

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 21 AUGUST 1947**

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## QUESTIONS.

## GOVERNMENT HOUSES AT STAFFORD.

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

“1. In reference to the Stafford housing project—How many houses are (a) included, (b) completed, and (c) occupied?

“2. What is the average cost of the completed houses, including land, building, all other improvements, and administration?

“3. What is the average rental of the occupied houses?”

**Hon. H. A. BRUCE** (The Tableland), for **Hon. W. POWER** (Baroona), replied—

“1. (a) 260; (b) 117; (c) 121.

“2. At last examination, cost averaged £1,113½ per house, made up as follows:—House and equipment average £1,018½, drainage average £55, fencing average £40. The land, fully developed, averages £120 per block. Administration, as provided in the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement, is charged at ½ per cent. Charges for plans and specifications, supervision, at 3 per cent. on erection costs, and capitalisation of interest on expenditure during course of construction, are included in the figures given above.

“3. The rentals range from £1 4s. to £1 15s., and average, at present, £1 11s.”

## PLURAL VOTING; FAILURE TO VOTE.

**Mr. WANSTALL** (Toowong) asked the Attorney-General—

“Following the election on 3 May last—

1. What were the totals of—(a) cases of plural voting notified; (b) persons to whom ‘please explain’ notices were sent following their failure to register their votes?

2. What is the total of prosecutions either launched or pending with regard to (a) and (b)?”

**Hon. D. A. GLEDSON** (Ipswich) replied—

“1. (a) No cases of plural voting have been notified, but there were 638 apparent plural voters. Returning officers and police report that errors by presiding officers in marking rolls have produced this result. (b) There was a number—namely, 63,928—of apparent non-voters. Notices were sent by returning officers to each one listed. All replies to these notices have not yet been received. Therefore, it cannot now be stated how many actual non-voters there were.

“2. There is no case, up to the present, with evidence to launch a prosecution in any of the 62 electorates in Queensland at the last general election.”

## UNIVERSAL COMPULSORY FINGER-PRINTING.

**Mr. MANN** (Brisbane) asked the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs—

“Did he make the statement attributed to him in the ‘Courier-Mail’ of 19 August

## THURSDAY, 21 AUGUST, 1947.

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

## USE OF LOBBIES.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I desire to claim the attention of hon. members for a brief period.

In regard to the entrances to the Chamber situated on the right-hand and left-hand sides of the Chair, I wish to say that the official lobby at the right-hand entrance has always been recognised as the lobby which is to be used for the convenience of Ministers who are under the necessity of having Under Secretaries and other public officials in attendance for the purposes of consultation. And in regard to the Speaker’s lobby on the left-hand entrance it has always been customary for members to consult with the Speaker on the occasions when they have a friend or constituent whom they wish placed there. Lately, in this lobby, there has been a congestion which impedes ingress to and egress from the Chamber, and I would ask hon. members to assist me in my endeavour to keep this passageway clear.

when addressing the Conference of Police Commissioners to the effect that the conference should consider the desirability of finger-printing everyone?"

**Hon. A. JONES** (Charters Towers) replied—

"No, the matter of finger-printing was not mentioned by me in my address to the Police Commissioners' Conference. As the Press were excluded I do not know where the 'Courier-Mail' obtained such incorrect information. However, on the matter being brought to my notice, I contacted the 'Courier-Mail,' with the result that the following correction appeared in their issue dated 20 August:—'In opening the conference the Health and Home Affairs Minister (Mr. Jones) did not suggest that the conference should consider the desirability of finger-printing everyone. Finger-printing of the public is a subject which may be discussed by the Commissioners.'"

STATEMENTS ON ALLEGED ELECTION  
IRREGULARITIES.

**Mr. ROBERTS** (Nundah) asked the Attorney-General—

"Will he have police inquiries made in connection with a statement which appeared in the 'Courier-Mail' on 20th instant, attributed to the hon. member for Toowong, when speaking in the House on 19th instant, that he had in his possession sworn statements, the taking of which appears to contravene section 95 of the Criminal Code, relating to the administration of extra-judicial oaths?"

**Hon. D. A. GLEDSON** (Ipswich) replied—  
"Yes."

SAWMILL LICENCES, NORTH QUEENSLAND.

**Mr. KERR** (Oxley), for **Mr. LUCKINS** (Maree), asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

"1. What is the number of sawmill licences granted for the area north of Mackay?"

"2. How many new licences were granted in this area in (a) 1945-46 and (b) 1946-47?"

**Hon. T. A. FOLEY** (Normanby) replied—

"1. Ninety-one.

"2. (a) 1945-46, 12; (b) 1946-47, 13."

MASTER ROLLS, GENERAL ELECTION.

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Attorney-General—

"1. Is a master roll compiled for each electorate showing all the votes recorded at a general election?"

"2. If so, who has charge of such rolls and will he make them available for inspection by hon. members or by the representative of any political party which had a candidate for an electorate in question?"

**Hon. D. A. GLEDSON** (Ipswich) replied—

"1. There is no statutory obligation on returning officers to compile a master roll; but it is a practice amongst returning officers to mark a roll for the compilation of the list mentioned in Section 63 (2) of 'The Elections Acts, 1915 to 1944,' of those electors who appear to have failed to vote.

"2. The returning officer, if he has compiled one. Again, he has no statutory duty nor obligation in this matter, and inspection is at the discretion of the returning officer."

WORKERS' COMPENSATION PREMIUMS.

**Mr. PLUNKETT** (Albert) asked the Treasurer—

"What workers' compensation premiums are payable in respect of employees of the following classes of employers, viz.—(a) agricultural farmers, (b) butter and cheese factories, (c) bacon factories, (d) market gardeners, (e) graziers in respect of (i.) station hands and (ii.) shearers, (f) road contractors?"

**Hon. D. A. GLEDSON** (Ipswich), for **Hon. J. LARCOMBE** (Rockhampton), replied—

"Workers' compensation premiums are payable at the undermentioned rates for every £100 of wages paid for employees engaged in the respective occupations shown:—(a) Agricultural farmers—(i) no bush-falling, clearing, or blasting, 30s. 6d. per cent.; (ii.) to include bush-falling (with blasting), 190s. per cent.; (iii.) to include bush-falling (no blasting), 119s. 6d. per cent.; (b) butter and/or cheese factories, 14s. 6d. per cent.; (c) bacon factories, 21s. 6d. per cent.; (d) market gardeners, 22s. per cent.; (e) graziers—(i.) sheep, 26s. per cent.; (ii.) shearers, 10s. 6d. per cent.; (iii.) cattle and/or horses, 35s. per cent.; (f) road contractors—(i.) road-making (no blasting), 47s. 6d. per cent.; (ii.) road-making (with blasting), 58s. per cent."

INTAKE OF SCHOOL TEACHERS.

**Mr. MORRIS** (Enoggera) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

"1. Of the total intake of teachers from 1 January to 1 August, 1947, how many were from (a) Teachers' Training College; (b) other sources?"

"2. Of those from the Teachers' Training College, how many had been attending that college for (a) two years; (b) more than 21 months but less than 2 years; (c) less than 21 months?"

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

"The information is being compiled and will be furnished as soon as possible."

## CENTRAL DOMESTIC SCIENCE SCHOOL.

**Mr. MORRIS** (Enoggera) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“1. Have plans been prepared for a central Domestic Science School?”

“2. When is it proposed to proceed with the establishment of this school?”

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

“1. No.

“2. The term ‘central domestic science school’ has no exact significance. Domestic science instruction is provided at centres throughout the State. As pupils travel to these centres from surrounding schools, each might be described as a ‘central domestic science school.’”

## APPOINTMENT OF G. A. STOCKWELL.

**Mr. MORRIS** (Enoggera) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“1. Is it a fact that a George Alfred Stockwell has been appointed a teacher, unclassified, in the Education Department?”

“2. Is this the same George Alfred Stockwell who was the defeated Labour candidate for Wide Bay in the election held on 3 May?”

“3. What are the qualifications he possesses for his position in the teaching service?”

“4. What was his employment prior to contesting the recent election?”

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

“1. Yes.

“2. Yes.

“3. He had a good Junior pass; he was interviewed by officers of the Education Department; it was thought that, in view of his personal qualifications as revealed during interview, he should be given a trial. He was appointed on the basic rate and he understands that he has to display his aptitude as a teacher, and has to enhance his scholastic qualifications before he can be accepted for training in the Teachers’ College.

“4. The Department regarded the nature of his employment as irrelevant to the issue.”

## TANK-SINKING BY EXPLOSIVES.

**Mr. MACDONALD** (Stanley) asked the Treasurer—

“In reference to the recent experiment in tank-sinking by explosives near Inglewood—

1. What kind of explosive was used and what quantity?

2. What was the size of the excavation in cubic yards?

3. Taking the ordinary market value of the explosive used, what would be the total cost of the tank, including all necessary work after the explosion?”

**Hon. D. A. GLEDSON** (Ipswich), for **Hon. J. LARCOMBE** (Rockhampton), replied—

“1. T.N.T.—12½ tons.

“2. 6,000 cubic yards.

“3. £1,657.”

## GOVERNMENT HOUSES AT ROCKLEA.

**Mr. KERR** (Oxley) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

“1. Was any time limit set on the period for the construction of the nineteen Rocklea houses, contract for which was entered into on 17 April, 1946?”

“2. Is he aware that sixteen months have elapsed and not one tenant is in occupation?”

“3. When are these houses expected to be ready for occupancy?”

**Hon. H. A. BRUCE** (The Tableland), for **Hon. W. POWER** (Baroona), replied—

“1. A time-limit was not fixed as in normal times. The contract stipulated completion in ‘sixteen weeks, subject to review.’ The matter was reviewed from time to time.

“2. Yes.

“3. Very soon. All houses have been allotted to tenants, and all will be completed shortly.”

## COTTON PRODUCTION AND ACREAGE.

**Mr. KERR** (Oxley) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“Would he inform the House—

1. Average cotton production and acreage in the immediate pre-war years?

2. Approximate production and acreage for year 1946-1947?

3. Targets for 1947-48 in both production and acreage?”

**Hon. H. H. COLLINS** (Cook) replied—

“1, 2, and 3—

Year.	Acres.	Production lb. Seed Cotton.	Bales of Lint (500 lb. nett).
1936 ..	62,200	19,198,600	13,504
1937 ..	52,692	11,792,828	8,519
1938 ..	66,470	13,687,872	9,654
1939 ..	41,212	17,527,709	12,447”
1946-1947 ..	8,524	1,586,200	1,133”
1947-1948 ..	30,000	Under normal conditions this area should yield at least 6,000 bales of lint (500 lb. bales.)”	

## CONDITIONS AT GOODNA MENTAL HOME.

**Mr. MORRIS** (Enoggera), for **Mr. DECKER** (Sandgate), asked the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs—

“Has the Visiting Justice who went to Goodna Mental Home, following the publication of a newspaper article on conditions there, submitted any report? If so, will he make the report available to this House?”

**Hon. A. JONES** (Charters Towers) replied—

“The usual periodical reports furnished to me by the Visiting Justice in June and July last indicated that matters and circumstances connected with the Institution represented a high degree of excellence and efficiency, and that all requirements and services were in first-class order. In his report furnished to me in May last the Visiting Justice made inquiries into the allegations made by patient Greenslade and reported that he could find no ground at all to support such charges, and that he had advised the patient Greenslade to that effect. The Official Visitor also reported to like effect concerning his official visits, and stated that there was no evidence of injury or maltreatment and no complaints were made to him. He further stated that the general condition of patients was good and their comfort and welfare were receiving excellent attention, and that the discipline and control were of a high standard. The Commonwealth Minister for Repatriation (Mr. Barnard) visited the Hospital on Tuesday last, 19th instant, and stated that the provision for the treatment of mentally sick ex-servicemen was the finest in Australia. This standard was the direct result of the high standard of hospital accommodation provided at the Brisbane Mental Hospital over the last thirty years by the State Public Works Department.”

Whereupon copies of the reports furnished by the Visiting Justice and the Official Medical Visitor were laid upon the Table of the House.

#### IMPROVEMENT OF RAILWAY WORKSHOPS.

**Mr. H. B. TAYLOR** (Hamilton) asked the Minister for Transport—

“Up to the end of July last, what practical steps had been taken to rehabilitate railway workshops in accordance with the specific pledges made in the policy speech delivered by the Premier in the recent election campaign?”

**Hon. J. E. DUGGAN** (Toowoomba) replied—

“Large orders have been placed for new machines during the past few years and various improvements have been made to workshops at Ipswich, Rockhampton, and other depots. A special investigation of railway workshops has been made by Mr. F. H. Harrison, Chief Mechanical Engineer of the South Australian Railways, whose report is now awaited, and further action in connection with the workshops will depend, to some extent, on the contents of his report.”

#### SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES, JUNIOR TEACHERS.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Mundingburra) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“1. What salaries are paid to junior teachers—(a) Male, (b) Female?”

“2. Are any away-from-home or living allowances paid to junior teachers employed at schools not in their own home town?”

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

“1, and 2. Teachers are paid according to the award of the Industrial Court of Queensland. In that award there is no category ‘Junior Teachers.’ Certain officers after completing a course at the Teachers’ College are paid during their first year in schools—males £225 per annum, females £185 per annum. Others are paid—males £185, females £155, while on probation; and £225 and £195 respectively during the next year. Others are paid—males £155, females £135, while on probation; and males £185, females £155, during the first year following probation; and males £225, females £195, during the second year following probation. In addition, teachers receiving £221 or over per annum receive £60 10s. basic wage adjustment, while those receiving less than £221 per annum, receive, in the case of males, £30 5s. per annum, and, in the case of females, either £23 5s. per annum, or £47 10s. per annum. Trainees, while attending the Teachers’ College are paid living-away-from-home allowances but once appointed to schools are paid the foregoing rates without away-from-home allowances. They are, however, paid ‘zone’ allowances which vary from £10 to £90 per annum according to the district in which the officer is serving.”

