

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 31 MARCH 1949

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

QUESTIONS.

SETTLEMENT OF RETURNED SOLDIERS.

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR (Hamilton) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

“In view of the emphatic contradiction by a ‘Courier-Mail’ correspondent on 30 March to the statement attributed to him which claimed the Queensland Government has placed 2,897 returned men on farms since the war and which appeared in the ‘Courier-Mail’ on Tuesday, 29 March, will he inform the House—

“1. Was he correctly reported?

“2. If so, were the 2,897 returned men settled on land opened up by the Government as soldier settlements and under similar circumstances to the 94 who have so far been successful in balloting for blocks?

“3. If not, how many of the 2,897 received benefits under the Government’s Soldier Settlement Scheme other than advances from the Agricultural Bank acting in accordance with its normal lending conditions?”

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby) replied—

“It is Government policy to place every eligible returned man on the land. Various forms of assistance towards this end have been adopted by the Government. To date 2,897 returned men have been placed on grazing selections, dairying and mixed farms and sugar lands as a result of this generous and sympathetic policy. This valuable work is still proceeding.”

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

“In reference to his recent statement regarding soldier settlement in this State in which he included ex-service men who had received loans from the Agricultural Bank as having been settled on the land in this State, will he kindly supply the following information regarding soldier settlement as from its inception after the last war to 28 February last, viz. (1) the total number of ex-service men approved as suitable applicants; (2) the number of ex-service men and their total acreage, respectively, under the following headings:—(a) actually allotted mixed farms, (b) actually allotted sugar farms, and (c) who have secured grazing selections under the priority provisions of the Act?”

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby) replied—

“See answer given Mr. H. B. Taylor, M.L.A., the hon. member for Hamilton.”

SUPPLY OF BARBED AND WIRE NETTING.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) asked the Premier—

“1. Is it a fact that the Government has recently compulsorily acquired over 3,000 coils of barbed wire from Queensland merchants, and, if so, what is the total quantity?

“2. How many coils of such wire have actually been supplied to soldier settlers?”

“3. How many coils have been supplied to the Queensland-British Food Corporation?”

“4. Has the quota of wire netting for Queensland recently been reduced, and, if so, to what extent?”

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca) replied—

“1. Part IV of The Building Operations and Timber and Building Materials Control Act of 1945, covering building materials control, has not been proclaimed; consequently, the Queensland Government cannot compulsorily acquire wire under this Act. Distribution is made by merchants under a voluntary scheme and delivery is normally effected according to date of order. It would seem that the hon. member’s question may possibly have relation to the purchase of wire by the Land Administration Board, through the State Stores Board, for the use of soldier settlers in soldier settlement areas. In June, last year, it was found that Rylands Bros. (Aust.) Pty. Ltd., Sydney, were unable to supply outstanding orders for 3,384 coils of barbed wire required for the above purpose. Officers of the Department of Public Lands and the State Stores Board had discussions with the Queensland Pastoral Supplies Ltd. and arranged for them to take over the orders in question from Rylands to be delivered over a period of nine months. This merely constituted a transfer of orders from one company to another to relieve pressure on Rylands so that in actual fact there was no reduction in the quota available for other users in Queensland.”

“2. See Answer to 1.”

“3. As no wire was compulsorily acquired, no such wire has been supplied to the Queensland-British Food Corporation, which purchases its requirements on the open market.”

“4. No.”

ROAD TRANSPORT OF GALVANISED IRON.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) asked the Premier—

“In view of the fact that all galvanised iron required in Queensland could be obtained if allowed to be brought by road transport, and at a price very much lower than that for imported iron, will be reconsider the Government’s refusal to allow iron to be obtained by Queensland merchants by that form of transport?”

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca) replied—

“The Government does not refuse to allow iron to be transported to Brisbane

by road. The Department of the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works has been and still is issuing approvals to any merchant to move such iron by road from Newcastle upon production of authority from the Brisbane office of the manufacturers of this material. The question of passing on to the consumer increased costs by reason of transport of goods by rail or road as against sea carriage has been raised on a number of occasions. In general principle, the Government has taken the view that the added costs should not be passed on to the public and that merchants, if they desire to use alternative means of transport, should be required, wherever practicable, to absorb such additional costs. As the hon. member will, of course, readily appreciate, where goods are brought by various forms of transport their identity is lost so that if costs were allowed to be passed on an unscrupulous trader could secure the highest price in respect of all his goods, whether brought by road, rail or sea. The production of galvanised iron in Australia is insufficient to meet the total requirements of the Commonwealth. Queensland receives a reasonable quota of Australia's production, and this quota is allocated to various parts of this State on an equitable basis."

BUILDING PERMIT FOR QUEENSLAND PASTORAL SUPPLIES COMPANY.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

"1. In reference to the fact that the Commonwealth Government recently compulsorily acquired Denham's building in Roma Street, with the result that the machinery used by the Queensland Pastoral Supplies Company for production of poultry feed in that building had to be removed, why was this company refused a permit to extend their own building for the purpose of installing such machinery and continuing the manufacture of poultry food that is so badly needed?

"2. In view of the facts indicated in (1), why was a permit recently granted by his department for the erection of a large garage in Raff Street, Brisbane, necessitating the demolition of four houses?

"3. In view of the fact that if the company mentioned in (1) hereof is not allowed to build premises for the machinery in question, it will be sold for removal to the South, will he have the refusal of the required permit reconsidered?"

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

"1. On 16 December, 1948, the Managing Director of Queensland Pastoral Supplies Pty. Ltd. was advised by the Building Control Division that he could renew his application for a building permit when the Commonwealth gave an indication of when they proposed to take over Denham's buildings. No communication has been received by my Department from the Managing Director since that date which

implies that so far the Commonwealth has given no indication of when they require occupancy of Denham's buildings."

"2. No permit was granted for the erection of a large garage in Raff Street, Brisbane, involving the demolition of four houses. From enquiries I have had made it has been ascertained that the building referred to by the hon. member is the new factory of the General Rubber Company Ltd. I have the permission of the General Manager of that company to advise the hon. member that three houses were involved and not four; that they were not demolished; that the company moved the three houses from what is an industrial area to more congenial surroundings in the suburbs; that the houses were renovated and improved; that no increased rental has been charged by the company to the tenants; that the tenants continued in occupancy of the houses during their removal and that during the period of removal, which occupied eight or nine weeks, the tenants were not charged rent. The permit for the erection of the General Rubber Company's new factory was issued in 1947, and one of the main factors influencing the issue of the permit was that the company was establishing a new industry for reconditioning agricultural and industrial tractors and graders which would be of great advantage to the farming community. This process of manufacture had previously been done only in the Southern States which involved considerable inconvenience to the farming community in Queensland."

"3. See answer to No. 1."

APPOINTMENTS TO INDUSTRIAL COURT BENCH.

Mr. LOW (Cooroora) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

"Is it intended to make an additional appointment or additional appointments to the Bench of the Industrial Court as provided in the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts Amendment Act of 1948? If so, when?"

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

"Yes. The matter is at present having consideration."

DISORDER IN HOUSE; MR. SPEAKER'S CALL.

Hon. members interjecting prior to the asking of a question—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. members again interjecting—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I desire to draw the attention of hon. members to the fact that when "Order" is called, on occasions some hon. members do not take notice of the call. I intend to see that the call to order is observed on every occasion.

PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

The Companies Acts, 1931 to 1942 (17 March).

The Landlord and Tenant Act of 1948 (17, 24 March).

Order in Council and Regulations under the Primary Producers' organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1946 (17 March).

Orders in Council (2) under the Profiteering Prevention Act of 1948 (24 March).

Regulations under the Labour and Industry Act of 1946 (24 March).

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BILL.

COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1 to 3, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—Number of members of Legislative Assembly—

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) (11.12 a.m.): This is the clause that specifies the number of members of the Legislative Assembly. We are of the opinion that the number provided for is greater than is necessary, and would not bring about the result that the Premier stressed so often in the course of this debate—that there should not be in any electoral districts division a preponderance of representation in the Brisbane area as opposed to the remainder of the State. I move the following amendment:—

“On page 2, line 47, omit the word—
‘seventy-five’

and insert in lieu thereof the word—
‘sixty-five.’”

