect the Government party, they are allowed privileges of speech on something provided nothing is gained from it, but immediately the debate affects Government party members the whole thing is sabotaged.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would point out to the hon. member that the matter he wishes to discuss must be relevant to the question before the Committee. He cannot go outside the scope of the question before the Committee.

Mr. J. F. BARNES: This morning you gave a ruling, Mr. Mann, and I moved that your ruling be disagreed to. You ruled that what the hon. member was quoting about Dr. Cilento was out of order, and then you allowed the hon. member for Windsor to carry on. You later allowed me and others to carry on, and exactly the same principle applies here.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The facts stated by the hon. member are true, but hon. members are beginning to make licence out of the liberty given by my ruling, and from now on I intend to keep every member in the Committee to the matter before the Committee. I see that the more liberty I give hon. members the more licence they take. I ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the vote before the Committee.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (5.39 p.m.): I have some very pertinent remarks to make on this vote, but I will make them as short as possible and confine myself entirely to facts. This vote provides for the allocation of certain moneys from Government funds to pay Government medical officers in various cities and parts of the State. I make the suggestion that various medical officers in this State, particularly the Government medical officer in Townsville, is prostituting his government position in the interests of his private practice. I ask the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs to have an investigation made to find out just how many patients of Dr. Halberstater were his private patients and were his patients at the Lister Hospital in the two years prior to his declaring them fit for some governmental service or other, particularly the railway service. There are many men who have told me these things but—and I am in this unfortunate position again—will not give me a definite written statement on the matter.

The Minister can get the evidence if he holds an inquiry and investigation. Men who go along to Dr. Halberstater in Townsville suffering from some complaint, such as hernia which can be remedied by an operation, were almost told by Dr. Halberstater to go into the Lister Hospital as their patient and then, after they have been cured he will pass them as fit for railway service or for whatever other branch of the Government service they seek to enter. Men who have said to Dr. Halberstater that they have not got the money to become his private patients—and Halberstater is one of the 25-guinea and 30-guinea men mentioned here the other day by the hon. member for Carpentaria—but who offer to go into the General Hospital are given a broad hint by Dr. Halberstater that if they go into the General Hospital and get cured there is every possibility of their not being passed by him for permanent employment in the railways or any other branch of the Government service.

Let me give an idea of just what is the attitude of the Australian Railways Union at this time. The Railway Department became more or less fully staffed during the war and many of the men were temporary employees. The department now finds itself in the position of having to pay off some of the temporary employees to make room for the returning men who are coming back from the war, and in order to deplete the staff to meet the depleted running conditions of the railway service. There is a leading article in the Railway "Advocate"—and these are not my words—that almost charges the railway departmental officers with using the Government medical officers to put off these temporary employees. The Australian Railways Union claims that these men are sent down to the Government medical officer with a sealed envelope. If they are sent to the Government medical officer in Townsville or elsewhere in Queensland with a sealed envelope that is a bit better than the practice that operated some time ago, although it is still fairly bad. When the Railway Department wanted to get rid of a man who was almost irreproachable from the point of view of railway rules and regulations, they did what they did in the case of Driver Thomas McMahon. McMahon was a man who, considering that he had suffered some injustice at the hands of the Railway Department, put the railway rules and regulations into operation in their spirit and letter. The Railway Department found that it could not deal with McMahon under the rules and regulations because McMahon knew the railway rules and regulations off by heart. So one day, although there was absolutely no need for it at all—and I want the Committee to listen to this because all this is on official records—the Railway Department decided to send McMahon down to the Government medical officer at Townsville. Before McMahon got to the Government medical officer an officer of the Railway Department was closeted with the Government medical officer for some time, and when McMahon went into the Government medical officer he was asked certain questions by the Government medical officer. Mind

you, McMahon, for some reason known only to the department itself—and he was a classified driver with about 30 years' experience—was sent down to the Government medical officer in a flash for a physical and medical examination. The first question asked him by the Government medical officer was—

“Are you a Communist?”

At 5.44 p.m.,

Mr. DEVRIES (Gregory) relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. AIKENS: The next question was—

“In the 1931 strike, were you a striker or a loyalist?”

The next question was—

“Is it not a fact that in driving a train from the South yard to the North yard on such-and-such a date you got stuck and the fireman had to take over and bring the train from the South yard to the North yard for you?”

McMahon was no fool. He answered all the questions, but he carefully took down each question that was asked of him. He received some cursory examination from the Government medical officer, and I have no doubt that if the Government medical officer had not been tipped off to what McMahon did he would have certified that McMahon was unfit to continue in the railway service. McMahon went straight to the A.R.U.

The A.R.U. went straight to the Medical Board and the Minister, who at that time I think was Mr. Hanlon. The moment the Government medical officer in Townsville knew McMahon did that the case collapsed and he was granted a clean certificate.

That is the sort of thing that goes on in the Government today. As I say, men who could not really afford to go to the Lister Hospital and be treated by Halberstater, have told me that they went there because they were given to understand and feared that if they went to the General Hospital they would be rejected on medical grounds. However, the Australian Railways Union is coming out into the open in the current issue of the “Advocate” and is complaining that the Railway Department is using Government medical officers in various centres as retrenchment boards.

Mr. Collins: You are complaining in this case because he was handed a good bill of health.

Mr. AIKENS: In McMahon's case?

Mr. Collins: Yes.

Mr. AIKENS: McMahon got a good bill of health not because the department and the doctor wanted to give him one, but because the A.R.U. went either to the Minister or to the Medical Board, and the Minister of the day, I believe, put his foot down on it straightaway.

Mr. Hanlon: That is another fantastic idea of yours.

Mr. AIKENS: It may be a fantastic idea, but I challenge the ex-Minister for Health

and Home Affairs to lay all the papers in connection with the McMahon case on the table of this Assembly.

Mr. Hanlon: I never had the papers in connection with the McMahon case.

Mr. AIKENS: You would not have them now that I have mentioned it.

I believe that wherever possible the superintendent of the public hospital should be the Government medical officer. A man without the right of private practice should be the Government medical officer wherever possible. In the small country centres it does not matter so much, because in those places there is usually only one doctor and he is the Government medical officer; he is the superintendent of the hospital, and he also enjoys the right of private practice among all the patients in that area. Therefore, the matter of private practice does not enter into the issuing of certificates by him from time to time in connection with employment in the railway or Government service.

Now I come to something for members to put their teeth into, and the present Minister for Health and Home Affairs cannot deny that he has these papers. Quite recently a boy was sent to Dr. Halberstater in Townsville for the purpose of a medical examination for admission to the Department of Justice. Dr. Halberstater, however, rejected him for employment in that department and issued a certificate for rejection on the grounds that the boy had no sight in his left eye—that he was blind in the left eye. Fortunately, the boy's father came to me and we had the boy sent along to Dr. W. Chapman, who is a qualified eye specialist in Townsville. Dr. Chapman immediately issued a certificate that the boy was suffering from an absorbed cataract in the left eye, and used some other medical terms that I do not fully understand, and, unlike the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs, will not try to pronounce. However, Dr. Chapman said that with the use of glasses the vision of the boy's left eye would be 6-9, and that is not bad vision. I wrote to the Attorney-General on the matter and he placed the certificate before the Public Service Commissioner. The Public Service Commissioner then took the matter up with the departmental doctors in Brisbane, who readily accepted Dr. Chapman's certificate, and the boy is now employed in the Public Service in Townsville. Had I not been able to get to the Attorney-General, and had the Attorney-General not been actuated by a sense of justice—and I have always found that he has been—that boy would now be out of a job because Halberstater had certified that he was blind in the left eye and had issued a false certificate wittingly, knowing absolutely—

Mr. Foley: Did the lad not have to get special glasses?

Mr. AIKENS: Yes. If the Minister had been listening he would have heard me say a few minutes ago that Dr. Chapman's certificate read, that with glasses the boy's vision in the left eye would be 6-9.

There is a case in which the Government medical officer knowingly issued a false certificate—a case that I brought before the notice of the Department of Health and Home Affairs.

Here is a case of a Government medical officer's knowingly issuing a false certificate. The boy had told him what Dr. Chapman had told him. The boy had told him that with glasses he could see fairly well with the left eye and knowing that he deliberately issued a false certificate yet this man occupies the position of Government medical officer at Townsville. The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs cannot deny that he had the papers in connection with that case. I wrote to him again only the other day to ask him what he intended to do. He wrote to me first and told me what the doctor had said. I have no complaint about his correspondence in the matter but I am confident in my own mind that if I had not been afforded the opportunity of bringing the matter up here nothing would have been done. If that boy had had an absorbed cataract in the right eye to the same extent as he had an absorbed cataract in the left eye, Dr. Halberstater would unhesitatingly have certified him as being stone-blind, because he had said that he was blind in the left eye—no sight in the left eye—deliberately and knowingly issued a false certificate; and he still holds the position of Government medical officer in Townsville. Let the Minister get up and answer that case.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs) (5.52 p.m.): I am satisfied after hearing the hon. member for Mundingburra discuss certain aspects of certain votes in this Chamber that he goes to no end of pains to exaggerate the position in favour of his own case. It is true that he referred to this case of a lad who had occasion to go to Dr. Halberstater in Townsville for a certificate so as to be eligible for appointment to the Public Service. Dr. Halberstater did issue a certificate indicating the degree of defects in the lad's eyes.

Mr. AIKENS: Mr. Mann, I rise to a point of order. Dr. Halberstater issued a certificate saying, "No sight in left eye." I do not think the Minister can complain that I made an incorrect statement.

Mr. FOLEY: The particulars of the certificate submitted to me were in turn submitted to Dr. Gibson, who is employed by the department and is a recognised eye specialist in Brisbane. Dr. Gibson reported to me that from the facts as set out in Dr. Halberstater's certificate that only special glasses would correct this particular defect, and only as the result of the boy's going to another doctor and getting a prescription for special glasses was the vision corrected from virtually defective eyesight to reasonably good eyesight. That enabled the boy to carry on his occupation. Dr. Gibson pointed out to me that had he been the Government medical officer giving the certificate he would have given a certificate explaining the defect that the lad was suffer-

ing from, just as Dr. Halberstater had given. Consequently, there was no intent on the part of the doctor to deceive anybody. He simply stated the facts as he found them and he did his job as a medical officer would do it. The lad's condition was corrected by the special glasses. Those are the facts and information concerning them has been supplied in greater detail to the hon. member for Mundingburra. However, he has not seen fit to quote the letter and the reply that he got setting out the facts as described by Dr. Gibson. One can grossly exaggerate any matter in this Chamber but that is not fair to hon. members, it is not fair to the public, and it does not get results. The facts are as I have stated them. If hon. members played the game they would get results but an attempt to exaggerate and mislead the Chamber is the lowest form of politics.

Hon. members at least should be honourable enough to give a fair statement of the facts. Had the hon. member given the statement of the facts as described by Dr. Gibson, who acted and reported on my behalf, a totally different picture would have been presented by him to the Committee.

Vote (Government Medical Officers) agreed to.

REGISTRATION BOARDS.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs) (5.57 p.m.): I move—

"That £1,970 be granted for 'Registration Boards.'"

The number of staff provided for is the same as in the previous year. The increased vote is brought about by award increases in salaries. The total expenditure to be refunded to Consolidated Revenue by the respective boards, the proportion to be borne by each board, is agreed upon between the boards.

Mr. MORRIS (Enoggera) (5.58 p.m.): To my mind the main function of the registration boards is to ensure that none but qualified medical men should practise medicine, that none but qualified dentists should practise dentistry, and that none but qualified chemists should carry on business as pharmaceutical chemists. On Tuesday last I brought before the Minister the case of a man who was practising dentistry without being either registered or qualified. I drew attention to the fact that this man had been fined yet it was not within the power of the board to take out an injunction against him prohibiting him from further practising dentistry. If it is not within the power of the board to move for such an injunction then the law should be altered as soon as possible.