#### SHOW-DAY HOLIDAYS.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Mundingburra) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

“What local authorities applied for the gazettal of the 1947 annual show day as a holiday in accordance with the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, and in respect of which annual shows were the gazettals made?”

**Hon. V. C. GAIR** (South Brisbane) replied—

“The information asked for in the hon. member’s question is tabled.”

Whereupon a list showing the show days gazetted was laid upon the Table of the House.

I desire to add that to obtain this information it was necessary to get two male clerks to work back last night for which they will be paid overtime. It is hoped that the reason for the question justified the cost incurred in obtaining the information.

#### FORM OF QUESTIONS.

##### MR. SPEAKER’S RULING.

**Mr. PIE** (Windsor) proceeding to give notice to the Acting Premier of a question concerning allegations as to conduct of recent elections—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I think the hon. member should be fair to the House and

frame the question in such a way that it will be a legitimate question seeking the result he desires.

**Mr. PIE:** This is the information I desire from the Attorney-General.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I ruled very strongly in this Chamber last year on the length of questions and in view of what the Acting Premier has said this morning as to the expense involved I think it is only fair hon. members should make their questions as short and as intelligible as possible.

**Mr. PIE:** I might state that no expense is involved in this; all we are asking is that the Attorney-General initiate a full judicial inquiry into these allegations.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** May I make the suggestion to the hon. member that in order to save a lengthy question he put it in a simple form asking that the Attorney-General investigate the charges made by the hon. member for Toowong?

**Mr. PIE:** There are additional charges that I wish investigated and it is only this House that can allow it to be done. May I continue, Mr. Speaker?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I will give the hon. member the opportunity of framing this question properly. I think it can be more brief.

#### PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Regulation under the Abattoirs Agreement Ratification and Meat Industry Acts, 1930 to 1932 (15 August, 1947).

Order in Council under the Labour and Industry Act of 1946.

#### NOISE IN CHAMBER.

**Mr. MAHER** (West Moreton) (11.28 a.m.): Many strange noises emanate from this Chamber from time to time, but I notice a new one this morning. It sounds like the humming of an electric fan. It is rather irritating, and I should like to know whether it is a permanent feature of the Chamber or whether it is only something temporary.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I have always thought that my hearing was acute. I cannot hear it.

**Mr. Aikens:** I can hear it.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I will have inquiries made with a view to seeing whether the position can be improved.

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—THIRD ALLOTTED DAY.

Debate resumed from 20 August (see page 110) on Mr. Crowley's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

**Mr. BROWN** (Buranda) (11.30 a.m.), who was received with "Hear, hears!" said: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to me to have this opportunity of addressing the House on the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Speech. First, I should like to add my congratulations to those already extended to His Excellency, the first Queensland-born Governor of this State, on his appointment.

I congratulate you, too, Sir, on your appointment as Speaker of this Assembly, as I feel sure that you will carry out your duties, as you have done in the past, with fairness to all and privilege to none. Furthermore, I should like to congratulate the hon. member for Brisbane on his appointment as Chairman of Committees. From what I have seen of his work so far I am satisfied that he knows his job and that every member in this Assembly will get a fair "go."

I do not know whether I am in order in doing so or not but I draw attention to the fact that a Minister of this Government has been laid aside with sickness and has not been able to take his seat in this Assembly. I should like if possible for this Assembly to convey a message of sympathy to the hon. member for Baroona in his sickness, coupled with the wish that his recovery will be speedy and lasting.

Lastly, I desire to congratulate both the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply on the open and frank way they devalued their maiden speeches to this House. They are to be congratulated on the good points they made in connection with the various departments of State they mentioned.

The Government, too, are to be congratulated upon the stand they have made in connection with migration. It should prove a boon to this State and should be successful, for I believe that conditions here are so good that if we advertise them well enough there will be no need to entice people to this State. I am sure the people will come to this State of their own free will. The Government are to be congratulated on going ahead with their 10-year plan and I believe that the people of Queensland will have such confidence in Labour that Labour Governments will be returned for a period of 10 years at least in order that they might carry out this plan. The people have enough confidence in the Labour Government to keep them in power long enough at least to carry out the plan that has been outlined.

I am pleased that the Government propose to carry out water-conservation schemes. I know that that will call for a good deal of expenditure, but it will be worth while. The matter was referred to yesterday by the hon. member for Maranoa in the course of his speech, and as he has had a vast experience of western areas the House would be well advised to be guided by his opinions on the matter. I congratulate the Government also on their proposals in connection with soil erosion, a problem that goes hand in hand with water conservation. In carrying out these proposals the Government will enhance their prestige and almost illimitable benefits will be conferred upon the people.

The Government are to be congratulated, too, on their electricity proposals, but I express the hope that when the various electric undertakings have been established the people will not be robbed as they have been in the past in the prices they will be required to pay for electrical appliances and equipment. This is a matter that I know something about, because being a progressive type of person I decided to install a number of electrical appliances in my home in 1929. For instance, I installed an electric stove, an electric kettle, electric jug, electric bed-warmer, electric bath-heater, and so on, but in my opinion I was robbed in the prices that I had to pay for them; I am a tradesman with some knowledge of the iron and steel business and I claim some knowledge of the value of articles made from those materials. My electric stove cost me £39 10s. in 1929 but in my opinion I should have been charged only £20 for it. I had not had these electrical appliances in my home for very long when I decided that I should have an additional element in case my electric jug went. So I went to a business place that supplied these elements and inquired whether they had an electric element for an electric jug. They said, "Yes," and they brought one out. They said, "That will cost you 1s. 6d.," to which I replied that I did not want a dozen, that I wanted only one, and I was again told that I would get only one for that price. Then I asked, "Have you any wire?" I finished up buying some wire and making the element, but I paid a tremendous price for the wire. It worked out at £1,176 a ton. Then I went home and made an element, and having made it I calculated the cost, which worked out at less than 1½d.

**Mr. Decker:** How long did it take you to make it?

**Mr. BROWN:** Not quite as long as it took the hon. member to interject. (Laughter.)

To show that I am not putting anything over hon. members I produce one that I made as a practical demonstration. I will hand it to the Attorney-General. I made that element this morning. It cost me less than 1½d. The Attorney-General and hon. members generally can be assured that the element is O.K. and up to the standard of similar elements purchased in Brisbane or elsewhere.

**Mr. Kerr:** I should like to be the local agent for it.

**Mr. BROWN:** I am not making these elements for sale, but I will not let people like the interjector make a profit out of it, whether he wishes to do so or not.

**A Government Member:** He will, whether you like it or not.

**Mr. BROWN:** He may, but I will not make it for him. That does not say he might not get that profit. With the experience I have had I am satisfied that the high price of electrical goods and appliances is retarding the progress not only of the people of this city but everywhere else in Queensland.

Let me take the price of refrigerators. During the war it was quite an open secret that refrigerators could be manufactured for £80. People working in certain places were able to get one for their own purposes for that sum, yet at the same time those refrigerators were being sold to the public for £98 and £100 each. There is something wrong when there is such a difference between the cost of production and the purchasing price of an article such as a refrigerator. It is time we began to take notice and go into these matters to stop people from exploiting the public on articles that are urgently required and are necessary in every home.

The development of the coal industry is another matter on which the Government should be commended. In this regard I hope that the interests of that fine body of men, the coal-miners, will be fully safeguarded—and I do not think there is any need to fear that they will not. The introduction of modern machinery for the mechanisation of coal-mines should be of great benefit to the men employed in the industry.

The regional development scheme is also in my opinion a step in the right direction. This, in my opinion, is merely preparing the way for the time when unification will be adopted by the Australian people and these regions will form the nuclei of provincial council areas that will then be necessary. I have been associated with projects having a similar objective. I was one of the first advocates on the public platform of the Greater Brisbane scheme. That was as far back as 1916. After all is said and done, the Greater Brisbane scheme, which unified all local authorities, including city and town councils and shire councils within the Greater Brisbane area, was only a step towards unification of local government.

**An Opposition Member:** Are you satisfied with it?

**Mr. BROWN:** Yes, I am perfectly satisfied with it. When the Greater Brisbane scheme was put into effect I was a member of one of the component shire councils. I was pleased to get out of it for it was impossible for those councils to carry on as they were. Greater Brisbane came into being on 1 January, 1926, but with the exception of the Jones Administration every council was controlled by men who in the main were opposed to the scheme. I think it is a reasonable inference that, being opposed to the scheme, they would try to make it a failure. But it could not be made a failure. I am not altogether satisfied with the progress that has been made, and I believe greater progress would have been made if all the councils had been in favour of the scheme. I am wholeheartedly in favour of unification in Australia, but before we get it provision must be made for the necessary local governments, for the councils. To my mind, only two forms of government are required in any country, national government and local government. When these regions I speak of are formed and in working order it will be an easy matter to form provincial councils, giving

them the full power to carry out local affairs in their respective areas. We shall be governed on all national questions by the national Government.

I am particularly pleased to be able to congratulate the Government on their intention to bring in a bill for the establishment of a 40-hour week. I believe that such a bill is very necessary because, with the scientific methods of production that are being used in all sections of industry, production must be greater, therefore unless shorter working hours are introduced the worker will be thrown on the unemployment market. I know that our opponents like to have a big army of unemployed because that condition of affairs enables them to create disunion among the workers. The worker cannot afford to be out of work very long because his savings, if any, are not sufficient to keep him for any length of time. That is the position in which the employers of labour would like to see the worker, so that they would be able to dictate the terms and conditions under which he must work.

The introduction of machinery into industry inevitably can have only one result—shorter hours of labour for the masses. I support the principle that wherever possible a 40-hour week should be worked in five days. That is the only way in which the whole of the people can be sure of employment; that is the only means of abolishing unemployment; therefore it should receive the support of all members of this Assembly.

The aim and object of every member of this House should be the abolition of unemployment. The introduction of science, invention and machinery into industry should mean shorter hours of labour, and in that way the masses of the people who are the workers, the real producers, will share in the benefits thus derived from the production of our goods.

The hon. member for Windsor, in the course of his remarks on a Supply Bill the other day, made mention of a machine that would probably be brought to Queensland; in fact, he desires the Government to help him bring it here because that one machine can do the work of 40 men in picking cotton. I wonder if the hon. member has given any thought to what is to become of the 40 men who will be thrown out of employment by the introduction of this one machine. I do not blame him at all for bringing the machine here—I agree with him—but when that machine is in operation the workers in that industry should share in the benefit derived from the use of that machine by having to work a lesser number of hours. That is the only way by which the benefits can be equitably distributed: the benefits derived from machinery should not go wholly to the employer in the form of bigger profits.

The other day a question was asked about the miners' request for a 35-hour week. I read in the Press that the proposal had been made and I am not at all surprised, because if we are to employ all our working people when these methods of production are intro-

duced, then shorter hours of labour are inevitable. It is the natural corollary to the introduction of machinery in industry.

I desire to congratulate the Government on their educational scheme and on the work they are doing in relation to education. Although I realise the great amount of work that is being done, we should spend even greater sums on the education of our people. It would be money well spent, and although the Department of Public Instruction is non-revenue-producing, in the long run we get the benefit in the results of educating our children in such a way that they are able to go out into the world, take their place in any community, and become the real producers of the future. I am inclined to think that we should endeavour to educate our children to become more State-minded, so that when they go out into the world to earn their living they will realise that the other fellow has as much right to live as have they. All forms of education today—and I mean all forms, not only our State schools from the primary schools to the University but political, industrial and religious education—are making each and every one of us an individualist in the struggle for gold alone.

We teach our children to go for the job that will give them the most money, irrespective of whether they are suited for it or not. We do not teach them to take the jobs for which they are suited, the jobs in which they can be successful or in which they can become experts. We do not do that, simply because the same money is not to be made out of the jobs of a more menial nature. I repeat that we do not teach them to be State-minded; we should expect them to become humans who can live with one another and not on one another.

I wish to congratulate the hon. member for Logan on his speech on the Appropriation Bill the other day and on his knowledge of international finance, as well as the easy manner with which he dealt with the subject. I noticed, however, that his remarks were void of any constructive suggestion for improving the position. We all have some idea of the present methods. To my mind, some better arrangement could be made for overcoming the financial crisis, both national and international, that is setting in. I am of the opinion that the nationalisation of banks in Australia has some connection with Britain's financial trouble. I may be wrong, but I cannot help thinking that there is something wrong with the present financial set-up and that some step is being contemplated, as it must be, to help Great Britain in her time of trouble. One thing of which I am certain is that the present method is wrong. Business men will tell you that there is something wrong but that they do not know how to rectify the trouble. Less than three years ago Great Britain, Australia and other countries were in the thick of the greatest war ever waged in this world. Then any amount of money could be obtained to carry on the destruction that war brings in its train, but now that the war is over we cannot find enough money for the peace that we are

supposed to have won. Many promises were made about the fight for freedom and the new era that was to result from the war. After the war we found that Great Britain, who sacrificed so much for so many, is now asked to try to balance her budget, and that at this short stage after all the sacrifices she has made.

I believe that America, which is pushing the case against Great Britain at the present time, will come out second-best. While she has lifted some of her controls, as mentioned in this House the other day, she has also a large number of unemployed, and she will be lucky, in my opinion, if she can stave off, in the not far distant future, a revolution within her shores. It appears to me that the question of interest will have to be reviewed all over the world. If I lend a person £100, and that person in the course of 20 or 30 years pays me back £200 in interest, it seems hardly fair that that person should still be owing me £100. There is something wrong with a system that allows that to happen. It seems wrong to me, and I believe that unless something is done and saner methods are adopted in relation to loans by one country to another, something grave might happen. I sincerely hope that I am wrong.