On the introduction of this measure one of the main points made by the Premier was that if there was a redistribution under the present Electoral Districts Act, with one quota, the representation of Brisbane would be increased tremendously and the representation of the country decreased. On examining that statement we find the Premier to be entirely wrong. If the redistribution was made under the Act, using the margins provided for in it, one-fifth above and one-fifth below the quota, with sixty-five members as proposed by this amendment, there would be an equitable redistribution in Queensland.

In endeavouring to explain the reason for introducing this Bill to bring about what he termed proper representation in this State, the Premier used some very specious arguments, one being that the old Country Party and the old Conservative Party opposed every electoral reform, that they opposed the principle of one man, one vote, the adult franchise, and votes for women.

Mr. Hanlon: That is right.

Mr. NICKLIN: On examination of this question we find that all these reforms the Premier was speaking of were made as far back as 1905, which is approximately 12 years before the Country Party came into existence. Yet the Premier has the effrontery, in an endeavour to bolster up a rotten case, to blame the Country Party for opposing these electoral reforms. It is interesting to note also that although these reforms were introduced in this State 12 years before the Country Party came into existence, they were introduced 10 years before the Labour Party came into existence in this State.

Mr. Hanlon: What rot!

Mr. NICKLIN: It was 10 years before the Labour Government came into office in this State.

Mr. Hanlon: You are saying something different now.

Mr. NICKLIN: I am correcting myself. It was 10 years before the Labour Government came into power.

Mr. Hanlon: That is not true. You do not know your history.

Mr. NICKLIN: It is true. A Labour Government were elected in this State in 1915; these reforms were made in 1905, which, according to my arithmetic, makes it 10 years earlier. Whether the Premier's arithmetic makes it any different, I do not know, but 10 years before a Labour Government were elected in this State these electoral reforms were already in operation.

Mr. Larcombe: As a result of Labour's agitation.

Mr. NICKLIN: What nonsense! If we examine Labour's contribution to so-called electoral reforms in this State, we find that it was through the electoral reforms they introduced in legislation in this Parliament that gerrymandering of seats was made possible, that it became possible for ghosts to be placed on rolls and for a minority Government to control the Treasury benches of the State. That is Labour's contribution to electoral reform in this State prior to this measure.

Now Labour has another sin to bear in connection with so-called electoral reform in this State in that it is endeavouring to legislate to make its occupancy of the Treasury benches absolutely impregnable and to accentuate still further the present position, under which they hold office on a minority vote.

Let us examine the effect of the amendment I have moved. If the present electoral machinery was used we could, by increasing the number of members in this State by three, give a more equitable distribution of the electorates than is possible under the legislation we have under consideration. The present Act provides for one quota for all electorates. It provides also for a margin of one-fifth either way. It instructs the commissioners—and this is important—that in fixing the electorates they are to take note

of the area of proposed districts that do not comprise any part of a city. It will be noticed that in this legislation zones are arranged in such a way that they will give a decided electoral advantage to the Government in country cities, which will have a smaller quota than that allocated to the city of Brisbane.

Mr. H. B. Taylor: That is why they call the city of Dalby a coastal town.

Mr. NICKLIN: With the quota and margins under the present Act, and the creation of three new electorates, as I suggest, increasing the total to 65, we could give adequate and fair representation to all sections of the State. I take the 1948 rolls as a basis for my argument, because they are used in arriving at the proposed electoral zones.

The total on the 1948 rolls are 653,903. The quota under the present Act would be 10,546, the minimum 8,437, and the maximum 12,655. Take a redistribution on that basis, giving the metropolitan seats the maximum of 12,655, other cities and surroundings an average of 10,100—which is 446 under the quota—and the country electorates an average of 8,500—slightly over the minimum. What result would be achieved by using that system, provided for, as I say, under the present electoral machinery?

Taking the metropolitan area again with 20 seats and an average for each of 12,655, we get a total of 253,100. The actual enrolment figure is 253,284. What nearer could you get to equal distribution than that?

Let us turn now to the other cities and their surroundings, and take Ipswich, Bundaberg, Gympie, Maryborough, Toowoomba, Warwick, Rockhampton, Mackay, Charters Towers, Townsville and Cairns—11 in all—which are handled on a differential basis under this legislation. Treat them equally, as they should be treated. They are all cities and should be entitled to equal representation and equal consideration. Take an average for each of 10,100 and you would get a total of 111,100. The actual enrolment figure is 111,523, almost equal to it, as in the metropolitan area.

Then take the remainder of the country electorates, and apply the average of 8,500 to each. We get a total of 289,000, against the actual enrolment of 289,366, again almost an equal allocation of the total enrolments for the country electorates.

That is a fair redistribution and a redistribution that could be carried out under the present Act without an unreasonable departure—mark these words, Mr. Mann—from the democratic principle of one vote, one value. That is the principle to which hon. members opposite were such vehement adherents in 1931, when they stood up on this side of the Chamber and blackguarded the then Government up hill and down dale because that Government were doing something that they said took away this vital principle for which they stood—one vote, one value. Since that time, however, hon. members opposite have turned a complete political somersault and the principle of

one vote, one value does not matter a tinker's cuss, because on that principle they would lose the control of the government of this State. They want to retain their position, as they hold it now, on a minority vote, after the passage of this legislation, which they will force through the House as a result of the majority they gained in this Chamber because of the electoral position that existed at the last State election. They will be able to keep themselves on the Treasury benches on a total vote of well under 40 per cent. of the electors of this State.

Is that democracy? Is that the condition we want to see existing in this community of ours, this democracy to which the Premier and hon. members opposite have given lip-service time and time again? When it comes to a principle where they are in danger of losing the Treasury benches democracy and democratic principles go overboard.

Now they introduce the iniquitous measure that we have today. Under the present Act a redistribution could be made that would give adequate cover and adequate representation to the people without any unreasonable departure from the democratic principles that at least we on this side of the Chamber stand for. The electorates could be redistributed so that the greatest difference in value would be no more than 50 per cent., as against the possibility under the Bill that a vote in the Zone 4 will have 3.36 times the value of a vote in the Zone 1.

During the debate on the second reading an hon. member opposite said that a vote in Zone 4 should be equal to 10 votes in Zone 1. He was not satisfied with the difference of 3½ times the value, but wanted 10 to 1. Yet hon. members opposite claim to be democrats and stand for democratic principles. Do not let us forget that when the 1931 Electoral Districts Act was under discussion hon. members opposite expressed great disapproval with the alleged departure then being made from the democratic principle of one vote, one value. Now they do not agree with that principle and argue that one of their votes should be equal to 10 of ours. It does not matter a tinker's cuss to them as long as the Bill will mean their return to the Treasury benches.

I have moved my amendment because I maintain that I have shown from the figures I have given that a total of 65 members would be adequate to cover the needs of the State for increased representation. We have agreed that there is need for electoral redistribution. That has been evident for some time and action should have been taken under the existing Act to rectify the position long before this. At the last elections 22 electorates in this State were either over or under the margins laid down in the Electoral Districts Act and action should have been taken under that Act to rectify the position before the last elections. But no. Hon. members opposite thought that as things were at the last elections the electorates would suit them and the results show that they did, because we find that they are on the Treasury benches on a minority vote of the people.

The principle contained in the existing Act and the principle I have applied in fitting in 65 members in this State gives due recognition to the principle the Premier enunciated so vehemently here when he explained that the object of the Bill was to see that country electorates should have some advantage over some of the closely settled areas and city areas of the State. " Premier alleges that he has given effect to that principle in the Bill but on an analysis of it we come to realise that the advantage that the city has over country districts has not actually been decreased, but rather has it been emphasised, rather has it been increased.

Mr. Aikens: The country will get a more rotten deal under this Bill than it is getting now.

Mr. NICKLIN: Of course it will, and that is the intention of hon. members opposite. They care not about country representation. All they care about is to maintain their control of the Treasury benches. As I have said previously, this Bill is designed to give them a stranglehold on those benches.

Mr. Sparkes: They do not care what they do to get that stranglehold.