Mr. Foley: You must have evidence on which to go before a judge to ask for an injunction.

Mr. MORRIS: Necessary legislation should be passed to prevent unqualified persons from carrying on this profession. As the Minister said, evidence must first be obtained before an injunction can be applied for, but

there is evidence that this man has already been fined for carrying on business as a dentist.

Mr. Foley: That offence is completed; you must produce fresh evidence for an injunction.

Mr. MORRIS: I admit that that particular case has been finalised. In that case he was fined £10-odd. Had steps been taken to have an injunction issued against him on that occasion he would not have been able to carry on practice as a dentist when he is unqualified to do so. That is only one angle of the case I wish to touch on. I am sure that the Minister will make quite certain that that man practising in Charleville does not continue to practise as a dentist as he is unqualified. What happens in the future remains to be seen but I am satisfied that something will be done.

I want to point out to the Committee a much more serious angle of the matter. I have knowledge that hundreds of people in Queensland are able to carry on as dentists under our law notwithstanding that they do not possess the slightest knowledge of dentistry. I admit that is a very sweeping statement. In fact, on the face of it, it seems ridiculous; nevertheless it is an absolute fact. I will tell how it occurs. There is a loophole in the Queensland Act that does not exist in the Act of any other State whereby a registered medical practitioner, in other words a man trained in medicine but not trained in dentistry, is able to perform dentistry.

At 7.15 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. MORRIS: Prior to the adjournment I reminded the Committee that on Tuesday last I drew the attention of the Committee to the case of one Latchem who had been practising as a dentist but was unqualified. I also pointed out there were some hundreds of men in Queensland who were permitted to practise dentistry although they were unlicensed and unqualified.

Mr. Walsh: What do you mean by "permitted"?

Mr. MORRIS: They are quite free to practise dentistry in Queensland although they are unqualified as dentists, and although they are unlicensed as dentists. Under the law they cannot be stopped from doing so. I am referring to doctors of medicine. The law as it stands allows a doctor of medicine to practise dentistry in this State. Anybody who knows anything about it at all knows that there are hundreds of doctors who have had no training whatsoever in dentistry and are quite unqualified to carry out that profession.

Mr. Devries: They have to do it in the West. You don't object to their doing it in the inland areas?

Mr. MORRIS: Would you object to a veterinary surgeon's taking out your appendix?

Mr. Devries: He is a horse doctor.

Mr. MORRIS: That is the same thing as the filling of a tooth by a doctor of medicine. The veterinary surgeon knows as much about taking out the hon. member's appendix as a doctor of medicine knows about filling a tooth or taking it out. The hon. member knows that as well as I do. It is time that there was an alteration in this regard. I believe the board should make investigations—that is one of the functions of the board—to see how the law is operating and whether it is operating incorrectly and unsatisfactorily for the people of Queensland. I maintain it should as soon as possible investigate the position and report to the Minister.

I know the argument will be used by the Minister that there are certain places in the outback where there is a doctor but no dentist, and it is necessary to have the doctor to do something at least to alleviate pain occasioned by tooth trouble to people who are not able to get in touch with the dentist. That is quite right, but that applies to every State and they have legislated in other States to deal with the matter, and a special permit is issued to the doctor by virtue of the fact that he is practising in a place where there is no dentist. Our law is out of date and archaic, and should be altered at the earliest possible opportunity.

There is one very serious aspect of Latchem's case that must be considered. I understand this Ralph Latchem who is practising at Charleville, and to whom I referred to on last Tuesday and earlier today, is identical with the ex-policeman who was prosecuted for assaulting his superior officer. He is not a qualified dentist and yet he is practising. Action has been taken by the Government, but there is one aspect that is very serious and to which I draw the attention of the Committee.

I quote a letter that was sent by the Dental Board to members of that board, and it is signed by Mr. Riddell, the registrar of the Dental Board. The letter reads—

"Dear Sir,

"Owing to the fact Mr. Ralph Latchem has for a considerable period been the only person providing a dental service at Charleville, the residents of that town have made representations to the local member of Parliament, Mr. O'Shea, M.L.A., with a view to having the prosecution against Mr. Latchem by the Dental Board withdrawn."

Mr. Latchem, incidentally, is unregistered and is not a dentist. The letter proceeds—

"Mr. O'Shea has conveyed the representations of the people of Charleville to the Department of Health and Home Affairs. Mr. O'Shea was advised that his representations would be submitted for the board's consideration. I shall, therefore, appreciate advice at your earliest convenience as to whether you are agreeable that the proceedings instituted against Mr. Latchem by the Dental Board for a breach of the Dental Acts should be withdrawn. A complaint has already been signed and in all

probability has been served on Mr. Latchem. An early decision in the matter is, therefore, imperative. A stamped addressed envelope for your reply is enclosed."

That letter is signed by the registrar of the Dental Board. This is a case of a man who is not registered and who is not a qualified dentist but who is practising in a town in this State and is being prosecuted under the law for doing so. All the evidence is obtained that he is doing this work and we have a member of the House making representation for the prosecution against that man to be withdrawn.

Mr. Walsh: That is not true.

Mr. MORRIS: The hon. gentleman says that that is not true. I have here a letter from the Dental Board headed, "Dental Board, Willoughby Chambers, 167 Adelaide Street," dated 3 July and signed by the registrar of that board, but the Minister states it is not true. There is absolute and incontrovertible proof that it is true.

When speaking on the subject previously I stated that an injunction should be issued against Ralph Latchem. I believe it could have been and the Minister, in replying, said in effect—I cannot give his exact words—"We cannot issue an injunction against Latchem. We have not got the proof." The occasion arose where they had the proof that this man was carrying on an unregistered practice and not only did they not issue an injunction, not only did they not even attempt to stop him from practising, but they have condoned the very fault; and that is an absolute indictment against the persons named in the letter.

Mr. Moore: Where did you get that letter from?

Mr. MORRIS: Everybody is asking where I got the letter. I have the letter here and if hon. members question the authenticity of the letter I am prepared to table it so they can read it, and I will do so at the conclusion of my speech. When I speak in this Chamber I quote facts and hon. members can rest assured that they are facts. I do not propose to put anything before the Committee that I am not prepared to back up.

There is another question that comes into this matter. The man whose practice this man Latchem had fled from him while he was carrying on his service to the country—Webb had been in the services—was unable to go back into any rooms in Charleville suitable for the carrying out of his work, whereas Latchem is not only allowed to continue but the very fact is known to the department and has been overlooked, as has been proved by this letter. That is to the disgrace of this Government.

Unless the registration board takes action in this regard and recommends to the Government that this practice should stop immediately, the Government are failing in their duty to the people of Queensland. I say also

that they must bring in a law that will prevent, say, foreign doctors, Italians or anyone else from coming over here, registering with the B.M.A. as medical men, setting up signs and practising as dentists to the detriment of the people of Queensland, which they can do under the law at the present time.

That is the case I wish to present to this Committee, and I sincerely trust that action will be taken immediately. For the benefit of hon. members I table the letter that I have read. (Whereupon the hon. member laid the letter on the table.)

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (7.26 p.m.): I did not read the correspondence I have on the vote for medical officers, because it deals with a definite application made by me to the Secretary of Health and Home Affairs that the deregistration of Dr. Halberstater be placed before the Medical Board. As we are dealing with the vote that provides for the payment of the registrar of the Medical Board, I am well within my rights in reading it now. Reading this correspondence from the Minister to me and from me to the Minister will serve as a lesson to the Minister to make certain that when he makes a statement in this Committee he can back it up with facts. On a previous vote the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs said that Dr. Halberstater had advised him of certain defects in regard to the boy's eye. I propose now to read the Minister's own letter, which throws back in his teeth the false statement made by the Minister, because the Minister himself admits that it was not Dr. Halberstater who made that report to him but it was his own medical officer.

Mr. WALSH: I rise to a point of order. I want to know whether the hon. member for Mundingburra is in order in imputing improper motives to the Minister. I ask him to withdraw.

Mr. AIKENS: Very well, I withdraw the statement, but I will read the Minister's letter and my letter, which deals with the suggested deregistration of a doctor by the Medical Board, and I will then leave it to the Committee to draw its own conclusions. This is the letter from the Department of Health and Home Affairs personally signed by the Minister.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We are dealing now with the vote for "Registration Boards." I understand that the hon. member read that letter on an earlier vote.

Mr. AIKENS: No. This deals with the registrar who registers all doctors in the State. It is his function to register medical practitioners and dental practitioners, and in my correspondence I have suggested that this doctor be deregistered. Therefore, this is the only vote under which I can read this correspondence, because it definitely deals with my suggestion that this doctor be deregistered. The registrar is the only person who can do that.

The letter is dated Brisbane, 27 August 1945, and is personally signed by Thos. A.

Foley, Minister for Health and Home Affairs. It reads:—

“Dear Mr. Aikens,

“With reference to your letter of 25th ultimo relative to the medical examination of Arnold Malcolm Morgan by the Government Medical Officer at Townsville, Dr. L. Halberstater, I desire to advise that the Public Service Commissioner upon receipt of a certificate from Dr. W. J. Chapman—”

remember that—

“and discussion with a medical officer of the Department of Health and Home Affairs, decided to continue Mr. Morgan’s services on probation. The Public Service Commissioner further advised that he had informed Mr. Morgan that in accordance with usual practice the question of the confirmation of his appointment would be reviewed in June 1946. I am informed by the medical officer of my department—”

not by Dr. Halberstater; remember that—

“skilled in eye diseases, that the lad has no crystalline lens in the left eye as the result of a traumatic cataract which caused the lens of this eye to be absorbed, otherwise that the vision of the left eye is very poor and in effect the right eye will do all the work. I am also advised that in order to read close print with his left eye he will need to wear an even stronger lens than the one required for distance vision, and even then he would not get simultaneous binocular vision because the brain will ignore the image received on the retina of the left eye. I am advised that this visual defect would debar him from being passed for entrance to any one of the fighting services to a grade higher than A-2.”

I want that to be clearly impressed upon the minds of hon. members. It was Mr. Foley’s own doctor who told him that, not Dr. Halberstater as he stated a little while ago.

Mr. Foley: He is a doctor of optometry.

Mr. AIKENS: Your own doctor told you that. You said Dr. Halberstater told you that.

Mr. Foley: You would twist anything.

Mr. AIKENS: This is what I wrote to the Minister on 28 August 1945—

“Regarding yours of the 27th re medical examination of Arnold Malcolm Morgan by Dr. L. Halberstater of Townsville, I have to respectfully state that I did not put this case before you in order to determine whether or not he is medically fit for any service. I sent the papers to you so that you could place them in your discretion before the Medical Board with a view to having a charge laid against Dr. Halberstater for issuing a false medical certificate in respect of this lad’s left eye.

“I am informed that Halberstater signed the certificate showing that the boy had no sight, i.e., was blind, in the left eye, whereas your own doctor, in addition to Dr. Chapman, refutes this. I urge you to give this matter your most serious consideration.”

This is the last letter that I have received from the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs on the matter. It is dated 3 September 1945 and reads—

“I desire to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo further in regard to the medical examination of Arnold Malcolm Morgan by Dr. L. Halberstater, of Townsville.”

I think this is a case that should go before the registrar of the Medical Board.

Mr. Foley: On what grounds?

Mr. AIKENS: On the grounds that Halberstater wilfully issued a false certificate with regard to this lad’s left eye.

Mr. Foley: He told the truth.

Mr. AIKENS: He did not. He said in his certificate that the lad had no sight in his left eye, whereas Dr. Chapman and the departmental doctor said that the lad merely had an absorbed cataract in the left eye and with glasses his vision would be 6/9. Not only that, Dr. Halberstater rejected this boy for admission to the Public Service because according to his own certificate he was blind in the left eye. The medical officer of the Department of Health and Home Affairs concurred with Dr. W. J. Chapman, and as a result of that concurrence young Morgan is now a member of the Public Service.