At 12.2 p.m.,

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

**Mr. BROWN:** I am pleased indeed to see Great Britain taking a stand, taking the bit in her mouth as it were, and I hope that Australia and the other Dominions will stick tight to the Mother Country and help her over the stiles she has before her today. Let us stick together and do everything to get the Mother Country out of the difficulties she is in. I say again that it is all a matter of interest. A Brisbane business man, in the person of Mr. W. S. Austin, once wrote a book entitled, "All Profit is Robbery," and I should like members of the Opposition to get a copy of that book; its reading would do them good.

We were told after the last war that the world would be a freer and better world to live in, but unless that state of affairs comes about all the sacrifices made during the war and since will have been made in vain. I hope that some better brain than mine will be able to solve this problem.

I am pleased that the Government are going ahead with their efforts to solve the housing problem. This is a matter that is giving Governments a headache—not only this Government but Governments throughout the Commonwealth and Governments in all countries that played a part in the last war. I am pleased to know also that according to the latest report the house-building position in Queensland is ahead of that of other States.

I think that the Brisbane City Council and local governing bodies should be playing a bigger part in supplying the housing requirements of our people. It appears to me that

in every house built plans have to be submitted to a local authority, and in that way the local authority has something to do with the matter. Local authorities are concerned either with the submission of plans to them or in the supply of electricity, water or gas, and I think they should go further and see that people living in their areas are housed as they should be.

When we take into account the fact that during the war years no houses were built, that there were a natural increase in population and an increase brought about by the arrival of evacuees and other people who came from the South, thereby swelling our population by many thousands, we must concede at once that the Government have done a great job in house construction. But although I appreciate all that they have done I am still at a loss to understand why the cost of building should be so heavy. Houses are too dear to-day. They cost over 100 per cent. more than they did before the war. How often are we told that wages represent the biggest element in the cost of any article, but the wages paid to workers in the building industry and to those producing the timber, fibro-cement, and iron for building requirements have not gone up to an extent that would justify an increase of 100 per cent. in the cost of home construction. And so I should like the Government to make searching inquiry into the reasons for these tremendous increases in the cost of building. It appears to me that it is almost impossible for a worker on the basic wage to build a home to-day, as that would mean to him a debt of approximately £1,000.

I was pleased to hear the hon. member for Maranoa refer to the grand work that has been carried out by the Government in hospital schemes throughout the State. He made special reference to the improved hospital facilities that had been provided in the Maranoa electorate and said how thankful the people there were to obtain these benefits.

His Excellency intimated in his opening speech that it was the intention of the Government to amend the Workers' Compensation Act and I sincerely hope that they do it in more ways than one. I know that it is intended to grant increased benefits to injured workers and to the dependants of a worker killed in industry, but I should like the Government to go even further than that—to inquire into the cost of premiums. I believe that there should be a uniform premium rate for workers' compensation. By proper consideration of the dangers associated with industry as a whole we should be able to arrive at a uniform premium. What a saving that would be! To-day, if a farmer desires to clear a piece of land and employs labour his premium for workers' compensation purposes is 190s. for each £100 of wages when explosives are being used, whereas the premium in respect of shop assistants is only 3s. for each £100 of wages.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. McINTYRE** (Cunningham) (12.10 p.m.): In making my contribution to this debate I wish, in common with other hon.

members, to extend my congratulations to Sir John Lavarack on his appointment to the Governorship of this State. He impresses me as possessing the qualifications that will enable him to discharge his responsibilities with dignity and to the benefit of the State.

I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, also on your reappointment. I wish to thank you for the courtesy and sympathetic consideration you extended to me during my first period in this Parliament.

I should like to make some brief comment on the conduct of the elections in the electorate I represent. I do not know whether the standard of honesty in the electoral district of Cunningham is higher than that to be found in other electoral districts but in it everything went to schedule. As you, Mr. Speaker, know, an attempt was made to swing the pendulum against me. That attempt was without avail and resulted satisfactorily to me personally. I wish, on the floor of this Chamber, to compliment the returning officer for his courtesy and efficiency in the conduct of that election.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McINTYRE:** It is my intention, during the short time I am allowed, to deal with what I consider one of the most important industries in this State, namely, the wheat industry, and I will speak on that subject from a Commonwealth-wide angle. All industries are interrelated one with the other and none can prosper in any one State unless a degree of prosperity exists throughout the Commonwealth. Until the wheat industry is placed on a similar Commonwealth-wide basis comparable to that found in the dairying industry, its conditions will not be satisfactory.

The importance of the wheat industry is not generally appreciated. Some 77,000 growers are engaged in it in producing the first essential of life, food. It provides, through the medium of wheat and flour, what is commonly known as bread—the staff of life. Therefore, it is of the first importance. It is the duty and responsibility of every citizen, both in this Parliament and outside it, to have some regard for those industries that represent the basic prosperity of this country.

The wheat industry, in common with other primary industries, can never be regarded as being on a satisfactory basis until it is stabilised on production costs with a fair margin of profit to those engaged in it. That is one of the basic principles for the success and satisfactory stabilisation of any industry.

I believe too, as a producer, that the wheat industry should be under producer control. The producers of this State have demonstrated their capacity to control their own industries.

**Mr. Macdonald:** Hear, hear!  
but on our own State Wheat Board and in

**Mr. McINTYRE:** That capacity has been exemplified not only in the dairying industry many other ways. Producers have now

entered into many other industries, chief of which is the milling industry. The splendid record achieved in that respect will demonstrate the capacity of our primary producers to manage efficiently all industries associated with the production of a primary product from the soil to placing the manufactured article on the table of the consumer. This country of ours can never prosper until these basic principles are recognised.

Expressions made in this Chamber from time to time suggest that we are all anxious about the prosperity of our land, which I believe can never prosper unless that prosperity is based on its primary industries. The soil is the source of all wealth. It is all very well to set about developing our secondary and other industries but we must first recognise that no country can have any form of wealth if it does not first produce from the soil.

I believe that this country can never carry the population that is essential to give to it national security unless it builds on the foundation of prosperous primary industry.

In dealing with the wheat industry in particular, I wish at the outset to make some remarks about marketing conditions in pre-war years. I am old enough to remember the old days when we were subject to and dominated by some capitalistic interests—

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McINTYRE:** —and we got only what they were prepared to give us. Co-operative enterprise came in. The party I am associated with on this side of the Chamber definitely subscribed to the great principle of co-operative enterprise—

**Opposition Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McINTYRE:** —where the profits in industry are returned to those responsible for their creation, namely, the producers themselves. In this State, away back some 20 years before the Commonwealth started fiddling in the wheat industry, we had a State Wheat Board. For 20 years prior to the Commonwealth control the State Wheat Board—a producer-controlled organisation—gave a splendid service to this State. As a result of the activities of that board, we received the maximum price payable under the then prevailing conditions for our wheat. We had provided for us a hail-insurance scheme. All claims were paid at a cost of  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. a bushel premium to the producer. In addition we had fire cover. We had a quality premium—for wheat over and above F.A.Q. quality. We had our seed wheat selected and chemically treated by the board. I am talking of the period of 20 years from the time of the institution of the State Wheat Board till Commonwealth control was introduced.

Before I touch on conditions associated with Commonwealth control, I should like briefly to review what is happening in other parts of the world. In America the conditions in the wheat industry are infinitely better than here. There was a demand in

that country for the stabilisation of all primary products. President Roosevelt's New Deal aimed at prices for certain basic agricultural products on a parity with other commodities. That principle has now been in operation for more than a decade and it has made a great contribution to the welfare of the farmers in the U.S.A. The depression of the '30s left the farmers in a condition of abject poverty. It is remarkable that we did not hear from members on the other side that the Moore Government were responsible. (Laughter.) It has been most distressing to me to hear these statements about the Moore Government from members on the Government side of the House. In throwing the blame on the Moore Government they have demonstrated their total ignorance of the world-wide economic conditions prevailing in the early thirties. It was not confined to Queensland; it was a world-wide depression. It is distressing to think that members who aspire to represent intelligent electors will continually display their ignorance by endeavouring to place the blame for the depression on the Moore Government.

**Mr. Crowley:** What about the money they gave away?

**Mr. McINTYRE:** I am not here to defend the Moore Government—I do not know much about them—but I think that in comparison with the other Governments in the world the Moore Government did not do a bad job after all.

In America the plan endeavoured to establish a right relationship between the prices of all agricultural products and those for other consumable goods. It thus became a matter of first magnitude for the whole nation. Right at the base of the late President Roosevelt's New Deal was the plan to lift the prices of basic agricultural products to a comparative level of prices for the things the farmers most need—equipment for the operation of their farms and the normal requirements of their households. Shortly put, the plan provided for the establishment of a Commodity Credit Corporation financed from Federal funds. That was the basis of the whole scheme. Provision was made that parity rises or falls should take place in relationship with the general commodity-price index. The plan has been most successful. It has operated for more than a decade and has, in conjunction with war-time prices, been the means of lifting the farming class from a position of penury to one of reasonable prosperity and the industry as a whole, it can be said, has risen from a debtor to a creditor position.

This roughly shows what has happened in America and today we see America's prosperity and in the world-wide economic struggle raging today we know that America is on top. I would suggest to the House that one of the reasons may be that she had due regard for the well-being of her primary industries down through the years. History places on permanent record that no country that neglects primary industries can survive.

I now have something to say about the position in Canada. The farmers in that

Dominion have shown some desire to achieve some measure of stability and it was this desire, as well as the desire to make a sale that was responsible for the negotiation of a contract between Canada and the United Kingdom in June, 1946, for the sale of approximately 600,000,000 bushels, delivery to be spread over the four years ending in 1950. This contract provides for a first advance to growers of 1.25 dollars at lake head for the whole period, which is approximately equal to 7s. 1d. at siding in the centre of the Canadian wheat belt. If the wheat-growers in the Commonwealth of Australia had anything like that I should not be speaking as I am today.

I now desire to review the attempt that has been made at wheat stabilisation in Australia during the war years, and will show as a producer of wheat that there has been no practical approach to the problem. We know that the Scully plan was implemented under the Australian Wheat Board but that board was not the product of the producers themselves: it was Government-controlled and Government-dominated. At no time did the wheat-growers themselves have any opportunity of expressing themselves as to what should or should not be done and I know that many things were done that were to their detriment.

Perhaps the most glaring of these, done under Commonwealth control, was the sale of wheat to New Zealand and I desire to state definitely the terms of that sale on the floor of this Chamber so that hon. members opposite will be fully acquainted with the circumstances associated with it. Under the terms of the contract Australia is to supply 4,500,000 bushels of wheat annually to New Zealand at 5s. 9d. a bushel. At the outset I would remind this House that this was to be at the expense of the wheat-growers of the Commonwealth but because a protest was made the powers that be decided that they would shift the responsibility from the shoulders of the wheat-growers to those of the taxpayers of the Commonwealth. It fell on the general taxpayer: the Federal Treasury will have to make good to the Australian Wheat Board the difference between 5s. 9d. a bushel and the ruling export price of all the wheat supplied to New Zealand consumers under the contract. It is estimated today that for the 1946-47 season, which is the one through which we are passing, it will amount to more than £2,000,000.

In view of the fact that the contract was for 5s. 2d., whereas the world's parity price for wheat is 16s. today, that enormous sum of money has to be found by the taxpayers of this country to subsidise the consumers in New Zealand. I was astonished to read in the Press yesterday that the New Zealand Government now intend to endeavour to speed up the production of wheat there so that they will not require these millions of bushels from Australia. They propose now to divert our wheat direct from our ports to England and elsewhere overseas where they will be able to derive the handsome profit of about 200 per cent. from the transaction.

Under the Scully plan the State Wheat Board in Queensland was reduced to a receiving agency. We know, too, that that plan resulted in reduced and restricted production all over the Commonwealth. In Western Australia the growers were paid the handsome sum of £1,965,684 by the controlling authorities in Canberra not to grow wheat, and this at a time when we were engaged in a major war. Anyone who knows anything about conditions prevailing when a country is at war must appreciate the fact that food is always a major problem. We all remember how Lloyd George told us, during World War I, to dig for victory. It was just as essential that we dig for victory during World War II, but we found that those in authority were prepared to reduce our production of the ordinary requirements of life. In Australia production was reduced from 153,000,000 bushels to about 98,000,000 bushels. Now, when the world is crying out for food, we have the president of the Australian Wheat Board stating that our reserves are exhausted and no more wheat can be sent overseas.

When the producers did have an opportunity to express themselves about the Scully plan, the result of the voting was such that Mr. Scully almost lost his political head. I would emphasise here that this was not a vote of censure against Mr. Scully, who is an estimable gentleman, but it was the first opportunity the wheat-growers of the electorate had had to express their resentment at the plan.

Following the Scully plan we had the Federal Wheat Stabilisation Scheme in operation. We then had the Wheat Industry Stabilisation Act, the Wheat Export Charge Act and the Wheat Tax Act operating.

**Mr. Hilton:** That was not the Scully plan at all.

**Mr. McINTYRE:** I said that I was going to deal with the matter on a Commonwealth-wide basis, and I hope I shall not be accused of working the parish pump. We all know the story of the measure introduced into the Federal Parliament. It was the same old product of politicians without consultation of the growers at any time. The growers in Queensland were never consulted.

**Mr. Hilton:** Did the State Wheat Board condemn it?

**Mr. McINTYRE:** It was never asked for an opinion, but it was definitely opposed to it.

**Mr. Hilton:** Did the board condemn it publicly?

**Mr. McINTYRE:** I am sorry the Minister is not in the Chamber at the moment, to hear what I am about to say. At a meeting of the Council of Agriculture the other day, he stated the wheat-growers of Queensland were in favour of it. He was asked through whom the growers had expressed that opinion, and he said, "The Wheat Board." A member of the Wheat Board was present, and he said, "We never agreed."

