

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 1948

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

TUESDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER, 1948.

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

QUESTIONS.**HOUSING AT GROVELY.**

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

“Will he inform the House of the location of any reservation of land reserved for the erection of a State school near the proposed new housing area in the old Grovely Camp?”

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

“An area of approximately twenty-two (22) acres of land with northern and western frontages to Samford Road and approximately six (6) chains from the old Grovely Camp site has been acquired by the Department of Public Instruction as a site for a future Post Primary school. In addition, an area of approximately seven and a-half (7½) acres opposite the Post Primary school site is held by the Department as the future new site for the Mitchelton State school.”

DECENTRALISATION IN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

Mr. MORRIS (Enoggera) asked the Premier—

“Referring to his letter of 5 August, 1948, in regard to zoning of Queensland for the purpose of education, will he inform the House—(a) Approximate area of each zone; (b) number of schools in each zone; (c) the approximate total attendance of children in each zone?”

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca) replied—

“(a) The approximate area of each zone is—Northern Region, 133,527 square miles; North-Western Region, 274,007 square miles; Central Region, 75,470 square miles; South-Western Region, 131,928 square miles; Southern Region, 54,901 square miles. (b) The number of schools in each zone is—Northern Region, 205; North-Western Region, 33; Central Region, 229; South-Western Region, 100; Southern Region, 981. (c) The approximate total attendance of children in each region is—Northern Region, 18,169; North-Western Region, 2,474; Central Region, 16,004; South-Western Region, 5,372; Southern Region, 95,005.”

SUPPLIES OF PROTEIN STOCK FOOD.

Mr. WANSTALL (Toowong) asked the Premier—

“In view of the serious shortage of protein stock food, will he inform the House what plans have been made to ensure an adequate supply of protein for use in the

Central Queensland Food Scheme without depleting that available for existing industries, particularly the poultry industry?”

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca) replied—

“I am advised by the representatives of the Queensland-British Food Corporation that a very large proportion of the protein required will be supplied from grazing and from vegetable protein such as lucerne.”

PAPERS.

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

Report of the Auditor-General under the Supreme Court Funds Act of 1895 for the year 1947-48.

Report of the Commissioner of Taxes on Land Tax for the year 1947-48.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Order in Council under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1940.

Order in Council under the Magistrates Courts Act of 1921.

Order in Council under the Queensland Law Society Acts, 1927 to 1941.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.**RETURN TO ORDER.**

The following paper was laid on the table—

“Return to an Order made by the House on 18 August last, on the motion of Mr. Morris, showing the number of Government employees at 30 June, 1948 (all departments), paid from Consolidated Revenue, Trust Funds and Loan Fund, respectively.”

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO ACTING PREMIER.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (11.13 a.m.): I lay upon the table of the House copy of the Delegation of Authority issued to the Hon. Vincent Clair Gair to enable him to perform the functions of Premier and Chief Secretary during my absence from the State on my mission overseas on and from 11 September, 1948.

COAL AND OIL SHALE MINE WORKERS (PENSIONS) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.**INITIATION.**

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Mines): I move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend The Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers (Pensions) Acts, 1941 to 1947, in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

COAL MINING ACTS AMENDMENT
BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Mines): I move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Coal Mining Acts, 1925 to 1947, in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

MINING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby—Secretary for Mines): I move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Mining Acts, 1898 to 1948, in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

INDUSTRIAL LAW AMENDMENT ACT
OF 1948 REPEAL BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE—RESUMPTION OF
DEBATE.

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

Debate resumed from 2 September (see page 226) on Mr. Hanlon's motion—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to repeal the Industrial Law Amendment Act of 1948.”

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) (11.14 a.m.): When a motion such as this is before the Committee not only a member of this Chamber but I should say every decent-living Queensland asks, why the change of front on the part of the Premier. We know that when the Act was introduced he met with opposition from some members of his own party who had communistic ideals, but they were told in no uncertain way that they must either accept the Act or get out of the party. What has happened since then? What has changed the views of the Premier?

We know only too well that when the hon. gentleman was visiting the South on a very important mission he was openly attacked by the Communists in New South Wales. We know too that right throughout the consideration of this legislation the attacks upon the Premier were made by men within his own party who held communistic views. It is only reasonable to suppose, then, that Communist influences are behind this repeal legislation. In fact there is no doubt about it.

We read in the Press on Thursday last—

“Mr. Hanlon's reply was that the party had already agreed to the repeal of the Act,

and for that reason it had not been deemed necessary to call them together again specially on the matter.”

Then we read again—

“Last night the Queensland Trades and Labour Council which is Communist controlled carried a resolution declaring the repeal of the anti-picketing legislation to be ‘an outstanding victory.’”

We find that the Communists are greatly pleased with this legislation. I understand they are having a celebration tomorrow night. I suppose the Premier will be asked to go along and that it will be a sort of send-off to him. (Interjections.) You will notice, Mr. Mann, how the Communists come in. That is what you would expect. I appreciate, and would expect when they get a victory like this, that they would be all smiles but the decent working man and the decent unions of this State are not all smiles. Decent-living Queenslanders today ask: why have the Premier and his Government turned traitor to the decent workers of this State? Why is it? I am not going to suggest why. We know, Mr. Mann. You know only too well the workings of the Communist Party. Bribery is one of their means of achieving their ends. I am not going to suggest in this Chamber that the Premier has been bribed. Far from it; I would not make that suggestion. (Government laughter.) I leave it to the people. I am not suggesting that the Communists have bribed the Premier.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member should leave that phase of his argument alone; his remarks are bordering on a charge of improper practices.

Mr. SPARKES: I am not suggesting that the hon. member would be bribed.

That being so, we have to seek some other reason for the change of attitude of the Premier, for there is a distinct change. What has brought it about? That is what we want to know. Everyone, not only in this Chamber but outside it, is asking the question. They ask what has happened to the Premier, and what has made him change his attitude. We can only surmise that the hon. gentleman has been brought to his knees. He acted the strong man and said that he would bring the Communists to their knees. Now we find that he himself has been brought to his knees. He is very afraid of the Communists at the coming poll. To my mind he has been brought to the stage where he fears the Communists. He is the man who said, “I will deal with the Communists.”

I was in Sydney when the hon. gentleman arrived by air at Mascot and we had the picture showing how the Communists demonstrated on his arrival. How is he treating them now? I venture to say that next time he steps from his plane at Mascot the Communists will be there to meet him with open arms and will salute him, “Hail, brother, fellow traveller!” (Opposition laughter.) It may have its humorous side, but the serious side of the question must impress itself on this Chamber today.

(Time expired.)

Mr. EVANS (Mirani) (11.20 a.m.): The Act it is proposed to repeal was introduced at a very critical period. I had an opportunity of speaking on the Bill and supporting it. During the course of my remarks I went back some 20 years to the previous railway strike, and I quoted what the Premier, who was then an ordinary member on the Government side, said; and it is well to repeat that statement today.

Mr. Aikens: He was an ordinary member of the Opposition.

Mr. EVANS: He was an ordinary member of the Government led by Mr. McCormack. This is what he said 20 years ago:—

“So far leaders of thought in the Labour movement have shirked the issue. We went on until we reached the stage we have reached today without laying down some plan of action whereby strikes could be settled and controlled.”

I remember very well the statement I made, that the Bill to protect the public was 20 years too late, and all the decent people of this State were very pleased that we had a Premier who had “guts” enough to stand up and protect the decent people. I must quote some of the statements the hon. gentleman made, the first of which appears at page 1896 of “Hansard” and reads as follows:—

“Hon. members will remember that the emergency regulations dealing with industrial disputes were intended to give protection to people who were obeying an order of the court or who were refusing to be involved in an unauthorised strike. Under our law there is provision for peaceful picketing in an industrial dispute, that is, a lawful industrial dispute, but in the present case there are two aspects of the matter. On the one hand there is an unlawful strike, that is, one not authorised by the court because no ballot has been taken and on the other an authorised strike, but since the ballot was taken there has been an order of the Industrial Court whereby the men have been ordered to return to work under pain of penalty provided by law. When men sought to return to work picketing was carried out to prevent them from obeying the order of the court, and the Government then made use of the emergency powers, which have been brought into operation by issue of regulations, to see that these people were not interfered with in going about their lawful business. . . .”

“The Bill deals also with picketing. The specific clause provides that a person shall not compel, counsel, procure, or induce or attempt to procure or induce any person to disobey an order of the court or take part in an unauthorised strike.”

We agreed on those paragraphs in that Bill.

“It further provides that a person shall not attend at or near a house or land, premises, or place where a person resides, etc.”

The Premier continued further, and Mr. Wanstall interjected, and the Premier replied to him—

“No, the police can order the offender away. If he sees a person going into a

man’s house, whether the man is there or not, he can, unless he can satisfy him that it is for a legitimate reason, direct him away; and if such a person goes near the house he will come under the Act.

“Mr. Luckins: Only if an unlawful strike is on.

“Mr. HANLON: Yes, an unauthorised strike or if men have been ordered to go back to work by the court.”

I will deal with those things later.

The Premier stated also—

“I want it to be thoroughly understood that there is nothing in this Bill that would enable any person to be in any way interfered with who obeys instructions given him by the police.”

Further on he said—

“The general principles contained in the Bill are that people who obey the laws of the court and are going lawfully about their occupations must not be interfered with; people who are working must not have their homes interfered with or their wives and children in any way threatened or terrified; the police will have power to shift people away from the vicinity of any workshop or the homes of people whom they may be attempting to threaten or to influence in any way. Those are the principles, and I do not think any member can fault them.”

I cannot fault them. I believe it was essential that those things should be in the Act. It is not very many months since the Act was passed and every member on that side and every member on this side, with the exception of the four Independents, supported the Bill. What has happened in the meantime? From where has pressure been brought to bear?

Mr. Hanlon: Peace has been declared.

Mr. EVANS: Peace has never been declared. It is not many months since the Premier—and I appreciate his action—came North and told us that peace was not declared. The hon. gentleman said, “Get your guns ready. Saddle up and be ready for further fights.” He said that Communists never declared peace, that they were always on the warpath. He said also that the communistic weapons were starvation, poverty and discontent, and that the more one tries to appease the Communist the more he will squeeze you. He warned us to be ready to stand up to fight these people. He also warned us that they were coming to the sugar industry. He asked, “How is your sugar storage? You need more storage.” I believe the Premier was quite honest and sincere when he met us and told us we wanted more storage.

Mr. Hanlon: Did you provide the storage?

Mr. EVANS: No, we did not provide the storage, the reason being that we know our own business. All our lives we have been fighting in the sugar industry to protect ourselves.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Hanlon: Yours is the only area in Queensland that would be in trouble if anything did happen.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is getting way from the matter before the Committee. He is dealing with the sugar industry.

Mr. EVANS: I will accept your ruling, Mr. Mann, but I am leading up to my point that in further disputes this Act would be necessary, and it should be left on the statute book to protect us. I submit that you allow me to continue to deal with that aspect of the sugar industry, because in the event of a dispute in that industry this Act is necessary to protect us in the North.

We told the Premier we were not prepared to build more storage because that would be only appeasement. We had provided storage year after year at the expenditure of thousands and thousands of pounds, but it was only appeasement; that they wanted only to get us in the position of having accommodation in which to stack our sugar in the sheds, so that what they did not load today they could load tomorrow—and get more money for doing so. We said, "There has to be a fight. We are prepared to make sacrifices and prepared to back any Government who will govern and stand up and fight." This is not political. That is the attitude today of the sugar industry. Throughout the sugar industry the attitude today is that we are prepared to stand up and fight to protect ourselves and for law and order. A Government must govern. But of course weak men cannot be made strong, although I am sure there are members on the Government benches who are prepared to stand for law and order.

I repeat that pressure must have been brought to bear on the Premier. Although I do not know whence it came, I have a very good idea—from the Communists.

Mr. Crowley: Are you a Communist?

Mr. EVANS: I was never a Communist. I have been successful. At one time I was a member of my district branch of the Australian Workers' Union. I repeat that I was always successful in anything I took up. If I went from Parliament tomorrow, I would say in answer to the hon. member for Cairns, I should survive, I should not have to get onto the workers' backs like the man I beat at the last elections. I can take my part in industry.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. EVANS: The Premier made this statement also—

"If this country is to be successfully governed as a democracy it must have its judicial functions separated entirely from its legislative and administrative functions. Once you get these functions mixed up, that is the end of good government. It is just as wrong for judges to trespass on the legislative field as it is for Governments to trespass on the judicial field.

Once you get these functions tangled you lose the independence that should prevail and you head for disaster."

What has happened? We have exactly the opposite occurring to what the Premier said on that occasion. He said that politicians should not interfere in the judicial field, but I say emphatically that the action of the Premier and his Government on this occasion is an insult to the judiciary.

Mr. Hanlon: And I say you do not know what you are talking about.

Mr. EVANS: I know what I am talking about, and the Premier cannot put me off the track. He has interfered with the judiciary. The judiciary has given a decision based on the law. These men have broken that law, and if the Premier is right in what he is doing now, every person who has a friend or relative in Boggo Road should have the right to go to the Government and say, "You have released these people, you have remitted their fines, you have pardoned them, you have failed to enforce the law that you introduced and you should release my friend or relative." If he did the right thing the Premier would do that for every one of them.

Mr. Hanlon: Every citizen has the right to ask that.

Mr. EVANS: But the hon. gentleman will not release them because the pressure group behind those citizens is not as strong as the one that is backing these other individuals. If they had a big strong organisation like the Communist Party squeezing the Premier and his Government just as the Communist Party is squeezing them today, he would be taking a different action. I believe that when the Premier introduced the Act we are now repealing he was just as conscientious as he was when he spoke about prices-control, but the same pressure was brought to bear in connection with prices-control as has been brought to bear in this matter.

The man who is mainly responsible for bringing that pressure to bear is Mr. Healy, and this is what Mr. Healy said when the strike was on—

"Notwithstanding any order from the Stevedoring Industry Commission, or any law, or despite the fact that the Queensland Government had sovereign rights, the Federation still intended to defy the Queensland Government and see that no cargo was moved in or out of Queensland."

When Mr. Chifley's attention was drawn to this open defiance of the law, all he could say was that he would confer with Dr. Evatt. What has happened in the meantime? The Premier has been to Sydney. He denies meeting Mr. Healy, but I am sure influence was brought to bear from Mr. Healy, Mr. Chifley and others, and he has come back and caved in. He has handed us over body and soul to the Reds. He is rescinding this Act releasing the men who broke the law and who starved the people of Queensland. As a matter of fact, I should not be surprised to see the Premier leading the Independent on the back benches.

Mr. Aikens: I have the ticket written out for him.

Mr. EVANS: When I was in North Queensland I met one of the leading Communists. He was discussing the matter of the hon. member for Mundingburra, Mr. Aikens, forming a new party. He said to me and others, "What is wrong with Aikens? What does Aikens want to contest seats for? We are getting all we want from the Queensland Government."

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. I do not know whether I misunderstood the hon. member for Mirani, but I understood him to say a leading Communist was discussing with me the question of a new party.

Mr. EVANS: Let me repeat what I said. He was discussing with me the formation of a party by the independent hon. member for Mundingburra, and he said, "What is wrong with his forming a party? We are getting all we want from the present Labour Government," and that is the position as it exists today. The other day the hon. member for Mundingburra was supporting the Premier and I should not be surprised if he were an endorsed Labour candidate at the next election. I know he would be if it were not for some of the decent members in the Labour Party. There are some members in the Labour Party who would not stand for that, or possibly Mr. Aikens, Mr. Paterson and Mr. Marriott would be all roped in, and Mr. Healy would be the boss.

Six months ago no hon. member of this Committee would have thought that the Premier would come back from Sydney and do what he has done in connection with this Bill, and remit the fines that have been remitted and release from gaol the men who broke the law. You can understand the statements he made when introducing this Bill about pressure politics. There is no doubt that there are pressure politics, and it is the Communists who exercise the pressure. Six or eight months ago Mr. Hanlon was fighting the Federal Government and getting Press publicity over his fight with Mr. Healy, the chap who was wrecking Australia. Now he is in the one room with him—in the one bed with him and Mr. Chifley—and being directed by him.

Mr. Hanlon: I have not the same easy morals as the hon. member.

Mr. EVANS: We will leave that for the people of Queensland to judge. He might not even be in the bed with him; they probably made him get under the bed but he was in the same room.

When the fines were paid I really thought the Communists paid them, but after this action by the Government in pardoning the law-breakers and agreeing to the remission of the fines, I am satisfied that the Government did not pay those fines but that they know who did pay them. I should not be surprised if the poor old worker, by his 2s. 6d. ticket levy for political purposes, paid those fines. I feel almost sure of that. What happened

with regard to Mr. Fallon? I have the greatest admiration for him, because he stands for arbitration—

Mr. Hanlon: You hate his hide.

Mr. EVANS: Throughout his long period as secretary of the Australian Workers' Union he has stood for law and order. Why did he come out in the Press the other day and on the spur of the moment suggest another leader?

Mr. Aikens: Because he did his £350 cold.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. EVANS: On the following day Mr. Fallon was squealing because pressure was brought to bear on him. Why had Mr. Fallon to back down? Why did the Premier come along and say that there would be no split in the party?