Mr. Foley: On probation.

Mr. AIKENS: On probation, of course. I pay a tribute to the Attorney-General who immediately stepped in and had this wrong rectified. What I want to know now, however, is why the action suggested by me as far back as 28 August last has not been taken—why the registrar of the Medical Board has not been approached to place a case before the Medical Board for the deregistration of Dr. Halberstater.

Mr. MORRIS (Enoggera) (7.33 p.m.): I desire to say something in addition to what I said earlier in the evening. The hon. member for Gregory made an interjection, which I did not hear, asking me if I did not agree that a medical officer in the outback should have the right to treat a tooth that was troublesome or was affected by an abscess or in any other way. Not hearing the question, I said “No.” I definitely believe that all doctors in outback places where there are no dentists should, even though they have no licence, have the right and should be permitted to treat teeth. However, in city areas where there are dentists I believe that doctors should not be permitted to carry out dental work.

Mr. MOORE (Merthyr) (7.34 p.m.): I rise to congratulate the registration boards on the interest they take in applications for registration. Recently I was asked for advice by an applicant from overseas who desired to practise in Brisbane as a chemist. He came here with very high qualifications from an overseas university and applied to the Pharmacy Board for registration.

Because his credentials were those of a university that was situated in a part of Europe where the war was at its height, great difficulty was experienced by the board in checking up on them.

It did everything it possibly could to do so. Officials of the board and the University went to no end of trouble. They realised from the information placed before them that this man was very highly qualified, they were keen to give the people of Brisbane the benefit of his knowledge, but at the same time they wanted to be sure that his credentials were in keeping with the status required of him by the board. Finally, after much investigation, they satisfied themselves that his credentials were in order and he is now practising here and I am sure that the general public who come in contact with him will benefit greatly from his high standard of knowledge.

I think the hon. member for Enoggera was drawing the long bow about the doctor who pulled teeth in certain circumstances. One cannot help thinking that members of the Queensland People's Party are in the habit of bringing briefs into this Chamber so as to get a little bit of political advantage.

Mr. Morris: That is absolutely unfair.

Mr. MOORE: Briefs have been brought in here. Some have been good and some have been bad. I want to give the experience that I had with my small boy who was taken to the hospital to have his adenoids removed. During the operation the doctor pulled one of his milk teeth and I felt that the doctor had done a good service in doing so. Here was a small child under the anaesthetic and in cleaning up one job the doctor removed a small milk tooth. So far as I am concerned he did a good job and I have sufficient faith in the majority of our medical practitioners to give them the right to do these little jobs. I think a good deal of harm would be done to the community if these doctors had to be registered as dentists.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (7.38 p.m.): All day I have been against the Government but now I am going to be with them for a while, and strangely enough I want to concur with the remarks of the hon. member for Merthyr to a limited extent. I do not think that the Government should register for practice a man who is not qualified as a dentist in one of the recognised and reputable universities recognised by the Dental Board here. So I do not want to have taken from my remarks the erroneous conception that I am advocating the registration of dentists who are not qualified to be dentists, but I sincerely hope that the Government will never interfere with the right of a doctor to practise dentistry if he so desires. I know that many doctors do not go in for what might be called the mechanical side of dentistry. They do not fill teeth, they do not crown teeth, they do not cap them, and they do not make false teeth; but many doctors pull teeth in the interests of their patients. In Townsville over the past few years we have come to realise the immense benefit of the provision

in various Acts to allow doctors to extract teeth. In Townsville during the war years we were chronically short of dentists. People who needed urgent dental attention were unable to have teeth extracted, the condition of which in many cases was affecting their health. These men, women, and children could not possibly get appointments at the recognised dentists because they were overcrowded with appointments, booked out for months ahead, but they were able to go along to doctors in Townsville and have their teeth extracted. I will not stretch it too far by saying that the doctors thereby saved their lives but they did arrest the disease that was seeping into their bodies from the affected teeth.

I am not one of those who believe in government by order in council, but if ever the time arose for the Government to consider the question of preventing doctors acting as dentists so far as the extraction of teeth is concerned. I hope it will not be done by legislative enactment. I hope that if any action is necessary to prevent doctors from extracting teeth that it will be taken by order in council, which can be revoked from time to time to meet extraordinary circumstances. Many of the dentists practising in Townsville worked day and night, some up to 100 hours a week, in order to try to keep faith with as many patients as possible during the war period, but even after working as many hours as that they were unable to cope with much of the work offering, and consequently had doctors not the right to extract teeth and perform dental work, many people in Townsville would still have infected teeth which might have easily been impairing their lives.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs) (7.42 p.m.): I listened to the points raised by the hon. member for Enoggera, with regard to a person named Latchem in the Charleville district. He was not altogether fair in the presentation of his case, particularly when he endeavoured to condemn the hon. member for Warrego for attempting to plead for the withdrawal of the summons issued by the Dental Board against Latchem for practising dentistry, he not being registered. The hon. member should have explained the position fairly to the Committee. The facts are that representations were made by the residents of the Charleville district to the hon. member for Warrego that there was a definite shortage of dentists there. All that the hon. member for Warrego did was to submit the case as presented to him. No request was made by him for the withdrawal of the summons or the intention to prosecute. The Dental Board went on with its prosecution of Latchem and was successful. Latchem was penalised by the court for practising, not being a registered dentist.

The hon. member for Enoggera next stated that we should do something with a view to taking an injunction out to restrain Latchem from practising. Even if there was some process in law enabling us to do that, we should have to get fresh evidence from the residents of the district before we could

approach any judge and ask him to issue an injunction and hope for success.

Mr. Morris: You could quite easily get new evidence.

Mr. FOLEY: The Dental Board informs me that the whole trouble lies in the fact that the residents of the district will not help it to get evidence to prevent this individual from practising. That is the actual position. I have representatives of the department in the lobby. They advise me that they have gone as far as they can in the prosecution of this man. They did prosecute him successfully some time ago. They must get further evidence from the residents to support any application to a judge for an injunction restraining him from practising.

Mr. Pie: You have an unregistered dentist practising.

Mr. FOLEY: I know that.

Mr. Pie: You know that, and you are not doing anything about it?

Mr. FOLEY: I am admitting all that, but it is the duty of the Dental Board and I can assure hon. members that it is doing everything possible. It cannot launch further proceedings unless it gets the full co-operation of the residents.

Mr. Brand: The law is insufficient then.

Mr. FOLEY: It is not a question of the law's being insufficient, but a question of getting one of the residents of the district to supply sufficient evidence to the Dental Board to deal with him. No matter what is done in this Parliament by way of legislation, you must be in a position to satisfy any tribunal with the necessary evidence before any person can be prosecuted successfully for a breach of that legislation.

Mr. Morris: Why should our board ask for the withdrawal of the prosecution?

Mr. FOLEY: It has not withdrawn any prosecution. The prosecution referred to was successfully effected and penalties were imposed by the court at Charleville.

Mr. Macdonald: The registrar asked for the withdrawal of the prosecution.

Mr. FOLEY: No, the residents asked for the withdrawal and the Dental Board refused to agree to the request. The board went on with the prosecution, which was successful, and the man was penalised.

Mr. Morris interjected.

Mr. FOLEY: The position is as I stated. The individual was successfully prosecuted by the Dental Board notwithstanding the request of the residents that the prosecution be withdrawn. That is the factual position.

Coming to the question raised by the hon. member for Mundingburra, again we find the same misrepresentation to the Committee. He contended that Dr. Halberstater in Townsville was guilty of malpractice because he indicated to the Government and to the

Public Service Commissioner that this lad had no sight in the left eye. We have to depend on our medical officers throughout the State to give a faithful report of the physical condition of any person who comes before them for examination, particularly when it is for the purpose of entering the Public Service. A number of questions are asked. I have an application form here and there are a number of questions the doctor has to answer. The third question asked is—

“Is there a defect in sight, hearing or speech or any indication of otorrhoea or any nasal or throat infection? If so, give particulars.”

The answer is as follows—

“Yes. No sight in the left eye. The right eye normal.”

The argument was that he had definitely deceived the Government and had done an injustice to the lad by making that statement. When the matter was presented to me by the member for Mundingburra I endeavoured to get to the basis of the statement by the doctor. I referred the matter to Dr. Gibson, medical officer of the department, who is a doctor in eye diseases, and I will tell the Committee what he has to say. It is quite definite that any doctor under similar circumstances would have given the same report. Dr. Gibson says—

“The lad has no crystalline lens in the left eye as the result of a traumatic cataract which caused the lens of this eye to be absorbed.

“This means that the left eye unaided by spectacles is unable to focus clearly distant or near objects. Thus when looking at a test chart with the left eye only and without spectacles he would not be able to read any letters on the chart at the usual distance.”

That being so what is wrong with the report the doctor gave that there was no sight in the left eye? That is the actual position. Without spectacles and with the left eye looking at a chart in the test room he could not see the chart distinctly whether it was close to him or at a distance. The report goes on to say—

“In common parlance the vision of the left eye is very poor.

“With a high-power lens in front of the left eye this eye will see well at a distance, but the lad will not be able to use his two eyes together to obtain simultaneous binocular vision because of a difference in size of the two retinal images. In effect the right eye will do all the work. In order to read close print with his left eye he will need to wear a stronger lens than the one required for distance vision.

“Even then he would not get simultaneous binocular vision because the brain will ignore the image received on the retina of the left eye.”

Under those circumstances I do not feel prepared, as the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs, to waste the time of the Medical Board by asking it to have this investigation

that the hon. member for Mundingburra requests. A doctor in eye diseases definitely states that looking at the chart with the left eye this lad could not see the figures on the chart.

Mr. Aikens: Neither could you if you took your glasses off.

Mr. FOLEY: Of course I can.

Mr. Aikens: Neither could I.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. FOLEY: A good deal depends on the particular eye defect one labours under as to whether one could or could not see without one's glasses. I can take off my glasses and see any person in this room or at a distance of half a mile away.

Mr. Aikens: You could not read the chart.

Mr. FOLEY: I can also read certain print, but I cannot read small print. This is an altogether different case. This is an instance of a defect, where, with the right eye covered and looking at a chart, this lad could not read anything that was on the chart. Consequently the doctor had to be fair: there was no sight in the left eye, and to submit it to the Medical Board would be simply wasting the board's time and no good result would follow. Much ado has been made out of very little by the hon. member for Mundingburra, as usual. The hon. member unquestionably exaggerates the case and endeavours to mislead the people. I will not be misled by any of his vapourings and do not intend to submit the case to the Medical Board, because I know what will be the result—no action will be taken because there is no evidence to in any way convict Dr. Halberstater of malpractice.

Objection has been taken to the practice of dentistry by certain medical men as the result of a diploma they receive from the University. From my understanding of the position, the average medical man during the course at the University has to do a certain amount of surgery, and although he does not practise certain surgery in regard to teeth he at least is taught the theoretical side of that subject. What is wrong with allowing a medical man in certain isolated parts of the State—and that is the only place where they practise dentistry—to come to the rescue or relief of some person who may be suffering from defective teeth? It is idle to tell me that any medical man could set to work and make a set of dentures if he has not gone through the school of training to fit him to do that.

Mr. Morris: Do you know there is a man practising in Brisbane who is a doctor and not a dentist at all?

Mr. FOLEY: There may be instances. I have an instance of a doctor who was recently in Springsure and who made it his business during the vacation period from time to time to specialise and learn what he could towards making himself proficient in various branches of dentistry. Although he has not studied

dentistry as a dental student has studied it, he has specialised in certain branches and has been able to give remarkable relief to people in the district in which he has his practice. That is about all these medical men do. If they have not specialised and made a special study, it is an utter impossibility for them to make a set of dentures or perform any difficult operation on the jaw or deal with other complex cases they might come across.

These are matters for dental surgeons and for dentists who have gone through the full course of four years in our dental institution or at the University.