Then complementary legislation was passed through this Chamber, and all hon. members know the story about that. We on this side of the House stated our objections to it most vigorously. They were in the main that the cost-of-production principle had been ignored, that it was politically rather than producer-controlled, that the period was too short, and that it had retrospective clauses in it that were most objectionable to members who knew something about the industry. History records that it was passed through this House—the party machine was set in action. I say that the vote that passed that complementary legislation was about a 90-per-cent. ignorant vote and by that I am not charging members of the Government with being ignorant in the general sense of the word, but I am saying that they lacked a knowledge of the industry they were handing over. Apart from Queensland there was only one State that passed such complementary legislation, and that was Tasmania. The other States of the Commonwealth never presented it to the various authorities concerned except South Australia. That State, in conformity with great democratic principles, said that it would get the opinion of the wheat-growing industry. Accordingly the matter was referred to the wheat-growers to see if they would approve of the scheme. The wheat-growers took a referendum and on the first opportunity they had of expressing their views on the Federal stabilisation scheme they defeated it by a large majority. We know that during those years the wheat industry in Australia was controlled by politicians at Canberra under the National Security Regulations. At the end of last year those regulations expired and the Commonwealth had no longer the authority it previously held. We know that the Federal Government passed the Transitional Powers Act and have been controlling the wheat harvests under that Act.

To further confuse the matter it is to be remembered that that Act expires on 31 December this year and in consequence the wheat-growing industry is placed in a speculative position, to say the least of it. Surely, that is something members of the Government will not subscribe to—the placing of an industry such as the wheat industry in the hands of speculators. I read quite recently that arrangements were being made to have the control under that Act extended for another two years and I say very definitely that that is not acceptable to the producers of this State.

In Western Australia we had an ex-Labour Premier, Mr. Wise. He was dissatisfied with the conditions obtaining and set up a Royal Commission of four whose names are: John Smith Teasdale, Stephen Bede Donovan, John Sadler and Richard Philip Roberts.

At 12.34 p.m.,

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the chair.

**Mr. McINTYRE:** That commission set to work and investigated marketing conditions and furnished a remarkable report. They did the job in some 13 or 14 weeks and the Premier of Western Australia made their

report available to the public. I suggest that if hon. members opposite want to become acquainted with the fundamentals of the wheat industry they read that publication. I make one brief quotation:—

Pool No.	Marketed Australia Crop Bushels 000 Omitted	Internal Consumption Australia Bushels 000 Omitted	Average Price Exports for Bulk During Same Period	Average Realisation (Bulk Price) Internal Consumption Including Subsidies	Rate of Concession Per Bushel	Total Value of Concession to Consumers in Australia
5	153,974	66,726	4/4½	4/2½	1½d.	B x E 486,833
6	141,990	72,926	5/3½	4/9½	6d.	1,823,150
7 and 8	133,472	127,971	8/8½	5/6½	3/2	20,262,075
9	123,723	60,832	10/5½	4/7½	5/10	17,742,666
10x	98,000	60,000	15/-	4/11	10/1	30,250,000
						70,564,724

Because of Commonwealth inefficiency in the matter of control the wheat-growers of the Commonwealth were compelled during the period of six pools to accept £70,564,724 less than they could have got if they had been allowed to receive world parity from year to year. Hon. members know what the concessional rates mean. They mean concessions to the consumers in this country, also the pig-breeders and the poultry men, but surely it is a gross injustice that one section of the community should have to carry the burden of a national policy. Let me repeat what I have said: that the wheat-growers of the Commonwealth had to accept a sum in excess of £70,000,000 less for their wheat than they would have received for it had they been allowed to sell it at world parity. I know that there are people who will say that if they want the open market let them have it, with the booms and the slumps. The authority that accepted the responsibility for the marketing conditions that brought about the results I have outlined should now accept some responsibility also for the stabilisation of the wheat industry in the days ahead.

I have offered much criticism about these plans and I now propose to offer some constructive suggestions. I have in my possession a wheat stabilisation plan that is acceptable to the wheat-growers of the Commonwealth. It meets with the approval of all the wheat-growers in Australia. Those in authority in the organisation in the wheat industry—and it is very highly organised today—have approached the Premiers of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia and presented this scheme to them and they have approved of it. When the representatives of the organisation came to Queensland they were unable to see the Queensland Secretary for Agriculture and Stock. I got in touch with him but he was not able to meet them and there is no doubt that he lost a great deal in not doing so.

The plan I have here is summarised under 10 heads, which I shall read in order that it may be placed on permanent record. It says—

“1. That the Federal and State Governments co-operate to provide an equitable wheat stabilisation scheme to operate for

at least 10 years commencing with 1947-8 harvest, each supplying their part of the essential legislation.

“2. That the scheme be controlled by an Australian Wheat Board comprising one Government nominee and two members each from New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia, with one from Queensland, these to be elected by ballot of the licensed growers in their respective States, with staggered retirements each two years, but eligibility for re-election.

“3. The Board to be given full statutory powers to arrange finance and for the receipt, handling and marketing of all wheat produced in Australia for sale.

“4. That a guaranteed ‘floor price’ be provided based upon the average cost of production (including a reasonable allowance for the work and management of the farmer and interest on his invested capital) as determined by the Commission of Inquiry, with periodic adjustment up or down in accord with any material fluctuation in the cost of items in its schedule, 5s. 2d. f.o.r., ports, bulk basis, to be the first advance pending the committee’s report.

“5. That the home consumption price apply to all wheat for human consumption in Australia and be adjusted and maintained in harmony with the fluctuation in cost since it was established, but retaining its original cost, plus principal.

“6. That all other wheat be sold at prices determined by and at the discretion of the Australian Wheat Board and should any concessional sales be made on the direction of the Minister, internally or for export, the Board shall be reimbursed to bring such sales up to export parity.

“7. That a stabilisation fund be created under the control of trustees appointed by the Australian Wheat Board and the Australian Wheat-growers’ Federation.

“That growers shall contribute to the fund in years when the average net realisations exceed the ‘floor price’ 50 per cent. of the excess (but not exceeding 2s. 2d. per bushel in any season) to maintain the

floor price in low periods. Any further deficiency to be met from the Federal Treasury.

"Moneys in the stabilisation fund to be invested at current rates of interest.

"8. That a properly constituted authority be set up to determine and provide for refunds to growers who have equity in the fund who are arbitrarily forced to cease growing wheat.

"9. That the compulsory referendum be taken of licensed wheat growers before any stabilisation scheme becomes operative.

"10. That equitable provision be made for the issue of further farm registrations, and permanent licenses with preference to returned personnel and farmers' sons and persons with a background of practical experience in wheat production.

"I submit the scheme to the House for favourable consideration."

As I said earlier the stabilisation of the wheat industry is absolutely necessary, and the basic principle to be adopted to attain that end must be a price based on the cost of production. In support of that contention I present to the Chamber a production-cost schedule. As a wheat-grower for a period of many years, I am in a position to give some suggestion as to what it costs to produce wheat. A wheat-costs inquiry is proceeding today. I have been privileged to peruse some data relating to it. The figures proved to me conclusively that some people handling this important industry today are not acquainted with its basic principles. If their ideas are adopted it will only make the position more confounded. They are not in a position to guide the industry and the growers will throw the ideas on which the inquiry is based back into the teeth of those who were foolish enough to promulgate them.

I have figures relating to the cost of production of wheat based on an average farm of 800 acres on the Darling Downs that I wish to place on record. It is based on an estimated yield of 18 bushels to the acre, with an average acreage of 700 acres, allowing 100 acres to be fallowed each year over a period of 10 years under present values for land, machinery, wages, &c. It is as follows:—

"1. Capital cost of land and improvements, &c.—		£
Cost of 800 acres of land (plain) unimproved at £5 per acre .. .. .	4,000	
Cost of 800 acres essential improvements, including fencing, water, barn, machinery, shed, garage, &c. .. .. .	2,500	
Breaking up 800 acres at 10s. per acre .. .. .	400	
500 bushels of seed at 6s. per bushel .. .. .	150	
		£7,050

"2. Machinery—

		£
1 caterpillar crawler kerosene tractor .. .. .	1,500	
2 ten disc sunderecuts H. V. Mackay (landed) .. .. .	162	

1 five-furrow plough H. V. Mackay (landed) .. .. .	76	£
1 nine foot scarifier H. V. Mackay (landed) .. .. .	82	
2 sixteen row combines H. V. Mackay (landed) .. .. .	218	
2 eight foot tandem disc harrows H. V. Mackay (landed)	111	
1 set twelve leaf harrows H. V. Mackay (landed) .. .. .	55	
2 ten foot headers with power take off H. V. Mackay (landed) .. .. .	658	
1 three ton truck .. .. .	700	
		£3,562

"3. Interest and depreciation—

		£
Interest on capital outlay, £10,612, at 4½ per cent. per annum .. .. .	479	
Depreciation on improvements, £2,500, at 2½ per cent. per annum .. .. .	62	
Depreciation on machinery at 10 per cent. over 10 years equals 7 per cent. per year ..	249	
Upkeep on machinery and insurance on truck .. .. .	213	
		£1,002

"4. Fuel—

		£
1 sunderecutting 800 acres, 1 gal. of kerosene per acre at 1s. 6d., oil and grease 2½d. per acre .. .. .	68	
1 scarifying, same as above ..	68	
2 combining, ½ gal. kerosene to acre, oil and grease 1¼d. ..	68	
1 disc harrowing, ½ gal. kerosene to acre, oil and grease 1¼d. per acre .. .. .	34	
2 harrowings, ¼ gal. kerosene to acre, oil and grease ¾d. ..	34	
Drilling in wheat, 700 acres at ½ gal. to acre, oil and grease 1¼d. per acre .. .. .	30	
Harvesting 700 acres, ½ gal. to acre, oil and grease 2½d. ..	34	
Fuel for truck, 30 gal. per month at 2s. 5d. per gal. ..	44	
Reg. on truck, and oil, 20 gal. 8s. per gal. .. .. .	18	
		£398

"5. Other expenses.

		£
Hailstone insurance on 12,600 bushels at ½d. per bushel ..	26	
Grading and pickling 500 bushels at 1s. per bag .. .. .	8	
Land tax and rates .. .. .	60	
		£94

"6. Wages.

		£
One man at £7 per week including keep for 8 months ..	240	
Two extra men at harvest time—20 days at £2 per day including keep .. .. .	80	
		£320

	£	
"7. Bags—4,200 at 2s. 4½d. each	499	
Sewing bags and twine at 3d.		
per bag .. .. .	52	
Cartage on 4,900 bags, less 166	202	
	£753	
"8. Total expenses.	£	
Item 3 .. .. .	1,002	
Item 4 .. .. .	398	
Item 5 .. .. .	94	
Item 6 .. .. .	320	
Item 7 .. .. .	753	
	£2,567	
"9. Estimated cost of production.	£	s. d.
12,100 bushels at 5s. 6½d. per		
bushel .. .. .	3,352	14 2
Expenses .. .. .	2,567	0 0
Owners' net return	£785	14 2''

I wish to point out that those figures were compiled before the recent rise in the price of machinery. There has been a 20-per-cent. increase in the price of machinery since these figures were prepared. I suggest that the machinery company must only have to establish production cost and it gets a 20-per-cent. rise in the price.

I want to say something about the position in Queensland. The wheat was almost a complete failure last year and the rain this year did not fall in sufficient volume to assure a crop this year. I think many of the wheat-growers—I do not mean the old wheat-growers, but the new growers and the returned soldiers—are and will be in a very serious position. This Government must accept some responsibility. It is to be regretted that the Premier and other members of the Cabinet did not interest themselves in the position last year even to the extent that the Labour Premier of New South Wales did. In that State a scheme was announced under which the New South Wales Government and the Federal Government contributed. It did not provide for a fixed rate of payment but it provided for the sum of £1,500,000 to be made available to the wheat-growers. The amount assured that an average of about 12s. 6d. an acre would be made available to wheat-growers in New South Wales. I speak particularly in the interests of those growers who have fought for their country and given to it six of the best years of their lives. I believe this Government must accept some responsibility in providing some financial assistance that will enable them to become established in wheat-growing.

I believe that the area under wheat can be stepped up to 1,000,000 acres. In Queensland we have not, generally speaking—and the member for Carnarvon will take me up on this—been able to produce sufficient wheat for our own requirements. That is a ridiculous state of affairs in a State like this where we have unlimited room for expansion in fertile land. When we were dealing with complementary legislation we had the assurance from the Minister that the legislation would include a proviso for the stepping up of the licensing to 1,000,000 acres, but when we saw the Bill it was not there. The Minister

said that Mr. Scully made a promise at the Commonwealth Agricultural Council meeting that such would be the case. The wheat-growers require something more stable than a promise made by a Minister in the Federal House. I suggest it is high time that the licensed acreage in Queensland was stepped up to at least 1,000,000 acres.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. BURROWS** (Port Curtis) (12.50 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, I join with other hon. members in congratulating you on your unanimous reappointment to the position you occupy. That appointment reflects the honourable manner in which you have discharged your duties in the past, and is a good augury for the future progress of this House.

In addition, I congratulate the other hon. members who have passed through the ordeal that I am about beginning and I associate myself with the felicitations that in the course of the debate have been given to Sir John Lavarack, our new Governor.

Predominant in my mind, and in that of most people, is the future of this State. Personally I am not depressed about it. On the contrary I am optimistic no doubt being influenced by the fact that I represent a particularly good district, one that in the past has suffered from the wicked and vicious influences of vested interests, which have not however been able to rob it of nature's bounty.

At Gladstone there is a natural harbour second only to that of Sydney on the whole of the Australian coastline. And when mentioning harbours I would point out that there are two or three different types of harbour. Yesterday the hon. member for Mirani naturally, and in a spirit similar to that which prompts me, extolled the virtues of the Mackay harbour. That harbour is artificial, and when humans, in order to make a harbour, have to interfere with nature, it is one of the basic rules—or should I say the law of the universe—that they must fight nature. The hon. member who has just resumed his seat calculated all his capital expenditure at 4½ per cent., and apart from the huge capital expenditure involved in providing an artificial harbour the bulk of the goods passing through such a harbour must bear a proportion of the cost, consequently at Mackay the harbour dues for sugar are four times higher than those at Gladstone with its natural harbour. I agree with the hon. member for Mirani that Mackay has a good harbour. In the hinterland of Gladstone lies immense coal and mineral wealth, virtually untouched. A copper lode approximately seven miles from Gladstone is so large that it is capable of being worked by the open-cut method. The result of the assay was 5 per cent. copper, and 5 dwt. of gold per ton. The lode is capable of supplying all Australia's copper requirements for many years to come, and with modern methods of mining and the high prices for base metals, including copper, prevailing today, would be very profitable to work.