Mr. NICKLIN: Unfortunately, but when the people wake up to the provisions of this Bill they will give their answer in no uncertain manner. Doubtless hon. members opposite said in Caucus, "We shall be right now." As I said on the second reading, hon. members opposite forget that Australians like a fair deal and when they think that something is being put over that does not give a fair deal to all sections of the community they usually show their disapproval in a very marked way. I am game to forecast that immediately the people realise the implications behind this legislation, and when they get the opportunity, which is theirs from time to time, to get a pencil in their hand and mark the ballot paper they will show their disapproval of it in no uncertain way. Although we are going to start in the electoral race very heavily weighted, and a very long way behind scratch, we are not losing heart because we are conscious of the inherent desire of the average Australian for a fair deal. When they know that this Bill does not give a fair deal to all, they will show their disapproval of the party that has so little respect for democratic principles as to introduce a measure of this kind. I submit the amendment to the consideration of the Committee.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (11.33 a.m.): I listened with a good deal of interest to the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition in which he gave an exposition of the history of the State politically and I also listened to his pretence of the support of the principle one man, one vote. Although he has told this Committee that he is a supporter of the principle of one vote, one value, I doubt whether he is prepared to go out and tell the people that. Will he go out and tell the country people that he is prepared to allow this State to grow into a State governed by the city of Brisbane?

The hon. member evidently has no knowledge of the 1931 Act, when he says that it provides all that is necessary for the redistribution of electorates today. A redistribution could not take place today under the 1931 Act. When our opponents were the Government they showed that they did not have a long-sighted policy and were incapable of forward planning, for they put a provision in that Act which prevented a redistribution from taking place when population increased to any extent, because that Act limits the quota to 8,029. If we distribute the electorates of the State today into 65 electorates, each having a quota of 8,029, we should have more than 35,000 electors without any representation at all. That is to say, part of the country would be excluded from representation altogether. The number of electors in the State exceeds that number multiplied by 65 by that number. Consequently, it is clear that the hon. gentleman has not studied the Act.

Then the hon. gentleman goes on to talk about what his predecessors in this Parliament did for democracy. He quotes the women's franchise and the abolition of plural voting as having been brought about by the Morgan Government.

Mr. Nicklin: I did not quote any Government at all. I quoted the year.

Mr. HANLON: He quoted the year.

Mr. Nicklin: I said 1905.

Mr. HANLON: It was done by the Morgan Government. Fifty per cent. of the members of this House at that time were Labour members. Morgan and his small party agreed, in order that Morgan should be Premier, to do something for Labour. He did what I am always telling hon. members opposite they must do if this country was so unfortunate as to have them form a coalition Government—Morgan had to sacrifice principles to retain support of the Labour Party. The condition under which the Labour Party agreed to support Morgan was that these reforms should be made. They were made, because that was the condition on which the Labour members in this Parliament—the largest party in the House—agreed to support Sir Arthur Morgan. Hon. members should think back a little bit.

The hon. member went on to say that these things were done before there was a Country Party. We know quite well they had not that name at that time; they travelled under some other name at that time, but they have changed their name that frequently that it does not matter. They have changed their name so frequently that although I have been interested in politics for over 40 years I could not possibly mention the names under which hon. members opposite have travelled. On the other hand there is not a member on this side who is not a member of the Australian Labour Party. Since this party was formed there has never been any change in its name; having nothing to hide it does not have to change its name. Hon. members opposite do not even make a contribution to revenue when they change their name; they do not do it by deed poll; they get up in

the morning and announce that they have a new name. The hon. member for Sandgate has had four titles. The hon. member for Windsor has been under three titles in this Assembly. He came in as an Independent, then he was a Queensland People's Party man—not a Liberal—and now he is a Liberal. In the short period he has been here he has changed his name three times. What is the good of trying to prove their innocence by saying that at that time they travelled under a different name?

Mr. Pie: I would rather do that than be dependent on the Communist vote, as you are.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member is annoyed.

Mr. Pie: I am not. You are the greatest hypocrite in this House.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member has changed his title three times.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I cannot allow the hon. member to get away with that. He said the Premier was a hypocrite. That is offensive and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. Aikens: You cannot say that about a Labour man but a Labour man can say it about you.

The CHAIRMAN: I will deal with the hon. member afterwards.

Mr. Pie: The Premier does not take offence at it. Are you his protector?

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to obey my order. I ask him to withdraw that remark.

Mr. Pie: At the request of the Chairman but not at the request of the Premier I withdraw it.

The CHAIRMAN: Do I understand the hon. gentleman has withdrawn that remark?

Mr. Pie: At the request of the Chairman of Committees but not at the request of the Premier.

The CHAIRMAN: I now ask the hon. member for Mundingburra to withdraw the reflection he made on the Chair when he said that remark could be made by a member of the Labour Party but not by hon. members opposite.

Mr. Aikens: I know that, like Brassington, you are under orders in this debate, so I will withdraw it.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to withdraw it; it is a reflection on the Chair. I ask him to withdraw it unreservedly.

Mr. Aikens: I intend to stay in the House till I am ready to go; I withdraw unreservedly.

Mr. Sparkes interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Aubigny to obey my call to order. If he continues to interrupt I will name him.

Mr. HANLON: Hon. members opposite having a bad case—

Mr. Aikens interjected.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member is quite ready, undoubtedly, to make a tremendous amount of noise. If he would give a little more attention to the work of this Parliament, give more constructive criticism of matters and make less row, he would be giving better service to the people who sent him here.

Mr. Aikens: You are not game to stand over us yourself and you get the Speaker to do it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the hon. member for Mundingburra that if he continues to interrupt I will name him.

Mr. Aikens: All right, I will stop here.

Mr. HANLON: Hon. members opposite, having no case, either on the previous reading or at this stage, are indulging in interjections and abuse.

The Leader of the Opposition is again completely unconscious of the political history of the State although he has been a long time in this Chamber and one would have thought he would have known something about the political history of Queensland. I will prove that he knows nothing about it. First of all, he said that all these things were introduced before there was a Labour Party, showing that he did not know.

Mr. Sparkes: He corrected that.

Mr. Pie: That is hypocrisy in its worst form. (Opposition interjections.)

Mr. HANLON: I would ask hon. members to listen to me. He then went on and corrected himself and said, "Before there was a Labour Government."

Mr. Sparkes: That is all right. Do you never make a slip of the tongue?

Mr. HANLON: That is not true, either.

Mr. Muller: Of course it is true.

Mr. HANLON: There they go again! Hon. members opposite are entirely unconscious of political history. There was a Labour Government in this State in 1899. Hon. members opposite do not take the slightest interest in the political history of the State and consequently are never capable of giving reasonable information. (Opposition interjections.) There was a Labour Government in this State in 1899 but of course they were not aware of it.

Mr. Muller: You were not in office in 1905, were you?

Mr. HANLON: We were composing the Government of this State.

Mr. Muller: You were not.

Mr. HANLON: We were, but the hon. member is completely unconscious of it.

Mr. SPARKES: I rise to a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition did not name any Government; he said the year "1905" and I ask the Premier to accept that.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member said "before there was a Labour Government in Queensland." He corrected his first statement. First of all he said "before there was a Labour Party," then he admitted that it was wrong. Then he said, "before there was a Labour Government." That also is wrong. There was a Labour Government in this Parliament in 1899. The hon. member does not know his political history.

The real point at issue is this: if the amendment was accepted and a redistribution made on the basis of 65 seats with one quota for the State we could have 25 seats in the metropolitan area and 40 in the country. But as the population of the State increases, on the basis in the present Act, that proportion in the city would have to grow. What we are doing is to prevent more than 24 members from representing the metropolitan area in this Parliament—no matter how the population grows, the metropolitan representation is restricted to 24. Supposing the population went to 500,000 electors there would be only 24 members in the House from the metropolitan area. That is what we are trying to do—to prevent the metropolitan area from being the controlling factor of this State. Hon. members must have seen the tendency in the world in the last 30 or 40 years.

Mr. Pie: Of Governments ruling on a minority.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member can bark and growl as much as he likes. He is not displaying interest in the standard of the debate by making these continual interjections.

The tendency under modern industrial conditions is for the people to congregate and create larger cities.

Mr. Sparkes: Because all the amenities are in the cities.

Mr. HANLON: It was only this morning that the hon. member was bemoaning the fact that barbed wire was being bought for soldiers.

Mr. Sparkes: You would say anything. (Opposition interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. SPARKES: I rise to a point of order. I have never made any suggestion of soldiers and barbed wire. I merely asked how much they got. I wanted to find out how much they give them. I ask the Premier to accept that statement.