Mr. Morris: But there is nothing in the law to stop them from trying, to the detriment of the person.

Mr. FOLEY: Take some of our older dentists. Take Jack Ross. He has retired from business but the firm is being carried on by another staff under his name. Jack Ross had never been to a university. In his heyday he could not possibly pass the tests through which a university student has to go today. He started off with teeth-pulling. He specialised and by reading text books and using other methods to make himself proficient in making dentures he became a skilled man and during his period he taught more dentists than the University has taught in a similar period.

Mr. Morris: Was he registered?

Mr. FOLEY: Eventually he was registered under the Dental Act as what is termed a foundation member. He is only one of many. I can name half a dozen in the North whom I know. There are odd doctors throughout the State who are in a similar position. Certainly they have an advantage that Jack Ross did not have in that they had the basic knowledge. They specialised in their spare time and studied in vacation periods to make themselves proficient in certain branches. It would be ridiculous for us to attempt to pass legislation to debar those men from practising up to a certain extent. They give service in certain isolated parts of the State where there are no dentists. I can assure hon. members that very few of them practice where an efficient dentist is already practising.

Mr. WANSTALL (Toowong) (7.57 p.m.): I was very interested by the letter produced by the hon. member for Enoggera, not so much in its contents as in its form. This is a letter written by the registrar of the Dental Board on 3 July to each individual member of the board, referring to the fact that a prosecution had been instituted but certain representations had been made for its withdrawal and asking the individual members to indicate their opinion in a stamped addressed envelope as to whether they thought the prosecution should be withdrawn or not.

Let us assume that in coming to the decision to prosecute an unregistered person the Dental Board acted in accordance with the requirements of the Act, held a meeting at which a quorum was present, weighed the

evidence and decided to prosecute. Then the registrar, most irregularly, for some reason or other circularises each individual member and asks him his opinion as to whether the prosecution should be withdrawn. The Act lays it down very clearly that when the Dental Board wants to discharge its functions under the Act, in other words wants to operate as a Dental Board, it must hold a meeting at which no fewer than three members must be present before any business can be discussed. I am shocked to learn that the registrar of the Dental Board has conducted the board's business in a way in which that letter would indicate he has. I hope that in his supervision of the administration of the Act the Minister will see to it that in future he holds regular meetings, calls the board together and allows the members, by discussion amongst themselves and by deliberations, to make their decision in a regular way. I am not saying there is anything dishonest about it, but it was an improper method to adopt to ascertain the opinions of members with a view to rescinding the motion that had already been passed at a duly constituted meeting of the board.

Mr. Foley: You are only assuming that this was all done by a duly constituted board.

Mr. WANSTALL: Is the Minister suggesting that the Dental Board decided to prosecute an unregistered person without being duly constituted, without considering the evidence and acting in accordance with the Act?

Mr. Hanlon: How do we know whether the board carried out its duty?

Mr. WANSTALL: If it did not carry out its duty in the first instance that merely reinforces my argument.

Mr. Hanlon: If you can give evidence that the board did not do its duty you have something to say.

Mr. WANSTALL: I am giving evidence that the board did not do its duty when the registrar circularised each individual member of the board asking him for an opinion, which in effect was designed to rescind a previous resolution.

Mr. Hanlon: What regulation does that break?

Mr. WANSTALL: It breaks the Act, not a regulation. Section 5 of the Dental Act says—

“Meetings—(1) The board shall hold its ordinary meetings at such times as are appointed by by-law in that behalf. Special meetings may be summoned at any time by the president, and shall be so summoned by him upon receipt of a requisition in writing signed by any two members.

“(2) No business shall be transacted at any meeting of the board unless at least three of the members are present when such business is transacted.”

To my way of thinking, it is an absolutely new procedure for a statutory board to conduct its business by circularising each member

asking him his opinion. What should we think if each individual member of this Assembly was given a copy of a proposed Bill in his electorate and asked, “Let us know what you think of this and we will put it through.”?

I rose in order to draw the attention of the Minister to what appears to be an irregularity in the conduct of the Dental Board's business as disclosed by this letter. If that is the position, let us stop it at this stage. We should not let the Dental Board conduct its business in that way, because it is dangerous. Instead of being annoyed with my raising the point, the Minister should be glad that the matter has been brought to his attention, because all sorts of things might happen if this practice was allowed to continue. As a matter of fact, it would appear that the majority of the members of the board answered that letter in the negative, but a number of them may have answered in the affirmative. Hon. members can see what this sort of thing could lead to. The Minister, in his own interests, should put a stop to such practices. I do not think anybody should resent my pointing these things out.

With regard to the person concerned, Latchem, the Minister has quite correctly said that the board cannot prosecute again on the old evidence on which he has already been prosecuted, because he cannot be prosecuted twice for the one offence. Further, I do not think the board could use the same evidence in seeking an injunction against him. However, the Minister stops there. He says, “We cannot do anything.” He says, “The local people will not bear witness against this man and we cannot do anything.” What an admission! If the Dental Board cannot carry out the duties with which it is charged under this Act—if it cannot stop an unregistered person from practising in a town as big as Charleville—it is high time that—

Mr. Foley: As a lawyer, what is the correct procedure?

Mr. WANSTALL: I will not give any free opinions to the Minister. He has his own legal advisers. The western mail leaves Brisbane tomorrow and arrives in Charleville on Saturday. (Government interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask hon. members to behave themselves and allow the hon. member for Toowoong to continue.

Mr. WANSTALL: If I wanted to get evidence in this matter I could put a person on that train tomorrow, and he could catch Monday afternoon's train from Charleville and be back in Brisbane on Tuesday.

Mr. Aikens: Will you volunteer for the job?

Mr. WANSTALL: No.

Mr. Aikens: Then why put someone else in?

Mr. WANSTALL: It is not my duty to police this Act. That is the duty of the Dental Board. If the Dental Board is unable

or unwilling to carry out its duties, it should be compulsorily retired. What is the good of the board if it cannot or will not carry out its duties? That is the only point I am making. I am not blaming the Minister. It is not his responsibility to get evidence—that is the Dental Board's responsibility—but the Minister has the board under his surveillance. I am quite certain that if the Minister took a firm stand this matter could be cleared up early next week. A man cannot carry on a dental practice without a surgery, a great deal of equipment and all the accoutrements of a dental practice.

Does he mean to tell us seriously that in a town like Charleville it is impossible to get the evidence to prove that a man is carrying on the practice of a dentist? Surely the local police at Charleville are not so incompetent as to be unable to help him in the matter? I do not for a moment suggest that they are so incompetent. If the Minister were to take a firm stand in the matter he could clear it up very quickly. Unless he does so then we have reached this stage in the registration of dentists, that a dentist is thumbing his nose at constituted authority, thumbing his nose at the board, flouting the law, and the Minister is admitting that he cannot get the evidence against him. I have never heard such a confession of weakness and incapacity before. I am sure that if the Minister were to try he could look after this matter in the interests of the health of the people of Charleville.

I also want to scotch the misunderstanding that may have arisen from the remarks of the hon. member for Enoggera in regard to doctors practising dentistry. I think the hon. member made it quite clear that he was not objecting to a doctor's pulling teeth in isolated cases. As a matter of fact, under the Act any layman can pull teeth if he is 5 miles from the nearest dentist.

Mr. Smith: The local butcher.

Mr. WANSTALL: Yes, the local butcher. The Act permits him to do it. The hon. member for Enoggera was not talking about these exceptional cases. What he was talking about was the loophole in the Act that permitted unqualified persons to practise dentistry. He did not direct his remarks to what might be called the merciful practice of dentistry in the isolated inland areas by doctors of medicine. He did not object to that at all. The hon. member specifically said in answer to the hon. member for Gregory that he was concerned to see that this loophole in the Act should be blocked up so that doctors of medicine would not be able to practise dentistry in the city area. It is quite apparent that that is a weakness in the Act. Any refugee doctor could come to this State with oversea degrees entitling him to be registered as a doctor, and he could set up in the practice of dentistry.

Mr. Hanlon: Before he could be registered as a doctor, he would have to be accepted by the Medical Board.

Mr. WANSTALL: Yes, I have put all that. The Medical Board would consider his

qualifications justifying his registration by the Medical Board, but it would not be concerned about his qualifications as a dentist. Do you not see the point? It would look at his medical degrees and register him as a doctor and hey presto, he could set up practice as a full-time dentist in Queen street if he liked. Do you not see the point?

Mr. Hanlon: Do you suggest that a doctor who is competent to operate upon a vertebra of the spine would not be competent to pull a tooth.

Mr. WANSTALL: I am not saying that he would not be competent to pull teeth, but I do say that even if he is competent as a doctor it does not follow that he is competent to practise dentistry. No-one has any objection to those inland mercy services, but there is a loophole in the Act. And why is the Acting Premier being so stiff-necked about the matter of loopholes in the Act? Nobody has asked the Government to deprive the people of the West of any advantage they have. We are asking for the blocking of that loophole in the Act, so as to prevent any damage from being done to the health of the people of this State.

Mr. Jones: You are not objecting to a blacksmith's doing it on a station?

Mr. WANSTALL: Where it is done in an emergency I agree with it, but that does not say that the people of the city should be exposed to any unnecessary risk. I ask the Minister to give consideration to the matter in a spirit of tolerance and without any suggestion of heat.

No-one has said that the Minister has done anything wrong. This matter has been merely pointed out to him. Surely he must realise that it is necessary for that loophole in the Act to be closed, particularly so far as the city area is concerned. All that the hon. member for Enoggera did was to point out that it was not necessary that it should continue to exist. All the speeches about the hardships the people in the outback undergo, although quite correct, were quite irrelevant.

Vote (Registration Boards) agreed to.

POLICE.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs) (8.11 p.m.): I move—

“That £931,454 be granted for ‘Police.’”

The vote is an increase of £65,511 over the actual expenditure during the last financial year. It is an increase on the appropriation for last year of £36,139. The increase is due principally to an increase in salaries amounting to £67,045, to an increase of nine in the strength of the force and to award increases in pay. The appropriation under the different headings show a slight increase in some cases. The allowance in lieu of overtime is £53,250. The amount actually expended last year was £51,799.

This vote covers the payment to 57 senior sergeants, 97 sergeants 1st-class, 276 sergeants 2nd-class, 1,158 constables and 12 women police, as well as those members of the force now on leave, or who will be granted leave prior to their retirement on pension during 1945-1946. The vote provides also for the usual allowance to meet increased cost of living, the amount being the same as last year. It includes also allowance for fuel and light, allowance in lieu of quarters, allowance for traffic duty and for general contingencies.

I wish to pay a compliment to the police for the very fine work they carried out during the war period, which was the most difficult period Queensland has experienced in her history. We had on a number of occasions to increase the strength of the force. The strength as at the end of the financial year 1944-45 was 1,730, including nine women constables. They have had a difficult period, particularly in the organisation of civil defence. The officers in charge of that work did a very fine job; they organised just on 65,000 citizens for that purpose. They organised one of the finest systems of lectures to improve the knowledge of the members of those organisations in their various spheres. They had a well-trained force of men and women under their control who were ready to meet any emergency had it eventuated during that stirring period.

While I am on the subject I wish to pay a compliment to the 65,000 men and women who responded so nobly to the appeal to organise into voluntary organisations to protect their fellow citizens in the event of bombing.

The response was wonderful, and it gives some idea of the spirit that prevails in the community. I feel that should we meet any crisis in the future it will be only a matter of appealing and our citizens will come forward to build up an organisation for the help and protection of their fellow-citizens.

The black-marketing that prevailed during the war period gave the police a very heavy task; and working under Commonwealth regulations they were successful in a large number of cases in running illicit traders to earth and they were helpful in supplying the Commonwealth authorities with the necessary evidence to enable them to go on with prosecutions.

Mr. Wanstall: They did a very good job.

Mr. FOLEY: The decrease in crime over the period we have gone through also is a remarkable feature. The Commissioner's report indicates that the decrease in crime over the previous financial year represents 2.885 per cent.