Mr. Aikens: Did you read the square-off?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am not going to be continually calling the hon. member for Mundingburra to order. If he does not obey my call I shall name him.

Mr. EVANS: There will be no split because they will have to answer the whip and do what they are told. During the period I have been a member of this Committee, a matter of 12 months or so, I have come to the conclusion that it does not matter what you call yourself, Labour, Country Party, Liberal or Queensland People's Party, it is a question whether you are decent and can distinguish right from wrong and have guts enough to stand up to your decision and put your people before your job. I have come to the conclusion that the Government are concerned only with holding power. To them it is only a matter of holding power, notwithstanding the sacrifices they have to make and notwithstanding what the people of this great country have to put up with.

I do not believe that the Premier will have to wait long before these people are back again on his doorstep fighting him—if he is still the leader. I presume they will have another leader and the Premier will have to go somewhere else. I admire the Premier for his ability and knowledge of political tactics; he can put it over many of us who are new to the game. He is going on a trip overseas and a dinner is being extended to him tomorrow, an appropriate function. I wish him well, as I know his mission is a very important one. But I know also that a victory function is being held tomorrow night at the Trades Hall.

Mr. Wanstall: Is the Premier going?

Mr. EVANS: I assume he will be present, because he is responsible for the victory, and I assume that if he is present at the social he will be asked to extend his visit to Moscow to tell the people who are directing the Coms. out here what a great job the Coms. are doing, to wreck this great country of ours, and how easily Labour politicians in

Australia in the Federal Government and the Governments of New South Wales and Queensland are pushed into position.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (11.40 a.m.): I am not going to allow the contribution to this debate by the hon. member for Mirani to go without comment. In his attempt to be facetious he rather exposed his own attitude to the Communists.

It is true that I visited Mackay and that I called representatives of the sugar industry together. I had arrangements made in every sugar district in Queensland for ample sugar storage to be provided so that in the event of a Communist hold-up it would have no effect on the sugar industry. But of all the people I spoke to about the proposal the hon. member for Mirani was the only one who made any murmur when he asked, "Who is going to pay for it?" He was prepared to fight the Communists to the last shilling—of someone else's money. He would fight them to the last bob—of someone else's money. The very suggestion that any of his money should be called upon to protect the industry from any attack that the Communist people might make on it was repugnant to him. It reminded me very much of that old gag of the anti-British people in France who used to say that Great Britain would continue the war to the last drop of French blood. The attitude of the hon. member is exactly the same as that—he would fight to the last bob of someone else's money.

The main fact is that the position is no different today from what it was last year, the year before and indeed every year since I have been interested in public life, and that goes back to a long time before I came into this Parliament. The Labour Party is assailed continuously—it never ceases to be assailed—by Communists and Fascists alike. There is no distinction. We get it from both parties, from the party opposite and the Communist Party. If ever there is any suggestion of affiliation or co-operation between the Communist Party and another party the suggestion always is that it is between the Communist Party and the Labour Party. At no time since I have been interested in public life, and that goes back 30 years before I came into this Parliament, has there been abatement of the hatred of the Labour Party, both by the party opposite and their allied parties, and the Communist Party. It never ceases and it will never cease. It is pure buffoonery for hon. members opposite to get up and talk about any alliance between the Labour Party and the Communist Party, but there is a similarity of outlook between the Communist Party and the party opposite, both having a deep-rooted objection to any freedom at all for the working people. Both of them have that objective. (Opposition dissent.)

Hon. members opposite demur but I have been through this fight. I have experienced the fight for the right to be a member of an industrial union but the fight was always waged on the basis of some organisation that would enable the workers to get a decent living. I remember an instance which

occurred many years ago, in connection with the wages board of which I happened to be a member. It fixed a wage of £2 10s. a week for shop assistants. At that time the people represented by the party opposite said that we were going to ruin the whole State, that grass would be growing in Queen street and that every business place would go bung—all because we provided a wage of £2 10s. a week for shop assistants on reaching the age of 24 years. That is the attitude of hon. members opposite and it never alters. That is the attitude of the Communist Party and the Liberal Party. Incidentally, those hon. members sitting in the north-west corner of this Chamber are becoming honest by admitting that they are the Liberal Party. I remember reading the pages of "Hansard" in which they frankly denied that they were the Liberal Party—they said that they were not—but now they say that they are and it would appear that pressure of circumstances is making them honest on every occasion.

Mr. Pie: You cannot reply to the charges made by the hon. member for Mirani.

Mr. HANLON: What charges did he make?

Mr. Pie: He charged you with having somersaulted in favour of the Communists.

Mr. HANLON: There is no somersault. It was announced by the Government immediately after the strike was over that this legislation would be repealed. The legislation was introduced to deal with a state of emergency that had arisen in the community.

Hon. members opposite are the people who before the ink was dry on the papers that sought to protect their lives and property clamoured for the removal of the restrictions imposed by the State upon themselves. Their Press and their industrialists yelled to the right and to the left of them that now the war was over all the war restrictions imposed on them in an act of emergency should be repealed. The legislation that is being repealed today was introduced during a time of emergency. I know that hon. members opposite would like to apply for ever and always a whole lot of its provisions to the working people, but they do not want emergency provisions applied to themselves. Ask any of the professional or business men or manufacturers, or anyone else in this community, whether they would like this class of emergency legislation to apply to them. They would say, "No." On every occasion on which there has been any attempt to impose penalties for profiteering or rack-renting in this community it has always been hon. members opposite who have wanted it repealed. Yet they talk about an alliance between this party and the Communist Party! Every hon. member over there knows, and the community knows, that the Liberal Party, the Communist Party, and the Country Party are eternally fighting to undermine the Labour Party. Do not forget that when the repeal of this Act was mentioned shortly after the dispute ended the average intelligent and thinking business man in the community was glad to see it removed because he knew

that such a restrictive Act in time of industrial peace could only be provocative of further disturbance.

Mr. Wanstall: It is not in operation in time of industrial peace.

Mr. HANLON: If the Act remains on the statute book it can be put into operation. Nobody knows better than the little group sitting on the cross Opposition bench that that Act on the statute book in time of industrial peace is provocative of further industrial unrest. That is why hon. members of the Liberal Party want the Act to remain on the statute book, because their idea of getting rid of the Labour Party and getting control of the State of Queensland in the interests of their section of the community is to foster industrial disorder and thus make the people tired of the Labour Party. I am going to tell this little group of shallow thinkers that they are not going to get that chance. This Government are going to govern this country in the interests of the great masses of the people, and they are going to encourage industrial peace in every way they can. If any member of their party is so shallow-minded as to think that restrictive legislation will solve the industrial problems of the world I have a very poor opinion of him.

Mr. Pie: This was emergency legislation.

Mr. HANLON: The emergency has ended and the legislation is no longer required. The attitude they are pursuing is calculated to cause industrial disturbance. It is calculated to create fertile ground among the ordinary rank and file of union members for Communist propaganda. Their idea of salvation is to encourage and promote the growth of Communism, for they believe that in doing so that it will encourage another organisation, a Fascist organisation, that will resist them and as a result sooner or later they will get control of the Government themselves.

I wonder how many people stop to think that there are only two rich political organisations in this country—the Liberal Party and the Communist Party. Only two. If you pick up the "Telegraph" of a couple of weeks ago you will find an account of a row between the Country Party and the Liberal Party about who was holding the bag with the money. The Leader of the Country Party was saying that the talk of keeping their political organisation going on the amount of contributions they were taking from members was pure bunkum. The Country Party Leader said that, and pointed out that the Liberal Party could not keep going on the contributions publicly made to its funds.

Mr. Muller: Is that the reason why you are cultivating the Coms.—to get their cash? (Laughter.)

Mr. HANLON: They did not mention the can of cream with the dead cat in it that was sent to the butter factory. (Laughter.)

That Liberal Party is the richest organisation politically—an organisation that has organisers out all over the State. Look at the little group here; they have more full-time organisers than members of Parliament travelling up and down the country stirring up industrial discontent, their only hope of interfering with the long period of success of the Labour Movement, which is progressive and which has certain ideals for the country.

Mr. Pie interjected.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member does not know what I am talking about. Their only hope of disturbing this long period of success of the organised Labour Movement is, first, by promoting disorder. That is the basis of their attack here this morning. I was not going to allow the hon. member for Mirani to get away with that story about sugar without explaining the matter. He is prepared to fight the Communists only if he has not to contribute anything to the fight. One of the rottenest features of this country is the number of people who are prepared to fight with somebody else's resources.

Mr. WANSTALL (Toowong) (11.53 a.m.): Bad as the Government's position was prior to the Premier's contribution, it has become infinitely worse since his further apology for the Government's extraordinary and unaccountable action, not only in repealing this very necessary legislation, but in remitting without the slightest show of justification the fines of those lawbreakers who were justly punished.

The repeal of this measure presents three aspects on which I propose to comment in the time available to me. The first and most important aspect is that involved in the repeal of the legislation; the second is the Government's remission of the penalties for the lawbreakers; and the third is the acceptance of the anonymous payment alleged to be on account of those who were properly languishing in gaol for their part in breaking the law.

Let me say this at the outset: As far as our party is concerned we recognise that the Industrial Law Amendment Act has a number of features that are not desirable in a democratic community, and we approach this question by suggesting that the Government's appropriate conduct would have been to amend their legislation by whittling down the arbitrary and unacceptable sections. I wish to make it clear that in opposing the repeal of the measure I am not asserting that it is right to continue all the harsh and arbitrary powers given to the police under the measure; but the need for amending it does not justify its entire repeal without its replacement by something equally effective to protect the honest and decent unionist against the deprivations of the Red element in the community.

The Premier this morning repeated an assertion that he has been making ever since the repeal of this legislation was mooted.

If ever there was a faulty syllogism the argument of the Premier is a classic example of it. He says he is justified in repealing this

measure because it was designed to have operation during an emergency. He argues that the emergency has finished, and, therefore, the repeal of the measure is justified. So practical does that proposition sound in its elements that it has even succeeded in hoodwinking a vast number of people. It has succeeded in pulling the wool over the eyes of many educated people who should have more acute vision and should be able to see the faults and falsity in that argument.

It is perfectly true that the measure was passed to deal with an emergency but therein lies the entire falsity of the Premier's justification for its repeal. The Act is not in operation today. The Industrial Law Amendment Act of 1948 is suspended: it is not in operation except during the times of illegal strikes or on occasions when the actions that constitute offences are against an order of the Industrial Court. Let the public understand that and the way for them to do that is through the Press's doing its duty in this State and making it perfectly clear to the people of Queensland that the Premier's apology for repealing this measure is based entirely on false premises. The Premier states that it is necessary to repeal this Act because it is provocative but it is well for the people to understand that this measure is not in operation today and has not been in operation since the end of the railway strike.

We need only to examine the sections of the Act in order to see how perfectly right I am in that respect. For example, Section 4 prohibits counselling an industrial offence, stating that a person shall not compel, counsel or procure anybody to leave his employment or discontinue his work. But that is not at all times; it is only when such counselling would constitute disobedience of an order or direction of the Industrial Court or would constitute an illegal strike. Similarly, studying each section, we come to the section relating to unlawful influence. It deals, for example, with parading before places of employment. It has only a suspended operation: it is not in operation unless the doing of the act would constitute a disobedience of the order of the Industrial Court and/or constitute an illegal strike.

Then we find the prohibition on threats. Most of us would justify the outlawing of threats and intimidation in any circumstances but this Bill did not go as far as that: it merely outlaws threats and intimidation during illegal strikes. It does not touch the rights of unionists during legal strikes. That point has been cleverly concealed by the Premier, but I wish to bring it forcibly before the people of this State by asserting and reiterating that this Act is not in force today and will not come into operation again until an order is made by the Industrial Court directing a band of employees to return to work or an illegal strike breaks out. Who can justify the repeal of a measure of such limited operation? Let the people clearly understand.

Mr. Hiley: No protection for the decent and lawful unionists.

Mr. WANSTALL: That is the viciousness and evil of totally repealing the Act without substituting any protection for the decent and lawful unionists. It is of vital importance.

The Government might have been justified in repealing a measure that operated at all times during legal strikes but this Act does not operate except during an illegal strike. The Premier was careful to explain that when introducing the Bill in March of this year. Let us remind ourselves of some of the things he said then and let us, in hearing the echo of those words in this Chamber today, give some consideration to whether they were not merely hollow words falling from the lips of expediency. As recorded in "Hansard," the hon. gentleman said—

"The Bill has been made necessary by the contempt in which the law has been held by people who should know better. These people know that when men are ordered by the court, under penalty of a fine, to return to work, they should have an opportunity of obeying the law."

Agreed, but that opportunity of obeying the law is now being taken away from those unionists who have been ordered by the court to return!

The Premier goes on—

"It should be possible for them to go to their places of work without having to run a barrage of offensive remarks or to push their way through a crowd of men."

No longer, when this Act is repealed, will it be possible for decent unionists, ordered by the court to return to work, to go back to work except by pushing their way through a barrage of offensive remarks and that will be because of the Premier's unaccountable action in repealing this measure without replacing it with something equally effective.

The Premier goes on still further—

"The general principles contained in the Bill are that people who obey the laws of the court and are going lawfully about their occupation must not be interfered with; people who are working must not have their homes interfered with or their wives and children in any way threatened or terrified."

The repeal of this measure is giving the green light to all those who would terrify the wives and children of decent unionists wanting to go to their places of work.

The Premier goes on—

"The police will have power to shift people from the vicinity of any workshop or the homes of people whom they may be attempting to threaten or to influence in any way. Those are the principles and I do not think any member can fault them."

What decent and honest member could fault principles of that sort, which are limited in their operations to times of illegal strikes?

Let us consider also some of the other things the Premier said, words that are now echoing back from the walls of this Assembly

and mocking the Premier's sincerity. At page 1936 of "Hansard" the Premier is reported as having said—

"The clause in no way interferes with anybody who does not try to prevent somebody from obeying the law."

What an oppressive statute! What a source of irritation! What oppression to interfere with somebody who tries to prevent somebody else from obeying the law! That is the argument the Premier used this morning to justify the repeal of that Act—that it would be a source of irritation, that it would be provocative. Is it provocative to prevent somebody from interfering with another person who wants to obey the law? The Premier did not think so in March.

Then, referring to the Communist hon. member for Bowen, the Premier said—

"The hon. gentleman is expressing alarm, but I want to point out that certain men were ordered by the court, under the law of the land, to proceed to work."

What hollow words! What mockery! He goes on—

"If they are threatened with punishment if they do proceed to work, then it is the duty of Parliament to see they are given the opportunity to obey the law. There is no doubt about that."

Is there a doubt today? What has happened to make what was right in March so thoroughly wrong today, according to the Premier's lights?

I come now to the point I was emphasising earlier. The Premier went on to say—

"In the other case, where an illegal strike is being held I am not at all concerned about having to help any little clique or group who tell men to come out on strike after they have held a ballot and have decided not to do so."

Today he is concerned about making it legal and right for those little pressure groups to tell men to come out on strike after they have decided they do not want to do so.

As I said at the outset, the Premier is completely without justification for repealing this measure without replacing it with something equally effective, particularly when the measure is of such limited operation and is directed only to preventing intimidation, threats, boycotts and picketing during times of illegal strikes. Not one section, not one line, not one word of that measure operates during a legal strike; it operates only during an illegal strike. Yet this is the measure the Premier says is provocative to decent unionists! Why, every decent unionist in this State welcomes that Act, recognising in it a charter of his industrial liberty, recognising in it his constitutional guarantee of being able to earn his living without let or hindrance from agitators and all that rotten Red element that will prevent men from going to their work and that even sinks to the depths of sneaking round in the dead of night terrifying the women and children of those men so as to bring them out on strike.

That is the main provision that is struck out in this Industrial Law Amendment Bill. Who can justify repealing a measure that gives protection to the wives and children of decent unionists whose only offence is that they want to pursue their lawful calling?

Who can justify the repeal of that protection? Who can justify the removal of the shield this measure gave to these men and their dependants from the depredations of industrial anarchists whose only thought is the overthrow of law and order in this State?

Not content with the offence against public decency that is represented by the repeal of the measure, the Premier has led his Government into the completely despicable action of remitting the penalties and fines imposed by the courts of this land on the lawbreakers who committed offences against the measure in times of an emergency. The very men whose actions were forbidden by this Parliament were hauled before the court and given every opportunity of a fair trial, convicted after the hearing of evidence and after having had every opportunity of defending themselves, and were fined; yet the Government has remitted the penalties out of hand and brought the enforcement of law and order in this community into a thorough state of contempt.

The Premier on the introductory stages of the Bill spoke of the royal prerogative of mercy. Let us ponder. The royal prerogative of mercy! The Premier in an attempt to justify his Cabinet's actions in remitting those penalties literally dripped maudlin sentiment about the prerogative of mercy. It is true that it is the King's prerogative to be merciful to offenders but there are well-recognised traditional rules with regard to the exercise of that prerogative. It goes hand in hand with two other Royal traditions. Not only is the Crown the fountain of mercy but the Crown is the fountain of justice also and the fountain too of honour in this land. In the Government's action in remitting these penalties both justice and honour have been prostituted to the demands of political expediency. That is the only explanation one can give for the extraordinary action of the Government in remitting these fines without the slightest ground or the slightest public demand. Why, the Government are laughing at the respect of the people for law and order in this community; the Government are dragging the Royal prerogative into the mud and mire of politics.