Mr. HANLON: His question was based on a complaint that the Government had acquired a certain quantity of barbed wire. The only relationship we can find to any barbed wire acquired by the Government was that acquired by soldier settlers.

This tendency for the population of the cities to grow will continue. It is obvious that where you have large congregations of population more and more industries will be established. In the first place, when an industry is being established the person establishing it looks for an immediate market.

The next step is to look at the possible number of employees that will be available for his factory or works. That has created the tendency to concentrate more and more people in the larger cities. Some people see an opportunity of getting in early in outside districts, like the hon. member for Windsor.

Mr. Pie: Do you object to my going to Townsville?

Mr. HANLON: I wish the hon. member would let me speak. These rude people will interrupt!

The hon. member for Windsor told us the other day that he was establishing a branch factory in Townsville, and we all congratulated him on his vision and foresight and on his confidence that the work of this Government was going to expand and develop Townsville and the northern part of the State. (Opposition interjections.) If the story he was telling about the effects of this measure were true, he would not be going to Townsville.

The Leader of the Opposition gets up and talks about one vote, one value, but he does not mean it. He is not game to go out and tell the electors that story. He will not get up at the next election and say, "If we are returned to power we will immediately establish the principle of one vote, one value in this State," and not one of his followers will do it. He is only putting up a sham fight on this question this morning. He should understand that under the present quota in the present Act a redistribution is impossible, that you could not possibly divide the State into 62 electorates of 10,790 without leaving many thousands of people out of consideration altogether and disfranchised.

Furthermore, the hon. member takes no precaution at all against the contingency that the continual growth of the capital city may lead to an increase in its representation here and thus strangle the interests of the country. I am satisfied, wherever I go in this State, to tell the story that this Government are prepared to see that decent representation is given to the far-out parts of the State.

This morning the hon. gentleman castigated the hon. member for Gregory for saying that in his opinion the man boundary-riding at Birdsville was worth 10 votes to 1 of somebody in the city. It is quite possible that he would be worth 10 votes to 1 of some people in the city; I am not going to say I would support that idea, but I am going to say that the man riding the boundary out in the Birdsville district is doing a greater job for this State than a terrible lot of people who are living closer into the city.

Mr. Sparkes: Would you say he is doing a greater job than the dairy farmer or the sugar-farmer?

Mr. HANLON: Personally, I think he is, if he is working further out in the outback. I do not care how much money a man owns, if he lives and works out at Birdsville he is facing a harder life than the man closer in.

Mr. Sparkes: You said he was doing a better job than the dairy farmer.

Mr. HANLON: I am going to say that the people who are going to save this country are the people who are going to go out into those places and work. This country will never be saved by the group of people who live within a hop, step and jump of the capital city. I give them all credit in the world for the wealth they are producing and the contribution they are making to the wealth of the community, but that is not enough; somebody has to go out into the far outback.

Mr. Sparkes: And those are the ones you people run down. You are never tired of hounding them down.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member is just being sore and making stupid remarks. I say definitely that the cattle man working out there is doing a better job for the State than the cattle man working within a reasonable distance of the city.

Mr. Sparkes: Yet you are prepared to take his cattle.

Mr. HANLON: He will be paid for them.

Mr. Sparkes: Your price.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask hon. members to allow the debate to continue without interruption. The "Hansard" staff will have great difficulty in doing their work and hon. members will complain if their proofs are not correct.

Mr. HANLON: More people will have to go out there and we shall have to appreciate their efforts in going out there and give them an indication that the Parliament of Queensland appreciates their courage in going out and pioneering that country. I am not a bit afraid to stand up in the city and say that I believe that 4,700—or whatever the number is—in the far-out West of Queensland are entitled to a representative in this Chamber although we are saying that 10,700 odd in the city should have a representative.

Mr. Muller: That is hot air and you do not mean a word of it.

Mr. HANLON: I am saying it and what I am saying is being published in the Press and will be read throughout my electorate. What is worrying hon. members opposite is that they will get a bad flogging when they get back to their electorates over the attitude they have taken here.

Mr. THEODORE (Herbert) (11.52 a.m.): I want to register my protest against the motive behind the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. It is an attempt to deprive the people in parts of this country of representation, people who today are not being adequately represented owing to the circumstances and conditions obtaining there. In that connection I speak of the distances to be traversed by their Parliamentary representative. I can speak truthfully of my own electorate and I say that there are some parts in my electorate which I am rarely able to visit owing to the distance to be travelled and because very often, when time is available, weather conditions prevent me from reaching them. On a redistribution those

parts would go to an adjoining electorate, with great advantage to the people concerned. At present it is a great disadvantage to me to reach them. And I might say that the places that would be attached to another electorate are those from which I get a very substantial majority. They do not have large populations but they return a substantial majority to me. It is not so very long since we had 72 members in the Legislative Assembly; we carried another House at the time, although I say that we are now getting a better or just as good a deal as any other State without the Upper House. The country has been saved the cost of and the interference with the will of the people by that excrement, the Legislative Council.

I resent the attempts made by hon. members opposite to exaggerate and distort the motives of the Government in introducing the Bill to increase the number of members of Parliament. The object of the measure is to give better representation to the distant parts of the State and this is no new principle in Australia. Zoning was adopted in Western Australia as far back as 1904, where one member represented an electorate with not quite 300 voters. They were squatters too, not the ordinary workers, because the working men were forced to following a nomadic life. I was one of them. I was engaged in prospecting. We had no fixed place of abode and so we found it difficult to have our names on the rolls. Still, the Western Australian Government of the time realised that they had to give representation to people living in those distant places; although the population was small the area of the country was large. That principle is still recognised in Western Australia where I believe they still have the zoning system. That principle is embodied in this Bill. Its object is to give due recognition to the remote parts of the State. I am satisfied that the Bill will help in the implementation of the Government's policy of decentralisation. We must do all we can to populate and develop the remote areas of the State and so provide for security.

Mr. Sparkes: Do you think that an increase of three members will populate the West?

Mr. THEODORE: I am not contending that the population will be directly increased by the addition of three members, but the additional representation will enable those parts of the State to exercise a more forceful influence in Parliament than is possible under the existing system. The Government have a tremendous programme of work that will have to receive very close consideration in the near future and the intention of the Government is to extend some benefits to the outback parts of the State.

Mr. WANSTALL (Toowong) (11.59 a.m.): I rise to support the amendment and in due course I shall declare my attitude towards it. Before doing so, I desire to refer, as I did on Tuesday last in reference to his other speech, to the effect created by the speech delivered this morning by the Premier. Again he has created the

atmosphere in which this debate turned on Tuesday. Apparently he is able to get away with calling the whole of the Opposition hypocrites and developing an argument—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Hilton): Order!

Mr. WANSTALL: I am replying to the two points the Premier made.

Mr. Hanlon: I did not call anyone a hypocrite.

Mr. WANSTALL: We will see about that. He first of all accused the Leader of the Opposition of plain ignorance of the truth with respect to the political history of the State, and of pretending to be a supporter of the principle of one vote, one value. If that does not constitute a charge of hypocrisy I do not know what does. Then the Premier proceeded to impute improper motives to the Leader of the Opposition in moving the amendment.

Mr. Hanlon: What improper motives did I impute?

Mr. WANSTALL: He imputed the improper motive of insincerity.

Mr. Hanlon: What improper motive did I impute against the Leader of the Opposition in moving the amendment?

Mr. WANSTALL: The hon. gentleman stated that the Leader of the Opposition was not sincere. Before I develop my argument I want the Committee to note the tactics adopted by the Premier in order that it might see the cause for the turn of the debate that took place last Tuesday. The Premier glories in the fact that the Australian Labour Party had never changed its name. The name does not matter; it is the principles and ideals of a party that do really matter. Note the principles and ideals of the Labour party. It has pledged itself to Socialism. I want to remind the Committee what that arch-priest of Socialism, Josef Stalin, said a few days ago. He told his inner circle, his Caucus as it were, that the time had arrived when Socialism had been carried as far as it was possible to carry it and that they were to take the natural step from Socialism to Communism, which was the next step from Socialism. Those are the words of Josef Stalin, as published throughout the Press of the world. They show the close link-up of the policy of the party led by the Premier with that of Josef Stalin. Those are the real things that matter, not the name under which the Government might be masquerading, the name of Labour.