**Mr. Bruce:** Is it pegged out yet?

**Mr. BURROWS:** It is pegged out and a man is gouging around and is making probably better salary than the Minister (Laugher). I know him very well.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. BURROWS:** In addition to the mineral and coal resources, there are rich agricultural lands as well as pine scrubs suitable for replanting and regeneration. Oil shale estimated to yield from 40 to 60 gallons of oil to the ton covers a wide area, extending from Lowmead to round about Mount Larcom. Incidentally, I might mention that this is not pegged out. I acted as agent for a southern firm at the outbreak of war and pegged out two leases, but when war was declared they were forfeited.

Both literally and figuratively coal is the burning question today. The Callide coalfield, 70 miles from Gladstone, with its great natural port and all the facilities for cheap handling of coal or any other product, is connected with Gladstone by a good road as well as by a round-about railway. That round-about railway is about 140 miles long, whereas with the construction of 55 miles of line coal could go direct from the field to Gladstone by railway. I have inspected the coal deposits of the Callide Valley and found the seams varying from a thickness of 18 feet to 60 feet and more. It is now being worked in a small way by the open-cut method, under which the miner is not subjected to the hazards and discomforts usually attached to coal-mining. With mechanisation it is not idle to say that coal could be produced there at much less than 10s. a ton, and the quality of the product is excellent. Nothing but lack of transport from the mine to the port stands in the way of developing a considerable export trade within the next six months, unless it is our own lack of initiative or inability to co-ordinate existing facilities. I have read correspondence and cables to agents offering to send the necessary ships to carry the coal, as soon as it is available, to three different centres in the Far East, and considerable quantities are required. This proposal offers one immediate solution to the problem of developing our coal resources, and at the same time it does not conflict with the long-term proposals of the big British company that is making overtures to the Government at the present time. I shall refer to that project later.

Because of its importance and ultimate value to the State, I suggest in all seriousness, and after having given the matter a good deal of consideration, that the Government should appoint a special Minister to deal with coal alone. At present the railways have insufficient rolling stock to handle the output of the mines, which could be trebled almost at will.

Road transport can be used to help the railways and it is pleasing to have the Minister's assurance that no objection will be raised against its use. By the co-ordination of facilities it is obvious that considerable quantities can be exported in the near future, with a gradual increase in those quantities as more

rolling stock becomes available. We must not let our enthusiasm over the prospects of the English company make us complacent because the project has to overcome many hazards before it can produce one ton of coal for export. The proposed company is negotiating for a concession to build a railway line and an artificial port at Broad Sound, 130 miles from Blair Athol. The point I make is that if material and labour were available it would take at least six years before the project would come into production.

It may be interesting to mention that 40 years ago a Bill was passed in this House authorising a similar company to build a railway line from Gladstone to the Callide coalfields for a similar purpose. Unfortunately that project too had hazards attaching to it.

It is interesting to ask: what are these people or countries that want our coal going to do in the meanwhile? Are they going to sit down and do nothing whilst they wait for these Frankenstein monsters—that is what I call artificial harbours—to be constructed? I say that they must be given coal with which to carry on. We cannot expect them not to look round for substitutes or for other markets. And another thing to be taken into consideration is that time is the essence of the contract. Science in six years' time or perhaps less may have discovered a substitute for coal and then our coalfields will become more or less obsolete. I therefore suggest that we do everything we can to hasten the exploitation of these resources, and when I say that I should like you, Mr. Speaker, and all members of this Assembly to take into consideration the question of the appointment of a special Minister of the Crown to deal with coal alone. I am not one to suggest the spending of money like the spending by a drunken sailor but it would be false economy if we did not spend a little now, because we can expect to get so much in return. If we delay too long in this matter it may be too late. I have given this question considerable attention and I have collected information and data on the subject, all of which are at the disposal of any member interested. I am in no way financially interested in the mines or the handling of the coal and there is no prospect of my being financially interested.

The information is there for anyone sufficiently interested to read it. The Premier has assured me that the Government will consider sympathetically any proposal for the development of the coal trade, and I am confident, in view of our natural resources, that it will be developed.

Another reason for my optimism as to the future of this State is the Government's policy in connection with water conservation and irrigation. The lesson of the droughts will, I am sure, not be forgotten. One farmer in the Gladstone district by means of irrigation kept his dairy herd in prime condition throughout the drought on the cast-off leaves of the cabbages that he grew and sold during the drought.

I am disappointed that an increased price for butter has been delayed, but it seems

assured and on a retrospective basis, too. That will do more than all the talk in this Chamber to increase production in the dairy-  
ing industry.

With the hon. member for Nundah I agree that if the people on the land are prosperous then the whole State is prosperous, and that nothing the Government are likely to give is too good for the dairyman. I have had my period at the separator and with the bringing in of the cows. I deplore the remark that was made by the then Leader of the Queensland People's Party, Mr. Chandler, who said in this House last session that he was sick and tired of hearing the remark that the city lived on the country and that if the position was analysed it would be found that the reverse was the case. Remarks like that disclose a warped outlook and they certainly cannot be regarded as coming from a man with any claims to being a statesman. I was never more disgusted than when I read those remarks.

Recently I visited the Motor Vehicles Control Office to see if it was possible to get a permit for a farmer in my electorate to buy a motor vehicle, and in the course of discussion I was told that the number of orders held by the various motor firms for cars and utilities was nearly 8,000, all of which required the making of a deposit. In the case in which I was specially interested a deposit of £50 had already been paid, and it was obvious to me that as a result of the payment of a deposit in every case very large amounts were held by these firms free of interest. That could provide the means for a great racket. I am sure that the decent firms would have no objection to paying interest on those deposits.

Since the end of the war a keen struggle has taken place throughout the world between capital and labour to see which is to get the benefit of post-war prosperity and unfortunately this has disorganised production, particularly in secondary industries, but it has emphasised the advantages enjoyed by countries that are more or less self-supporting, even in time of peace. It is possible for Queensland to become self-supporting, and I am sure that while Labour remains in power this will be our ultimate objective. The influence of vested interests located in the large cities, and not necessarily Brisbane alone, must be completely ignored, and our methods of distribution or sale of our products must be completely overhauled. Too many middlemen who neither toil nor spin are living on the consumers of our products. Where it is not possible to obtain direct contact between producer and consumer not more than one intermediary should be tolerated.

I made inquiries into the inability of a certain retailer to obtain supplies of biscuits from a firm in Brisbane that is the sole distributor for Queensland for a big monopoly in the South that manufactures them. I found that retailers and even wholesalers must buy their supplies through this firm. This means that the retailer, in order to get a quota of biscuits, is forced to buy other goods from this distributing firm notwithstanding the fact that he might be able to buy those other

goods to better advantage elsewhere. I am sure that members of the Country Party will bear me out when I say that certain machinery firms blacklist co-operative societies for no other reason than the fact that they have turned the big profit or commission allowed them into the pockets of the purchasers of machinery on a co-operative basis. Had those profits been used to kill the accursed Labour Party everything would have been all right, but co-operative societies' purchases are taboo because those profits go into the pockets of the purchaser. That is the attitude that a certain machinery company has adopted towards a co-operative dairy company. Co-operative dairy companies have done a magnificent job to uplift the production of dairy produce and consequently the wealth of this great State. Queensland will never be able to pay the debt it owes to these societies.

Transport costs raise another question that vitally affect the country and if care is not taken in fixing them the objects of centralisation will be defeated. An analysis of the present rates will show that this does occur. As a result concessional freight rates do not in the ultimate benefit the primary producer. This was not intended. Nevertheless they have acted as a boomerang against centralisation and require adjusting. I honestly believe that all Governments, in conceding these rates, thought they were doing something to help the primary producers, but in the ultimate it was found that these concessional freight rates, instead of going to the farmer, went to the city consumer. The farmer and country dweller should not be compelled to pay a higher freight rate on the necessities they require to obtain from the city than the city dweller does on the necessities he requires from the country.

There is another dangerous and unprogressive line of thought that might threaten the whole principle behind the Government's policy of regional electricity schemes. The adherents of those schemes advocate a cheaper rate for electricity for people living in the more populous areas, particularly at the point of production than for others farther away. These differential rates must not be tolerated, as they threaten the whole principle of decentralisation. If they are tolerated regional electricity supplies might be defeated in principle.

In order to prove that it is possible to supply all consumers of commodities at the same price I will quote the policy of the Fish Board. Fish produced in Gladstone must be sold to the Fish Board at a fixed price less a commission for distribution and freight. The greater portion of fish produced in Gladstone is sold in Brisbane. The freight is borne by the Fish Board out of its commission, with the result that the consumers in Brisbane and Gladstone pay the same price for their fish. If that is fair enough in respect of fish it can just as fairly be applied to electricity and many other products. When the prices of commodities and necessities are placed on the same footing for both city and country consumers, that will be D-Day for centralisation.

I wish to refer now to the determined effort that the representatives of vested interests made to obtain the control of the Government at the recent Commonwealth and State elections. Those efforts were inconsistent with the determination exhibited by them to avoid being in power during the dark war days, when Fadden and Menzies dropped their bundle and asked John Curtin to carry on. I think that was the greatest contribution those two gentlemen ever made or will be likely to make to Australia's future.

In the recent State election every form of trickery was employed to defeat Labour. Wherever possible traitors in the Labour movement were singled out—as dingoes pick out the weak beast in a mob—to give testimony against Labour. A man of that type was employed in my electorate. He previously stood two or three times unsuccessfully as a Communist. That did not matter. Evidently there was something in common between them.

I am not going to say that I will support the next incident by a statutory declaration—I leave that to the hon. member for Windsor's Man Friday—the hon. member for Toowong. This man was on the platform at Yarwun with the Country Party, and believe it or not, as soon as he spoke every rooster in Yarwun crowed. The "Courier-Mail," which is the mouthpiece of vested interests, published the most atrocious libels against Labour. The hon. member for Logan spat a bit off his chest at Maryborough and accused the Government of not having the Mundubbera weir surveyed although at the time men were working on the job. These tactics no doubt did the Government some harm, but not sufficient to defeat them, and the Government were returned.

The policy of the Opposition is, and always has been, win, tie, or wrangle. The hon. member for Toowong likened their protest to a protest made on the racecourse. A protest may be made on the racecourse, but there is also a rule in racing that provides a penalty for a frivolous protest; and if anybody deserves that penalty I submit the case put up by the Opposition was such that they should have been sent out for life. That excuse was not enough.

Hon. members of the Opposition raised the old cry of rigging electorates. If a Government are unpopular, rigging electorates will not save them. If anybody wants a better example of that than the instance of the Moore Government, I am afraid he is hard to satisfy. No Government made such wicked changes in electoral boundaries as that Government, and no Government bit the dust so hard as that Government did at the ensuing election. The hon. member for Mundingburra hit the nail on the head the other day when he said that the real reason for asking for a redistribution of seats is nothing more and nothing less than a brazen attempt to give the cities more representation and reduce the number of country electorates.

**Mr. Pie** interjected.

**Mr. BURROWS:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Windsor in Rockhampton bumped

a man about 20 years older than himself and got himself written up in the Press. I have this much in common with the hon. member: that some years ago I bumped the same individual; the only difference between the hon. member and me was that I was unfortunate enough to have a smack at him. If the hon. member had done the same he would have thought all his birthdays had come at once (laughter).

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. BURROWS:** The elections of 1947 will go down in history as the die-hards' last act. The hon. member for Toowong was correct when he quoted Mr. Churchill the other day and maybe I shall be pardoned for varying it by saying, "Never did so much do so little." They spent, as the saying goes, all the money in the world and came out just as they were. The hon. member for Windsor and his followers can apologise as much as they wish for their ignominious defeat but the electors have spoken and their political threat has been a farce. As Omar Khayyam has written—

"The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,

Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,  
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word  
of it."

**Mr. Pie:** Shakespeare?

**Mr. BURROWS:** I will admit I paid a visit to the library to get the reply but that sums up the protest that was lodged here on Tuesday so half-heartedly and deserved the fate it received.

In the immediate future, at least in the life of this Parliament, repercussions of the chaos that prevails in the greater part of the world will be felt here. It is obvious that it will embarrass all Governments throughout the world. I am not asking for any mercy from the Opposition in respect to criticism of the party but I hope to see a reduction in the amount of destructive criticism, which according to the implication that appeared in a Brisbane "Telegraph" of last week is all that members of this House are capable of.

I now wish to refer to an incident that occurred in this Chamber during the debate on Supply. When the Treasurer was speaking, the hon. member for Stanley asked him across the table to tell him how I won a plebiscite.

**An Opposition Member:** No, he did not.

**Mr. BURROWS:** If the hon. member peruses the "Courier-Mail," which is his political Bible, dated 1 July, 1946, he will see I won it somewhat easily and in case he has not realised it let me tell him that I won the election just as cleanly as I won it easily. I forgive the hon. member for having those bad thoughts. He had recently come from a Country Party conference at which a particularly obnoxious plebiscite had been discussed somewhat heatedly and a man's political head was taken off. I therefore forgive him for thinking that all plebiscites are rotten.

In conclusion I assure the Opposition that any efforts to read anything into my speech similar to what they have tried to read into other hon. members' speeches will be wasted on me, just as they were on the other hon. members. We on this side enjoy a freedom of thought and expression totally denied to those on the opposite benches.

**Mr. Luckins:** That is the best yet. (Opposition laughter.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. BURROWS:** You are the best joke we have.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I suggest to the hon. member for Windsor that this is not a pantomime altogether.