Let us consider for a moment the action of the Government in falling over themselves to release Messrs. Julius, Englart and Healy when a sum was lodged by some anonymous person who sneaked into the Treasury and dropped £350 in £10-notes on the counter. The Government knows full well that the law makes provision for certain necessary safeguards in the handling of moneys paid by way of fines. There is a section of the

Justices Act that deals specifically with the question, and I refer to Section 176, which says—

“Every clerk of petty sessions and every keeper of a gaol shall keep a true and exact account of all moneys received by him under or by virtue of any conviction or order”

and here are the significant words—

“ showing the persons from whom and the time when the sums were received and to whom and when the sums were paid, in the form in the fourth schedule of this Act”

That is the law of this land and surely that law is known to the Under Secretary for the Department of Justice. I have no doubt that it is, yet the Government, so eager to release these offenders from gaol, were ready to disregard entirely the provisions of the Justices Act, which require to be kept a true and exact account of all moneys received, showing the persons from whom and the time when the sums were received and to whom and when the sums were paid.

That section has been disregarded by the Government. And why? Why did not the Government insist upon compliance with that section of the law when this money was brought along to the Justice Department? There was no need for the Government instantly to use that sum in liquidation of the fines or immediately to release the men from gaol. It was the Government's clear duty, having regard to the law as I read it in the Justices Act, to delay the release of these prisoners until they were able to make an account of the sources from which that money was paid, and in giving that opinion I know that I am supported by the fact that there exists with the Crown Law authorities of this State considerable doubt as to the correctness of the Government's attitude in the acceptance of that £350. Let the Premier answer that, if he can. I know perfectly well that the Crown Law authorities are considerably worried about the propriety of that action and well they might be when they know of the existence of Section 176 of the Justices Act.

I merely introduce that for the purposes of this debate in order to show that the Government have been consistent in their disregard for the enforcement of law and order in relation to punishment for industrial offences. The Government have been at all times prepared to sacrifice principles laid down for law and order and to take the line of least resistance.

The retention of the measure on the statute book, so far from acting as provocation to decent unionists, was regarded by every decent unionist in this State as his protection. He thanked the Government. When the Act was passed the Press published congratulatory messages received by the Government from unionists all over the State. There has been no demand for the repeal of this measure in its entirety. Admittedly there has been some well-justified dissatisfaction with certain of the provisions but Parliament could very well have amended those provisions in half a day and given universal satisfaction throughout Queensland.

Mr. Hanlon: And you would have had to manacle some of the men in the gaol.

Mr. WANSTALL: Let me assure the Premier that every hon. member on this side of the Chamber would have welcomed the amendments about which I speak and that there would have been no need for the manacling of anybody.

Never let us lose sight of this fact, that in order to justify the repeal of the measure in its entirety the Government are relying upon the entirely false argument that the measure was designed to cope with an emergency. Admittedly it was emergency legislation dealing with an emergency but Parliament very rightly restricted its operation to those conditions of emergency.

The Act does not apply to a legal strike, it applies only to an illegal strike so as to prevent intimidation, threats and boycotts—during an illegal strike and where there is such action as an order by the court. In those circumstances, how can the Government justify the repeal of the measure in its entirety on the ground that it was designed only to deal with an emergency?

That very argument makes it clear that we should not repeal the measure in its entirety. Let it stay there so far as it relates to provisions that are good and reasonable and let us amend those that are harsh. Let us restrict the power of the police to do things without warrant, and alter the other questionable provisions. Then we should have the beginnings of an industrial code in this State that would enable decent unionists to go about earning their living and would enable their wives and children to go about free of any intimidation in the dead of night.

To throw it overboard entirely merely exposes those people to all the hazards to which they were exposed during the recent railway strike. I know of no more eloquent language to describe those hazards than the words used by the Premier himself when introducing this measure in March last.

Mr. MACDONALD (Stanley) (12.15 p.m.): When this Act which it is now proposed to repeal was before this Chamber as a Bill we on the Opposition side gave it every support. That support was freely given. It was not given for sordid, sinister, political motives, which the Premier now attributes to us. Quite the contrary. Our decision was arrived at by the conviction that industrial turmoil was then raging in the State, that it had ruptured the economic heart of this land, and was bringing hardship and misery into thousands of homes, particularly in the country areas. We deemed it necessary as a means to put an end to that strike. At the same time we submitted to the Government that under existing legislation they possessed there was ample power to deal effectively with the lawbreakers. But the Premier and others thought otherwise. As a natural consequence, in due course the Bill became law and throughout the whole of Australia the Premier was acclaimed as the champion of democracy. It was said the hour had produced the man. But what a man! For over

ten years I have had him under close observation. During that period I have in one respect developed quite a profound admiration for him. His political nous is undoubted. In that regard he is as nimble as a flea and just as irritating. (Laughter.) During the strike the Press made the Premier a sawdust Caesar, and now he himself has ripped the seams wide open—the sawdust runs out.

You, Mr. Mann, have a logical mind, at least when your opinions are not in conflict with mine, so let us look into the antecedents of this Bill and arrive at a conclusion. First of all, let me emphasise this fact, that not for one moment do I question the Government's right to introduce, to amend, or to repeal any legislation whatsoever. That is their prerogative. But one does assume that any such legislation is passed for the benefit of the majority of our people. However, I do hold to the opinion that the very necessary powers contained in the Act we are now asked to repeal, should never have been enacted in that Act, but should have been contained in an amendment to the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. Be that as it may, again it is the prerogative of the Government to decide otherwise. This Bill will be repealed, despite private Labour members' strong protests—that is the Premier's purpose—but one does assume that any legislation introduced in this Chamber is brought down for the benefit of the majority of the people. I repeat that I do hold to the opinion that it was not necessary to introduce the Act we purpose repealing today. These powers being very necessary, they could have been embodied in an amendment of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, and as I said before, it is the Government's prerogative to decide how they will introduce legislation.

This Bill will be repealed, there is no doubt, despite very strong opposition and protestations from private Labour members, but the Opposition are justified by reason in refusing to accept the Premier's specious pleas in vindication of his action. Of sophists he is king. Whence came the urge or pressure for this repeal? Was he driven by the threat of the Communists to foment strife during his absence abroad and, realising this to be no idle, empty threat, has bitter experience given him so little confidence in the ability of his senior Minister to handle an ugly situation during his absence overseas that he is taking time by the forelock and repealing the Act, the *causus belli*, prior to his departure? That well might be so, for we do remember that the Press gave much prominence to the Premier's condemnation of his Ministers' handling of the strike in its early stages.

Mr. Hanlon: Where was that?

Mr. MACDONALD: Does not the hon. gentleman read his daily paper?

Mr. Hanlon: I never condemned the action of a Minister in my life.

Mr. MACDONALD: The Press reported him as saying that he did.

Mr. Hanlon: I do not think it did.

Mr. MACDONALD: I can only tell him what the Press said.

This may be the final act in a political play called "Great Expectations," although I myself would change the title to "All for Nought." Let us look at that for a moment. As a result of the Act we are asked to repeal, certain of the extremists, the leaders of the Communists, were languishing in prison and proving a great embarrassment to the Government. This would never do, so with Machiavellian cunning the Government decided to release these men by having their fines paid surreptitiously. We do know that the fines were paid. Then began an intensive publicity campaign. Labour contended that the Communists had paid the fines but had freed only the tall poppies. The Communists were so heartless that no consideration was given to the understrappers who were left in gaol—no consideration whatsoever. That, of course, Labour said, was consistent with the unholy doctrine of Communism. Here was a heaven-sent opportunity for Labour to cash in. Sir Galahad, in the person of Ned Hanlon, that knight in shining armour, charged to the rescue, released the minor lights, and proclaimed to the world the humanitarianism of Labour's policy. In this connection I should like to draw your attention, Mr. Mann, to the fact that the sands of this Parliament are fast running out; elections are not too far distant and at the moment Labour is baggy at the knees.

Already I have stated that I do not challenge the Government's right to repeal this Act, but I do question their morality in releasing the men imprisoned under its provisions and remitting fines imposed on such convicted persons. There was no popular clamour for this action; no petition for clemency had been presented to His Excellency the Governor. During the trial of these men the court, having examined the evidence adduced, could find no extenuating circumstances and fixed the penalties accordingly. If justice was to be tempered with mercy surely that was in the hands of the judge; he is not Bloody Jeffreys. The Premier thought otherwise. All right-thinking citizens believe that the penalties inflicted were merited, but not so the Premier. His motion in this House is a direct rebuke to the judge and the Commos. will regard it as such. They can well have their victory celebrations tomorrow night.

Finally, I have reached the conclusion that the Government's action arose from political expediency—nothing else. Fearful of their political future, they have not had the intestinal fortitude to uphold the law of this country.

Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (12.24 p.m.): I regard the motion before the Committee as perhaps the most serious one that we have had to consider during my 14 years' experience in this House.

I should like first to state the policy of the Country Party on this principle.

As you know, Mr. Mann, it is one of arbitration in the settling of industrial disputes. We are prepared to support this policy of arbitration up to the hilt, and to legislate, if given the opportunity, to ensure that our industrial laws will be observed. We are willing to go so far as to legislate to meet whatever occasion might arise, and any person engaged in an unauthorised strike must be dealt with effectively.

We on this side of the Committee were naturally pleased when some few months ago the Government introduced the legislation the Premier proposes to repeal. At the time it was realised that the legislation was drastic, but I would remind the Premier in reply to some of his remarks this morning, that it was contended that that legislation would apply only if a person offended against the law. I am not at all moved by the same hon. gentleman's remarks in this Chamber this morning that it might have a provocative effect on people engaged in industry. I desire to know who the people are that the anti-picketing legislation might provoke? It could provoke only those who have offended against our industrial laws. I was rather amused at reading over the week-end remarks attributed to the Deputy Premier, in which he said that our Supreme Court did not eliminate crime. I agree, but it is the opinion of every right-thinking person in Queensland that the Supreme Court minimises crime. I would carry the argument of this hon. gentleman a degree further: abolish the Supreme Court and see what would happen. We do not accept the view that the Industrial Court is a cure-all and will eliminate all industrial disputes. These will occur from time to time, but in the last year or so we have had the experience of seeing our Industrial Court placed in jeopardy, and unless something is done to preserve and protect the rights and powers of that court it is only a matter of time when it must cease to exist.

This morning I would draw attention to the psychological effect that legislation of this kind will have on the community. The moment this Act is repealed, what do you think is likely to happen, Mr. Mann? First of all, the Communists are already boasting that the repeal of this legislation is a victory for them. They have said that the Government paid the fines of the men in prison in order to have them released. I will not accept the Premier's mere statement that the Government have not paid the fines. I take it that Max Julius would be authorised to speak on behalf of the Communists, and he is reported in the "Queensland Times," published in Ipswich, of 1 September, when addressing a body of men outside the Ipswich railway workshop gates, to have said—

"Mr. Julius claimed that the Australia-wide protest that had followed the gaoling of himself and other union leaders had halted the Government's hand.

"We could be arrested to-day and so could others who have not yet paid their fines," said Mr. Julius. He stated that one

reason was that the Industrial Law Amendment Act was not good enough to be on the statute books and therefore was not good enough to be enforced.

"It was Mr. Julius's first public appearance since his release from gaol last week after fines had been paid to meet convictions against himself and two other union leaders.

"Mr. Julius denied emphatically that the fines had been paid by the Communist Party, and contended that the payment of the fines had been the result of Government action aimed at splitting the working classes.

"Would the Communist Party leave £350 in the Justice Department without getting a receipt for it?" he asked. "We are not as much fools as that."

Whoever provided the money for the release of these men, the Communists assert that they did not do so and it was paid by the Government, and the Communists give the sound reason that no sane person would leave £350 in loose cash lying on a counter from which it could be picked up by anyone and everyone.

Let us examine the matter a little further. If the Government have provided the money to pay the fines, it is simply a matter of taking State money out of one account and putting it in another. Actually it has cost them nothing.

Mr. Hanlon: You have a great idea of bookkeeping.

Mr. MULLER: I am studying the Premier's method of bookkeeping. After all, if a man transfers money from one of his pockets to the other it is costing him nothing, and that is what has happened in this case.

The psychological effect of the Government's action is the danger here. In the opinion of all right-thinking people the Government's action today will encourage the rising generation to break the law. The moment young men who may be communistically inclined learn that a Government are not strong enough to enforce the law they will feel that they have an open invitation to break it in the future.

I should like to know whether the Premier and the Government believe that we have seen the end of unauthorised strikes. It is but human nature not always to agree with the other man. As far back as I can remember there have been strikes. We all remember the shearers' strike of the early days. Most of us have been employees and we know that not all employees or employers play the game. We all reserve the right to strike, even against prices. Within ourselves we strike by rejecting prices offered for our goods, just as the employee has the right to strike against an offer made for his services, and that will continue. But we must remember that we have now established an Industrial Court to settle these differences. The court's decisions must be upheld. No body of men is entitled to defy the court by refusing to work and by preventing others from going to work. There is a vast difference between striking

and intimidating somebody else into refraining from going to work. The other day the hon. member for Brisbane said it was the inherent right of the worker to strike, and I agree with him up to a point. A man has the right to refuse work if he so desires, but he has no right to defy the law, nor to intimidate any other man who wishes to go to work. If one section of the community is to be given the right to strike and to intimidate others who wish to go to work, then we are looking for trouble.

I do not blame the Communists for the whole of the trouble. The great trouble in this country is caused not by those people who openly declare themselves to be Communists but by the Communist sympathisers, people who are Communists but who have not the courage to come out in the open and say so. Whether a law is industrial, civil or moral, it must be enforced; and it is the duty of this Parliament to see that it is enforced. If it is not enforced there is only chaos ahead of you.

I should like to deal with the circumstances leading up to the introduction of this Bill. At one time a plain statement was made by an ex-Premier of this State in the person of Mr. W. Forgan Smith. I have not forgotten certain statements made in this Chamber. Mr. Forgan Smith told us one day, when speaking of Communism, "There is nothing to choose between Communist dictatorship and Fascist dictatorship, as both are government by a minority." The very legislation we are concerned with has been brought about by a minority. It is common knowledge—and the Premier might shake his head if he wishes to—that Caucus was fairly evenly divided as to whether this Bill was or was not to be brought down. Suppose we give the Premier the benefit of the doubt and say he had 19 supporters. It is safe to say that at least 16 of Caucus would be opposed to this legislation. There is an undivided Opposition on this side of the Committee of 22, which would mean 38 votes against the measure. Notwithstanding that fact we have it introduced. Does that not throw us back to what Mr. Forgan Smith told us—that both a Fascist or a Communist dictatorship were dangerous because both were governed by minorities. We were told during the war that such-and-such a thing could not happen in this country but it has.

When introducing this Bill the Premier used the word "mercy" and if he will use it in its true sense and say that he took the stand he has taken because of Christian principles, I will stand with him. The position must be faced sooner or later and hon. members will realise that we shall be obliged to stand up to our industrial laws because if we are not there can only be chaos ahead of us. Disrupters will have to be dealt with. You have them in every walk of life and as you deal with them under the civil law so you will have to deal with them under industrial law.

Never has the Communist had such a great boost as the introduction of this Bill has given him. It would have been better for

the States if the original Act had not been introduced because placing it on the statute book and removing it later has been a great boost to the Communists. It was their boast, made soon after the legislation was introduced, that they would fight until they saw the end of it. The men who broke the law and were fined vowed and declared that they would not pay their fines; when they were transferred to prison their mates made the open boast that they would see that they were removed from prison very shortly. The statements that were made that the fines would not be paid have been borne out, so much so that the Government saw fit to remove the legislation from the statute book.

I can imagine the thrill the introduction of the Bill must have given the hon. member for Bowen. Having fought the Government right through, he must have been thrilled to hear that the legislation was being repealed. He is in the Chamber this morning enjoying the thrill of defeating the Government and seeing his threat carried out. I am giving the Committee the facts of the matter and the Premier knows that what I am saying is correct. It was an open challenge, not only to the court but to the Government also, and the Communists have been successful in seeing their challenge victorious.

I say again that we are all subject to the weaknesses of human nature. If you give some people a licence to defy the law they will do it. What was Mr. Fallon's attitude towards this measure? Mr. Fallon is no more a political friend of mine than perhaps the members of the Government are. Mr. Fallon is reported to have said that danger lurked in actions such as this. He made it clear that he did not approve of the Act when it was introduced, but he argued that as it was passed it should be carried out. I know of no action calculated to display greater weakness than that of convicting men for offences against the law, committing them to prison, and then releasing them and remitting the balance of their fines.

Mr. Hanlon: That is done regularly.

Mr. MULLER: It has been done, I have not the slightest doubt.

Mr. Hanlon: I have never attended a meeting of the Executive Council where there has not been a proposal to remit a penalty in some form or other.

Mr. MULLER: According to parliamentary practice, I must accept the Premier's statement, but you cannot get away from the stark truth here. I have never known an instance—and I invite any hon. member who has to give it to me—where anyone was committed to prison in defiance of the law, who has vowed and declared that he would be released sooner or later, and who has been followed by a number of other men committed for similar offences, saying, some of them before they were charged, that they were going to be released. If this is not a complete back-down, I do not know what it is.