Mr. Roberts: Why is your party financing the Commos in the Brisbane City Council election?

Mr. PIE: Mr. Hilton, I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Nundah interjected that our party was financing the Communists in the Brisbane City Council election. That is untrue and objectionable to me and I ask that he withdraw the statement.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Windsor has not the call at the moment.

Mr. PIE: I rise to a point of order.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I rule that there is no point of order.

Mr. Pie: You rule that there is no point of order.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Pie: Good!

Mr. WANSTALL: I was speaking when the interjection was made and I did not hear it, or I should have raised the point of order taken by the hon. member for Windsor. I now ask you, Mr. Hilton, to direct the hon. member for Nundah to accept our denial that our party is financing the Communists in the Brisbane City Council election.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I did not hear the interjection made by the hon. member for Nundah.

Mr. WANSTALL: I am telling you of it now.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I want to remind hon. members that if the debate is to proceed in an orderly manner they will have to confine their remarks to relevancies. (Opposition interjections.)

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. ROBERTS: In reply—

Mr. Pie: A point of order has been raised.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I want to hear what the hon. member for Nundah has to say.

Mr. ROBERTS: I beg to inform the Committee that I interjected when the hon. member for Toowong was speaking and said there was some link between the Australian Labour Party and Communists and Stalin and I did say what is objected to by the hon. member for Windsor. I am only too pleased to withdraw it.

Mr. Pie: I had a point of order. That should have happened before.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Hilton): I ruled that there was no point of order. If the hon. member continues to reflect on the Chair I shall have no option but to deal with him in the manner prescribed under the Standing Orders.

Mr. WANSTALL: It is refreshing to know that the Standing Orders will be enforced. I am glad the hon. member for Nundah was honourable enough to deal with that matter.

When the Premier ceased attacking the Opposition he made one point. That argument was this: it would be impossible to distribute the seats on the basis of the amendment because that would result in lopsided representation. That argument deliberately ignored the fact that the quotas in this

Bill allow for a variation of 20 per cent. The Premier based the whole argument on the assumption that there was to be a flat quota. He knew that was not in the amendment.

Mr. Hanlon interjected.

Mr. WANSTALL: The Premier now parades as a slavish apostle of the principle of one vote, one value. He is not able to encompass the reasonable tolerance of variation from the quota. His is the most ridiculous and puerile argument that has been advanced—that one vote, one value must have a literal interpretation from which there is no divergence. That is an absurdity and was never advanced by this side. My leader, on the introduction and second-reading stage, said that one vote, one value could be taken as the beacon on the horizon towards which we steered but we should not be bound to steer fixedly towards it, that there should be a tolerance that permitted a divergence to deal with adjustments.

Mr. Hanlon: You are diverging from it.

Mr. WANSTALL: The Premier is diverging from it to the extent that he is going into reverse gear.

Let me remind the Committee that almost identical sentiments to those expressed by the hon. member for Logan were expressed by the Leader of the Opposition. The hon. gentleman said that his amendment would advance the principle of one vote, one value without unreasonable departure from it—from the democratic principle. Therein lies the coincidence between the view expressed by my party and the Country Party; none of us will tolerate an unreasonable departure from it. We will not insist on literal compliance with that principle. Nothing will convince me that the Premier did not know well that he was putting up an Aunt Sally or drawing a red herring across the trail in answering the argument for the amendment by assuming that it was based on slavish adherence to the literal meaning of the one vote, one value.

Reference was made in the earlier speeches to the proposition put up by the hon. member for Gregory, that a shearer at Birdsville was entitled to 10 votes compared with the city worker's one vote, with which the Premier agreed. The hon. member is even going further than Mussolini was willing to go. Mussolini introduced an electoral law that had the effect of giving certain sections of the community six to one voting strength. He introduced a law under which it was possible for Fascists to remain in by getting 66 per cent. of the seats in return for 25 per cent. of the votes which meant 75 per cent. of the votes returned only 33 per cent. of the seats.

I am indeed amazed to find that the hon. member for Gregory is prepared to out-Musso Musso. I am not amazed or surprised to know the Premier is prepared to out-Musso Musso, but the hon. member for Gregory, for whose views I have always had a great amount of respect, I am certain is

not aware of the ramifications of the principle he supports. Why, the whole principle of this Bill is so utterly remote from the basic principles of democracy that I go on record as saying that it is a Fascist Bill. There is no other way of describing it. It is taken direct from the case book of Mussolini. I pointed out the coincidence of views between Socialism, that is the Premier's Party—and Communism, but I was not denying that the Premier would learn from Mussolini also, because I do not think there is much difference between Mussolini and Stalin in their political views and their methods of achieving their ends.

The amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, as pointed out by him clearly and emphatically, indicates that it is possible—and not only possible but eminently desirable—to limit the proposed increase to 65 members instead of 75. If a proper regard is had for the importance of country seats and towns in relation to the surrounding districts, which are purely rural, an equitable distribution can be had. As I pointed out on the introduction stage, except in Zone 4, and that only partially, there will be under this Bill no increase of rural representation, but that all the new seats will be on the fringe or outskirts or include parts of the large provincial cities of Toowoomba, Mackay, Townsville, Cairns, Bundaberg, and so on. There are the places where the new seats will come in, because it is impossible to get a quota except by taking in the fringes of these provincial cities. That explodes immediately the hollow sham of the Premier's argument, put forward with such pretentiousness, that it is a measure designed to improve the lot of the country dweller. It is designed for one purpose, and that is to create seats on the fringes of the country cities, seats that Labour knows will keep it in power against the will of the people and on a minority vote. I therefore support the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (12.13 p.m.): We all know the actions and gyrations of the fan-dancer. She comes on the stage or floor completely nude, waving a couple of large fans, and by a remarkable series of prestidigitations discloses everything except the vital spot. We have seen the Premier giving an exhibition of political fan-dancing during the passage of this Bill that has been unexcelled in this Chamber for many years. Unfortunately, the Press have been reporting the Premier's exposition of a political fan-dance by a series of remarkable verbal prestidigitations. The Premier has so far completely deceived the people and some of the back-bench members of his own party as to the real purpose of this Bill, and his deception, unfortunately echoed by the Press, has gone forth to the public in such a way as to deceive the people to the extent that many seem ready to support the political dishonesty of the Premier.

Let me tell this Committee just what the vital spot in this Bill really is. We have heard quite a lot of the Premier's statement that this Bill will give greater representation to the country and northern centres

than they enjoy at present. Nothing further from the truth has been ever stated in this Parliament or any Parliament. That is a gross misstatement of the case.

After this Bill becomes law the country and northern area of the State will be worse represented than they are at present. They will have a smaller proportion of representation in this Parliament than they have at present.

When I explained that to some back-benchers of the Labour Party they expressed consternation that they had permitted themselves to be beautifully led up the garden path by the oral and verbal sleight of hand and fan-dancing of the Premier.

Mr. Brown: Mention those who said it.

Mr. AIKENS: The hon. member for Buranda is a fine type of man and I like him very much indeed, but he is a political neophyte and consequently he will know in the future, if he does not know it now, that if I were to mention even the names of some of the members of the Labour Party with whom I talk, off would go their heads.

Mr. Brown: That is not true.

Mr. AIKENS: It is true, and the hon. member knows it is true. If he does not know now that it is true he will damn soon know it is true in future.

Mr. Brown interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: I am not doubting the hon. member's sincerity as a Labour member, and I am not doubting his calibre as a man—I like both—but he has still got a lot to learn about the machinations of the Labour Party and a lot to learn about the undercover methods of the Labour Party.

Let us examine the map—and I hope the Press will be decent enough to report this because I got air-mail letters today from friends of mine in the North expressing concern that I should oppose a Bill that, in the words of the Premier, will give the western and northern parts of this State better representation than they have at present. One man wrote to me and said, "There must be something wrong with the Premier because there is never anything wrong with Tom Aikens when it comes to fighting for the North." The trouble is that the Press has been reporting only what the Premier has said, that this Bill will give the country and the North better representation than they enjoy at present.