Mr. Macdonald: They have done a great job.

Mr. FOLEY: That is a very fine piece of work, and shows the degree of efficiency that our police force has reached, which is due to the splendid co-operation from the Commissioner down through his officers and men.

I think we can safely say that we are second to no other State in the efficiency of our police force.

Mr. HAYES (Nundah) (8.18 p.m.): I desire to make a few observations on this very important vote. I wish to pay a tribute to the Commissioner and the Chief Inspector who now fills the position occupied for so many years by the late James Toohill. I am sure all hon. members who are conversant with the work of the late Inspector Toohill in his position as Chief Inspector felt when he died that his place would be hard to fill. I am pleased that his successor, Mr. Perrin, has carried out that job very capably.

Members come in contact with all branches of the police service because of the very many onerous duties the police have to perform in all electorates. It is the responsibility of the police not only to uphold the moral law themselves but to see that the laws of this Parliament are carried out to the fullest extent, and they have discharged that responsibility with credit to themselves. During the war years there was difficulty in obtaining recruits owing to the call up of youths 18 years of age for Militia. According to what appeared in the Press recently, some people are inclined to ridicule some of the young policemen who are doing points duty, and who did a remarkable job during a trying period.

These young fellows entered the force under the cadet system, if my memory serves me rightly, initiated by the Government about 1935 when lads who passed Senior University examinations were taken into the Force each year. They had the opportunity of training indoors and learning shorthand and typewriting and other things to make themselves very efficient in such work as well as in outdoor police duties. I am sure hon. members on both sides will give credit to the Government of the time for doing something worth while. The age for acceptance of recruits was 21 years but the nation having become embroiled in the war and young men of 18 being called up for military service, the age of acceptance of recruits into the police force had necessarily to be reduced and it was lowered to 19 years of age. The difficulty experienced was to find men of the physique required for entry to the force prior to the war. However, these young men have performed their job nobly and well and in the course of time before they attain the age of 21 they will be equal in stature to the former requirements. They certainly have done a good job and no-one can fault their efficiency.

I referred some years ago to the introduction to Queensland in 1935 of the modus-operandi recording system. I have had certain experience that enables me to speak with pride on the extension of that work. In the "Police Gazette" published from time to time and to be found in every police station in Queensland, there are recorded the particulars of any crime perpetrated in the State. The whole history of it is given and it is illustrated by photographs. Particulars are given of how the cat burglar, the cattle-duffer,

or the pickpocket works or is likely to carry out his nefarious practices because of the unfortunate kink he possesses. A personal description is given with particulars as to any disfigurements, marks, limb defects—anything that would be helpful to a policeman to bring the offender to book.

This system was brought to my notice owing to an incident that happened at a school picnic at a seaside resort that I attended, and at which I helped other parents in the running off of races and other sports for the benefit of the children. We find crimes by sex perverts recorded far too frequently. It is very difficult to keep down the activities of these persons. Unfortunately such crimes appear to be on the increase and everything that can be done for the prevention or the discovery of the offender is exercising the minds of those charged with this matter. These sex perverts are to be found operating among little children enjoying themselves in the briny.

One of these mongrels got amongst the children at the picnic I speak of. That evening it was reported that this mongrel had done certain things when the children were in bathing. I took the parent and the child to the police station to lodge a complaint. I asked if they had any records or any system that might allow a check-up to be made and under which perhaps I might be able to recognise the offender. To my surprise I found that they had such records as enabled me to identify the man, and within a very short space of time he was picked up and brought to justice. I understand that this system of records was copied from Scotland Yard. It was introduced into Australia first by the New South Wales Government and later adopted in Queensland. Although we cannot claim to have been the first to adopt it, I certainly must give the police great credit and praise for the diligence with which they have followed it out and the wonderful results they have achieved.

I come now to the police wireless station, which was completed during the financial year 1941-42, and it is with pleasure that I am able to state that it is the best-equipped police wireless station in the Commonwealth, which is saying something. It proved of immense value during the time when we had at least 500,000 Allied service personnel as well as our own troops throughout the State. Through this system the United States Provost Corps and our police were able to communicate with one another. If there was any likelihood of a disturbance in any part of the city or suburb—and this applied in all garrison towns throughout Queensland—this wireless system enabled our 15 police cars and the military provost corps to prevent it, and because of its efficiency and effectiveness much damage was averted. But for this service there were times when disturbances would easily have arisen, with resultant injury and loss of life.

I do not desire to touch on many other points, but I have personal knowledge of the courtesy that is always extended by these

officers. Whenever I have had occasion to approach any member of the Police Force—the Commissioner, the Chief Inspector, or any of the police officers stationed in my electorate of Nundah—I have always received the utmost courtesy. Throughout the electorate of Nundah, the work of the Police Force has been effective and has been recognised as such by all.

For some years past—and particularly during the war years—the Government have not had an opportunity to provide the accommodation that is so necessary for the efficiency of our "Boys in Blue." To get worthwhile service, the housing conditions of these men must be attended to. In this regard the Government have done a grand job at stations like those in the Valley and at Woolloongabba, but the suburbs appear to have been forgotten. For many years I have appealed for improvements to the police station at Nundah. About five years ago I spoke of it as being a little, dingy office with a skillion roof, where the sergeant and two other police officers have to carry out their duties. A great deal of work has to be carried out by the police in that district. The many inquiries that they receive result in a great deal of correspondence, which keeps those men in this confined space. A policeman's hours of duty never end. The police are on duty at all times, even when they are on holidays. If a disturbance occurs, a policeman knows there is a job for him to do. Therefore, I think these men are entitled to improved housing conditions and better office accommodation. I again make that appeal to the Minister in regard to the Nundah police station. Improvements to it are long overdue. I am not expecting the Minister to say that he will be able to do something about it this year. I know it is very difficult to do these jobs at present because of the scarcity of labour and materials, no matter how much the Minister may desire to do them, but I should like to hear fairly soon that serious consideration will be given to my request.

I should also like to mention the area of land available at Nundah. I believe that a certain amount of money is made available to members of the Police Force by way of rent. Housing difficulties are being experienced by policemen as they are by any other member of the community who is looking for accommodation. The only chance a member of the Police Force has of getting somewhere to live when he is transferred to any locality is to get in early and try to get the place that his predecessor was renting. I know of one instance in which a man was transferred to the North and became financially impoverished because he had to pay for board and lodging at a hotel out of his wages, which charge was greater than his allowance, even though he was in that place on official duty.

Where there is enough land, as there is at Nundah, it is a comparatively easy matter to construct a new police station that would also serve as the residence for the sergeant of police in charge as well as erecting two

residences for the police constables there. That would be of benefit to the department too because it would save it the payment of an allowance in lieu of rent and the buildings would be available for the sergeant and constables who were transferred to the district. On the other hand, if the department was put to the expense first of having to acquire the land and then erecting the building there would not be quite so much merit in the suggestion. However, the land is available now and it could be used for the purpose that I have indicated. It would mean a saving to the department and a great convenience to the police officers.

Mr. LUCKINS (Maree) (8.37 p.m.): I want to join with the Minister in paying tribute to the members of the Police Force for the magnificent job that they have done, especially during the past five years. If any body of men ever earned the gratitude and good will of the people it is the police. I think that only those closely associated with policemen in the thickly-populated districts can have a real understanding of what they did in the past five years. The policemen and policewomen have borne the burden of the day in helping to administer the social services of the State. Some public recognition is due to them, which I hope the Minister will bear in mind when the right time comes.

I am pleased that the Minister has made mention of the splendid subsidiary services rendered by the members of the force. They perform many functions not only as policemen keeping order or carrying out investigations for the various State departments but as policemen doing work for the Commonwealth Government too. Their job is one for 24 hours of the day. I am pleased that there has been an increase in the number of policemen, which is due, I presume, to the influx of people over the past two years. However, in the future more police will be required because I am sure that the population will increase. The population of Queensland is about 1,000,000, and it is controlled by about 1,400 policemen, which speaks volumes for the temperament of the people and of the members of the force. A good type of police officer is a very valuable asset in any community. I have had some experience of policemen in my own district and I can pay them this tribute, that their psychological understanding of men and things has enabled them to bring pleasure to the people and esteem to the Police Department. I do not intend to detain the Committee at length, but I should not like to miss this opportunity of paying a tribute to the members of the Police Force and I do so as one associated with a political party on this side of the Chamber.

I should like to see the police have better conditions in connection with overtime. An amount of £53,215 is to be appropriated for payment in lieu of overtime. I understand that policemen receive overtime when they work from 44 to 48 hours in any one week, but if they work beyond 48 hours they receive time off in lieu of payment.

That is unusual in industrial awards. Any man who works overtime in the discharge of his services, as the police do, should be rewarded by a cash remuneration. It is only right that his services should be considered from that angle.

I observe that this vote includes £50,215 in lieu of quarters. That sum capitalised at 5 per cent. interest would mean an expenditure of £1,000,000. I hope that the Minister—and I believe he will—will see to it that in the near future accommodation is provided for junior officers, particularly married officers. We have the spectacle of officers who are unable to take rewards for services in the way of promotion to, say, Brisbane, because there is no accommodation for them. It might be advisable if the department went to extreme measures and bought suitable residences in proximity to the police stations which would at all times accommodate junior officers, particularly married constables.

I observe too that the Estimates provide for arrears of increases amounting to £7,375. No appropriation was made under that heading in last year's Estimates, nor do I remember having seen it previously. The Minister might inform the Committee if the officers of police were entitled to increases in the past year when the Treasury was full of money, why that amount was not paid during the financial year but was allowed to accumulate to this year. It may be due to some book-keeping methods peculiar to the Treasury. To have arrears standing in the books to the credit of policemen or policewomen is not in keeping with the old proverb that "Every man is worthy of his hire."

I am pleased to notice that certain men have been promoted from the ranks to higher positions. I hope that the Government will, if the Commissioner at any time is retiring from his position, at least acknowledge the splendid services of his inspectors and officers by filling the vacancy from among them instead of going to the extreme point of making, as they did previously, a political appointment to the position. That caused more dissatisfaction in the Police Force than anything else I know of. I counsel the Minister, the Acting Premier and the Cabinet to put into practice the principle of rewards for men with faithful service, and those rewards include appointment to the higher offices when vacancies occur.

We can congratulate the police on their splendid work during the past year. From my experience and observations in many parts of Australia and many parts of the world, the Queensland Police Force compares more than favourably with any similar force not only in the British Dominions but other parts of the world. They are a fine body and I am glad to know that the qualifications necessary to enter the force have been raised. That has attracted a type of man who has given the force a standing, and will redound to its credit. I wish the force well, and hope that everything possible will be done in the interests of its members, not only with regard to the payment of overtime when it

is worked, but in the provision of accommodation for junior officers and improvement in conditions generally in order to make their lot a happy one, for it has been truly said that the policeman's lot is not a very happy one.

I am pleased to know that 95 per cent. of the Police Force are held in very high esteem by the people of this State. The only people who have anything against the force are the lawbreakers, who I am pleased to say are not very numerous in the State of Queensland. The British people the world over are the most law-abiding people I know of. I take my hat off to the people of Queensland for the way they have conducted themselves during trying times and thanks are due to the men and women of the Police Force for the tactful manner in which they carried out their duties.

Mr. PATERSON (Bowen) (8.46 p.m.): The debate on the Estimates for the Police Force is very important because this force plays an important part in the life of this State. The Police Force happens to be a class of public servant against whom it is very easy to launch a general attack. And, you will find people who will launch a general attack on the force because a small minority of them do not come up to the proper standard. I do not agree with those who launch a general attack on the Police Force; nor do I agree with those who try to cover up the errors or wrongdoings of the minority by suggesting that all the police are good. I think it is incorrect to say all the police are good just as it is incorrect to say all the police are bad.