The Premier has argued that there is a grave danger in allowing provocative legislation to remain on the statute book, but can

he tell me what people are likely to be provoked by it? The only people who are afraid of the law are those who contemplate offending against it. I am not afraid of the law and I should hope that a very large percentage of hon. members here are not afraid of it either. I repeat that the only people who are afraid of the law are those who intend to offend against it. The action of the Government has not only shattered the confidence of members of the Opposition but both the release of the men from gaol and the repeal of the legislation have shattered the confidence of the right-thinking people in this State. How can anyone have any confidence in any political party that is prepared to do what is being done here?

I take it that before this anti-picketing legislation was introduced its repercussions were fully considered by the Government party. I take it that before it was introduced into Parliament the repercussions, if any, were taken into account. I take it that the Premier's attitude was that the Government and the State were right up against it and that something had to be done, otherwise there was likely to be a complete breakdown. There is not the slightest doubt that when the legislation was introduced we were all agreed that the only people who would suffer by it would be those who defied the law. The Premier must surely realise that before very long we are likely to have another industrial dispute. Indeed, the Communist Party has already announced that it proposes to put its policy into operation, but by the repeal of this measure the Government have weakened whatever possible chance they may have had of dealing with any subversive element in the community.

I wonder just what the Premier has in mind. Let us suppose that at some time, let us say next month, an industrial dispute occurs. I sincerely hope there will not be one before the hon. gentleman returns from England, because we have no wish to spoil his holiday by another industrial dispute occurring in this State in his absence. What has the Premier in mind? Would he come back to this country and say to Parliament, "We shall have to introduce drastic legislation in some form or another to deal with an emergency that has arisen?"

I wonder whether he will go to Mr. Max Julius, or to the hon. member for Bowen, and say, "We have fallen down on this job; I will hand it over to you as you probably know the solution of the problem." That is what it amounts to.

Mr. Burrows: He certainly will not appeal to you.

Mr. MULLER: He certainly would not appeal to the hon. member.

The Government have now placed these people on a pedestal such as they have never been on before. I can imagine that anyone communistically inclined will be more convinced than ever that the Communists are right. Just imagine young men growing up in the city of Brisbane being told that they can get something for nothing, so long as they

got rid of the boss! They will be inclined to get rid of him and at the same time destroy industry. Imagine a lot of young men being imbued with that idea! The ranks of the Communist Party will be increased tremendously as a result of this legislation.

This Act had the effect of stopping the strike. I make no bones in saying so. Without it the Government could not have stopped it. They called in their police to do a very difficult job. I do not know what the position would otherwise have been, and I do not know what the position will be if the Government call on the police again to deal with people who offend against the law, if they are not fortified by this legislation. Without it, the position can only be one of chaos. Nothing else can happen. It will mean the end of our industrial law. As a result of happenings in the recent strike there were scenes bordering on bloodshed. We went very close to it. As a matter of fact, there was a little bloodshed. That possibility will recur if workers going about their lawful tasks are met on the roadside by people who wish to prevent them.

This is too serious a matter to gloss over or decide lightly. Each hon. member should think very deeply before recording his vote. If he believes that this Bill is against the interests of the State he must oppose it. I appeal to those hon. members who opposed it in the Caucus room to come right out into the open and tell their leader that this legislation is wrong. Only big men with guts will do so. I am surprised that people entrusted with the responsibility of representing their districts are to have their views cast aside by a few votes that might be cast against them in Caucus, particularly when they realise that this legislation is wrong. If we are not big enough to give voice to our opinions on the matter and to discharge the duties entrusted to us by the electors, we should get out. That is all there is to it. If the Government are afraid that the Communist section will overwhelm them they should get out and tell the people they are unable to control the situation, and ask them, as is being done in France and other countries, to elect a party that will deal with the extraordinary circumstances that have arisen.

If the Premier could read the minds of the people he would be amazed to know how they stand on this proposal. I hope that the members of the Government party who do not agree with it will be big enough to stand with the Opposition and thus protect Queensland and everything worth protecting.

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR (Hamilton) (12.50 p.m.): In introducing this Bill, which aims at repealing the Act that proved to be the most effective means of preventing the extension of illegal strikes, I think the Premier has revealed himself as Queensland's No. 1 apostle of appeasement. Over the last 10 years surely the world has seen the ineffectiveness of appeasement. Democracies have found that it has been quite impossible to talk with their enemies in terms of appeasement, and surely this Government have seen that it is quite impossible to talk with the communistic element in terms of appeasement.

Mr. Aikens: What are they doing with Japan and Germany today?

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR: I would suggest that Berlin is not a battlefield because the democracies have found men who have the courage and firmness to refrain from appeasement and demand stability and call the bluff of the Russians. I feel that the Premier has failed to learn the lesson that the past 10 years has taught us, otherwise he would not have brought forward this Bill of Appeasement. May I recall that before the war the emblem of appeasement in Britain was Mr. Chamberlain's umbrella, and that since the war the emblem of appeasement in Australia is Mr. Chifley's pipe?

I think we are justified in asking what will be the emblem of appeasement for Queensland after the Premier's return from London. It may be a new sort of walking stick or a new Homburg hat. Possibly the Trades and Labour Council, which is holding a victory social, might make a presentation to the Premier, and that may be the emblem of appeasement.

When it was learned that this Act was to be repealed, I made it my business to inquire from my electors what their opinion was. My electorate is thought by the Government party to be a borderline seat. (Government laughter.) Well, the Government party put up a token candidate against me, so obviously the Government party must have thought Hamilton a borderline seat. I made it my business to inquire from my electors what their opinions on the Bill were. I asked professional men, tradesmen, managing directors, commercial travellers, retired men and pensioners, and every one of them thought that it was a most desirable Act. Every one of them applauded the Premier. The prestige of the Premier in the electorate of Hamilton was at the highest possible peak. The electors of Hamilton looked on the Premier as a man of courage, a man of decision, a man of firmness. But today the Premier's prestige has fallen to zero. It has fallen because, in contrast with his brave front in March, he has crumbled to the dust. The Government have yielded obviously to a fear or to intimidation, but at least they have yielded. The members of the Government who support this Bill must feel some humiliation when they face their electors and have to speak of the retreat of the Government from an Act that obviously was designed to protect the hard-working, honest worker, who is not to be intimidated by Communists and illegal strikes.

On Thursday last at Gibson Island and again on Saturday at the factory of Bruce Pie Industries Ltd. I listened with keen attention to excellent speeches made by the Premier. It was obvious that he was inspiring in all the thousands who listened to him a pride in Queensland and pride in the development of possibilities of expansion in this State, and I think on reflection that we were imbued with pride in our State and appreciated the potential industrial activities here. But that pride receives a dreadful shock when it is found that a Government

who aim at protecting the people in a time of illegal strike come forward a few months later and declare that they will repeal the Act that made that protection possible.

Mr. Hanlon: Both speeches you refer to were made after the introduction of this repeal Bill in Parliament.

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR: Quite, but the speeches were indicating what I believe to be true—the pride of the Premier in his State and an endeavour by him to instil that pride into his listeners. I repeat that pride got a dreadful shock when the people reflected that while the speeches were in progress the Premier's Government were aiming at the repeal of an Act that protected the people.

Mr. Hanlon: Everyone to whom I spoke on the matter on Thursday agreed that I was doing the right thing.

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR: The Premier was obviously doing the right thing when he was inspiring in people pride in this country.

Mr. Hanlon: No, the repeal.

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR: The introduction of a Bill to repeal the Industrial Law Amendment Act is having a serious effect on the morale of the people of the State. They had felt that at last they had a legislative body determined to suppress illegal strikes and look after the welfare of the industrialist, who wants nothing more than reasonable and happy conditions. But that morale of the people is brought down to a low ebb when they lose faith in a Government and realise that only three months after the passing of that legislation the Government are aiming at repealing it.

The Premier is off on a mission to London. His fame of March last in making every effort to keep Communists in check has probably gone ahead of him. It was only last week that a member of the House of Commons in the person of Lady Davidson spoke to a group and pointed out that in England the Socialist Government hate Communism just as much as the Conservative people. The Socialist Government in England are doing their utmost to overwhelm the influence of the Communists. I feel sure that when the Premier meets Mr. Bevin and is congratulated by him on the firm stand he took against the Communists the Premier will feel rather ashamed of having to apologetically admit that he had been obliged to repeal the Act he passed.

I can imagine the A.W.U. members of the Government party going to the shearing sheds and sugar mills, speaking to A.W.U. members and explaining to them why this Act was repealed and apologising for their Government. It certainly will be a difficult task for them, and I feel sure they will find that their explanations will not be well received by the members of the A.W.U.

Last January I had the opportunity of visiting the Legislative Assembly in Melbourne when the House was called together for the special purpose of passing a measure similar to the one being repealed here now.

At that time the position in Victoria was similar to that obtaining here last March when the measure now being repealed was passed by this Parliament. The railway employees in Victoria were engaged in an illegal strike. The men in charge of the strike were Communists, as in Queensland. The Victorian Parliament passed a measure similar to the one passed by this Parliament, but did not repeal it two or three months after it settled the strike; in fact, the mere implementation of that Act ended the strike.

Mr. Aikens: No, it did not. The strike was over before the Act was brought in.

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR: Probably the hon. member is not as familiar with the circumstances as I am, because I was in the House and listened to the debate. Immediately the Bill was introduced and carried through the two Victorian Houses, the strike collapsed. Because of the courage of the Government and the firmness of their Cabinet, stability returned to the industrial life of Melbourne, and that Act remains on the statute book.

Mr. Aikens: It was never proclaimed.

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR: I agree that it has not been proclaimed, but at the same time it has not been repealed.

Mr. Hanlon: If it has not been proclaimed it has never become law.

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR: But it will become law if a similar set of circumstances arises. It will not be necessary for the Victorian Parliament to put through another Bill to make it law. This Government are repealing their measure, and if a similar set of circumstances arises in Queensland tomorrow this Government will be forced to pass another Act. Just as the Victorian Government took wise action and placed the Act on the shelf, so to speak, so should this Government take similar action. Frankly, I feel that if an appeal was made to the electors of Queensland for an expression of opinion as to whether this measure should be repealed, the answer would be an emphatic negative.

Mr. LOW (Cooroora) (2.19 p.m.): I regret very much that the Government have decided to repeal the anti-picketing legislation and all I can say is that they have completely somersaulted from the attitude they took up last March. To my way of thinking it is merely a waste of time for both hon. members and Parliament if we are to pass legislation in one session, only to repeal it the next.

The circumstances today are exactly as they were when the legislation that it is now sought to repeal was introduced.

I should like to make a brief review of the situation leading up to the introduction of this legislation in the House last March. On Monday, 2 February, workshop employees numbering about 3,000 started an illegal strike, and on Thursday, 5 February, train services were curtailed. That was on the third day of the strike.

On Saturday, 7 February, all train services had ceased at midnight. This was the major blunder, as it was a grave injustice to non-striking employees.

On Thursday, 10 February, the court granted the application of the Commissioner for Railways to be allowed to stand down non-striking employees without pay, and about 14,000 employees were locked out.

On Thursday, 26 February, the court ordered all strikers to return to work.

On Monday, 1 March, the Government ordered the stand-down men to resume work.

I had the pleasure of listening to the Premier's broadcast on Sunday night, 29 February, when he made an appeal to the employees and said that those who failed to resume work would be regarded as having left the service. He said also that the alternative was a challenge to democratically constituted government and had all the elements of civil war. This broadcast coincided with the issue of the emergency order in council under Section 22 of the State Transport Facilities Act. This order in council contained provisions that prohibited disobedience of an order of the Industrial Court and counselling, procuring, inducing, etc., as in the subsequent anti-picketing legislation.

This was rightly termed the big bluff that failed. On Monday, 1 March, the strikers having refused to return to work, the Premier said that the decision of Cabinet regarding the termination of employment would not be carried out to the strict letter as men willing to return to work might have been absent from their usual places of residence and not seen the notice. He said that no hasty move would be made by the Government to take action against these persons who disobeyed the emergency orders and counselled or attempted to counsel men to return to work. This is what might be termed the crawfish act after the big bluff had failed.

On 2 March the Seamen's Union and the Waterside Workers' Organisation joined in the illegal strike. This included a ban on all shipping from the South to Queensland ports.

Furthermore, Mr. Hanlon conferred with strike leaders and stated that he advised them to get back to work and obtain the big increases in wages that the court had assured them of.

After the issue of the emergency order in council picketing and mass demonstration increased.

What is known as the anti-picketing legislation was introduced on 9 March, not until mob rule began to threaten the existence of the Government.

The strike ended on midnight on 5 April, the Government adopting the starve-them-back-to-work policy and taking positive action only when their own interests were threatened.

We hear much about the remission of fines, and I ask the Premier: if the industrial law-breakers are entitled to have their fines remitted, what about the hundreds of thousands of pounds the illegal strike cost

the country people and the primary producers of this State? Are the Government willing to make remission to those people and refund to the local authorities the cost involved in the repair of the heavy wear on local-authority roads by the use of motor trucks?

What about the railway men who were stood down and what about their wives and their families, some of whom have never regained their feet? The industrial law-breakers are allowed to go scot-free, a very regrettable situation indeed.

The order proclaiming the state of emergency was issued on 27 February, 1948, and came into force the following day. What happened? Nothing at all. The position became even more desperate. Indeed, the Government let the people of Queensland down. If this was communistic disruption, as I really believe, then the only thing to do with these communistic disrupters who are so disloyal to Queensland and Australia is not only to ban their organisation but to deport them individually back to their place of origin, there to remain. We do not want any industrial law-breakers in this State; we want honest, decent workers.

What is the position today? I have heard the Premier and other hon. members say that the unionists of Queensland have reached the stage where they will not follow the communistic element, that they have awakened to the subversive actions of these disrupters and will not go on strike, but there is a greater influence on the average unionist today than the sudden awakening to their peril and that is the guiding influence of the womenfolk of the State. No-one knows better than the women, the housewives, that it was impossible to balance the household budget in times of industrial strife. During the strike hundreds of thousands of homes were affected and to such an extent that they did not know where the next meal was coming from.

I am very pleased that the Queensland Country Women's Association passed an appropriate resolution at their last conference and I trust that members of the Cabinet and every member of the Government party will take heed of a communication from that organisation, which I should like to place on record. On 20 August, 1948, every hon. member received a letter from Mrs. Sterne, State President of the Country Women's Association, conveying a resolution unanimously carried at a recent conference of the C.W.A. representative of 16,000 women in Queensland. It reads—

“As a major step in countering anti-British activities in Australia, this conference invites the Prime Minister to enact legislation to ensure that all organisations operating or potentially capable of operating against the interests of the British Empire shall be compelled to submit to either the Registrar-General's or Auditor-General's Department in each State regular certified lists of their members, copies of their Constitution, rules and by-laws and properly audited statements of accounts, and that all Federal members of the House

of Representatives and Senators, members of the State Cabinet of Queensland, and members of the State Parliament and other loyal organisations be asked to support this resolution.”

I solidly support that resolution and fully agree with the Queensland country women that there are many evil forces at work throughout the world to bring about, if possible, the disintegration of the British Empire and I appeal to you Mr. Hanlon, as Premier of this State, to give favourable consideration to the request of the Queensland country women in their sincere desire to check the activities of the anti-British disrupters so active in Queensland today.

At this stage I should like to pay a tribute to the very valuable work of the Queensland country women and with such a list of remarkable achievements is an organisation of which the people of Queensland can well be proud. There is an indication of the driving force behind the men today, behind the workers, the unionists guided by their womenfolk and their families who have had enough of this dreadful state of affairs, of the suffering and the poverty that these illegal strikes bring to the people of Queensland.

The most important point about this Bill is that public opinion is not so hostile to it as it is about the remission of the fines. That is the sore point. Several hon. members have stated that the Premier's stocks rose to the sky during the railway strike because of the stand he took, but today his balloon has burst and his stocks have fallen to the ground. There is always a rock on which you perish, and this Bill is the rock on which the Government will perish. They will perish because the Premier has remitted the fines of these law-breakers. I am of opinion that the £350 that was received for payment of the fines of three of the law-breakers can be traced very close home to the Government. I ask the Premier: is it a fact that he has a secret fund from which he can make payments? Today every Premier has a secret fund that he administers. (Government laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. LOW: I am reliably informed that the Premier in every State has a fund that is not subject to the audit of the Auditor-General, that it is not a very big fund, and that only the Premier knows who is to receive benefit from it and how it is distributed. I want the Premier to give me an assurance on that point. I know that fund is in existence. I am reliably informed that it is. I believe its existence was disclosed during the Cosgrove inquiry in Tasmania. It was discovered previously in Queensland. Is it not a possibility that this £350 came from that fund? It is the remission of the sentences by the payment of these fines, the money for which came from the clouds, that has brought consternation in the minds of the public.