Look at the map and you will notice that down in the south-eastern corner there is what is called the south-eastern Zone. Almost in the centre of it, of course, is the metropolitan area of Brisbane. The whole of that South-Eastern Zone comprises only one-tenth of the whole of the State of Queensland. Under this Bill, that little one-tenth of Queensland down in the south-eastern corner of the State is going to get seven additional members. The whole of the rest of the State, comprising the western part of the State, from the border of New South Wales to the Gulf of Carpentaria, and

the whole of the northern part of the State, from Mackay to Cape York—the whole of the other nine-tenths of the State is going to get six additional members! I repeat that one-tenth of the State down in the south-eastern corner is to get seven additional members in this Parliament while all the rest of the State is to get only six additional members; and the Premier has the colossal hide to stand up here and tell this Parliament, tell the Press and tell the people that the country and northern areas of this State are going to be better represented after the passage of this Bill than they are at present! It is a tribute to his rhetorical ability and to the gullibility and credulity of the rank and file of his party that he convinced many of them also that that was so.

One-tenth of the State in the favoured south-eastern corner is to get seven extra members and the other nine-tenths of the State in the West and North is to get six additional members; yet the Premier has the nerve to tell us this Bill will provide for better representation for the western and northern parts of Queensland! No greater statement of political mendacity was ever made in this or any other Parliament, and unfortunately the Press has never stressed the point that the Premier has been politically fan-dancing. He has, by remarkable gyrations and prestidigitations, obscured the vital spot at the psychological moment, but now I have ripped the fan away and shown the people the vital spot as contained in this Bill.

To address myself to the amendment, having finished with my observations in connection with the clause, I say that I oppose it. It simply seeks to increase the number of members of Parliament from 62 to 65, whereas the clause seeks to increase the number from 62 to 75. I say without reservation and quite unequivocally that I am opposed to any additional members coming into this Chamber. I say that not only can the representatives now here adequately represent their electorates but they can do more than that. Some represent not only their own electorates but also others.

Mr. Barnes: They call you Three-in-one Aikens at Townsville.

Mr. AIKENS: That is so, and following on what the hon. member for Bundaberg has to say, so gratified are the people of Townsville that I am called "Machine-oil Politician Aikens—Three-in-one." I do not only my own work but a great amount of work attaching to the electorates of Townsville and Kennedy; and I do not work 40 hours a week. I cannot support a measure to unload on the overburdened backs of the people of Queensland one extra politician in this Parliament.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) (12.22 p.m.): I am about to quote from a written statement and I am so quoting in order that there will be no mistake as to the figures mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition this morning, which the Premier endeavoured to twist so unfairly.

A Government Member: Speak up.

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. member has been riding in some of his out-of-date trains and his ears are clogged up and he cannot hear.

The Leader of the Opposition made this statement—"Electoral districts could be redistributed under the principles of the 1931 Act without any unreasonable departure from the democratic principle of one vote, one value." He never advocated one vote, one value; yet the Premier said he did—as usual, of course. It is rather surprising that the greatest enemies of the Leader of the Opposition have never doubted his sincerity and integrity; it is rather surprising that the Premier of this State would stoop so low, in the absence of the Leader of the Opposition, to make that statement this morning. And he described the Leader of the Opposition as a hypocrite. I am surprised. It only shows that some people follow the rule, "If you have no argument, abuse the other fellow." That is the good old communistic principle—abuse the other fellow.

Mr. Roberts interjected.

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. member got his party into enough trouble this morning without coming in again. We had the unfortunate episode of an hon. member rising on a point of order when there was no point of order. The hon. member was the cause of that and his leader told him to sit down.

Mr. ROBERTS: I rise to a point of order. I deny that the Premier told me to do anything in connection with the incident and I request that the hon. member for Aubigny be asked to withdraw that statement.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member for Aubigny will accept the explanation given.

Mr. SPARKES: I will accept it. The hon. member was not told that he was a fool, the Premier probably thought it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. SPARKES: Let us examine what the Premier had to say—I am sorry he is not in the Chamber. He said that he was giving this representation to the far West.

The hon. member for Barcoo rose in his place to support the Bill and so did the hon. member for Gregory. Knowing them as I do, knowing them as good sound men, I began to think as the Premier was speaking that they must have some reason for supporting the measure. I listened to the Premier expounding his views and heard him say that the men in the West should have extra representation and so I presumed that he would go back to Caucus and say that the western men should have two and a half times the value of the representation of other men on his side of the Chamber. That was what he actually advocated, and I thought that that was what was going to happen. I could see some reason in the hon. member for Barcoo's support of the Bill.

The hon. member for Barcoo knows as well as I do that the giving of one extra member or three extra members to the West will not make the slightest difference to the population there.

Mr. Hanlon: You are always protesting about the undue A.W.U. influence in this party.

Mr. SPARKES: I will be fair to the hon. gentleman. First of all he imagined that the Leader of the Opposition was insincere and that he was a hypocrite, and now he imagines that I said something about the A.W.U. If he can produce that statement in "Hansard" I shall be happy for him to read it out. I challenge him to find it. Any time that I have anything to say about any hon. member opposite I bring out the little book, and then I am met with the demand, "Give us the page." I gave them the page. Let me examine the remarks of the Premier now. Why has there been this drift to the cities? Apparently the drift follows the member to the city, and if there are to be three more members for the West, there will be a still greater drift to the city. It appears that that is what happens. It appears that all the western members come to live in the city and presumably the people follow them down. Now we are to have three more members from the West and they will all come to live here in Brisbane. Shortly there will be no people left in the West and there is hardly anyone there now.

Mr. Devries: What a poor argument!

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. member has become city-minded. He does not know anything about the West now. He has not been out there for years. He would hardly know his way about there now.

I thought that the hon. member for Gregory might have made his statement in the heat of the moment, but when I questioned him on the subject again he said, "Of course, I agree that they should have ten votes to one." He was speaking on behalf of the working man of the West.

Mr. Devries: The station hand at Birdsville.

Mr. SPARKES: Does he think that the station hand at Birdsville is a better man than the station hand at Taroom, or, as Dalby has been mentioned, the station hand at Dalby?

Mr. Devries: I think he would be.

Mr. SPARKES: Let the hon. member keep coming in! Does he say that he is a harder and better worker than the dairy farmer? Silence! He does not want to put his party in. He has the wind up. (Government interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. SPARKES: Let me tell him that the Premier did think he was a better man than the dairy farmer. Unfortunately the hon. member for Gregory did not hear that, otherwise he would not get the whip next Wednesday. I know that he does not like it. I regard every producer, no matter

whether he is a country worker in the tropics or anywhere else, as doing a good job and all should be placed on an equal footing. Why run a line like a snake's back through the State of Queensland in this distribution.

Mr. Jones: Only a few years ago the station hand, unlike the squatter, got no consideration at all.

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. gentleman has only just come into the Chamber. Had he been here earlier he would have heard the Premier lauding the squatter, or the grazier. We all know how hon. members opposite love the squatter or the grazier. The hon. member can shake his head. He is at least honest about it, but any suggestion from that side of the Chamber that they love the grazier for what he has done is mere eyewash.

One of the points stressed by the Premier was the trouble of hon. members in getting about the electorates. Why, you can spit over some of the electorates.

Mr. Brown: Shocking!

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. member knows how easy it is to spit over his electorate. Let us examine the matter clearly. In days gone by we have heard a great deal in this Chamber about the wonderful roads that have been provided by the Government, and all the wonderful modes of travel that exist. It must be admitted that with the advent of the aeroplane and the fast modern motor-car it must be a little easier to travel through our western areas than it was many years ago. If the need he spoke of exists today, how much more did it exist 10 years ago?

Mr. Jesson: When the Moore Government took 10 seats away from the country.

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. member has just wakened up and come into this Chamber. He has made an interjection to let it be known that he is in the Chamber.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. SPARKES: Every hon. member will agree that travel today is much easier than it has been, so why the need for additional members to traverse the electorates? We have been told by the Premier that one Labour man is as good as three other men.

Mr. Hanlon: What is wrong with that?

Mr. SPARKES: Like other statements made by the hon. gentleman, that statement cannot be substantiated. If we take that statement at its face value we can ask the Premier why he wants to place more members in this Chamber, if that man is of such great value? Why, the very man whose voting value the hon. member for Gregory desires to have increased, the bush worker at Birdsville and bush workers at far distant places, will not get one bit more representation than he does today, because he will probably be linked up electorally with one of the bigger towns.