I want to take this opportunity of dealing with what I believe to be one aspect of administration of the Police Force that should certainly be investigated. I am referring now to the part some members of the Police Force in North Queensland have played in the past in regard to sending in reports that prevented certain Italians from becoming naturalised and helped other Italians to become naturalised. The tendency in some of those centres, particularly in Ingham and round about Home Hill and Ayr, was to favour those who favoured Fascism. If this did not touch this brand of politics I would not be so concerned about it. I am going to quote one particular case to the Minister; and I hope that later on there will be a complete investigation into the reports made from North Queensland by officers of the Police Force that had some determining influence on the question whether men were to be naturalised or not. As, I understand, some of these reports were used later on to determine whether men should be interned or not, the question becomes even more important.

This happened in February 1931. One of the first cases I ever defended as a member of the legal profession was a case in which two Italians named Frank Carmagnola and Mario Tardiani were charged with assaulting the Italian consul at Ingham and stealing his badge. It happened that the consul was the Fascist consul and it happened that the badge was the Fascists' badge. I defended them in

Townsville and they were acquitted. I am not concerned with the fact that they were acquitted but I am concerned with the fact that the consul went into the witness box and swore on oath that these men assaulted him and took his Fascists' badge away because they were bitterly opposed to Fascism. According to the words of the consul himself these men were open and avowed anti-Fascists. Strange to say, Tardiani was one of the first men interned when Italians were interned. Yet there were hundreds of pro-Fascist Italians who were not interned. I hope that it will be possible to have an investigation into the report that led to the internment of Tardiani and an investigation into the name of the person who was responsible.

I am going to be perfectly fair and say that in this case it may not have been a member of the Police Force who reported; but I suggest that only an investigation will ever clear up the suspicion that has been attached to that case. It is not an isolated case. There is the case of another Italian, Mario, a well-known bootmaker at Ingham whose other name I have forgotten. He was interned at the time when many pro-Fascists were not interned. This man had to leave Italy. He had to clear away from Italy because of the fact that he was such a bitter anti-Fascist that his life was not safe if he stopped there.

People in North Queensland asked themselves why was it that prominent Fascists were not being interned and well-known anti-Fascists were being interned; why was it that prominent Fascists found it easy to get naturalisation and prominent anti-Fascists found it difficult to get naturalisation. I suggest that only an investigation will clear the matter up. It affects only a minority of the police, but it would be a pity to think that the great majority of the Police Force are accused of the wrongdoings of a small minority and it is because I feel strongly on that point that I urge on the Minister that he himself have an investigation made and, if he cannot, because it is a matter that primarily concerns the Commonwealth Government, that he will use his influence to urge that Government to have an investigation. I do not know whether these reports go through State channels or direct to the Commonwealth Government, but, however it may be, I urge the Minister to have this matter investigated.

It created a considerable amount of feeling in North Queensland at the time. In fact the feeling that prominent Fascists were being let free while prominent anti-Fascists were being interned was so great that the demand grew, as there was only one way to get the Fascists interped, to intern the lot. That demand was very strong in North Queensland when North Queensland was in danger. Many people felt that unless we interned the lot we should find the majority of Fascists outside and the majority of anti-Fascists inside internment camps. I have mentioned the case of Tardiani and the Minister can check up from the court records. I did so today on this very case and he will find the report of the case either at the Supreme Court or wherever the records of

criminal cases are kept. The case was tried in February 1931. The Fascist Consul was Malano and his secretary was Chieffi. Chieffi subsequently became Fascist Consul in Townsville. Chieffi and Malano both gave evidence against Tardiani and a photo of Chieffi will be found in the front row with Dr. Cilento in the photograph tabled today by the hon. member for Mundingburra as being a photo of the members of the Grand Judicial Council of Fascism in this State.

This is a very serious matter and if it can be found that any member of the Police Force favoured Fascists he has no right to remain in the force one moment longer and in the interests of sound and clean administration of this force I again urge that this matter be thoroughly investigated so that the people in North Queensland can be assured that if any person responsible for it is at present in the force he will no longer have anything to do with the maintaining of law and order in this State on behalf of the Government.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) (8.54 p.m.): Many hon. members have risen in this Chamber to congratulate the policeman on the performance of his duty, but I have yet to hear one member stress or even suggest that some of the work policemen are doing should be taken from them. I do not know whether it is so in the city, but in the country a policeman has to carry out many duties that should never be allotted to a policeman. We find in country centres that a policeman can scarcely attend to his own duties at all. Half his time he is running about to see how many eggs Mrs. Jones's hens lay or getting some stupid statistics required by Colin Clark or somebody else. Does not the Minister think that the duties of the police are heavy enough without all these little outside matters that are being put on him?

Mr. Gair: Do they have to look at the brand on the poddies?

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. gentleman makes a stupid and silly interjection.

Mr. Smith: A poddy has not a brand on?

Mr. SPARKES: It depends on whether the poddy has a brand on or not. The hon. member who interjected might be inclined to brand a few poddies on the quiet. I do hope that the Minister will give consideration to this question of the duties the police are asked to do in the country. Hon. members opposite have always advocated the principle of one man, one job. The policeman has 101 jobs.

Mr. Graham: He is still a policeman.

Mr. SPARKES: But why should he have all these odd jobs to do? He has enough to do in his police duties without having to collect all the little returns that have to be filed. In most cases, when the policeman goes to a farm for a return he probably finds the farmer sitting on the tractor and when he asks how many hens the farmer has the farmer will probably say he has 20 or 30 or he does not care what he says, so long as he gets rid of the policeman, with the result that the policeman's time is wasted.

In many country districts cattle-stealing is still rife. I realise that probably the Minister has not as many members in the force as he would like, but to my mind it is wrong to send city men into the country while country bred men are brought to Brisbane. I suppose the Minister will say that we must give them a practical knowledge of both spheres of life, but in a big cattle district like Taroom it must be admitted that we need a bushman, a boy who has been trained in the bush. When a policeman gets to Taroom he does not want to have to be sitting in Taroom half his time attending to all the little jobs that he is asked to do.

Mr. Foley: The Taroom citizens do not steal poddies.

Mr. SPARKES: That is exactly why I say we do not want the policeman sitting in Taroom. We want him to get out to Hornetbank or Glenhaughton and have a look round. When the present Acting Premier held this portfolio, he asked why I should have a policeman boundary-riding my country. When I walk out of this building I find the police walking up and down the street. Why are they doing that? Actually they are boundary-riding the city people's property. Why is it that the country people always have to take second place to the city dweller? If it is right for the policeman to walk up and down the streets of our cities and suburbs looking after our houses, it is equally right to suggest that a policeman should patrol round about Glenhaughton or down below Springsure.

Mr. Devries: They do it.

Mr. SPARKES: No-one in this Chamber knows better than the hon. member that the police have too much to do in little towns like Blackall to be going out into the country. How often do we meet a policeman in the bush patrolling at 5 or 6 o'clock in the morning or who has been camped out all night? Not at all.

The present Acting Premier has argued on a previous occasion that the mere fact of a policeman's going out would not stop the thieving of cattle. The policeman may not catch the thief, but I suggest that the fact that he may be here today and there tomorrow makes the cattle-duffer feel that he might run into a policeman at any time and tends to discourage his activities.

Mr. Devries: You cannot fool a "John."

Mr. SPARKES: You cannot fool a "John," but I feel sure there would be no difficulty in fooling George in this case.

Mr. Collins: Do you not think the policemen know where the stolen cattle are?

Mr. SPARKES: I did not quite catch the hon. member's interjection, but if the police knew where the stolen cattle were I presume they would go and get them. The hon. member must know that if the police are out on patrol they are much more likely to find out if anything like that is going on than if they are stuck in the town. Individual policemen cannot say anything

publicly about these things themselves, but go to any little town you like and I will guarantee that if you say to the policeman, "I have not seen you about much," he will say, "I am too damn busy here. I can't get out of the town." I do not care what the hon. member for Gregory says, I say that today you do not see the police patrolling as you did 20 years ago. I defy the Minister to name one district where the police are patrolling to any great extent.

Mr. Foley: They are patrolling in all districts.

Mr. SPARKES: Then they must be in your own damn electorate. They are not in mine.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Foley: There is less duffing now than there was in previous years.

Mr. SPARKES: Don't be ridiculous! In every paper you pick up you read about the duffing of cattle. The Minister must know that there is not as much patrolling by police today as there was in years gone by. The Acting Premier, who is now present, knows that when he was the Minister in charge—

Mr. Hanlon: Did you ever find those seven heifers? (Government laughter.)

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. gentleman thinks that is a great laugh. What happened to those heifers? A stock inspector who is still in the employ of the department was responsible for returning some of those cattle.

Mr. Hanlon: How is it that you never reported it?

Mr. SPARKES: How is it we did report it? The hon. gentleman is going back quite a little while. He can go right into that matter. Many cattle are stolen but the matter is not reported because people feel, "What the hell is the good of doing it?" Take the case of Jandowae, which is in my own electorate. It is one of the biggest cattle centres on the Downs. The Minister was there only the other day. We find that only one man is stationed there and he can never get out of the town.

Mr. Hayes: Have you any boundary-riders?

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. member is echoing an interjection that the Acting Premier made years ago. That is the sort of thing we get from the other side. That shows the amount of brains in that hon. member's head. He would get quite upset if he found that no policeman was on the beat in his own suburb. I am not taking any objection to a policeman's being on the beat in the city, but this is another instance in which the country is absolutely neglected in comparison with the city. If it is worth while sending a policeman out on patrol in the suburbs, it is just as essential that a policeman should go on patrol out in the country where cattle-stealing is taking place.

Ask the hon. member for Dalby if any cattle-stealing is going on in the Chinchilla district and how much patrolling there is. No patrolling is going on at all. So I ask the Minister in charge of this portfolio, as an hon. member representing a country electorate where there is a large number of cattle, to see that there is some patrolling in the different districts.

Mr. Hanlon: If your neighbour pinches your cattle, do you not pinch them back from him?

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. gentleman regards this as a joke. If he had a property he would be one of the first to sing out if a policeman was not going round. If you look round the suburbs of Brisbane there is almost a policeman every 100 yards.

Mr. Hanlon: There are fewer policemen in the suburbs of Brisbane in proportion to the population than there are in your district.

Mr. SPARKES: That is always the cry—population, population. At one time an hon. member said that we represented a lot of gum trees, and in the next breath he said that we should put people on the land. Yes, put them on the land and tell them to go to blazes when you get them there. That is the attitude of hon. members opposite. They have no time for the people on the land, they give them no concessions and no looking after. Everything is done for the cities.

Mr. Hanlon: I have no railway in my electorate, whereas you have.

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. gentleman is fortunate in not having a railway in his electorate. No doubt he has buses and trams that do run somewhere on time. A railway in an electorate is considered a hindrance. That does not come under this vote; we are talking about the police.

The former Secretary for Health and Home Affairs had only short vision in administration, he saw only the city, but the present occupant of the office represents a country electorate, and he should have a great deal more vision. At least one would expect him to say, "It is only right that the police should go out occasionally." I can honestly say that in my district I have not seen that policeman out once. We have one of the finest constables you could wish to meet in our district, a splendid man in every way, but he does not get time to go out. I admit that if I make a special complaint to him he will take a ride out, but why should we have to do that? The police should be patrolling the country from time to time. The patrolling should not be done just occasionally, but we should be able to meet a policeman here and there in the bush. But we shall not do that until the Minister decides that the country is to be patrolled by men with a thorough knowledge of the bush. Until he does that cattle-thieving will go on.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs) (9.9 p.m.): I

am surprised that the hon. member for Aubigny has not taken into consideration the difficulties under which we are labouring at the present time. It is true that in some districts where it is difficult to get labour and where the programme of branding and ear-marking has got behind we receive odd complaints. That may be so in his district, but I object to his suggestion that we should send the police round to muster his cattle.

Mr. Sparkes: Who suggested that?