The Premier says that everything is normal. The position may be normal at present, but we have not got rid of the evil. The root of the evil is at the Trades Hall. No-one

knows better than the Premier that war has been declared between the A.W.U. and the small industrial unions at the Trades Hall. The hon. gentleman is on the eve of departure for the United Kingdom. I wish him well and a safe return, but I cannot refrain from saying that he has made a major blunder in this matter. Had he left the Act as it was it would have frightened the people concerned and it would have kept them just where they belong. The remission of the fines has given these people fresh hope and an inclination to start a State-wide brawl. If it is the desire of the Parliamentary Labour Party to have this legislation repealed, that suggests to me that it realises that it is on its way to disappearing from the Treasury benches, and is afraid to leave this Act on the statute book in case we put it into operation and use it against the workers. Far from it. No-one on this side of the Chamber would do such a thing.

Government Members: Oh, no!

Mr. LOW: If we could not treat the workers as well as the present Government—

Mr. Sparkes: As well? Better.

Mr. LOW: We could do much better. The primary producer and country people are the greatest sufferers from these industrial upheavals. It was so in the railway strike. I am yet to be convinced, for instance, of the need for cancelling trains in the first week of the strike. That caused suffering to the country people. The people in my electorate, particularly the pineapple-growers, suffered considerably. The pineapple season was in full swing. The growers thought they would get a few pounds to pay off their overdrafts, but instead they fell further behind scratch.

The repeal of this legislation is a retrograde step. It should be reconsidered by the Government. We on the North Coast are still suffering from the effects of the railway strike. The train services have not yet been restored and consequently traffic is not back to normal.

Why should we hand out this preferential treatment to these disrupters when people are still making sacrifices? When I heard that Clarry Fallon was thinking about a new leader for the Labour Party I thought that the Premier should give consideration to the position offered him as chairman of the Coal Board, because whenever anyone falls out with Clarry Fallon, the big boss of that Party, it is time for him to sit up and take notice. The Premier would be well advised to do as I suggest.

During the railway strike the hon. gentleman was regarded as the strong man of Queensland but I am satisfied that the hon. member for West Moreton was right when he said he was as weak as a crippled crayfish, but what made the Premier appear strong was the organs of the metropolitan as well as the country Press. They built the Premier up during that very critical time. It was not on account of sound leadership, because every day one realised that mistakes were being made, but the metropolitan and country

Press and the rest of the people of Queensland, realising that we must defeat the Communists, boosted the Premier every time they possibly could. And rightly so. If they had shown the Premier and his party in their true colours and pointed out their mistakes, the morale of the people would have dropped. They had to build up the Premier and his Government as the strong man of the Government administering the law. I take exception to the remarks that came from the Government benches sneeringly referring to the "Courier-Mail" and "Telegraph" and the country Press as Tories. I think hon. members opposite are greatly indebted to these people, because they built them up when they were weak.

Mr. Sparkes: They need some more building up now.

Mr. LOW: Yes, they need some more building up. Today, when there is no industrial trouble, the Press publicise the Government in their true light and tell the people exactly how weak they are and the people see them in the true light.

The next thing that occurred as a result of the strike was that the Government have realised that a second Industrial Court is necessary. I know there have been delays at the Industrial Court, because certain men were overworked.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is getting away from the question before the Committee.

Mr. LOW: I agree that they have done at least one thing right as far as the Industrial Court is concerned. I heard the Premier talk about Japan during this debate, whereas I am speaking about the Industrial Court, which is just down the road.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am allowing the hon. member a great deal of latitude and I do not want him to cast a reflection on the Chair. I advise the hon. member for Aubigny to allow the hon. member for Cooroora to make his speech without interruption.

Mr. LOW: Thank you for your guidance, Mr. Mann. I know that you have extended a good deal of leniency to me.

I wish to say that the members on this side are very concerned about the remission of these fines, an act that we think wrong and improper. Even at this late stage I urge the Premier and his Government to reconsider this decision. The Premier announced that the remission was going to take place without having previously informed members of his own Government. That is obviously wrong. It would look as though there were a small clique running the affairs of the Government and the rest of the members of the party were Yes men.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (2.40 p.m.): I had not intended to speak again on this stage of the Bill but I feel I must reply to some of the remarks made by members of the Opposition today. I intend, of course, to ignore the remarks made by the member of the Country Women's Association

who has just resumed his seat. I wish to have something to say in reply to the remarks made by the hon. member for Mirani. I believe he started off to make a serious and intelligent speech but because of the levity and jocularity with which it was punctuated, it was more vaudevillian than anything else. The hon. member drew attention to the fact that in my first speech on this motion I did not attack the Premier. Why should I? Frankly, I saw no reason why I should because I believe that the Premier is doing in repealing this Bill what is right, fair and just.

I believe that the Premier made many errors of judgment during the strike. I believe that at one period he was absolutely frenetic and as a result of that state of mind he perpetrated some of his worst errors and he introduced the Act we are now seeking to repeal, but after the strike was over the Premier was able once again to get his feet on the ground and see very clearly just how the position lay in Queensland.

The Premier, as I have said before, is a man of considerable astuteness. I doubt whether in the Commonwealth today there is a man as politically astute as the Premier of this State. During the railway strike he received telegrams of congratulation and commendation from all over the place. He was bespattered with adulation by the Tory Press for the stand he was taking against the railwaymen but after the strike was over and after the Premier had calmed down no-one knew better than he that 95 per cent. of the men and organisations who had sent him these telegrams of congratulation and commendation for his actions during the strike and in respect of the Act would rather vote for a knock-kneed Afghan on polling day than a Labour candidate; consequently the Premier said, "These men are not going to lead me up the garden path."

No-one knows better than the Premier that all this Act could and would do if allowed to stay on the statute book of this State would be to split the Labour Movement in twain and when I refer to the Labour Movement I do not refer only to that section of it known as the A.L.P. This Act would have split the Labour Movement in this State to pieces and no-one knows that better than the Premier—no-one knows better than he that in splitting the Labour Movement in pieces by the retention of this Act he would have been playing right into the hands of his political opponents.

The strongest argument used in favour of the repeal of this Act during this debate has been the condemnation that has emanated from the benches of the Opposition. Their condemnation of the repeal is enough to justify it in the minds of every clean and decent working man in this community. Consequently, I did not attack the Premier and I do not propose to attack him now because, if during the strike the Premier made several errors of judgment, as I believe he did, and if he did a grievous wrong, as I believe he did, there is such a thing as a repentance. It has been mentioned even in

the Bible. I commend to hon. members the perusal of the Good Book now and again. It may temper their judgments and broaden their minds. There is a passage in the Good Book with which many members of the Opposition are entirely unfamiliar and it reads that "joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, who need no repentance" and what is good enough for the Good Book is good enough for me.

Now I want to refer to some remarks made by the hon. member for Mirani. I know that it has been customary for members of the Opposition from time to time to attempt to flay the party I have the honour to lead in this Chamber by referring to it as fellow-travellers of the Communist Party. The hon. member for Mirani made some reference to the fact that my party is expanding and establishing branches right throughout North Queensland.

That is so, but he did not mention the fact that our expansionist moves are being strongly opposed by the Communist Party because if he had mentioned that fact he would not have been able to correlate the fact with the statement that is so often made that our party are fellow-travellers with the Communist Party.

The Opposition are very concerned because some humble members of the working class are being released from gaol. They believe that for the members of the working class the law must be put into effect, with its full weight and majesty, that there must be no remissions, that there must be no clemency and that there must be no mercy. Let us contrast their attitude to the clemency and mercy that is being shown to the working class by the Premier with their attitude to the clemency and mercy that is being shown at the present time to top-ranking Nazis. Many Nazis who were brought to trial at the end of the war and who were serving long terms of imprisonment have been released from gaol recently in Germany and other parts of Europe, yet no word of protest comes from hon. members opposite. Many Japanese who were serving long terms of imprisonment because of atrocities committed against Australian soldiers have been released from gaol, but we get no motion or indication of protest from the Country Party.

Mr. Russell: What is your authority for saying that?

Mr. AIKENS: If the hon. member is able to read, if his education will permit him to read the simple language in his own beloved Tory Press, I suggest that he read of the releases of those prominent Nazis in the columns of his journalistic Bible, the "Courier-Mail."

Quite recently members of the Opposition in the Federal House went to Japan, and we read of them kissing the putrid flipper of Emperor Hirohito. Those are the men who believe in clemency and mercy for Nazis, Fascists, and brutal Japs, but who oppose the

extending of mercy to working-class members by a Government who carry the brand of Labour.

Now we hear of workers' rights. I am sure that the Premier must have quaked with inward laughter this morning when he heard the hon. members opposite stand up one after the other and defend the right of the working man to go to work whenever he felt inclined to go to work. They said no man had a right to prevent a worker from getting employment so long as the worker was willing to work.

Mr. Wanstall: I was quoting the Premier's words when he introduced the measure he is now repealing.

Mr. AIKENS: Not only the hon. member for Toowong but other hon. members of the Opposition said this morning that no-one should prevent a man from going to work if he desired to go to work. What, then, of the infamous black-lists that exist in every industry in this State today? What of the employers' black-lists? Go to the Mt. Isa mines, go to some of the big C.S.R. mills and some of the other big industrial undertakings in Queensland today, and see whether you can get a job if you are on the employer's black-list, which is circulated amongst industrial concerns and is operated and implemented secretly. At least the picket does come and stand openly in front of a place, at least he is open and honest in his endeavours to prevent a man from going to work, but when a worker goes into an industrial concern and asks for a job and the boss says, in his mealy-mouthed oleaginous way, "No, I am very sorry, Mr. Brown, but we cannot give you employment," but gives no reason for it, it is a hundred chances to one that that unfortunate worker is on the employer's black-list because of his industrial and political activity in the past. Why, during the 1931 strike, when the northern railwaymen struck against the infamous Moore Tory Government a black list was issued of men who were not to be re-employed; I was on it.

(Time expired.)

Mr. CHALK (East Toowoomba) (2.50 p.m.): I listened very attentively last Wednesday to the Premier when he outlined to this Committee the reasons for the introduction of this repealing Bill, because ever since the Government gave an indication that it was intended to repeal what is termed the anti-picketing legislation there has been some speculation amongst the people as to the reasons Premier Hanlon would advance in support of the proposal. No matter where one travelled, a question was usually put to one—and it was put to me several times both in the State and outside it—“How does Premier Hanlon intend to justify such a change of face to that which he exhibited when the Act was introduced?”

We also heard the Premier reply very strongly to some of the remarks made by the hon. member for Windsor last Thursday, and I want to say that I have not been in any way convinced by the words of the Premier, nor have I been convinced by the

arguments by the Government that there is any justification for the repeal of this legislation nor the remission of the fines of the men who were convicted under the law. I am, however, convinced that some pressure has been brought to bear on the Government and on the Premier, and all I can say is that that pressure must have come from the Communist Party or from the Federal Labour Party who, I believe, are hand in hand with communism. Some pressure has been brought to bear on the present Government since the day they came before us and advocated the introduction of this legislation. To-day we hear an entirely different story and the Premier comes into this Chamber and advocates the repeal of the Act and argues that it is right to remit the fines and that the two Communist members who were in gaol at the time the Premier spoke last Wednesday should be released.

I have never had in my possession a double-headed penny—I believe it is an offence to have one—but if any member of this Parliament is entitled to be called a double-header, the repeal of the so-called anti-picketing legislation entitles the Premier to be called a double-header, because it does not matter which way he goes with it, this is an attempt to get a double issue. A few months ago the Premier said in this Chamber that the law must be obeyed and at that time he earned the good will of all decent people—all people who believed in democracy—but to-day we have him mixing with the Communists. We know he has been. We have had the spectacle of his going to the Trades Hall, where Mr. Dawson has referred to him as Comrade Hanlon. In this Chamber the Premier is introducing a Bill to repeal what is known as the Anti-Picketing Act, exactly what the Communists are asking for. On Wednesday night they will be holding a victory social. I do not know whether the Premier has received his invitation yet, but I understand he is to receive one and of course whether he accepts or not will be a matter for him to say.

We all know that when the anti-picketing law was before this Chamber the Premier was hailed by the whole of Australia as the strong man, the man who would see the Communists defeated, not only in this State but throughout the Commonwealth. I make no secret of the fact that at the time I subscribed to the idea that the Premier was playing a very vital part in this State and that he was handling the situation in such a way that it would bring about the downfall of Communism here. We now discover that it was not only a sham fight but that the Premier has completely somersaulted; and his somersault would be the envy of any acrobat. I think most hon. members are ready to agree that the Act contains some sections that should be amended, and I should be willing to vote in favour of their amendment, but it is nothing less than suicide and in the worst interests of the State to repeal the Act in its entirety. It gives the Communists the victory that they set out to achieve, and it compels us to retrace our steps to exactly where we were before the Act was passed.

The hon. member for Hamilton has already told the Chamber that the Victorian Act, although not proclaimed law, did have a deterring effect upon Communists in Victoria, just as I believe that if our Act was allowed to remain on the statute book it would deter Communists in this State. We must fight Communism with all our might. Whether we belong to the Labour Party or the Liberal Party we must today face Communism in our community, but the repeal of the Act in its entirety means that we are playing right into the hands of the Communists and right into the hands of the Molotovs at the Trades Hall. We know very well, and so do members of the Labour Party, that every day at the Trades Hall some scheme is being concocted to undermine the decent people of Queensland.

The repeal of the Act must be placed at the door of the Government, although I have heard it said that the Premier is playing a lone hand in the matter. Surely members of the Labour Party have the right to say what their leader shall or shall not do! Members of the Labour Party will not be able to excuse their actions at the next elections by saying that the repeal of the Act rested solely with the Premier. Every member of the Labour Party has the right to say whether or not the measure should be passed. I understand on very good authority that at least 12 members of the Government Party in the Caucus room were utterly opposed to this measure and spoke their minds about it.

Mr. Brown: Name them.

Mr. CHALK: I could name them, but the party consists of too many decent men to name them, men who are solid loyal Labour men. They cannot get up in this Chamber and express themselves and it is deplorable that members of Parliament and representatives of the people cannot do their duty by the people.

When people break the law they should be punished. Not only was the Premier and his Government willing to release two Communists from gaol, but they were willing to remit the fines on all other offenders, including this man Tippet.

I want to tell hon. members about him. I happened to be in Townsville during Exhibition Week and was staying at an hotel within very close reach of the Townsville band rotunda on the Strand where the wharf labourers, the seamen, and a section of railway carpenters held a one-day stop-work meeting. I heard a considerable amount of the speeches delivered there that day. Several speakers said, "This man Tippet is in Cairns but he will not be arrested and put in gaol because we have arrangements with Hanlon and his Government that if Tippet is put in gaol the whole of the wharf labourers in the North will then go out on strike, not for one day but for every day." Those were the words of a speaker at the meeting.

Mr. Hanlon: I do not think you are telling the truth.

Mr. CHALK: I do not know whether that statement was right or wrong but the words I gave were used on the Townsville Strand during Exhibition Week. We had it from the Premier last week that Tippet was not arrested because he was ill.

I know of two people in my electorate who were recently called on to appear before the court. They were legitimately ill and the court did the right thing by giving them an opportunity to recover before they appeared in court, but not before their legal representative had appeared in court and produced doctor's certificates. Has the Premier a doctor's certificate to say that Tippet was ill during the time the police were looking for him? The Premier has admitted in this Chamber that he knew where Tippet was because he said Tippet was ill. If Tippet was ill he must have known where he was, yet he says in this Chamber, "We did not arrest him because he was sick," notwithstanding that in other cases doctor's certificates had to be produced to exempt those charged from appearing. As I explained, these men had to appear through their legal representative and submit justification of their absence.

There is no doubt that by granting pardons to those people who were convicted and for releasing those who were in gaol the Premier has lost much of the credit he gained for his handling of the railway strike. I do not say that the Premier paid the fines of three of the convicted people but anyone is entitled to assume that whoever did so was in the confidence of the Premier and knew that on the payment of those fines the Premier would forgive the rest of the comrades and let them out of gaol. Something must have happened somewhere that gave rise to the payment of those fines. Those leaders knew somewhere along the line that the Premier was going to release these men. I believe someone in the confidence of the Premier paid the £350 fine into court. Whatever was the motive that caused the Premier to make his decision to release Graham and his fellow Communist, it is already apparent from public reaction that the Premier made a grave mistake.

That view has been expressed by members of the Labour Party. And the supporters of the Labour Party are prepared to admit that the Premier has made a vital mistake in remitting these fines and releasing these two law-breakers. I am willing to gamble that at least 12 members of the Labour Party—and I mentioned this before—opposed this repeal in Caucus, and that these men last Wednesday afternoon spoke against the Premier's action. I have a very high regard for the hon. member for Toowoomba, the Minister for Transport, and I have a high regard for the hon. member for Carnarvon also, both of whom represent adjoining electorates. I am not convinced for one moment that these men voted for the release of these people, but according to what we hear today—and neither has spoken on this question—they must have voted for the remission of the fines and the release of these two men because they have not come into this

Chamber and openly declared their opposition to it. I know the reaction in Toowoomba, and I know that the hon. member for Toowoomba during this week-end had this put to him very forcibly by many people in Toowoomba: did he or did he not support the repeal of this Act? And I challenge him to come into this Committee and indicate how he voted or what his opinion is on the repeal of this Act.

I believe the Government have completely climbed down on this matter and that they have placed themselves in a much weaker position than they were in some time ago.