**Mr. BURROWS:** I wish to assure hon. members, particularly the hon. members opposite, that they will not find that I or any other hon. member on this side will be afraid to speak his mind. Perhaps I may speak mine too freely to suit most hon. members opposite, and anything that has been told to us by the more experienced hon. members of this party has been told in an advisory, not a dictatorial, spirit. I have been through the mill, and I know, but I must express appreciation of the many kindnesses that have been shown me not only by hon. members on this side but also by hon. members opposite, the hon. member for West Moreton and the hon. member for Wide Bay in particular.

I mention these things in an endeavour to point out that there is a difference between democracy and the autocracy that is represented by hon. members opposite, but I honestly and sincerely forgive them for not understanding the meaning of democracy. If they had an understanding of it I am sure they would be all on this side of the Chamber and the work of this Parliament would then be a one-sided job.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Nanango) (2.41 p.m.), who was received with "Hear, hears!" said: When I became a member of this Parliament I recognised that I incurred responsibilities that I did not carry previously. I assure hon. members that I regard those responsibilities as a duty. My outlook may be different from that of many hon. members present, but, on the basis of my past experience, I wish to work for the benefit of my electorate and the State. While my election to the Legislative Assembly as a member of the Australian Country Party may imply a sectional interest, the whole policy of the organisation is definitely national, and I wish to work for the benefit of all sections of the community.

Viewing the trend of everyday affairs from different angles, we see the need for giving every consideration to those who train our youth through our State schools. Qualified teachers do not receive the just and due recognition that should be theirs, which causes their ranks to be depleted and fails to entice to them many who are specially suited for the teaching profession.

I shall endeavour to assist in overcoming the many deficiencies that exist in primary production and country standards as a whole. We live in a time and age when travel is common to all of us so that many have had the opportunity of experiencing the amenities and conveniences that exist in the cities, and this causes the drift from the country, which I contend is a very serious threat to our national life. Speaking generally, however, most people are looking for peace and security in which to enjoy the fruits of their labour. They recognise, at least dimly, that the Governments of the day have a bearing on this aspect of life, that only by working through all the broad fields of national and international endeavour can industry, and so the standard of living, be improved to give security. To achieve this we all realise that industry in Australia today requires a fresh spirit, a finer vision, a greater objective. To fall back to the attitude of pre-war days and little enterprise would mean a certain loss of much of that for which the sacrifice of war has been made. In brief, it is a problem of national and State industrial efficiency.

The problem is to bring the community output of goods and services to the highest level possible in the light of our resources of labour, material, and equipment. Unless we can vastly increase it, then all other plans of national improvement might well come to naught. In order that there may be more to divide and distribute, more must be produced. A better standard of living, and increased opportunities of leisure demand harder and more efficient work by all, and that could well be made a national slogan so that it would become part of the conscious or sub-conscious make-up of every citizen of the Commonwealth.

Australia has wonderful opportunities for obtaining markets, not only for her primary but also for her secondary industries. We should lose no time in rapidly expanding our production in order to seize the opportunities offered on the markets of the world, and keeping Australian economic life on an even keel. As you know, if we had no exportable wealth, the living conditions not only of the producer but of the city dweller would be seriously affected. The value of the overseas contracts will depend on whether our overseas contracts can be maintained, or rather increased, and unless this is done the results will be detrimental both to the producer and to the State.

In face of the tragic decline in many of our industries, greater consideration and opportunity are their just dues, for the well-being of the cities and our many industries is closely related to the well-being of the producer. I believe that many people have realised this, particularly of recent years, and have seen how important it is for farms to be kept in production and developed in order to meet the demands for consumer goods. It is realised that the margin between production and consumption is small, leaving little for overseas trade, and goods and services are needed on every hand for the protection of existing markets, and in the

future for the capture of others available to us, apart from the great moral assistance of sending food to Great Britain and the starving countries of Europe.

We believe, particularly at this period of reconstruction, that it is not in the interests of the people to shorten the hours of production, but rather we should seek to establish our economic position whilst the time is opportune. Greater leisure is of no benefit unless we have the things whereby to use it properly and to the full. We find on almost every hand in the past processes being instituted to slow down production and paralyse industry, particularly our basic industries. It is a form of treachery to the great masses of the people and can only lead to an economic upheaval of a severity not yet experienced. You, Mr. Speaker, know the axiom of the survival of the fittest. The same thing applies to industry. If industry is sound and healthy, it is better able to weather times of depression and competition, than if it is not, with benefit to the people employed; if through industrial unrest it is not allowed to prosper, then naturally it will not be in a sound financial position when times become normal and competition keener. If we lose markets and contracts in a world fighting for trade, it will be a serious loss and will hit back on the man in industry.

Therefore I feel that every possible encouragement should be given to private initiative and enterprise, to the people who are prepared to undertake development subject to the test of profit and loss, and that we should use State investment, apart from indispensable national works and services, as a balancing factor where private enterprise does not fully cover the field, so that there may be opportunities of work for all who desire it. Such a policy will, I hold, lead to the material welfare of a nation and a more rapid rate of progress and provide sounder foundations for social security than a policy the effect of which would be to limit and discourage private enterprise.

This encouragement of private enterprise is vital to full employment, because 80 per cent. of all employment is created by private enterprise, and unless enterprise is forthcoming no amount of planning and control will succeed in solving the critical industrial problems that confront any nation after a war. Therefore State policy must create and give opportunity to capital to play its part in providing the necessaries and comforts that the people need and seek to enjoy.

While I recognise fully the need for Government planning for specific purposes, still it cannot be too often or too strongly affirmed that the lifeblood of production and trade will still be the initiative, resourcefulness and courage of individuals and groups. And freedom is a fundamental condition wherein these characteristics are given the fullest encouragement—freedom to make decisions, freedom to act, freedom to experiment and to incur the risks involved in the undertaking of projects great or small. In the interests of the community the State must impose but

the minimum of conditions, regulations and restraints, and beyond these must encourage, yea, demand the greatest freedom. In such an atmosphere constructive development is more readily attainable.

In this matter our party's platform and policy is an ideal to be pursued—the inauguration of a rural-community development scheme. The term generally used to cover this subject is decentralisation, but that word is hardly correct, in that Australia today has too few industries and decentralisation rather suggests the transfer of industries from one place to another. I contend that the need is rather to establish new industries and the foundation of such a plan is the establishment of rural industries on a sound basis. At present our rural industries generally are not on a sufficiently sound basis and it is impossible to erect a safe structure unless the foundation is solid. Our rural industries can be made sound only by fixing the price of all primary products on cost of production plus a reasonable margin of profit. Primary producers must be guaranteed a minimum price instead of a ceiling price, which is seldom realised. If we have sound primary industries we can build sound secondary industries upon them and thus ensure an increased population distributed much more equitably than at present. All must be given a permanent livelihood and no better avenue can be provided than in the development of industry.

I feel also very positively that a Government should interest themselves to a greater extent than in the past in such things as water and fodder conservation, and they should speed up the long-overdue rural electrification, the building of roads, and the extending and connecting up of many rail links, because there is a real necessity for these facilities for the people in the country.

Until more of those improvements and amenities are provided we shall be unable to arrest the drift to the cities of which we are all conscious. Unless we endeavour to develop our great inland and outback areas, we cannot expect our country to advance or even play a part in the often spoken-of and supposed brave new world. I shall endeavour, Mr. Speaker, to assist the powers that be, yea, to urge them towards this end.

**Mr. FARRELL** (Maryborough) (2.56 p.m.): I desire to support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, which has been so ably moved and seconded by our junior hon. members on this side of the House, the hon. members for Cairns and Nundah. I am sure that their contributions to the debate will receive careful attention. It is a worthy tribute to our democracy that under your guidance, Mr. Speaker, a new member of this Chamber is permitted to deliver what is his most important speech without interruption, which in addition to the strain of the calm dignity that surrounds this august Chamber would unnerve many men. The contributions of both hon. members were delivered in accordance with the highest ideals of this Chamber.

I offer my sincere congratulations to the Governor, Sir John Lavarack, on his appointment to the high and honourable position of Governor. Naturally, following in the footsteps of a man with such high attainments as Sir Leslie Wilson, he will find that his office is not an easy one to fill. I was indeed pleased to note that at a very early stage in his occupancy of his office he took the opportunity, together with Lady Lavarack, to travel throughout the length and breadth of this State to gain a first-hand knowledge of the great potentialities we have, and to rub shoulders with the people themselves in order to gain an intimate knowledge of their requirements.

A study of the Speech must convince our most bitter critics in the Opposition of the Government's intention of fulfilling the promises made by us during the election campaign. It will probably be found that the legislation to be enacted will place us in the forefront of all States. I represent an industrial area in the electorate of Maryborough. I say that to enable me to answer some of the criticism that has been made in respect of a certain part of my electorate, and in particular the firm of Walkers Ltd. It is one of the greatest engineering firms, not only in Queensland but in Australia. I want to disabuse the minds of hon. members of any suggestion that Walkers Ltd. might be involved in the complaint made by the hon. member for Bremer yesterday. It may be that the cause of the complaint arose from work done in other States. Walkers Ltd. has made a wonderful contribution to the economy of this State in the construction of locomotives, among other things, but at no time has the firm repaired locomotives. There is no comparison between the construction and the repairing of locomotives. Locomotives can be constructed only in a particular section of the workshops; repairs to locomotives cannot be made in that section.

One of the greatest drawbacks in the construction of the Garratt engines introduced in this State during the war was the fact that many of their parts were constructed by a number of engineering firms throughout Australia.

It was assembled from those workshops in which those contributions were made, and never bore the firm's signature to this work, consequently it can be readily understood that an engine manufactured under those conditions could never be the success that is desirable. I want to correct any impression that Walkers Ltd. might have been concerned with the repairing of the engines referred to by the hon. member for Bremer yesterday.

There is another point I wish to clear up. During the last session of Parliament the hon. member for Sandgate went to great lengths to speak about the sale of the "Otter" by the Government to Hyne & Son so that timber might be produced and the work of the Government and the State Housing Commission could be carried out, but I want to inform the hon. member that since he made that statement we have taken over and made the "Otter" a valuable adjunct to

our timber industry. Today that hull is carrying logs to the capacity of 50,000 super feet a week. That is a much better job than the hon. member would have it doing—acting as a breakwater down in the metropolitan area. To maintain the industries we have in Maryborough we require something like 17,000,000 super feet a year; and it has to be got from somewhere. It is necessary for us to see what can be done to provide an industry capable of supplying the sawmilling industry and providing employment for the numbers who work there under ideal conditions, equal to those to be found in any city on the coast area. It is not often we find that in the sawmilling industry we can give employees good housing conditions, water, and sewerage and electric light, but we can do that in Maryborough. Consequently it is necessary for us to maintain that industry at its fullest capacity so that we may play our part in contributing towards the solution of the housing problem. These two firms at Maryborough provide enough materials to build just on 800 houses per annum; so it will be seen that it is a big industry and one that requires the assistance and protection of the Government.

Those who were privileged to witness the Royal National Show that has just concluded will have some knowledge of the wonderful potentialities of this State. I wish to pay a tribute to the people who are responsible for the district exhibits, because their work gives a great measure of enjoyment to the people who go there and see what this country is capable of producing. It was interesting to me to learn that the beef cattle there were described as one of the finest exhibits ever seen at the Show. When speaking to the hon. member for Aubigny yesterday I was agreeably surprised to learn that stock coming from his property topped the highest average sale for a pen of beasts that it has ever been the privilege of anyone to obtain in this State. I am not concerned about the price the hon. member got but I am concerned about the fact that he is able to produce as a member of the community cattle that bring such a record price.

I believe our success at the elections was due to the fact that we had better leadership, and that we had a policy that met the requirements not only of the average person throughout the State, but of the general public in such a way as to merit the return of the Government. In addition, we had a record of achievement, the result being that we were able, in no small measure, to secure the Government benches in this House. Every hon. member will agree with me that the leadership of our Premier, Mr. Hanlon, has been outstanding and all hon. members will agree also that when introducing a Bill in this House no Minister gives greater consideration to the House than the hon. gentleman.

It was very pleasing to me to hear during the Governor's Speech that amongst other things he as leader of the Government has a 10-year plan for the development of our water resources. The only way in which we

shall ever develop Queensland is by careful planning and the appointment of heads of departments capable of interpreting the decisions of the Government.

Here I wish to quote an extract from the foreword written by the Hon. John D. Winant, Ambassador of the United States to the Court of St. James, to the book, "TVA" by Julian Huxley—

"The President (Mr. Roosevelt), advocating the creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority in 1933, said in a message to Congress: 'Many hard lessons have taught us the human waste and results from lack of planning. Here and there a few wise cities and counties have looked ahead and planned. But our Nation has "just grown." It is time to extend planning to a wider field, in this instance comprehending in one great project many States directly concerned with the basin of one of our greatest rivers. This in a true sense is a return to the spirit and vision of the pioneer. If we are successful here we can march on, step by step, in a like development of other great natural territorial units within our borders.'

"In spite of the fact that private enterprise had neither envisioned this project nor was implemented to carry it through, vested interests in the United States fought it with a bitterness that has seldom been equalled in any controversy involving private property and the public welfare.

"The problem of intervention by government for the common good has always been the concern of statesmanship. The continuing development of the Tennessee Valley marks the advance that science, in combination with the popular will, can evolve out of a co-ordinated national and local authority; it is proof that democratic government under wise leadership can direct our natural resources to serve present human needs. It is a unique experiment in government as well as an engineering feat of tremendous significance.

"For its attainment we owe a special debt of gratitude to Senator Norris of Nebraska and to President Roosevelt."

I quote that to indicate the need of planning for the future, having always maintained that if we are to develop this State in a proper way three main principles must be taken into consideration—main roads, electricity, and water conservation and irrigation. The Main Roads Commission, over a number of years, has done a tremendous job towards the development of this State and whatever criticism one may level against that Commission nobody can deny that its engineers are responsible for a marvellous improvement in transport.