Mr. FOLEY: Just because the hon. member has a few unbranded stock he is afraid that his neighbour may get a decent bull or a decent heifer and therefore wants to put our police on the job of going round and mustering up his cattle. I am surprised at the hon. member.

Mr. Sparkes: I am surprised at your talking like that. (Laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. FOLEY: To be serious, I can assure the hon. member that in most districts, particularly cattle districts, the police do patrol work. I have in mind the Rolleston district, outside Springsure. The officer there does patrol work. As a member of the district I can give the Committee the assurance that I have received no complaints about any deficiencies in cattle or undue cattle-duffing.

Mr. Sparkes: What about Glenhaughton, which is in your area?

Mr. FOLEY: The hon. member refers to one particular holding. It is true that through lack of labour there are a lot of unbranded stock in the district. Take the big area of Duaringa. The position arose there when one officer found it impossible with his extraneous duties caused by the war to patrol the district, and we supplied him with another man particularly to control the cattle areas. We did the same at Springsure. We also have a patrol man centred at Emerald. The same applies to the Injune district and I take it the same thing goes on in the Taroom district. The fact that the hon. member does not see the policeman out on his rounds shows that the officer knows his job. The really scientific officer does his patrol work in such a way as not to be seen. He does his job in a thorough manner when he does it without enabling people to follow his tracks and see that he is on the job. A scientific man first gets his clues, goes to the district in question at night and at daybreak follows up the tracks and patrols the area, which very often is away from the beaten track. During the war period quite a large number of officers had to be sent into areas adjacent to the coast where there was danger and where extra police were required. That danger has ceased and I can assure the Committee that the department is gradually reorganising the whole position. The hon. member may be able to point out a shortage of police in a district but in time this will be remedied.

Mr. Sparkes: I will tell you one where the man says he has not the time.

Mr. FOLEY: There may be the tendency for an officer in charge to put off a complaining individual. At the same time the department has received few complaints about cattle-duffing or cattle-stealing.

During the war period, with the Commonwealth regulations and the need for the rationing of petrol, tyres, and various other things, it would be an utter impossibility for the Commonwealth or the State authorities to put men on throughout the State for every little job that was required, consequently many millions of pounds have been saved to the Commonwealth and the States by using the existing authority, whether it is the police, the C.P.S., or any other State service. That work was done willingly by those officers and has resulted in considerable saving. If we were to put a man on here and there to do every little job the hon. member would be complaining because of the increase in expenditure. As I said, the hon. member need have no fears for the future. Men of the bushman type who have been concentrated on the coast will be gradually drafted to centres where better use can be made of their qualifications in that direction.

The hon. member for Bowen raised the question of what he alleges were the unfair methods adopted with regard to giving preference to Fascists, as he termed them, in naturalisation matters, as against the non-Fascist Italian. He also referred to the internment of Italians and said that mostly the non-Fascist was the person who was picked up and interned during the war period. I can assure him that is not the fault of the police. As the hon. member knows, there is a service known as the C.S.S.—Commonwealth Security Service. In most cases the arrest and internment of Italians was a result of warrants issued by that service, and all our police had to do was to carry out the work. I think that is a matter to place before Mr. Menzies, who was in control of the Commonwealth at that time. There would be no harm in the hon. member's referring his complaint to him. It is not much use our trying to do it at this end. If it had been a matter of the State Government's instructing the State police to carry out this work there would be a justification for a State investigation of any allegation made in this Chamber, but it is not; it is the work of the Commonwealth Security Service which issued the warrants for the arrest of certain Italians. Our police merely carried out that work for the Commonwealth. Consequently the representation should be made to the Federal Government for an investigation if, as the hon. member alleges, any unfair action has been taken against any of our citizens, Italians or otherwise.

Mr. Pie: He said they were interned on the police reports.

Mr. Aikens: So they were.

Mr. FOLEY: I am trying to correct that.

The hon. member for Maree asked for some information in regard to a question of arrears of increases amounting to £7,375. I find that is due to the fact that the award providing for an increase in salaries was gazetted on 25 June, and as a result the whole of the increases could not be paid before the end of the financial year, and some of it has been carried over to this financial year.

There is a big programme of work ahead of the department in catching up on arrears of repairs to police buildings as well as in improving by new buildings the standard of the Police Force throughout the State. We have a programme already submitted to the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works. He discusses it with the Commonwealth Co-ordinator-General before our Loan Council meetings and puts this work in the order of priority and urgency based on the reports he receives from the departments. Naturally, in due course we shall catch up with the work required in the State.

I agree that there is a definite need of homes for the police. This financial year we are paying away £50,000 in allowances in lieu of quarters, and it is possible that when the circumstances permit and we catch up with some of the arrears of housing for our citizens in the community we shall put into effect a home-building policy for our police. We should thus make a really good investment and eventually show a profit. The £50,000 now being paid in lieu of quarters would pay interest and redemption on an investment of approximately £1,000,000 in homes, and at the end of a period of years the State would have a definite asset to show for its annual commitments instead of no asset as under present conditions. I can assure hon. members that the matters raised will have the attention of myself and the department, and in due course we shall be able to rectify many of them.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (9.22 p.m.): Like the hon. member for Bowen I do not intend to make a fool of myself by standing in this Chamber and saying that all police are good. Neither do I intend to say that all police are bad. I believe that at the present time the great majority of the Queensland Police Force will compare favourably for courtesy and efficiency with the members of the Police Force in any part of the world. But there is a certain section of the force that need to be rooted out. The high general standard of efficiency and honesty in the force today is the result of the manifestation of decency among the great numbers of the force itself. No high-ranking officer of the Police Force today can claim credit for the transformation from the dark days of the 20's to the conditions operating today. To give the Committee some idea of how the force has progressed, I would remind members that I was in Townsville in 1919 during the meat workers' strike, when a trainload of special police arrived from Brisbane in Townsville allegedly to maintain order during the strike. There may have been one or two good fellows among them, but I doubt it. In

the main a lower and more scurrilous group of men could not have been got together anywhere. I was then only a young man down in Townsville with a western football team, and at night when we stood on the edge of the footpath a drunken man, or a professedly drunken man, would come along, stagger up to us, and spit in our faces. Naturally, on one occasion one of our mates, although we had been warned not to fall for this dirty trick, hauled off and hit the supposed drunk. Immediately he did so, two of these special policemen who had been hiding in the doorway close by rushed up and arrested the two. They immediately released the drunk. He was a special policeman put on to do the dirty trick, and all the way to the cell these policemen kicked our lad to pieces. That sort of thing went on night and day while these policemen were there.

In 1931 I was again in Townsville and again involved in a strike, the 1931 railway strike, but this time I was a striker myself. Again a trainload of special policemen was sent from Brisbane to Townsville to maintain order, under Inspector Battersby. It was remarkable to contrast the conduct of this trainload of policemen and the trainload in 1919. In 1931 only one policeman tried a bit of rough stuff, and, unfortunately for him, he tried it on me. I immediately tackled him. Battersby came along and in front of 200 or 300 men blew the socks off the policeman, and told him to keep his hands off the men, and to do absolutely nothing to insult them. We know that in 1920 and right up to 1930 the police force in North Queensland was in the main, not all of them, worse than the police force of Chicago. We know of course of the gambling dens in the North that were run by policemen.

We know of course of the high-ranking policeman who used to mount his bicycle every Monday in Townsville, ride round the S.P. joints, ride round the gambling joints, even ride out to the brothels in Herod street behind the Causeway Hotel and collect his weekly graft. We know of the bombings of gambling joints in Townsville because of the row over the split-up of the graft the gambling joints were paying. We know of the bashings to which people had to submit in Townsville from the Police Force in those days. We know of the terrible conditions in Innisfail where policemen ran their own gambling joints. We know of men who were opium-runners for high-ranking policemen. We know of the case—and I only wish the man was out of gaol so that I could tell the full story but I know if I told the full story of a certain murder charge at Townsville some of the police would go out to Boggo Road and kick this poor old chap's ribs in, so I shall have to wait until he gets out of Boggo Road to tell the story.

Gradually, but nevertheless steadily, the decent element in the Police Force became paramount. Gradually and steadily they have been putting the screw on the irresponsible, on the corrupt, and on the crooked element. There was a time not so very long ago when a woman could not be arrested without being

raped in the police cells. It is not so long ago since an aboriginal gin was raped in the police cells at Townsville and because she was raped in the darkness the gin could not determine who her assailant was. The following morning all the decent policemen together with the raper had to line up while this aboriginal gin felt them and smelt them, and by her feel and by her smell she selected the culprit. Unfortunately he got out of the charge because that was not considered sufficient proof of her assailant. Most of these things, fortunately, have passed. As I say, today the Police Force in the main will compare favourably with any Police Force in the world, and the decent members in the rank and file of the Police Force alone in my opinion are responsible for that transformation and for that betterment.

In Townsville during the war years we felt the impact of war very severely so far as the Police Force was concerned. There was that particularly fine officer, Inspector Carseldine, with Sub-Inspector Gannon, who with a handful of men had to deal with all the traffic problems arising out of 100,000 Allied and Australian troops pouring into Townsville. Traffic became chaotic, in fact so chaotic that I found it necessary to have a conference convened by the Colonel then in charge of the American Army, Colonel Considine. At that conference all high-ranking officers of the Allied services and of the Australian services in Townsville were present, and we laid down a basis of traffic control in Townsville, but because the Commissioner of Police felt that his ego was being impaired by even agreeing to a more or less co-ordinated system of traffic control he prevented the Townsville police from joining in this co-ordinated traffic control. I sent a telegram to the then Secretary for Health and Home Affairs and said that if something was not done I would employ and pay municipal traffic police. I was then Deputy Mayor of Townsville. The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs acted promptly. He sent Inspector Smith by plane to Townsville. Inspector Smith came into the Town Hall in Townsville and I had Colonel Considine and Colonel Brown of the American Army, Colonel North of the Australian Army, and the provost marshals of both armies there, and as a result of that we were able to introduce co-ordinated traffic control in Townsville, with the result that the lives and limbs of many of our citizens were saved. Today there is still what is known as a ghost car driving up and down the streets of Townsville. It is a big white car with a loud speaker attached in which there rides a civilian policeman, an Australian military policeman, and an American military policeman.

The police there under Inspector Carseldine and the traffic police under Gannon did a magnificent job with a handful of men. Military traffic police were employed on points duty in the Townsville streets in order to relieve the civilian police man-power shortage. Yet when I came down to this House in August 1944 there were military police still on

points duty at Townsville because we were told there was a shortage of police in Queensland in general and that no Queensland civilian police could be spared to go to Townsville in order to protect the lives of our citizens.

While there were military police on point duty in Townsville, I came down to Brisbane in August 1944 and saw civilian police, many of them with flushed faces, marshalling beer queues, picture queues and chocolate queues, and a red-faced young constable in George street was marshalling a corset queue. At the very time that military police were on point duty in Townsville, we had civilian police in Brisbane marshalling corset queues, picture queues, chocolate queues, and beer queues.

Mr. Hanlon: That was the time when you were saying in Townsville that the people of Brisbane had everything they required.

Mr. Aikens: That is so. That was the very time when the people of Townsville were living on the scraps thrown to them from the tables of Brisbane. The hon. gentleman is right, and I am glad to have his public confirmation of that fact.

The hon. member for Bowen has made a statement in connection with the internment of aliens. The hon. member for Bowen rightly enjoys in this community a reputation for careful statements. He has been complimented—and deservedly so—by members of the Government for his careful consideration of his every statement before he makes it, and I know from my own experience of him in local-authority and political affairs, and as a member of this Assembly, that the hon. member for Bowen never makes a definite statement until he is absolutely certain that both of his feet are on solid ground.