Last week the Premier made the sensational statement that Communism was on the decline. Surely the Premier was not serious when he said those words—that Communism in this State was on the decline. If he was, all I can say is that it was wishful thinking. I prophesy that unless this Government are wide awake to their responsibilities during the coming months every good law-abiding citizen of this State must surely suffer.

The importance of any legislation is the action taken to enforce it. If we make laws one day and direct the police to carry them out, and then we back down, as the Premier has done in this case by instructing the police not to carry out the anti-picketing legislation, we are weakening our position. First of all he insisted that they make arrests and that they put in gaol the men who broke the law. The police carried out that job well, but today we have the Police Force being made a laughing stock because the Premier has backed down on the very legislation that he directed them to carry out.

As I said before, I favour the repeal of a few sections in this Act but as to releasing these men from gaol, these Communists, these law-breakers, I am utterly opposed to it. I am also utterly opposed to any remission of the fines the law of the land placed upon them because they had broken the law, therefore I intend to oppose the repeal of this legislation.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (3.9 p.m.): Although one is not inclined to take much notice of the bogus indignation worked up by members opposite, I cannot allow one remark of the hon. member to go unchallenged. He stated that while at a hotel, unnamed, he heard Communist speakers at some place where a meeting was held, state that an arrangement had been made with the Premier for the release of these particular people.

I have a very poor regard for the veracity of Communist leaders as a whole, but I still do not believe that he is telling the truth when he made that statement.

Mr. Chalk: You deny it.

Mr. HANLON: I do not think anything of the kind was ever said by any Communist leader, because they are cunning enough not to say these things. Furthermore, it would have been reported to me if they had done so.

Mr. Chalk: You had your scouts there?

Mr. HANLON: No, but I have friends everywhere. The hon. member must not think the whole of the State of Queensland consists of men like himself. The vast majority of the people of Queensland are decent, honest people, and if such a statement had been made publicly it would have been reported to me very quickly. The hon. member, in my opinion, was merely calling upon his imagination.

It is amusing, Mr. Mann, to observe the whole set-up of the debate today. Everybody is partly in favour, but not wholly. You see, Mr. Mann, this happens to be a matter upon which there is a certain amount of division of opinion in the community, and the hon. member who has just resumed his seat, like all previous speakers, points out that he is in favour of part of the repeal, but not in favour of the whole. They are all trying to be a bit on each side in the argument. Not one of them stood up and said in this Chamber today that he would favour the continuation of the whole of the Act. Everybody in the Opposition today is trying to be a little bit on both sides of public opinion.

This Government have no apologies to offer for anything they do. They are quite prepared to do what they believe to be best in the interests of the people in this State. They are not going to play up to any lolly stuff from the traditional enemies of the working people as to their being strong men. The idea of a strong man in the minds of the Opposition is somebody who does what they want and the idea of an astute man in the mind of the hon. member for Mundingburra is a man who does something he wants. But we will not play up to any ideas of his. We do what we believe to be in the best interests of the whole of the people of the State: not a little bit on this side and a little bit on that side in the interests of getting votes.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Nanango) (3.13 p.m.): The question before the Committee has been fairly well dealt with and I suppose it may be said that nothing further can be gained by continued debate, but the steps to be taken are of such a nature that as a representative of the people one is compelled to express an opinion.

The repeal of this legislation is a serious enough matter in times such as these, but the release of breakers of the law and payment of their fines—are those the actions of men fit to govern? It is not an instance of our seeking to make political capital. Indeed, the whole matter is a very clear-cut issue. The repeal of this legislation will cater to a force that is raising its head in many countries of the world, including Australia and this State. It is a force that has been very successful in inflicting its ruthless policy on the people of many lands, a force we loathe and wish dispelled because it will trample down our freedom, liberty—our individualism. The people generally have no opportunity to resist. We members of Parliament are a responsible body of men and the Government have the obligation of dealing

with this force, so that every effort may be made to resist any move that comes from it and to curb any means towards furthering their ends, as they do through the organisations of the various unions.

It is interesting to note that this Red element to which I make reference does not thrive within the ranks of the section of the community represented by the Country Party, nor in that represented by the Queensland People's Party, but it does thrive in the ranks of the Labour Movement. That is where it grows and thrives. For many years the Labour Party have been working hand in hand with these men, giving them concession after concession, just as in this instance they are remitting their sentences and paying their fines. If anything is giving them a concession that is, just as is the repeal of this legislation. It is because we realise this and see the dangerous possibilities of the greater power they are acquiring that we on this side raise our voices in strong protest.

The point is that the Government made certain decisions relating to the activities of this disturbing element, having seen the urgent need for countering them. That emergency has passed and now, by their presently intended action, the Government invite them again to inflict upon the people the suffering that they alone are willing to inflict to further their ends and gain greater power and control over the community.

Do not the Government realise this? Are they not conscious of the extreme weakness of their action, or do they not see the extreme danger to industrial peace and prosperity that their actions invite? Everyone admires and respects a man or group of people who can make a decision and then, being convinced that the decision is right, stand by it, but no-one admires or has respect for those who capitulate on a principle because they fear the consequences, as this Government are doing by their action today.

During the prolonged railway strike, which the Government's weakness permitted to extend for the period it did, the Government were compelled by the criticism of Opposition members and strong public opinion to make a pretence at observing law and order, and they passed the anti-picketing legislation that served on that occasion to save the face of the Government. But that crisis is passed and another is confronting the Government. They fear the consequences of the future acts of these industrial law-breakers who have big power in the unions and who can marshal many votes against the Government if they do not remove this Act, which may hinder their treacherous activities. Under that threat the Government are retreating, they are backing down. If the people can see and realise, as I believe they do, the weak-kneed Government who are leading them, then I am sure the results of the next election will be as clear-cut as the voting on the recent referendum issue. Then we shall be vindicated for the many declarations we have made that this Government have no moral right to direct the affairs of the people of this State.

How can we admire and respect a Government who twist and turn in order to curry favour with the people regardless of principle and consequences involved? By no stretch of the imagination can justification be found for the action of this Government in releasing men and paying the fines of men who have broken the law. This Government, by their proposed retreat from a measure that is a further safeguard against a recurrence of industrial lawlessness, have condemned themselves. We have always censured them, and I feel sure that at the next election the people as a whole will do likewise. It is hard to credit anyone with being sincere who claims that with the Red element we know is in our midst no further upheavals will occur. Such an attitude is unrealistic, and by saying that if such an action should arise there are powers to deal with the position is giving the lie to the word that previously led us to believe that such a power did not exist.

Truly the Government must feel in a very unenviable position, and very small before the public eye. Perhaps they adopt the attitude of saying, "We can take it," but let me remind them of the saying, "You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time." That is what the Government have been seeking to do, by in the first place bringing in this legislation to give the impression that they were the Government of the hour, and in the second place, to repeal it and retreat, hoping that their actions would not be observed. People often speak scathingly of politicians, and such action as this justifies such comment. The Government have received a round of condemnation by hon. members on this side, and it has been fully justified, because it is obvious that the Government are retreating under outside pressure. It leaves us with no alternative but to believe that the Government are dominated by the Red element even to a greater extent than we realised. The Red element have had an outstanding victory in having their men released from gaol and fines paid, and they are celebrating by a great social.

Mr. Hanlon: Are you suggesting that somebody paid their fines?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: It is to be greatly regretted, as it is a very serious position when a supposedly responsible Government adopt such measures as releasing lawbreakers and paying their fines.

Mr. Hanlon: I heard the hon. member say that the Government was descending to pay the fines. That is as false a statement as was ever made by any liar in this country, and I want it withdrawn. It has been repeatedly denied, and it comes with ill grace from an hon. member with the background of the hon. member for Nanango.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Nanango to withdraw the statement.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I withdraw the statement, as the implication I meant was that if the fines were not collected they were really paid by the Government.

Mr. Hanlon: I thought you were saying that we were paying the fines.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I am sorry. I was referring to letting men off who had not paid their fines. It may be considered good political strategy on the part of the Government, but their actions do not tend towards law and order, and peace and prosperity in industry, and in effect the Government are "playing to the gallery" regardless of the consequences.

Mr. MORRIS (Enoggera) (3.24 p.m.): In 1946 this State was held to ransom by a strike that was engineered by the Communists of Queensland. In 1948 the State is again held to ransom by communistic action. In March this year the Premier had the Communists where he wanted them, but because of pressure that has developed within the Communist ranks he is giving in, like the weak man he is. I say that he is giving in because of pressure from within the Communist ranks, and I say that with a good deal of authority, and I propose to refer to the "Courier-Mail" of 10 June.

A Government Member: You don't believe it.

Mr. MORRIS: I believe it, because when the Premier of the State exhibited a little backbone—and backbone is missing from the members of the Labour Party—the "Courier-Mail" and the "Telegraph" supported him and said what a good job he was doing. Does the hon. member believe that?

The "Courier-Mail" of 10 June published this—

"The secretary of the Trades and Labour Council, Mr. M. Healy, who has a personal interest in the matter, says that the trades-union movement will not be satisfied until pending prosecutions under the legislation are withdrawn and existing penalties quashed."

That was a statement by Mr. Healy himself. He knew that the Premier of this State did not have the guts to stand up to the legislation he passed in March. Why did the Premier give way to one small section of the community that was trying to hold up this country to ransom? It is all very well for the back-benchers of the Government party to sit there barking when they know that although this debate has been on for three days only one member of the Government party has had the guts to get up and support the Premier. The other members of the party will not come in because they are opposed to the repeal of this Act. All that they can do is sit there barking and yapping in the hope of putting other speakers off their speeches.

This is the greatest exhibition of weak-kneed legislation that we have ever seen in this Parliament. It has been said that the Prime Minister, Mr. Chifley, had the reputation of being the greatest appeaser of the

Communists of any leader of any party in Australia and that perhaps was so until a week ago, but to-day the people of Queensland and Australia are saying that the Premier of Queensland has outpointed Mr. Chifley in the appeasement of the Communists.

When speaking of the release of Graham and his co-traveller, the Premier said that the repeal of the anti-picketing law would not affect the prosecutions that had already taken place and the penalties that were imposed. He made that statement on 9 June last and here we have him going back on his promise.

Mr. Hanlon: What was that statement?

Mr. MORRIS: The hon. gentleman made the statement himself and surely he can remember it.

Mr. Hanlon: What statement?

Mr. MORRIS: The hon. gentleman made it.

Mr. HANLON: Mr. Chairman, I rise to a point of order. I ask the hon. member to give chapter and verse for the statement he is quoting.

Mr. Pie: Chapter and verse? What right have you to demand that?

Mr. HANLON: Mr. Chairman, I rise to a point of order. The Standing Orders provide that when an hon. member quotes a statement in the Chamber he must quote chapter and verse for it.

Mr. Pie: They do not provide that at all.

The CHAIRMAN: I would say to the hon. member for Enoggera that as a matter of courtesy to the Premier and the Chamber he should give the authority for the statement he is quoting.

Mr. MORRIS: As a matter of courtesy I did give the chapter and verse for what I was quoting. I have already given the chapter and verse. I quoted the paper from which the reference I have read has been taken. I have quoted the published report. What more can I be asked to do? The Premier is simply trying to put me off what I am going to say and I am not going to let him.

I do not want to recapitulate all the arguments that have been advanced, but hon. members on this side of the Chamber are solidly opposed to the repeal of this Act. We are solidly behind the Act. The Labour Party is not solidly behind this measure because so far only one member of the Government party has risen in his place to support the Premier in the introduction of this measure—only one man in three days. I say also that every hon. member on this side of the Chamber is absolutely and utterly opposed to the release of Graham and his co-traveller.

That is the second point at issue with which we quarrel with the Government. I come now to the third point that I wish to

make, the final point. If the former member for Mirani, Mr. Walsh, who was Deputy Premier before the last elections, were leading this Government to-day we should not see this cave-in to the Communists.

At least he was strong enough to fight them. He is at least strong enough to fight them today, yet the Premier of this State is not. He should be thoroughly ashamed of himself for introducing this legislation. You need only to look at his face, and the faces of his supporters, to see how ashamed he is. If he could he would probably do anything to call off this legislation. It is a great pity that he is in the position he is instead of another and stronger member of his party who would not repeal this legislation.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (3.31 p.m.): I am not going to allow the hon. member for Enoggera to get away with that. The practice of quoting chapter and verse for quotations used in debate arises from the practice of unscrupulous liars in misquoting members of Parliament. Consequently one is always suspicious of an hon. member when he quotes another hon. member without giving chapter and verse for his statement. That is why I asked him for chapter and verse. I want to tell him that he was not telling the truth when he said that I made any promise whatever that any fine would be remitted. I never made any such promise; I never made any such statement. He was not telling the truth to this Chamber.

Mr. MORRIS: I rise to a point of order. The Premier said I was not telling the truth to this Chamber. I say he is the man who is not telling the truth because when I quoted the statement I stated that I was quoting from an article published in the "Courier-Mail" of 10 June. There is the article (displaying a newspaper cutting). The Premier can read it and check it if he wishes. I further quoted—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member cannot go on and make a speech.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member for Enoggera is not quoting me at all. What he quoted is an article written by some other person. It is not a quotation from my speech at all. Unless that statement is a quotation from what I said, he is not telling the truth. What he quoted from is a leading article written by the "Courier-Mail."

Mr. MORRIS: Mr. Mann, I rise to a point of order. The Premier says I am not telling the truth. I am quoting the paper from which the article was obtained. I read the article. I am quite happy to table the extracts from which I read.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would remind the hon. member for Enoggera that the Premier has already told the Committee that the Press statement is not a statement made by him.

Mr. Morris: I said it was a Press statement.

Mr. HANLON: No, he said it was a promise made by me. I do object to that. I never resent criticism of my actions; at least, I never resent truthful criticism. I never resent anyone's quoting anything I say but I do resent any hon. member's getting up and lying about it. I do resent it, for it is wrong. Any hon. member should try to keep his self-respect and refrain from misquoting any hon. member.

Mr. MORRIS: Mr. Mann, I rise to a point of order. I have here the extract I read from. It is taken from the "Courier-Mail." I will read it again—

"Mr. Hanlon said the decision would not affect the prosecutions which had taken place and penalties imposed." There are the exact words, and there is the quotation.

Mr. HANLON: That is the position—to repeal the Bill would not affect the penalties imposed. The hon. member for Toowong will tell the hon. member that that is so. There was no promise in that. The hon. member for Toowong will tell the hon. member that the repeal of an Act does not in any way affect the remission of penalties already imposed. I made no promise for the remission of penalties.

Hon. members opposite know that members of the Opposition come along to the Government seeking the remission of penalties. What irritated me today was to hear the hon. member for Nanango saying that we had descended to the low practice of remitting these sentences. Why, he himself made representations to the Government to remit the sentence of a man convicted of a criminal offence. I do not blame him for doing so, as all hon. members have to make representations on behalf of their constituents. If it is a low practice to remit penalties, then it is a low practice for a hon. member to ask for the remission of a sentence for thieving and robbery. I say that very definitely. I am not objecting to members making representations on behalf of their electors.

Mr. Morris: I hope you are not insinuating that I made those representations.

Mr. HANLON: I want to say definitely that if people in the hon. member's electorate approached him and asked him to make representations, if he thought they had been severely dealt with, he would be entitled to do so. There is nothing wrong in that; every member is entitled to do it; every member has a duty.

Mr. Brand: In this case nobody asked you to do it.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member means the case of this Bill? Quite a number of unions carried resolutions asking for the penalties to be lifted. Unlike the hon. member, I am a unionist myself.

Mr. Pie: There is nothing to be ashamed of in that.

Mr. HANLON: That is what has got the hon. gentleman worried—not being a unionist himself.

I got up to call attention to the fact that the hon. member said a promise was made by me because he read something to that effect in the newspaper. Then he misread it.

Mr. MORRIS: I rise to a point of order. The Premier said that I misread it. That is not true, and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. HANLON: You said it was a promise by me: that is not true.

Mr. KERR (Oxley) (3.37 p.m.): I feel impelled to protest against the repeal of this Act, and the reason I advance for my action is this: the people of Queensland will look upon the repeal of this legislation with the utmost disgust. The repeal of this Act is bringing the law into contempt and bringing this Parliament into contempt.

You pass a Bill one day and you have a strong Premier who is going to see the law is carried out. But what does he do. In a moment of weakness or as a matter of political expediency, he brings down a Bill to repeal the Act and remit the fines imposed under it.

In order to get a clear picture of the effects of the strike, one has only to consider the inconvenience and expense that were inflicted on great numbers of our citizens. Numbers of people in my electorate were put to heavy expenditure in order to go to work each day. What justification is there for the repeal of this Act in the eyes of these people? I have seen mercy given in many instances and as a result I have seen it regretted that no good has resulted.

The idea that Communism has died down is all wrong. It has not died down; it has gone under cover for the time being; and as sure as the sun rises it will emerge again at a convenient time and the Government will be placed in the same position again.

It is remarkable indeed that other than the Premier and yourself, Mr. Mann, no one on the Government side has supported the Bill, except the hon. member for Mundingburra. It is astonishing that members of the Government who were opposed to the Bill have not got to their feet and protested. I challenge the Premier and the Labour Party to assure its members of freedom from any action by the party against any member, no matter how he may vote on this Bill. I challenge them to give a free vote in this Chamber. If we had a free vote this Bill would never go through.