Mr. Devries: It would not make much difference at Birdsville if you gave them 100 to one.

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. member got his party into trouble with his 10 to one and he is now endeavouring to tie it down to only the fellow in Birdsville.

Mr. Devries: I will stand pat on it.

Mr. SPARKES: That is all we want him to do. I ask the hon. member: will making an extra member or three members increase the population by one person more in those areas? Of course it will not. Every honest, decent man knows that. All it will do is to make three less people, because the three representatives will come to live in Brisbane. I have always had the greatest respect for the Westerners; they are great fellows—there is no doubt about it. I put in a good deal of my life out there in the Far West—further out than the hon. member talks about. Much as I think of the Western man I do not think that three members are going to cause the population out there to increase, no matter how good they might be.

Having disposed of that, let us look for some other reason for the increase in members. We find that it is a deliberate attempt to make sure that the Government will be returned to power, because the very areas where the increase in membership is made are specially selected. A line is drawn in and out so that it will be drawn entirely round seats held by the Socialist Government of the day. There you have the whole Bill in all its nakedness and in its rottenness.

Mr. Hanlon: Oo!

Mr. SPARKES: Oo! The hon. gentleman will not frighten me; I can take it. As long as they will let me give it, I will take it. That is the position. If any member on that side of the Committee can show me that by providing for three new members in those areas prosperity and population there will be increased or the country will carry one more sheep or one more bullock to the acre, then I will support the Bill. I defy any man to prove that by increasing the number of members of Parliament you will in any way increase the population, the prosperity of the people, or the productiveness of that western area.

Mr. Aikens: Are you against both the amendment and the clause?

Mr. SPARKES: As far as I am concerned I should be quite happy to see fewer members of Parliament rather than more.

Mr. Hanlon: One member of Parliament would do you.

Mr. SPARKES: Nobody in this Chamber during the debate has tried to make it a one-man debate more than the Premier. He has been everlastingly, since the Bill was brought in—and I say this most advisedly—trying to goad us with the idea that he can talk to empty benches and push his Bill through this Chamber. That is his one idea; and he will not get me in. His idea is to take away opposition—to take away criticism from his Bill so that he can push the Bill through this Parliament without any opposition to it. (Government interjections.) He

does not want the Opposition to get a fair go at all. While the Opposition are here we will have a fair go and we will not be pushed out of the Chamber by the Premier, despite his trying to make us say or do things that will offend the Chair.

Mr. Hanlon: This Bill will not go through until every hon. member has had an opportunity to say all he wants to say.

Mr. SPARKES: If the hon. gentleman had his say there would not be any Opposition members in the House.

Mr. Hanlon: Not the way they have have been going on.

Mr. SPARKES: What I am concerned about is not offending the Chair, not about the hon. gentleman. Let the hon. members on the Government benches examine this Bill and then let some of the western members—I do not care about the town members—get up and say that there will be increased population, productivity and prosperity because of this Bill.

Mr. Aikens: The West is to get three extra members and Brisbane is to get four.

Mr. SPARKES: It would not matter if 33 additional members represented the West, it would not make the slightest difference.

Mr. Hanlon: You want 33 more in the farming areas outside the metropolitan area.

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. gentleman should listen attentively. He should be fair. First of all he states that I wanted only one member of Parliament and now he states that I want more members of Parliament for the country area outside the metropolitan area. The hon. gentleman in his own heart knows that the Bill is not fair. He knows that as well as I and he knows that this Bill is introduced for one purpose only—“no matter what we do or how we gerrymander things, we must do it; we must, at all costs, keep the Opposition from getting into power.”

Whether Labour gets back on a minority vote does not matter to the Government. The Leader of the Opposition has stated that Labour would be returned on a vote of probably less than 40 per cent. but they could be returned on a vote of less than 37 per cent. of the people. Imagine that, Mr. Mann. The Opposition, who would represent 63 per cent. of the people of Queensland, would be still in Opposition. I ask you, Mr. Mann, to think that over. Is that a democratic principle—a State of the size of Queensland being governed on a vote of 37 per cent. of the people whereas the Opposition represent 63 per cent. of the people? Shame on you, westerners. I will not say that to the town representatives as they do not know the meaning of “sport” or “shame” but the western man does. The western representatives should consider very carefully before they support such a Bill as this. Surely we in Queensland have not sunk to such depths and are so little concerned for British justice that we have to sneak into power in this Parliament on such

a low minority! That is what is being done. We are getting down to anything at all in order to retain office—the Government crawl in by any means so long as they get back. Why do not the Government place the redistribution on a fair and equitable basis and face the elections on that basis? If they did so I believe they would have a better chance of being returned to power than they would have under the present conditions, because I believe the people will rise against them and will not tolerate such a drastic and unfair Bill as the one now before the Committee.

Mr. ROBERTS (Nundah) (12.44 p.m.): The amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition is a simple one and aims at reducing the suggested increased number of representatives in this Parliament provided for in the Bill from 75 to 65. For the information of the hon. member who has just resumed his seat I would point out that the amendment makes no mention of zoning. The amendment means that in the opinion of the Leader of the Opposition 65 representatives are sufficient for the good government of this State and for that reason the 75 members should be reduced to that number. We should be able to deal with such an amendment as that without ranting, without roaring, without making a lot of noise, and we should be able to consider the merits of the suggestion made by the Leader of the Opposition coldly and analytically.

Before doing that, I should like to say something about the remarks of my learned friend, the hon. member for Toowong, who of late has adopted the practice of appearing here as the defender and protector of hon. members of the Country Party. He said this morning that throughout the whole of this debate on this Bill the Premier has adopted a provocative attitude. Let us look for a moment at the speech made by the Leader of the Opposition this morning in support of his amendment and before any other person had spoken in this debate. Did he adopt a cold analytical attitude towards the amendment, or did he, in the words of the hon. member for Toowong, adopt a provocative attitude towards this Government? I distinctly remember hearing the Leader of the Opposition say this morning that it was the Labour Party that had adopted the custom of gerrymandering and manipulating electorates.

Mr. Sparkes: That is true.

Mr. ROBERTS: To make it worse, it was provocative, and I deny that there is any truth. In addition to that, the Leader of the Opposition, for the first time in this debate, said that it was the Labour Party that, through legislation in the past, made it possible for ghost voters to exist. If anything more provocative than such a statement as that could be made by any hon. member, I have not heard it since I have been in this Parliament. Obviously the Leader of the Opposition is imputing the same improper motives to this Government today as those that actuated the Moore Government when they brought down their legislation between 1929 and 1932. I felt,

in view of the remarks made by the hon. member for Toowong, that it was necessary to point these matters out.

Let us look at the amendment itself and compare the Bill with the position in the other States of the Commonwealth. In Queensland it is proposed that we shall have 75 members of the State House. According to the 1947 census, the total population of Queensland—and I realise that they are not all voters—was 1,106,269. The area of Queensland is 670,500 square mile. That is the position that we propose to put before the people of Queensland.

Looking at Western Australia, we find that in that State there are 30 members of the Upper House and 50 members of the Lower House. In all, there are 80 members of Parliament in that State and, according to the 1947 census figures, its population was 502,731, approximately half that of Queensland. They have five more members of Parliament than we propose. The area of Western Australia is greater than that of Queensland, being 975,920 square miles. Obviously the State of Western Australia has taken into account the sparsely populated districts and has made some provision for a modification of the principle of one vote, one value, as we are doing in Queensland under the present Bill.

In South Australia there are 20 members in the Upper House and 39 in the Lower House, making a total of 59. The population of that State is 646,216, not much more than half of Queensland's population. The area of South Australia is 380,070 square miles.

In New South Wales the Upper House is composed of 60 members and the Lower House of 90 members, making a total of 150 members of Parliament. Certainly New South Wales has a population of 2,985,464, but the area of the State is only 309,433 square miles. On a comparative basis I say that nothing could be more reasonable or less objectionable than the provision in this Bill for 75 members of Parliament for Queensland.