**Mr. Bruce:** In about 15 years.

**Mr. FARRELL:** That is so. During the years of the war the only part of the State developed to any great extent has been the Northern Territory and everyone will agree that it was very desirable that the road system should be developed in that period.

However, the greatest development is bound up with the extension of electricity, particularly as it affects the districts that come under the regional scheme. It is a great pity, therefore, that projects such as the Wide Bay Regional Electricity Board's scheme should be retarded simply because we are unable to obtain the structural steel with which to lay foundations and erect buildings for the engines that will generate and supply electricity throughout the area. It is indeed to be regretted that at a time such as this, in which we are desirous of extending electricity throughout the district, we should find ourselves up against the problem of materials to such an extent that the future development and possibilities of the district are held up. Therefore, it is suggested that the Government should give the requirements of the various electricity boards an A1 priority.

**Mr. Pie:** They are on an A1 priority now.

**Mr. FARRELL:** They are not. I hope that the Minister in charge of the electricity undertakings will approach the Federal Government, through the Premier, for the purpose of having them placed on an A1 priority so that the plans envisaged by the Government and the boards may be brought to fruition. If we are to decentralise industry it is essential that we have sufficient cheap power to encourage the development of industry. No regional planning will be successful unless we are able to give to the various areas cheap electricity and water, with their consequent amenities. If a planned development of electricity takes place, there will be a considerable reduction in the cost of electricity to the consumer. The hon. member for East Toowoomba said he did not think it was fair or reasonable for people to have to meet a charge to have electricity carried to their areas.

**Mr. Sparkes:** They should pay part of it.

**Mr. FARRELL:** They do. Since the formation of these regional boards the Government have subsidised the development of areas to the extent that they will help by meeting up to 75 per cent. of the loss suffered by the undertaking, showing that the Government are desirous of giving electricity to every possible section of the community. I do not say that electricity will be possible in all areas, but where it is possible to obtain a fair and reasonable return it is very desirable that it be developed.

If we are to encourage the man on the land to rear families who will remain sons and daughters of the soil, we should go even further than we do now. Up to the present the Government have generously agreed to subsidise the losses of the regional boards, but there is no reason why we should not go further. Take Maryborough as an example. Just because we happen to be a city we are favoured with such amenities as electricity, water, sewerage, indeed everything that goes to make life in the city more pleasant and comfortable than in the country, all of which has been paid for by the taxpayers in general.

That being so, I think it is only reasonable for the people in country areas to expect that those in the city who already enjoy these amenities should contribute to the development of similar comforts in country areas.

**Mr. Pie:** Have not your rates in Maryborough been increased recently?

**Mr. FARRELL:** That has nothing to do with it. The electricity department is outside the ambit of the Maryborough City Council. There is no question about it, rates will be increased by every local authority.

Since the Government introduced the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission Act of 1946 much valuable information has been gathered for the purpose of laying down a principle that can be followed when we have sufficient funds. I was pleased indeed to hear of the appointment of Mr. Lang, a Victorian by birth and a Queenslander by adoption, to a position in charge of the Sub-Department of Water Supply and Irrigation in this State. I have not come in contact with Mr. Lang to any great extent but I have knowledge of his outstanding qualifications and ability from Victorians I have met on their passage through Maryborough from time to time.

At 3.16 p.m.,

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Mann, Brisbane) relieved Mr. Speaker in the chair.

**Mr. FARRELL:** I have no fear that under his guidance we shall not be in a position to carry out the policy of this Government in regard to water conservation and irrigation. I have always held the view that every stream that is not navigable should be weired so that its waters may be stored and held in reserve for the development of our land and as an assurance against drought. We are differently placed from the other States of the Commonwealth because we have no snow-capped mountains with which to replenish our water supply. We are at the mercy of the elements in the shape of rainfall and the only way to store water is by the weiring of rivers.

Let us disregard locality and look at the matter from the point of view of the development of the State. I have no claims to make in regard to the weiring of the Mary River if Mr. Lang thinks Mundubbera, for instance, is the right place. Recently weiring was begun on the Burnett River and I hope that we shall have a clear indication of the Government's policy of weiring all streams in the coastal belt. If that is done the people benefited will become advocates for giving the rest of Queensland the advantages they have already won as a result of Government policy.

Recently at a gathering at the Royal National Exhibition a remark was attributed to the Premier to the effect that all members of Parliament should take advantage of seeing the potentialities of this State and becoming aware of the problems associated with its development. Some time ago I took the opportunity of going into the Upper Burnett and was able to see some of the difficulties

and drawbacks the typical settler has to contend with. There you find settlers miles from means of communication, many miles distant from each other, and their only possible meeting place probably at a small school in the district. I have nothing but the greatest sympathy for those marvellous settlers of ours who are making such a wonderful contribution towards the development of the State. They have not the amenities enjoyed by the city-dweller nor have they the necessary facilities for the education of their children.

They have none of the amenities generally available in the cities, and it is desirable that consideration be given to these matters in the interests of the people outback. I hope the decentralisation of the educational system will be so ordered as to give to the country a higher standard of education than that which obtains today so that the people there may have the advantage and privilege of the easy access to it that the city already enjoys.

No industry has played a more important part in our industrial life than the coal industry, and at present there is a tremendous demand for coal by secondary industries. We cannot develop secondary industries without the necessary power, and today that power is provided by coal. Some time ago the Federal Government, acting in conjunction with the Government of New South Wales, found it necessary to introduce a Bill for the purpose of obtaining and maintaining adequate supplies of coal and improving the coal-mining industry. That Bill has many features not dissimilar to those included in the Act relating to the industry in this State. And there are many people who are desirous of throwing that measure overboard. However, after the introduction of that measure, which included legislative sanction for many recommendations by the New South Wales Royal Commission, many amenities have been granted to the coal-mining industry in that State, and it is only reasonable to assume that the Queensland coal-miner should wish to obtain some of the advantages won by his fellow-worker in the industry in New South Wales.

Yesterday the hon. member for Bremer dealt very effectively with the development of the Joint Coal Board, and I trust that the efforts of the Premier will be successful and he will obtain a greater measure of improvements for coal-miners in this State. Queensland is in a much more favourable position than most people seem to realise, because this State can quite easily be divided into districts. We have for instance the Ipswich and West Moreton district, Maryborough district, Central district and so on. That gives some idea of the extent of the coal deposits in this State.

Prior to the passing of the Coal Production Regulation Act here we were working only very short periods, in some instances only half a dozen days a month, but now things have changed, and some contribution is required of management in the coal-mining industry. I am not very much concerned about that at the moment, because before very long we shall have electricity, water, and

I hope sewerage, for the coal-mining community in my electorate, which of course is in keeping with the high ideals and traditions of this Parliament.

The hon. member for Bremer dealt rather exhaustively with the coal-mining industry in his speech yesterday. All I want to add is that if you want to understand the mining community you must live with the people. You cannot express an opinion about them unless you do that; there is no use in simply driving through the township in a car, because that would give you no right to say that you knew all about the coal-mining industry and the people in it.

We have no more law-abiding people than the coal-miners. They have a perfect right to adjust their own affairs. No one can pull their legs about what is required for the industry. So long as the contract system exists with coal-mining, differences of opinion between employer and employee will always occur. It is gratifying to note that when the new Bill is introduced the opportunity and privilege may occur of settling disputes in the industry right on the spot.

I am very pleased to note the help that has been promised to improve the conditions of the examination for mine managers. While Mr. Platt has been Chief Inspector of Coal-mines, he has endeavoured to raise the standard of the mine manager's certificate of competency. It is not a bit of use providing for a greater standard of proficiency if we do not give facilities to enable the men in the industry to obtain the requisite knowledge before sitting for the examination. Consequently some method should be devised other than the present method to give candidates the benefit of that knowledge. Some time ago I endeavoured to get the Department of Public Instruction to provide lectures to enable candidates to equip themselves to become mine managers. Up to the present my efforts have not been successful. I suggest to the Minister that he give favourable consideration to stationing a fully-qualified mine manager at Ipswich to enable men in the industry to qualify by examination. Such an appointee should have the capacity and ability to draw up lectures to enable men in the industry beyond the Ipswich district of also sitting for a qualifying examination. Nothing is so depressing to such a candidate as being unable to get the information he desires. Some consideration should be given also by district coal boards to assisting educationally persons in a coal-mining district who may desire to make that industry their occupation. We could even go further. We should train men as mine technicians. If they have the capacity and ability they should be sent to a university. If that is done I am sure we will see a more rapid development of the industry.

I now want to deal with the Burrum coal-field in my own electorate and the industry as it is carried on there. A great necessity exists to test our mining fields throughout the length and breadth of the State. Up to the present only the surface of our coalfields has been scratched, and our knowledge of our coal

deposits is only meagre. No-one would suggest that we can accomplish that work with the 1914 machine. If a complete test for the development of our coalfields is to be made we must have up-to-date machinery.

I believe that if we follow the principle that has begun to operate here and introduce modern and better machinery for the testing of the fields we are likely to get somewhere. At the present time our only method in our district is to test by hand boring, which is one of the best methods to determine how far a seam extends horizontally but to determine its depth we must have a diamond drill. It is necessary to provide that plant so that the fields throughout the State—particularly the fields in my district—can be tested. Seams in my district are mostly what we call dry seams, seams pinched out to the dip; consequently hand boring is very effective in one respect, but to determine what lies at the dip of an area it is a different matter altogether. No-one can lay out a mine unless he has that knowledge to a great extent. Our trouble really is that as we sink a shaft or drive a tunnel the mine has to get production figures almost straightaway because of the inability of the companies to bear the necessary cost without return and the result is that the field is not tested to the extent desirable. If we worked the seams correctly we should drive our depths to the boundary and our levels to the boundary and bring the coal on the road back. That would be working under ideal conditions.

**Mr. Pie:** Why do they not do that now?

**Mr. FARRELL:** We do not have the knowledge of what lies ahead. Until we do get that we shall not be able to lay out a colliery to accord with the desires of the Miners' Federation and nobody has discussed this question more than the federation itself. If we were in a position to determine before a shaft was sunk or a tunnel driven the amount of coal available we should be able to set a programme to enable us to determine the way in which we ought to work that seam. Consequently I ask the Minister to give favourable consideration to a recommendation that at a very early period a new machine be introduced in our district to give us the opportunity to determine the life of the seams in that field.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. H. B. TAYLOR (Hamilton) (3.33 p.m.):** May I at the commencement of my speech acknowledge the honour conferred on me by the electors of Hamilton. To have been selected by more than 70 per cent. of the electors voting at the poll, emphasises—if emphasis should be necessary—the trust that has been reposed in me and in the objectives of the political party I represent. I shall always be aware of that trust, and I will endeavour to conduct myself in my future representation in this House with such dignity as the high office of member of Parliament demands.

May I join too, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with other speakers in offering my congratulations

to both Mr. Speaker and yourself on your re-election to your respective offices? Between the elections and the commencement of this session I have been a frequent visitor to the House and Mr. Speaker has shown me many kindnesses, which I greatly appreciate. I look forward to a further happy and useful term with both of you during this Parliament.

At the same time may I acknowledge my profound respect for our parliamentary procedure and traditions. Between the two world wars I, while engaged in commercial pursuits, took little more than an average elector's interest in politics. In order to register an intelligent vote we naturally followed the policies of the respective parties, and I am afraid we criticised politicians in general. We wondered if it was in the best interests of the State that it should be governed by 62 elected members, many expert in nothing and a few expert in something, or on the other hand, whether the State should be governed by a board of highly paid civil servants, industrialists, or professors. Of course, that was before the period when we had so much experience of government by commissions and boards.

During the last Parliament, in my capacity as a political party executive I was a frequent visitor to this House and saw the House in its many changing moods. I watched it in its dignity when prayers were being said. I noted the orderliness of formal business, and I saw also the occasional clashes that rose like thunder clouds filled with menace, but which melted away, sometimes much more slowly than they had gathered. But as an onlooker sees most of the game, so the listener in the gallery sees how typical members are of the sentiments and emotions of the people. They are truly representative. As one reflects that for nearly 90 years in this State and for over 70 years in this very House men such as are gathered here now, no more expert, no better informed, have debated and made decisions that affected the lives of all the people throughout the State year after year, one must of necessity be impressed with the tradition. My feelings on being now on the floor of the House, privileged to participate in these debates and decisions, are slightly different from those of a listener in the gallery. My feelings are somewhat akin to those thousands of young men who during the war put on a uniform for the first time. I, like them, feel the strangeness of things, the strangeness of being a raw recruit.

**Mr. Aikens:** Not so raw.

**Mr. H. B. TAYLOR:** I appreciate the interjection of the hon. member and thank him for it. I feel somewhat like a former Governor-General of Canada, the late Lord Tweedsmuir, who expressing his experiences when first entering the House of Commons said it was interesting for a minnow like himself to meet other new and agreeable minnows and gaze with awe across the table at some veritable triton on the Government benches. I am reassured, however, in the fact that it is the practice for hon. members to listen to the first speech of a new member,

judging him not so much on any professional success or attainments, but on the sincerity and truthfulness of his advocacy and plea.

Just here I feel it my duty to pay tribute to my predecessor, whose voluntary retirement made my entry into this House possible. Both as a member of Parliament and as the Lord Mayor of this city, Alderman Chandler is highly regarded by the people.

It was typical of his sense of responsibility that when he saw that it was physically impossible to carry on, to his idea of efficiency, the duties required of both a member of Parliament and Lord Mayor, he immediately announced his intention of resigning the more recent appointment. Alderman Chandler's entry into politics, was, I believe, in the eyes of the people, prompted by a sense of duty, not of self-interest. His paramount emotion was to get things done, not to seek fame for himself by doing things. He believed that in politics, as in all human affairs, the prosperity of the people results from things moving forward, not standing still. The formation of the Queensland People's Party by Alderman Chandler, my present Leader and Deputy Leader, and others, arose out of the fact that a large number of people believed at that time that the prosperity of the people of Queensland was not moving forward.