The Premier would be compelled to withdraw it. My advice to the hon. gentleman now is not to disregard the feelings of the people of Queensland. He has brought the law into contempt, as he has brought this Parliament into contempt. I challenge him to allow a free vote to be given on the Bill in this Chamber. If he does I know that the Bill will fall by the wayside. I appeal to him, for the better government of Queensland and to ensure the peace, the continuation of our industrial endeavours, and the maintenance of our industrial efforts at the highest degree possible, to withdraw this Bill even at this late stage.

Mr. DECKER (Sandgate) (3.41 p.m.): I know it is becoming rather monotonous for one after another member of the Opposition to rise and oppose the Bill, but one has become used to the cunningness of the Premier in this Chamber.

There are some disquieting features in this affair that have been stressed today that require an explanation from the Premier on behalf of the Government. It is extraordinary that men in imprisonment are released on the anonymous payment of their fines: that the Government accept this payment and release the prisoners, all without any questions being asked as to where the money came from. There is no doubt that it was an absolutely illegal action on the part of the Government. To carry this action to its logical conclusion, any Tom, Dick or Harry could pay the fine anonymously of a person in prison and have him released from gaol. That is not the intention of the Act. That is not what it contemplated in regard to what might be termed political prisoners, and these men were political prisoners, more or less. The Government released them, not knowing who paid the fines.

Every hon. member is entitled to know why the Government acted so illegally on such a demand made for the release of the men. There is only one conclusion that can be come to and that is that originally the Government were stampeded into bringing the Act into operation and they were equally stampeded in getting rid of it because of the gloom of industrial trouble that lay over the whole of the Commonwealth of Australia. There is not a man who did not know of the black clouds looming over the whole industrial field of the Commonwealth. It was a very cunning move on the part of somebody to pay the fines that would release the three captains, as they might be termed, without bothering about the corporals. This proves to me conclusively that one need not look far afield for the person who originated that move. We must exonerate the Communists to begin with, because the retention in gaol of these men gave them a reason for fomenting trouble and, as I have stated, hon. members know the industrial trouble looming over the whole of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Hanlon: You are telling the truth. That is quite right.

Mr. DECKER: On that evidence nobody could assume that the Communists would be involved in the payment of these fines.

Then, coming to the unions, one asks: what union or unions would be involved in the payment of these fines? Most of the unions were behind the law and were anxious that the particular men branded as Communists were made to pay the penalty for their actions. That is evidence not only from what one reads in the Press but from the admissions of the Premier that he has had approaches from unions on this very subject. It would be absurd to suggest that any organisation such as that would be involved in such a plan.

The fact is that the Government, by accepting this money without any evidence as to who paid it, have done something illegal, and it appears to me as though the only man or men implicated were the Premier or somebody else, and I would not put it past him, because his cunning has been demonstrated to me over the years I have been here. I am satisfied that anything at all would suit the Premier if it gained his end. Knowing the trouble that is brewing and what the Act is likely to involve the Government in, knowing that there is likely to be trouble ahead, the Premier evolves this cunning method, and I congratulate him upon it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member is not imputing improper motives to the Premier.

Mr. DECKER: I am stating what I believe to be true.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow the hon. member to make a statement that reflects on the honesty and integrity of the Premier. If he does that I will ask him to resume his seat. I ask him to withdraw the statement.

Mr. DECKER: All right. Then I say that it appears to me that that is so.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to connect his remarks with the matter before the Committee.

Mr. DECKER: The Bill before the Committee seeks to repeal a drastic measure that we hoped would give better control over the Communists of this State and weaken their control over the unions of working people. We helped the Premier in his fight against Communism at that time. By means of propaganda through the Press, with the aid of the Government party, the people of Queensland were led to believe that the Government were putting up a magnificent fight in the industrial trouble caused by the railway strike, but as a careful onlooker in this Parliament I feel that the Government brought that strike on themselves, and there was no victory about the settlement, even though that Act was passed. The strike was settled, not by that Act but by the Government's giving way and granting the concessions asked for by the men.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not want to stifle the hon. member, but I ask him to connect his remarks with the matter before the Committee.

Mr. DECKER: The railway strike was responsible for the Act we are now repealing, which in turn makes the Bill under discussion necessary.

Mr. Hanlon: Did we plan the strike?

Mr. DECKER: I do not know whether the Government did or not, but they handled it badly when it came about, and some millions of pounds were lost to Queensland.

The Act that is about to be repealed has been a bugbear with most unions. I have been in contact with a number of working people in my area, and they cannot understand how a Government who claim to be Labour could implement such an Act. It is beyond their comprehension. Knowing the implications involved, and knowing the trouble that is still looming, even though the strike has been settled, it is no wonder to me that the Government are seeking to repeal that Act. That does not worry me at all. What does worry me is the Government's refusal to say why they accepted money from an anonymous source and released three men from Boggo Road.

Mr. Hanlon: You could not lawfully keep a man in gaol after his fine has been paid.

Mr. DECKER: We are entitled to know who paid the money. In every other case the Government would want to know.

Mr. Hanlon: As a matter of fact, if you like to go up for it you will get back the £1 you overpaid.

Mr. DECKER: Will the Premier tell members of this Committee whether there has been a precedent for this action—the anonymous payment of a fine to release a prisoner at Boggo Road? It is an unheard of thing and the very business was questionable from the beginning.

Mr. Low interjected.

Mr. Power: You tried to get a fellow out of gaol who tried to rape a girl of 11 years.

Mr. Low: I rise to a point of order. I think the Minister is going over the fence. When a member of Parliament receives a request he passes it on to the Minister concerned; you do not always subscribe to the representations. I think it is a rotten thing to come from the Minister and in keeping with his type.

Mr. POWER: I rise to a point of order. I made the interjection that the hon. member for Cooroora made representations to get a man out of gaol who tried to rape a girl of 11 years. I repeat the statement and I say that it is true.

Mr. Low: The letter was passed on for Government decision.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the statement is not true the hon. member can deny it.

Mr. Low: I passed the letter on and I did not ask for the man to be released.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Sandgate.

Mr. DECKER: Feeling is getting to a high tension.

I was making the point that the fines were anonymously paid and the second point which I am about to make, is: why did the Government take the big step of remitting the fines of those other two men who were still in custody and why go to the extreme of not

collecting the fines of the other members who have not been brought before a court? The whole question is wrapped up in the legality of the business, and it is the legality of it that concerns us. I say that if there is a law it should be obeyed; the Government should be castigated for making the releases on an anonymous payment.

Mr. PATERSON (Bowen) (3.53 p.m.): I congratulate the Government on bringing forward this repeal Bill and I want to say also that most of the debate I have heard today has dealt not with the merits of the Bill but with matters that are not relevant to the repeal of the anti-picketing legislation. The question whether the Government should have remitted fines or released men from gaol has nothing to do with the repeal of the anti-picketing Act. I myself agree with the Government's actions in all these matters but nevertheless they are not relevant to the repeal of the legislation.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I should like to point out that the Premier when introducing this Bill made a statement in regard to that matter and I have therefore allowed discussion on it.

Mr. PATERSON: I do not want you, Mr. Mann, to take my remarks as suggesting that you allowed hon. members to go outside the ambit of the Bill; I merely stated that their statements had no relevance to the merits of the Bill.

Various hon. members today have suggested that they are in favour of repealing certain parts of the anti-picketing Act but were very careful not to state clearly which parts.

Mr. Macdonald: Why should they?

Mr. PATERSON: I cannot imagine such an interjection coming from a so-called intelligent hon. member of this Chamber. If a person says he is in favour of repealing certain parts of an Act he should at least have the decency to suggest which parts he favours. The Act itself sets out only four offences and it would be interesting to know which of the offences hon. members who say they are in favour of repealing certain parts would agree to repeal. None of them had the decency even to say clearly what particular sections they would repeal.

Mr. WANSTALL: Mr. Mann, I rise to a point of order. The hon. member knows perfectly well what sections I was in favour of amending. I mentioned that they were those sections giving arbitrary powers to the police.

Mr. PATERSON: I was here when the hon. member spoke and he made a vague statement about certain sections giving arbitrary powers to the police but what sections did he mean? That is the point. So far as I am concerned more than one section gives the police arbitrary powers and the hon. member for Toowong at least, as a member of the legal profession, should understand what sections of an Act mean. He should have been able to point clearly and explicitly to them and say which sections he wanted repealed.

The four sections dealing with offences are, briefly, as follows: the first prohibits the counselling or the attempting to counsel or procure a worker to strike; the second makes it illegal to use threatening or intimidatory language to compel a worker to strike; the third makes it unlawful to display placards or words that are of a threatening or intimidatory nature for the purpose of inducing a person to strike, and the fourth is that if a sergeant of police is of the opinion that a person's presence at or near a work place or some other place is likely to influence a worker to strike he has the right to tell that person to get out of the place and remain away and if he does not obey he can arrest him without warrant.

Those are the four main offences and I should like to ask hon. members opposite who have spoken whether they are in favour of repealing them or any of them. If they are, then why were they not perfectly honest? Why not say whether they are in favour of the repeal of those four sections or of their remaining part and parcel of the law of the land? I am pleased that the whole Act is being repealed.

Let us assume that Parliament had passed similar legislation applying to the wealthy class of the State and let us try to ascertain what would be the reactions of members of the Queensland People's Party and the Country Party. For instance, suppose there was an Act on the statute book of this State which provided that if a sergeant of police was of the opinion that a shopkeeper or warehouseman was hoarding material for the purpose of forcing up prices or for profiteering later on, that sergeant of police could order the shopkeeper or warehouseman to display the whole of his wares, to take them out from under the counter, place them on the counter with price-fixing tags attached and if the shopkeeper or warehouseman did not do it, if he disobeyed the order, he could arrest him without a warrant. I wonder how many hon. members opposite would approve of such legislation, and I wonder how many hon. members opposite would object to the action of any Premier who said that he was going to repeal such legislation? If they will not tolerate such legislation in relation to shopkeepers and warehousemen, why do they tolerate it in relation to the workers? If they would object to such provisions if they affected them, let them say clearly on what grounds they support those that are being repealed.

Let me take another section of the Act, the one dealing with the exercise of police powers. The Act gives a sergeant of police power to enter a house or enter any building, using force if necessary, simply because he is of opinion that an offence against the anti-picketing Act is being committed or that someone is preparing, in that building, to commit an offence against the Act.

Mr. Aikens: And enter without warrant.

Mr. PATERSON: Yes, enter without warrant. What would be the reaction of hon. members opposite if there was an Act on the statute book of this State which provided that if a sergeant of police had formed the opinion that in T. C. Beirne's building or Finney Isles's building or in any other shop or big warehouse a shopkeeper was actually committing an offence or was preparing to commit an offence against the profiteering law he could, without any warrant and without any further authority than that existing in the legislation, break into the building, using force if necessary? I wonder what the reaction of hon. members opposite would be to that?

Mr. Wanstall: There is such a power now under the regulations.

Mr. PATERSON: If there is such a power, what is the reaction of hon. members opposite to it? That is the point. I know what their reaction would be. Their reaction would be that it is tyrannical law and the hon. member himself would be the first to applaud the Premier if he came along and repealed it.

The main complaint of the Opposition is that the strike to which the Act refers was an illegal strike. Let us see how it became an illegal strike so far as several of the striking unions involved were concerned. The strike itself started by the taking of a secret ballot. When we were dealing with the Bill in March the Premier quite honestly admitted that the members of the A.E.U. took a secret ballot of its members, who overwhelmingly voted in favour of a strike. Several other unions also took secret ballots, but some did not. Let us deal with those that did take secret ballots, because those who took secret ballots were legally entitled to be on strike if their members decided in the affirmative. The A.E.U., the Boilermakers', the Blacksmiths', the Vehicle Builders', and Electrical Trades Unions did take ballots.

This Parliament passed a law giving unions the right to take a ballot as to whether they should strike or not, giving the unions the right to take a ballot and thereby make a strike legal. The unions took a secret ballot and went on strike. But then the Industrial Court overruled the legislation we had passed. It ordered the men back to work. Then the strike, which was originally legal, became illegal.

Those are the conditions and circumstances that we must bear in mind. I must admit that some unions did not take secret ballots and their strikes, according to the law of the land, were illegal from the beginning. But what was the advantage of taking the ballot. Are hon. members opposite who are opposing the Government's action in this matter prepared to distinguish between the actions of those who had taken secret ballots and were ordered back to work and those who had never taken secret ballots right from the start?

Those who oppose the Government today would not make that distinction. Today hon. members opposite have used this debate primarily for the purpose of perpetuating the falsehood that the strike was a Communist strike, that the strike was Communist-controlled and was not a strike supported by the majority of the rank and file. Well, the result of the secret ballots so far as those unions who took the ballots are concerned, gives the lie direct to those statements, because the majority voted in favour of the strike.

The majority of the men on the Central Disputes Committee were not members of the Communist Party, and the resolutions carried by that committee were unanimous, so that those who were Communists and those who were not Communists voted together. If the Communists were wrong so were the non-Communists. On the other hand, if the Communists were right, then those who were not Communists were also right when they voted on that committee.

It was a rank-and-file strike from the start, and the rank and file were able to exercise their rights from the start. Mass meetings were held in all the big centres and votes taken by the mass meetings as to whether the men at those mass meetings supported the policy of the Central Disputes Committee or not. They had the right at all times to vote against this policy and tell the Central Disputes Committee to get the men back to work immediately.

I mention those things to dispel the propaganda that has been sedulously spread today in this Committee by members of the Opposition in order to poison the minds of the public, not only against the strike and strikers, but against the repeal of the anti-picketing legislation.

Let me remind members of the Opposition that their leading men are not averse to strike action when that strike action suits themselves. Only a few days before the railway strike began there was a big agitation in Bowen against the dismissal of Dr. Hurrey by the hospitals board. Because the Government refused to grant a public inquiry at that time a big public meeting was held, and as the member for the district I was asked to speak at that meeting, at which there were representatives of all political parties. There were prominent members of the Country Party present, there were prominent members of the Communist Party present, and there were prominent members of the Labour Party present; and there were men who belonged to no party whatsoever: And that meeting carried a unanimous resolution urging the trade unions of Bowen to take direct action if the Government failed to hold a public inquiry.

Mr. Aikens: They wanted the railway men to strike.

Mr. PATERSON: They wanted the railway men to strike; they wanted the watersiders and the meatworkers to strike, in order to force the Government to hold a public inquiry into the dismissal of Dr. Hurrey. The Government held that public inquiry, and I am not concerned in this debate to deal with the merits of the public inquiry or the results, because they are irrelevant. But I mention that fact in order to show members of the Country Party and the Queensland People's Party that they will find that many of their prominent supporters are willing to support direct action when it suits themselves.

Mr. Muller: That is only mob rule.

Mr. PATERSON: Whether it is mob rule or not, you had prominent members of the Country Party at that meeting voting in favour of a strike.

Mr. Macdonald interjected.

Mr. PATERSON: Yes, there was no suggestion about a secret ballot: And it was not even a strike to improve the conditions of the men who would have gone on strike; it was to obtain what the public rightly believed was justice for Dr. Hurrey.

Do we find that hon. members of the Country Party protest when a farmer refuses to sell his produce because he cannot get sufficient price for it. I myself—and I suppose every other hon. member—have known numerous occasions—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not wish to stifle the hon. member, but I hope he will not elaborate that point too far, but that he will get back to the matter before the Committee.

Mr. PATERSON: I want to, but unfortunately hon. members opposite when speaking this morning spent their time to a large extent attacking the strike, saying there was Communist control, and so on, and in reply I show them that when it concerns their own interests they are willing to do exactly what the workers are compelled to do to protect their interests.

There is a section of the Act that makes it unlawful to use threatening or intimidatory language to compel a worker to strike. That is a brief summary of the provision. Hon. members opposite seem to suggest that if this Act was repealed it would be lawful to use threatening or intimidatory language to compel a worker to strike. Let me remind hon. members that the Criminal Code still exists, irrespective of what happens to the motion before the Committee. Under criminal law it is still unlawful to use threatening or intimidatory language for the purpose of compelling a person to strike.

Mr. Wanstall: Is that effective without the other provision?

Mr. PATERSON: Just as effective.

Mr. Wanstall: Why was this passed?

Mr. PATERSON: I do not know. Some members admitted that it was rushed through. I am not responsible for it, because I voted against it. I think the hon. member for Toowong will agree that the Criminal Code contains that provision.

Mr. Wanstall: It is not as complete as this.

Mr. PATERSON: It is as complete.

Further, there has been the suggestion that it leaves the way open to violence. The Criminal Code is the best law we have dealing with the use of violence. Let me remind hon. members that there is not one single section in the Act we are repealing that makes it unlawful to do an act of violence.

There is not one, because the Government or the Parliamentary Draftsman realised that the Criminal Code contains ample provision to deal with acts of violence. Under the Criminal Code, if one person assaults another, whether that person is assaulted in connection with an industrial, family, matrimonial, business, or any other dispute, the person can be dealt with under the Criminal Code, so that if any hon. member is worried simply because he fears the repeal will leave the way open to violence, I would ask him to study the Criminal Code again; therein he will find ample protection. Let me remind hon. members who are supposed to be worried about the use of violence by the workers that from the beginning to the end of the strike not one railway or waterside worker was arrested or prosecuted for an act of violence.