In 1942, when the Townsville City Council sent me over the head of the State Government to Canberra in order to get a fair deal for the people of Townsville and the North one of the resolutions that I took to Canberra was that we demanded from the Federal Government a public inquiry into the administration of the Aliens Internment Act as it operated in Northern Queensland. At that time the hon. member for Bowen, who was then an alderman of the Townsville City Council, made a statement at a meeting of that council that was reported in the Townsville papers and headlined in the Southern papers. A half-page headline appeared in the Sydney "Sun" reporting the fact that Alderman Paterson, barrister-at-law, said, "If this inquiry is granted I will guarantee that many prominent police officers in Northern Queensland will finish behind prison bars." The hon. member for Bowen made that public statement, which was publicly published in all newspapers, yet neither the Commissioner of Police nor the then Secretary for Health and Home Affairs took any action to deal with such a serious considered statement as that. We know that many of those anti-Fascists who were interned and many of those Fascists who were allowed to go free were respectively interned or allowed to go free on the basis of the police report that was tabled about them.

I have a great respect for the rank and file of the police, and in this country we have built up, and are steadily improving, a basis of confidence between the people and the police. The police in Queensland and the police in some of the other States are not armed because the people in the main trust the police in the main. In other countries, the police work on a basis of fear—they try to make the public fear them—with the result that the public will not co-operate with them in the suppression of crime. However, in this country we have built up—and I hope we shall continue to build up—a basis of trust between the people and the police.

How can the people have confidence and faith in the police, however, when certain things are going on? When I came to Brisbane last August I found operating, almost in the shadow of Parliament House itself—just round the corner in Charlotte street—one of the biggest gambling dens in the State, run by unsavoury Greeks. In Ann street another big gambling den was flourishing. In Wickham street another one was flourishing. In Flinders street in Townsville a big gambling den was being run by a Chinaman. An officer of the Police Force in Townsville came to me and said, "Can't you get us the O.K. to stop it?" I said, "That is your job. I have no intention of interfering." While C.C.C. workers were being grabbed by the police and fined for having a game of hazards on the kitchen table, and while soldiers back from New Guinea and the Middle East were being fined for playing the Australian game of Two Up, almost within the shadow of Parliament House itself—just round the corner in Charlotte street—flourished one of the biggest gambling dens in the city, and run, not by Australians, but by Greeks.

How then can you expect me to believe that there is no corruption in high places in the Police Force? Was this place closed down? Was it ever raided? Were the runners ever prosecuted? No. The police later went to these Greeks and said, "Things are getting too hot, old fellow; you had better close up" and they closed up. Why did they not do that before? This place was conducted in Charlotte street and it operated as a sly-grog joint as well.

As the Police Force plays a very important part in the social set-up of any country every facility should be given to it to carry out its work efficiently and expeditiously. I know that perhaps equipment has been held up on account of the war, but when we read of what has been done in other countries in the way of radio outfits, ballistic departments, finger-print departments and co-ordination-of-crime departments attached to the police we begin to realise that in Queensland we lag somewhat behind. I know that we have a finger-print department, a ballistic department and certain radio equipment but much more can be done and should be done. During the war it was almost impossible to deal with the black-marketeers. They are still amongst us and their pockets are still filled with ill-gotten gains. They will try to perpetuate the post-war conditions so

favourable to them during the days of peace, but if the police are to cope with this new type of criminal they must be quipped with the modern devices to enable them to do so. While I am an hon. member of this Assembly I will never vote against any increase in this vote so long as it is to provide for extra men, fully qualified men, and for equipment, no matter how costly or delicate it may be.

Mr. Hanlon: If the police are corrupt then you should not vote one penny for them until they are cleaned up.

Mr. AIKENS: In reply all I have to say is that I am a worldly man. I walked past that gambling den in Charlotte street every day coming to Parliament. I knew that it was flourishing. Every 10-year-old kid in Brisbane knew that it was flourishing—you could see them going in and coming out. I am a sporting man but I have never been a gambler. Sporting friends of mine have said that if I liked a flutter they could get me in there. I have never set foot in the place. The Acting Premier knew that it was flourishing. How could it flourish unless some high-ranking police officer allowed it to flourish? He did not do it because he was suffering from some form of administrative trachoma but because the lids of his eyes were being pressed down by a fairly heavy bank note. I am complaining about the administration of the Police Force. Does the Acting Premier suggest that because there is one rotten apple in the barrel I should take the full barrel and dump it on the Fortitude Valley dump which has been getting a great deal of publicity lately? Let the man responsible for the administration of the Police Department sort out the apples and pick out the rotten ones.

I want to see the police given an opportunity to do the service expected of them as policemen when they join the force. Many of them are my personal friends and I am proud to call them my friends because they have been responsible for acts of personal bravery in Townsville during the war that could never be excelled.

I remember on one occasion an American policeman became a little bit officious and exceeded his duty—there were isolated instances of American police overstepping the mark. In this case an American policeman tried to prevent a civilian policeman driving his wife and kiddy home from the pictures from crossing the Causeway. The civilian policeman said in a very decent manner "Old chap, I am a policeman; I live just across the Causeway and I am driving my wife and child home. If you do not let me go across here I shall have to go right round via Lowth's Bridge or Victoria Bridge, but I do not think you have any right to prevent me from crossing the Causeway." The American policeman pulled out his big 45 automatic revolver and pushed it into the civilian policeman's stomach. The civilian policeman was in plain clothes. The civilian policeman acted very promptly, caught the American policeman by the crutch, up-ended him, knocked his revolver out of his hand and told him never to point

a gun at him again. It takes courage to do that. The Minister can produce the official file on that incident for the Committee if he likes.

We have many civilian police of integrity and courage. When they join the police force they should be allowed to perform the duty they join to perform. Today we find policemen on joining the force assigned to clerical duties. That clerical work should be done by people who are engaged as clerks or typists. A policeman who joins the force to perform police duties should not be engaged in any form of clerical work. It has been said that many reports typed by police are confidential. So are governmental, city council and many of my letters highly confidential, yet I, and the Minister too, trusts his confidential letters to his male or female secretary. Why should not these confidential clerks be appointed to the Police Department to release scores of police now engaged on clerical work?

The hon. member for Nundah worked the parish pump for a police station at Nundah or in the Nundah district. If he wants to see what a dilapidated police station looks like let him go to Ayr. When I first saw it it was right alongside a nice brick court-house and in a street near a garage. I thought it was the back building of the garage. It was a little wood and iron shanty. I realised that nothing could be done to recondition it during the war. If the Minister has any plans for a building programme in connection with new police buildings I commend to him the rebuilding of the police station at Ayr.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Health and Home Affairs) (9.44 p.m.): The remarks made by the hon. member for Mundingburra were remarkable. I can assure the Committee that I tried to follow him as closely as I could. He appeared to put the boot into the police, as it were, in one breath and then was kissing them on the cheek on the other. The only conclusion I can come to after hearing him is that every policeman in the State today is under a cloud.

Mr. Aikens: Don't make any mistake about it. I know the ones who are under the cloud.

Mr. FOLEY: The hon. member went away back into the past, recounting all the sins of omission of the people in the North away back in the early days of the State. That has all gone.

He was really intending to convey to the Committee that everything has been all right since that date. Then he goes on to recite another list of sins of the community that were not being attended to. He referred to the corruption of the police in high places because a few gambling dens were operating. I want to know who are the upright officers of the Police Force. I feel they are all under a cloud. That is the only conclusion one can come to. I have not been able to discern from anything he said just what section is not playing the game by the State today. Every one of them, according to him, if one

followed him closely, is being corrupted by different sections of the community, gambling dens, opium dens, and other forms of corrupt practices in the community. I should like to point out to him that except for a spasmodic game—and they will spring up anywhere—there is not one game operating in Queensland today, including the one he referred to in Townsville; there is not one game operating in Queensland other than the spasmodic game that may crop up here and there throughout the State. I get reports regularly on attempts that are being made in and round Brisbane and other parts of the State to carry on illicit gambling. We have absolutely stamped that out in this State today. The only way in which we could do that was to transfer extra police to suppress that vice. During the war period our police were carrying out a tremendous job in other quarters.

Black-marketing and goodness knows how many vices cropped up during the war, and the only way we could combat them in Brisbane and other parts of the State, particularly Brisbane, was to put special policemen on for the job.

Mr. Aikens interjected.

Mr. FOLEY: We know very well it is easy enough for the hon. member to get up in this Chamber and on the soap box and say what the police should do, but I can assure hon. members that the difficulty in the past has been for the police to get evidence on which to prosecute. The problem in dealing with gambling joints is the getting of the evidence. First of all they had to get inside the premises, and after doing so they had to have someone inside to supply the evidence of gambling. That is the difficulty the police encountered over a number of years. In the case of Chinamen it can be done. Success has been achieved over and over again because of the picking up of informers among the Chinamen who were willing to go in and get the evidence and then claim their moiety of the fine after a successful prosecution. But that cannot be done with some of the other joints, such as one registered as a club. Every member is known, and before any man can enter that joint he has to be sworn to by a particular club member. It is an utter impossibility to get any agent inside to get the evidence. I have come to the conclusion that apart from the methods we are adopting lately, in fact the only effective method that can be adopted is to give the right of issuing a warrant at any time to one of our police inspectors to enter at any time any place in which it is believed gambling is being conducted.

One can visualise what a great power that would be, and how it could be abused by the police. I doubt if the community would tolerate the giving of such a power to the police. But to stamp the evil out absolutely and to prevent spasmodic games, greater power than they have today must be given to the police but then of course there is always the danger that in some place somewhere, at some time, some member of the

police force may abuse the powers that have been given to him and so bring injustice to some member of the community.

I do not know whether it is worth while taking notice of the remarks that have been made by the hon. member for Mundingburra, but I can assure him that they will be noted by the Police Force of the State. Naturally, the police follow the discussions that take place in this Chamber. The Commissioner and staff will analyse the hon. member's remarks, and if anything is going on in the Police Force, any corruption or anything else such as he alleges, I can assure hon. members that attempts will be made to run to earth those individuals who are corrupt and who are allowing the things to go on in the community that should be stamped out by them in the course of their duties. I do not stand for the methods that have been adopted by the hon. member.

If any hon. member comes in here with some semblance of evidence in cases where he thinks something wrong is going on in the community, it gives the Government and the police at least an opportunity of making some effort to stamp out vice. However, when a member comes in with a rambling list of statements of corruption in high places, it naturally leaves a cloud over the whole of the force. Where are we to start? Does the hon. member refer to the Commissioner? Does he refer to his Deputy, the Chief Inspector? Does he refer to the officer in charge of the Police Force in Brisbane or in Townsville? Does he mean the first-class sergeants? Does he mean the second-class sergeants? The whole thing is ridiculous. No hon. member should be allowed to make broad charges without any semblance of evidence to substantiate them and without giving the police an opportunity to clean up what he alleges is going on.

I say these things are not going on. I have a discussion with the Commissioner of Police almost every morning and a report is made to me of any current happening of importance that has taken place in Brisbane or any other part of the State. I also have occasion from time to time to discuss matters with other officers in the service. As the result of those discussions, my impression is that nothing but intense application to his duties is the objective of the average member of the Police Force today.

The results speak for themselves. The members of the force have carried out a splendid job. Crime is on the decrease compared with last year, and the years before. Gambling has been stamped out and black-marketing is held in check. They have carried out many extraneous duties, they have overworked themselves, and have never spared themselves in the matter of working hours. They have done a good job, as one can see from the report of the Commissioner. I deplore the attitude of the hon. member. If he is not prepared to give the evidence here in this Chamber openly but will give it to me as Minister in charge of the department, no pains will be spared to run to earth anyone who he says is being corrupted in the Police Department today.

Mr. JESSON (Kennedy) (9.54 p.m.): I cannot allow the vote to go through without saying something concerning the attack on the Police Force in relation to internments. No man in Queensland knows more about the internments or the position that brought about the internments than I do. Most of it related to my electorate, to a place that has been my home for many years.

At 9.55 p.m., under Standing Order No. 307 and Sessional Order, progress was reported.

The House adjourned at 9.57 p.m.