Here I should like to deal with political parties and their systems. We all believe in democracy. I do not think any hon. member will disagree with me when I say that the democratic ideal is a belief in our individual rights and in the obligation of everyone to respect the rights of his neighbour. Do we all recognise that democracy cannot stand by this virtue alone? In recent years we have seen that of all forms of government the democratic is the most delicate. It depends more than any other upon the capacity of leaders. Leadership is most important in the Commonwealth and States of Australia today. Democracy, however, has come so much under the intricate and expanding machinery of the party system that the leadership we need in a crisis—and the present is certainly a crisis in our history—is often restrained and frequently missing altogether. Have we not seen the influence of the powerful political machine on leaders, have we not seen how it has suppressed the independent opinion of many leaders and cramped the personality of public men? I do not suggest by this that I am opposed to the party system, for we have seen that of all forms of government in a democratic country the party system is the only one that has succeeded. If there is a better way of governing democracy it is still a secret of the gods.

At 3.44 p.m.,

**Mr. SPEAKER** resumed the chair.

**Mr. H. B. TAYLOR:** Then I would stress that the method operating throughout the Commonwealth by which political parties go before the people with their respective policies, which they believe to be in the best interests of the public, for the electors to decide, is the only way of determining the issue. With whatever policy the majority of the electors agree, then that should prevail.

When, however, we find that only a majority of electorates have agreed with a policy and not a majority of the electors, then something surely should be done about it.

The attitude of political parties towards leaders has varied in the past. Some parties or members of political parties select their leaders and trust them to lead them wisely. Other political parties select their leaders as servants and look to them for obedience. I believe that our party system in the present day is somewhat of a compromise between those two systems. In these critical times I feel that the form of democratic government political parties should encourage is the one that leads towards establishing such confidence in leaders that they, knowing they are so trusted, will put forward all their energy, vigour, steadfastness, and sincerity; it is this that brings out the highest qualities of the people.

During the recess, or in the phraseology of the sugar industry, during the Parliamentary slack season, I set myself the task of finding as much information as I could that would be of benefit to me in this present session. I aimed at obtaining facts and not at forming opinions for political expediency. I can recall sitting in the gallery during the last session of Parliament and hearing Ministers of the Crown telling Opposition members that if they would go to such and such a department and seek the information they required it would save a good deal of time in asking questions. In my simple innocence and inexperience I thought the best place to go for the information would be to the department concerned. I want to give two instances of my experiences. I found that when I approached the officers of a department I was courteously received and they listened to the requests I made, and in the two instances I refer to they agreed to get the information for me. Then, when I went back, it seemed as if I were walking into a broadcasting studio, where the red light was against me, silence was to prevail and a curtain was drawn to shut me out from the means of getting the information I sought.

I refer to the two articles that appeared in the "Courier-Mail" reflecting on the administration of the Brisbane Mental Hospital. I have been a worker amongst returned soldiers for a very long time, and my efforts concerning the welfare of those less fortunate than myself are pretty well known in this city. As there was a large number of returned soldiers in that institution, I thought the best thing to do to ascertain the facts about these articles was to pay a visit to the hospital and make a few inquiries. I shall refer to that matter in more detail at a later and more appropriate time, but there are two points I wish to bring out about that visit. Firstly, I want to pay tribute to the courtesy extended to me by the Director of Mental Hygiene, Dr. Stafford, because without notice he gave me three hours of his time and showed me all through the place. I feel that the State is fortunate in having the services of so eminent a superintendent, because he is devoted to the cure of the mentally sick and is not just a custodian of mentally unbalanced people.

The other point I mention now, because those who have worked in the interests of returned soldiers realise that anything that will be to their benefit cannot be delayed. The "Courier-Mail" brought out the fact that the Repatriation Commission is responsible for a certain number of men. There are about 180 returned men in that hospital and about 40 of them are there owing to war service and are the responsibility of the Repatriation Commission. The "Courier-Mail" pointed out that these men got an extra ration and immediately my ambition was to see that all the service men in that institution got the same ration and to see that the ration for all men under State supervision was stepped up. So I took the report and went to the Repatriation Commission. I saw the officer in charge of the medical section and I asked him whether it was true that the Commission provided an extra ration for the 40-odd men under its care. He assured me that it was. Then I asked him if I could be given the details of that ration and I was promised that I should get them. Nothing happened in a week or so, and so I went along again but I was immediately referred to a higher authority and that higher authority said, in effect, "No, you are a member of Parliament. If you want anything you write in and ask for it and I will communicate with Melbourne or Canberra or somewhere else and see if I can get authority to give it to you."

That was only about three or four weeks ago and I doubted whether I should get a reply in that length of time and so I believed in my innocence that the next most sensible step was to write to the secretary-manager of the institution and ask him if he could give me details of the extra ration that was given to the men under the care of Repatriation Commission. It is alleged that the other inmates must watch this extra ration being given. I suggest also that the mentality of those people in such an institution would not be above that of a child and so it is not hard for hon. members to imagine the thoughts that would pass through their minds. I was very pleased to get this reply from the Director of Mental Hygiene—

"I beg to inform you that practically all ex-service men patients at the Brisbane Mental Hospital receive the same dietary."

It will be observed that the admission is made that they do not all get the same dietary but that they get practically the same dietary scale. I was very happy to get that reply because I have here the dietary scale of these ex-service men for the previous week and I believe it to be very satisfactory. I now ask the Minister whether he will examine the position to see whether the men in the institution who are not the responsibility of the Repatriation Commission can get the same dietary scale. My whole ambition in mentioning it is to see, if it is at all possible, that the rations of all the patients are stepped up so that they receive exactly the same as the Repatriation Commission men who will be passing out this month to their new block of buildings that have been constructed by the Commonwealth Government.

My colleagues have invited me to attend to transport matters during the coming session and my mind went back to the days when I was an apprentice-clerk in the Railway Department.

I lived at Clayfield in those days and used to catch a train at 8.14 a.m., which got me to Central at 8.34 a.m., exactly 20 minutes. I wondered, not travelling by train very much these days, how long it takes 40 years later to get from Clayfield to Central. I turned up the time table to discover that in 40 years these passengers had been saved two minutes in getting to Brisbane. (Laughter.)

I then thought it would be a happy idea if I could compare all the suburban trains—from Ascot to Brisbane, Sandgate to Brisbane, Ipswich to Brisbane, and Manly to Brisbane—particularly as to the length of time they took and the number of trains run as compared with 40 years ago. I went to the department and was most courteously received. After finding out that the department did have a timetable for 1907, I sought the permission of the Commissioner to get that information, and he promised to get it for me. Not hearing anything for a week or more, I went back on Monday morning and was really surprised to be told, "The Commissioner regrets that he cannot give the information." That made me wonder what influence had been at work. I know the Commissioner. We both worked in the same office together, he as accountant and I as correspondence clerk. I was surprised and I could only form one conclusion, namely, that the information was so striking a comparison between 1947 and 1907 that it might not be desirable to show that the railways had progressed so little in so long a time.

Seeing that I was deprived of that information I happened upon a time-table of the Queensland Railways dated 1879—68 years ago. I turned it up. The timetable shown on the first page was in respect of Brisbane to Ipswich. I compared the times of the trains in 1879 with 1947. I found the first train out of Brisbane in those days would have left at 6.35 a.m. and arrived at Ipswich at 7.33 a.m. The journey took 58 minutes in 1879. The mail train, which probably is the fastest train on that line today, leaves Brisbane at 7.45 each morning and arrives at Ipswich at 8.35 a.m. so that in 68 years passengers travelling to Ipswich by an express train have gained eight minutes.

Take the mixed train stopping at all stations—not a passenger train. Back in 1879 it took 1½ hours to get to Ipswich but a passenger train today with no goods to detrain at each station, but just passengers, takes an hour and 14 minutes.

**Mr. Crowley:** There are many more stops.

**Mr. H. B. TAYLOR:** I think four more stops. I was dealing mainly with the express trains.

Consequently I was extremely gratified to read in the Governor's Speech that the

Government propose to electrify the railways. But when? I call attention to the fact that in 1944 my party proposed the electrification of suburban railways and not until three years later did the present Government appoint a committee of inquiry whose report we shall all be very interested to hear. In that I strongly support the hon. member for Bremer who was urging it yesterday.

Although I represent a metropolitan electorate, I should like hon. members to know that at times I shall want to address myself to matters relating to North Queensland in particular.

I have gained experience of North Queensland by living amongst the people there for a number of years in the township of Babinda. Members may remember that town because of the State enterprise by way of an hotel, which is renowned throughout Australia for its remarkable trading results. There I had the honour of meeting the Secretary for Public Instruction and, I think, the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock. I am familiar with the problems of the cane farmer—and incidentally I congratulate the hon. member for Mirani on the splendid case he put forward here yesterday. I am familiar also with the conditions at the sugar mills, and anything the Government can do to increase industries in that area during the period of unemployment while the mills are shut down will be encouraged by every member on this side of the House.

I lived for some time in the North-west of Queensland in the town of Winton in the electorate represented by the hon. member for Gregory. It is only by living in those parts, by personal contact, that one can appreciate the fortitude and strength of character and loyalty of those people of the West. I spoke in the shire hall at Winton on Anzac Day, 1939, and I was impressed by the tremendous number of names on the honour board for World War I. I went to the bother of going to the Oxley Library and finding out what the population was in Winton in 1914-1915. The area of the shire was 21,000 square miles and the population 2,554. I suppose we can say that 50 per cent. were males. The enlistments from that district whose names appeared on the honour board totalled 519. I suggest that every eligible man in that district enlisted for World War I. I am sure my honourable friend is proud to represent an electorate with such loyal people.

I have come to this House with certain political creeds, or with a political creed. In view of the forthcoming debate on the hours question, I want to refer to one particular point of that creed. It reads like this: I believe that employer and employee have a common indivisible interest. Probably during the next few weeks we shall hear a great deal about the associations in business and industry and we shall be told of the happy relationships in some and of the conflicts in others. I shall follow these debates with

great interest, because I have had experience as an employee in large and small organisations, and also as an employer in my capacity as company manager for some years. Ever since I received my first pay as a junior clerk of a State Government department at 6s. a week—and hardship of a pecuniary nature had a share in my education—I always appreciated the discipline of work in those most impressionable years. Lord Montgomery in his speech at the State luncheon told us of the difficulties a statesman had in implementing his decisions because he was dealing with an undisciplined public, against the immediate action that followed the decisions of an army general because he was dealing with a disciplined army.

He gave us also an insight into the reason for his success because he showed us how all ranks had been brought into the picture of the commander's objective. Is there a very great difference between an army, in which all ranks through their initiative and co-operation are out to win, and an industry, in which employer and employee are working in mutual co-operation for success and development? It is our duty as public men to encourage in every possible way the spirit of co-operation. Surely there is no trade union or employers' association that does not believe in that policy.

I feel sure that the hon. members who attended the Labour Day gathering at the Exhibition grounds in May last and heard the chairman of the Celebrations Committee, Mr. McDonald (and I quote from "The Telegraph" of 5 May) saying—

"The main thing was to get together against the boss, against the common enemy, with the ultimate aim of complete control of production by the workers"—

do not subscribe to such a doctrine of hostility. It is as far removed from our democratic ideals as Communism, for instance, is in the eyes of the A.W.U. at least removed from the trade-union movement. To agree to such a doctrine of class warfare, because it has a following of doubtful size, would be to admit being one of those small-minded politicians who see only the front row of things that are obvious and fail to see the dangers in the shadows. Personally I feel that such men are more terrified of opinion than of facts.

I recognise it as an undeniable fact that employers and employees have a common interest. Edmund Burke, in his famous speech on conciliation with America, said—

"Magnanimity in politics, is not seldom the truest wisdom; and a great empire and little minds go ill together."

Surely in the forthcoming debate we in this Parliament might encourage the establishment of harmony in industry by stressing this fact.

Another matter I should like to mention is the topical subject of the day, Socialism,

because my party's attitude and my personal attitude towards this is belief in a social system based on fair and free enterprise. I draw attention to the fact that I feel that the Government possess two classes of members, the true Socialist who believes as a doctrine that nationalisation is good in itself, and probably the more liberal-minded radical who is not prepared to accept that doctrine but who although not admitting that nationalisation is bad would consider every case on its merits, and would apply the principle where he saw that it was in the best, fairest, most efficient and most economical interests of the public.

I am reminded of an old story published some 50 years ago described as a Message to Garcia. Members may have read it or may have seen a picture about it. It is said that 40,000,000 copies were printed and it was published in many languages.

The story surrounds an incident in the Spanish—American war, when President McKinley required a message to be sent to General Garcia who was in charge of the insurgents on the mountains of Cuba. The problem was how to get the message there. Somebody said to him, "A man named Rowan will get the message there if anybody can." Rowan was sent for, given a message, and sent out on the journey. How he got there, how he penetrated the hostile country and crossed the island in three weeks, is another story. The point I wish to emphasise is that Rowan accepted the responsibility for his country, just as we in this Parliament are accepting a responsibility for the next three years. Rowan did not ask, "What do I get if I get there? Cannot somebody else take this dangerous risk? Do I get any extra danger money?" He applied his initiative and went straight to the job. I suggest that we in this Parliament, over the next three years, have our message to Garcia. Let the greater production of our country be the message. Let Britain and the world's markets be our Garcia, and may we, through our example and our endeavours to create a spirit of indivisible common interest between employer and employee of our people and our country, be the means of getting that message over.

I should like to close by quoting some words of the late President Roosevelt, which were intended for a speech that was never uttered, and consequently never voiced by him, but in them he proclaimed this hope—

"The only limit to our realisation of tomorrow will be our doubts of today. Let us move forward with strong and active faith."

Debate, on motion of Mr. Hilton, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 4.13 p.m.