Mr. Sparkes: Who hit you?

Mr. PATERSON: I only wish I knew. Unfortunately, I was struck from the back, but as the hon. member by interjection has raised the matter I would remind him that it is surprising that he has not, as far as I know, done anything to try to bring the offender to justice, yet he talks on the subject and claims to believe in law and order.

Mr. Sparkes: How would I know if you do not know?

Mr. PATERSON: The hon. member has done nothing to try to bring him to justice.

Before resuming my seat I express regret that I missed the opening stage of this debate. As hon. members know, I became ill and was unable to be present, therefore I am not in the position to-day to discuss anything said on previous days. I have been present only to-day because of the state of my health, but I am sorry that I missed the debate because it is a very important piece of legislation.

Mr. Wanstall: It is all recorded in "Hansard."

Mr. PATERSON: Yes, but I prefer to hear what an hon. member says here. Moreover, "Hansard" containing a full report was not published in time for me to study it.

Mr. Sparkes: Who paid the fine? Your guess is as good as that of anybody else?

Mr. PATERSON: Certainly I did not pay the fine, and I am satisfied that the Communist Party did not pay it. I do not know who did pay it.

As I have said, I am fully in favour of the Government's action in repealing this legislation. I am fully in accord with their action in remitting the unpaid fines and not proceeding with further summonses. I am very pleased the Government have taken that attitude, and I feel certain that in the interests of the working-class movement in this State the Government's action has been wise and good.

Mr. MARRIOTT (Bulimba) (4.14 p.m.): I have been particularly interested in this debate because I approve of the action of the Government in bringing forward this measure to repeal the outstanding blot on the statute book of Queensland. I have been trying to find out from the speeches of Opposition members just why they favour the repeal of certain parts of the existing legislation and the retention of other parts. This has not been disclosed in the course of the debate. Unfortunately I was ill when that Act was going through, and had to leave the House to take to my bed, not because I was in favour of the legislation—far from it.

Hon. members opposite complain that the Bill was brought through in the first instance, but all of them supported it. They could not vote strongly enough in favour of it, yet now they tell us the measure was rushed through and certain provisions should never have been placed in it!

One would think from the speeches made today that hon. members opposite are the great champions of the working class. Let me remind them that this is not the first piece of repressive legislation to come into operation in Queensland as the result of an industrial dispute, nor is it the first repressive Act in the history of the working class. We hear hon. members opposite posing as champions of the working people. I wonder whether they remember the deportations from Great Britain to Van Diemen's Land. I wonder whether, during their holidays, they ever look at the old settlement in Tasmania. I have done so and have often remarked that I missed a good deal by being born so late in that I missed the opportunity of enjoying Her Majesty's hospitality there.

In the past I have often heard the gibe thrown at trade unions that if they are so opposed to repressive legislation, if they are so dissatisfied with their conditions, they should send representatives to Parliament to act on their behalf and to legislate on their behalf. I remind the Committee that at one time there was the notorious shearers' strike, there was the seamen's strike in the

'90s against the introduction of cheap labour, and I remind the Committee also that at that time the workers accepted the advice offered to them to send representatives to Parliament to fight their cases. Ever since then the fight has gone on.

Despite the speeches made here today our friends on the Opposition are running true to form. The stock from which they come shows that their breeding is running true. They are opposed to the repeal of this legislation. In 1912 in Brisbane in particular we had the notorious tram strike which brought about the birth of a Labour Parliament in Queensland and which likewise was the cause of the notorious piece of legislation known as the Industrial Peace Act which the Labour Government repealed as soon as they were returned. That Industrial Peace Act was another piece of repressive legislation.

Mr. Brand interjected.

Mr. MARRIOTT: I did not catch the interjection, but the hon. member for Isis knows of my experience in his electorate. My earliest recollections of the black-list that the employers operated in those days was when I was four years old, and that black-list was operated not only against trade unionists but all others who had advanced ideas about the establishment of the Labour Party. As a youngster I had to suffer as a result of the putting into operation of that black-list against my father in the Queensland Copper Company in 1893. Then I had experience as a freelance operator in the sugar industry in the Isis district, and later at Cairns. I had personal experience of the operation of the black-list there. I know all about the birth of the Sugar Workers' Union.

I was concerned with the disputes in those days because I was a worker in a sugar mill and I saw exactly what was going on. At a later date I had experience as a trade-union official of the Industrial Peace Act and I gloried in the action of the Labour Government when they came into power in repealing that Act.

I support the action of the Government in repealing what I previously termed a blot on the statute book of Queensland. Nobody knows better than hon. members on this side of the Chamber how it has affected members of the trade-union movement—the honest trade unionist described by hon. members in Opposition. That honest trade unionist has appealed for the repeal of this repressive legislation, which I say again is an outstanding blot on the statute book, despite the crocodile tears of hon. members opposite.

Mr. LUCKINS (Maree) (4.21 p.m.): No doubt we have had a great field day on the rights or wrongs of this Bill but my sympathy today goes out to the Premier in his dilemma about bringing it down and wanting to wipe the amending Act from the statute book.

There must be some real good reason for the introduction of this Bill, but so far as I can gather a mist seems to surround the whole block and tackle. We have heard statements made from this side; we have had speeches delivered by the Independent section, composed of the Communist and the Independent Labour; but from the Government side we have had only an untold story. I was surprised to find that the Premier had only one supporter, in the person of the hon. member for Brisbane.

To me it would be a matter of great concern if we had a recurrence of what happened early this year when the Government in their wisdom brought down legislation with a definite purpose. When I interjected when the Premier was speaking, he informed me that the Act was to be brought into operation only where there was interference or violence with regard to an illegal strike. Like other hon. members, I do not deny the unionist or a combination of workers the right to strike legitimately for a cause but I say that they should not take the law into their hands and commit violence to the public generally. It was for the purpose of preventing that that the Act was introduced. Everybody must admit that there is a condition of affairs in Queensland and Australia that calls for definite action on the part of the Government. The Government have to control the activities of foreign philosophies that are not in keeping with our ideas of democracy and the sooner the Premier and his Government concern themselves with that matter and pass legislation to combat that influence the happier we shall be in Queensland. We members of this Committee have the grave responsibility of making laws for the good government of the people of this State. I am very sorry that the Premier has been left high and dry by hon. members sitting behind him. He was lonely and deserted, sitting as a shag on a rock; no explanation was given by members on the Government side.

We have to clear up the mystery surrounding the action of releasing men prosecuted for breaking the law. Is there any hon. member who would suggest that the law-breaker was not entitled to his deserts? Is there to be a law for one section and not for another? Are not leaders of the Labour movement throughout Australia hand in glove with the Communist Party? We have Mr. Chifley, the Prime Minister, Mr. Holloway, Minister for Social Services, and the Deputy Leader of the New South Wales Government, along with many other members of the political Labour Party throughout Australia closely associated with the Communist Party. They are Communists before they are Labour representatives, and they are helping with the insidious influx of foreign philosophy into the Labour Movement.

It is regrettable that such drastic laws as those passed in March last should be necessary to combat a foreign influence that is undermining our democracy and destroying the liberties of British subjects. The sooner it is taken in hand the better. I make no apology for my stand in this Chamber as

one representing the working classes of the community. I will not quietly allow them to be repressed for their denunciation of the Communist Party, nor am I going to allow them to be injured in their search for work by the Communist Party and its black-list, to be used against people who will not meekly submit to their regulations and conditions.

It has been emphatically said and published that there are a number of men in the Labour Movement in this State and sitting in this Parliament who associate with the Communist Party. Let them stand up in this Chamber and declare themselves as fearlessly as the hon. member for Bowen does. He makes no secret of his political affiliations but his political philosophy comes from the Russian Marx's ideas. He and his party are prepared to impose their foreign philosophy upon a freedom-loving people. I make no apology for my attitude today. So long as I am a member of this Assembly I shall always acknowledge the Christian way of life and live according to Christian ideals, which have animated decent people throughout the ages. I make no apology either for my endeavour to combat the evil influences of Communism that flourish so profusely in the Labour movement.

The Premier has been guilty of an act of betrayal or at least a reversal of form. Earlier in the year he introduced a drastic piece of legislation to protect people from intimidation and fear. The whole matter had its genesis in the strike. It is true that the law was drastic and that it was received with hostility in certain quarters, but it was approved by all members of this Assembly, with the notable exception of the hon. member for Bowen and his worthy lieutenants. We had to acknowledge the force of the statement of the Premier at the time that chaos was likely to develop in this State, and that no law was too strong to cope with such an emergency. The law effected a good purpose, but now it is to be repealed simply because, so we are told, certain sections of it destroy the liberty of the subject. I am quite willing to admit that they are drastic powers, but they were necessary at the time and well adapted to give the people protection.

However, I warn the Premier that it will not be long before even more drastic powers will be needed if we are to combat the influences now undermining the lives of the people and the institutions of the State. We must fight the Communistic element that is so widely distributed throughout the world for the deliberate purpose of undermining the British way of life, and, I am sorry to say, is using this Parliament with that very object in view. So long as I am a member of Parliament I will fight this evil influence in my determination to maintain the rights of the people and the liberties of the subject. I am determined to resist this foreign doctrine, which has a world-wide mission, that of undermining existing forms of government so as to create disorder and chaos and take control of the very things we produce.

Question—That the resolution be agreed to (Mr. Hanlon's motion)—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 34.

Mr. Aikens	Mr. Jesson
" Bruce	" Jones
" Burrows	" Keyatta
" Clark	" Larcombe
" Collins	" Marriott
" Copley	" Moore
" Crowley	" O'Shea
" Davis	" Paterson
" Donald	" Power
" Duggan	" Roberts
" Dunstan	" Smith
" Farrell	" Taylor, J. R.
" Foley	" Theodore
" Gair	" Turner
" Graham	
" Gunn	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Hanlon	" Brown
" Hilton	" Ingram

NOES, 18.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen	Mr. Morris
" Brand	" Müller
" Chalk	" Nicklin
" Decker	" Sparkes
" Hiley	" Taylor, H. B.
" Kerr	" Wanstall
" Luckins	
" Macdonald	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Madsen	" Low
" McIntyre	" Russell

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Devries	Mr. Maher
" Gledson	" Pie

Resolved in the affirmative.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING.

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

OFFICIALS IN PARLIAMENT ACTS
AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (4.39 p.m.): I move—

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

Hon. members were informed at the introduction that the Bill merely makes provision for the appointment of an Acting Minister during the absence of a Minister from the State on duty. As members know, the law already provides for the appointment of Acting Ministers during the absence on sick leave of any Minister. When that was passed no provision was made for the appointment of a temporary Minister during the absence of a Minister on duty. The work of government, as I think hon. members realise, has grown very much more strenuous in recent years, and it would be overloading any Minister to ask him to carry on for any long period with two portfolios.

The Bill makes provision for the appointment as Acting Minister of a member of the House to act as member of the Executive Council and Minister of a department during my absence overseas. At the return of the Premier or the Minister who may be away, automatically the appointment ends and the Minister resumes his post.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) (4.40 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, in the amendment of the Act made previously

provision was made for the appointment of an Acting Minister in the event of the absence from duty of the Minister because of illness. We then agreed that it was necessary, in view of their heavy responsibility and the large amount of work being done by Ministers, to have this provision written into the Act. But at that time we did not visualise the circumstances that will arise in a day or so when the Premier leaves for Britain and Cabinet will be short by one member. In these circumstances I agree that such a provision is necessary—that in such circumstances as that an Acting Minister should be appointed and an allowance at the rate of £250, as provided in the Bill, should be paid.

There is a point I wish to raise in this connection and that is that the Bill is very wide in its scope. There is a possibility that the provision now being written into the Act will be abused. I do not suggest for one moment that it would be but it could be, the Bill being drafted as it is. For example, during a very short absence from the State of a Minister, say on a holiday tour or in the South, there would exist provision for the appointment of an Acting Minister and the payment of an allowance to him. It is questionable whether that is the purpose for which this amendment is proposed. I do not think that that practice would be followed but I should like the Premier to give the House an assurance on that matter because, as he well knows, as the Bill is at present that could happen.

I repeat that I do not think it would happen. We know the practice at present is that if a Minister is absent from the city carrying out duties in his electorate or is absent in the South on holidays or discharging ministerial duties there, the practice is for one of the other Ministers to carry on the activities of that department. That practice has worked very well in the past and I do not think any Minister has been overburdened with work as a result.

As I read the Bill at present, it makes provision that under circumstances such as that an Acting Minister could be appointed and the Acting Minister's salary could be paid to him. I should like the Premier to give an assurance, in view of the looseness of drafting on this occasion, that that practice will not be followed and that Acting Ministers will be appointed only in circumstances that fully warrant the appointment, such as the appointment of the hon. member for Merthyr during the absence of the Premier overseas for some weeks.

In connection with the Bill I would raise another point. Ministers have responsibilities, and ethical responsibilities, in carrying out their duties. This afternoon we had two very bad examples, I should say, of lack of ministerial ethics, inasmuch as the business of private members was ventilated in this Chamber. Mr. Speaker, if this practice is to continue members will lose confidence in Ministers when making representations to them—proper representations in regard to their constituents. I do not think it is right and certainly it is not in keeping with true ministerial ethics that the business of private members should

be bandied about from one side of this Chamber to the other. Representations by members to Ministers should be treated in confidence. They should not be made public property.

I hope that such a thing will never happen again in this House. We expect certain standards of Ministers of the Crown. We expect them to treat their responsibilities seriously, to regard their duties highly, and particularly to maintain a high standard of ministerial ethics. I hope that we shall never again see the business of private members being bandied about from one side of the House to the other by Ministers.

I trust that the Premier will clear up the point I have raised in connection with the appointment of Acting Ministers as the wide scope of the Bill as at present drafted leaves it open to abuse. I hope that he will give us an assurance that no Acting Minister will be appointed unless such appointment is fully justified.

Mr. HILEY (Logan) (4.46 p.m.): I approve of the principle contained in this very brief measure. The miracle to me is that this House has gone on all the years that it has without finding it necessary on an earlier occasion to do the very thing we are now being asked to do. That it has been possible during the infrequent occasions when overseas visits have taken place necessarily implies that some Minister has been asked to accept a double-banked responsibility of office. Weighing the responsibilities of ministerial office, it seems to me that a Minister who does his job conscientiously today, has his hands so full that to ask him to accept the responsibility of a second portfolio for any length of time is too great an imposition altogether; consequently, as I approve of the principle that if illness justifies it, so also should extended absence, I accept the measure.

I observe that in these days of fast travel the probability of overseas visits is unlikely to lessen but is, if anything, likely to increase. In these days when it is possible, in something under a week, to find yourself on the other side of the world, and when the deterrent of the burden that travel previously presented is somewhat less than it was, I should imagine that with the growing importance of some of the activities in this State more and more of our Ministers will find it necessary to pay visits overseas. Consequently, I feel that the principle that is simply set out in this measure commends itself to me and I intend to support the Bill.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (4.48 p.m.): I can assure the Leader of the Opposition that the power to appoint Acting Ministers is not likely to be used on the occasion of short visits of Ministers to the South. It takes a Minister a certain time to gain a knowledge of the working of a department and acting appointments for such short periods would be hardly worth while.

Visits of Ministers outside the State and within Australia are not now as long as they were during the days of rail travel, when it was frequently necessary to stay for

a while because there was a kind of formula to go through with courtesy calls. In those days, if a Premier visited another State he had the obligation of putting his name down at Government House and waiting for an invitation for dinner, then he would call on the Premier of the State he was visiting, indeed he would go through a series of courtesy engagements associated with the office. In the last decade, however, visits have become so frequent and there has been so much need for conferences between Ministers from all States that all these things have been discarded. The rush of work now makes it impossible to observe any of the old formalities that were at one time associated with visits of Ministers from one State to another. Visits are short and the appointment of an Acting Minister while any Minister is on holidays is ruled out by the wording of the Act, which provides that the appointment must be for a time during the absence of a Minister in the course of his duties.

The matter raised by the Leader of the Opposition is important, and I should like to remind him that life is a mirror—if you smile on it it smiles back at you. The Leader of the Opposition heard one of the members of his Party make the statement that I was bribed to bring down this measure; he made no protest about it.

Mr. Sparkes: You misunderstood him.

Mr. HANLON: No, he didn't, and the hon. member cannot help him. The hon. member said that I was bribed and the Chairman had to call him to order and stop him from making offensive reflections.

The hon. member for Nanango said that I had descended to the low tactics of letting people out of gaol. That is not true. I do not know what influenced the interjection by the hon. member for Cooroora but evidently it was insulting to the Secretary for Public Works, who replied accordingly. If hon. members opposite want to receive courtesy from Ministers, surely they have the obligation to extend courtesy to Ministers. That goes without saying. I do not like these things to happen. I took pains to point out that the hon. member for Nanango had done nothing wrong in doing what he did, as it was in accord with his work as the representative of the people of his constituency. But it was no more right to suggest that I was doing something low.

We sometimes forget the man on the other side who also is entitled to courtesy. I hope there will be an improvement in the manners of debate and I join with the Leader of the Opposition in trusting that these things will not occur again.

Motion (Mr. Hanlon) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

The House adjourned at 4.54 p.m.