Victoria has an Upper House of 34 members, and a Lower House of 65, a total of 99 members of Parliament. The population is 2,055,252 or approximately twice that of Queensland, but the area of Victoria is only 87,884 square miles. I submit—and I am not now dealing with the zones provided for in the Bill—that the figures I have quoted show that the Bill is a reasonable one, and that there is no justification for the suggested amendment.

Mr. Sparkes: How about justifying the zones?

Mr. Roberts: For the information of the hon. member let me say that the question is dealt with in a different clause and will undoubtedly be discussed at a later stage. I shall be only too pleased to listen to his arguments and perhaps say a few words myself. Hon. members opposite, with the exception of the Leader of the Opposition, who indulged in a little provocation in moving his amendment, have completely overlooked the

simplicity of the amendment before the Committee. So far as I am personally concerned I feel sure that the added representation to be given to the people of Queensland, primarily to the West, the northern, and the other less populated portions, will be for the betterment of the people. It will enable those living in the sparsely populated areas to get closer to their elected member of Parliament and he will be better able to make representations on their behalf.

Speaking as a metropolitan member, I say that the people in the metropolitan area are wholeheartedly behind the Bill. I have pleasure in supporting it and opposing the amendment before the Committee.

Mr. MADSEN (Warwick) (12.54 p.m.): I agree with the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition to reduce the number of electorates from that proposed in the Bill to 65. It is my own personal opinion that the present number of members can represent the State adequately. Of course, the people in the outback are deserving of the greatest consideration but we are somewhat reluctant to accept the Bill as a means of providing them with greater benefits.

I listened with interest to the points made by the Premier in his several speeches on the Bill, but as one who has lived in the country all my life I must say that he has not convinced me by any means that any increase in the number of members would, under a Labour Government, help the country people to any appreciable extent. I am sure that the sorghum-growers on the Downs, who last year sat by for months on end and watched their produce rot in the fields and who had so much difficulty in convincing the powers that be of the need to do something about it, would not be carried away by the Premier's remarks nor would primary producers generally who are the people who must go to the outback and carry out the development of which the Premier speaks. However, the people who are willing to go to the outback parts of the State are deserving of the very greatest consideration.

I make this proposition to the Government, and indeed to any Government: that the methods adopted by Governments in developing the State are the reverse of what are required. Let me illustrate my point. When we make representation for the construction of a main road we are required to prove that the area is populated, that it has a certain amount of production, and the many other things well known to those connected with local authorities and Parliament. I suggest that before we can expect people to go to these outback areas we should be in a position to assess the productivity of an area and then construct the roads, so as to give them means of communication and thereby induce them to take their families there.

Let me stress my point a little more by a reference to my own electorate. I have in mind one of the most fertile dairying areas in the southern part of the State, with a good rainfall and capable of no end of development as high-class dairy farms, yet it is only with the greatest difficulty that we

have been able to get a school there, telephone facilities, roads or anything else. One can understand the doubt in the minds of people who give some thought to the settlement of areas where these facilities are not available. Any practical man who proposed to go to that district, or to any district, would assess its potentialities and possibilities of settlement and consider whether it had road communication and other facilities. It would not matter if you had 10 members representing the area, they would not have the desired effect.

Naturally the development of the outback areas will depend upon their population and it is essential to give people in those areas amenities and public utilities if population and development are to follow. In addition we should give special attention to the development of industry, for we cannot have population without industry. Therefore it is absolutely necessary that we should give special attention to the development of industry to give employment to the population that will follow. I am certain that every member of this Chamber has found that schools, telephone facilities, roads, and other conveniences play an important part in development.

The main theme of the Premier's submission for the better and greater development of this State has been the need of greater representation. I do respect those hon. members who represent Western areas. I realise the difficulty of their job, but I have found from practical experience that greater representation in this Parliament is not the solution. We need a better practical understanding of the State's requirements if we are to develop the industries that will encourage population. I am certain that hon. members representing Far Western areas possess the necessary knowledge, but it is a matter of concern to hon. members generally that population, instead of being encouraged to go to the outback areas, is inclined to drift away.

We have not had the investigations that are necessary if we are to understand the true position. Values have been used to blind us to the true position. Values of many primary products such as wool and wheat are so much higher at the present time than in years past that they give a false picture. When we get down to solid facts we shall discover that production has seriously declined in many primary industries. Time will prove that the economic position will be affected considerably by the greatly reduced production in several of our industries, a fact that is hidden from many of our people by the greatly enhanced ruling values. Most hon. members realise that these values cannot continue, and that when they recede and become stabilised we shall find a lesser amount of State wealth to be divided among the people. It is just a matter of simple arithmetic to divide the value of production among the population.

The Premier has endeavoured to convince us of the value of greater representation. I feel that there is a need for a very definite practical approach to the many problems

confronting the State. Many people, looking at the vast area of this State, get a wrong impression as to the number of people who can be settled in various areas. It must be borne in mind that there are vast areas where the population will always be sparse. Some of the great grazing areas, while they provide a valuable source of wealth, cannot carry many people. The same applies to many of our farming and rural areas. We should be able to assess the productive potentialities of those areas and to give those people the public utilities, such as roads, railways and electric light, that will encourage population to follow.

I support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. I feel that it will give all the representation that is necessary for the development of this State.

Mr. O'SHEA (Warrego) (2.22 p.m.): This Bill, which has had a lot of bandying about in the Chamber, met with a good deal of opposition from the Country Party. I do not know why, in view of the fact that the Bill plans to give greater representation to the country than it has had previously. I should imagine that if the Country Party was a real Country Party it would welcome the Bill. Its chances would be very substantially enhanced if there were more seats in the West and over the back-country generally. I do not know why the Country Party should be approaching the matter of greater representation in the country with such fear. I do not know why hon. members opposite have become so timid about it, because after all they are tagged with a name that would suggest that they belong to the country, and were very interested in the welfare of the western country. The western country is not going to benefit substantially from this increase in the number of seats. The North is to get a substantial increase and the city has an increase of four seats; there are nine extra seats throughout the whole length and breadth of the rest of Queensland and they will be in the country. So the Country Party should not be timid about the Bill at all; it should welcome it.

From time to time members opposite have spoken of providing amenities in the West to encourage the people to go there. One of these amenities is reasonably good representation. A member told me yesterday that his electorate covers 2½ square miles. Mine covers 95,000 square miles.

Mr. H. B. Taylor: You do not represent miles; you represent people.

Mr. O'SHEA: You represent people or misrepresent them; that is what I mean. From Mungallala to Arrabury is about 700 miles. Mine is the third-biggest electorate in Queensland.

Mr. Pie: You represent it ably now, do you not?

Mr. O'SHEA: Of course I do and intend to continue to do so. Irrespective of the divisions, I shall continue to represent it.

Mr. Muller: Will you get over it regularly if it is half the size?

Mr. O'SHEA: Of course I will.

Mr. Muller: You will not.

Mr. O'SHEA: I challenge the hon. member, who represents a little pocket borough, to come out and contest the seat and see how he gets on. I am willing to resign my seat in Parliament tomorrow if the hon. member will resign his and contest the Warrego electorate as constituted at present. The hon. member can accept that challenge any time he wishes.

The Country Party has made quite a lot of noise about the principle of one man, one vote.

Mr. Pie: Do you not believe in it?

Mr. O'SHEA: After all, it was the Labour Party that was responsible for the principle of one man, one vote, and that dates back to a very long time ago, before the birth of the hon. member for Windsor. The agitation began then.

Mr. Morris: You are turning your back on Labour's principles.

Mr. O'SHEA: You should forget about principles; you do not know anything about principles.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. O'SHEA: I tell the hon. member through you, Mr. Mann, that he knows nothing about principles. His interests are in Brisbane. He is a Queen Street politician.

Mr. Pie: And it is a Queen Street Cabinet.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Hon. members must not indulge in personalities.

Mr. O'SHEA: After all, I should imagine that the Country Party would be particularly interested in getting full representation for the country people.

Mr. Brand: So we are.

Mr. O'SHEA: Of course they are, but they object to the creation of a greater number of seats in Queensland, despite the fact that they reduced the number long ago. What did they do in 1931? They reduced the number of seats by 10 but the Government now propose to give back to the people of the West the seats that were wrongfully taken from them in 1931 and there is a scream from the Opposition. Why all this screaming if they as a party have confidence in themselves? The truth is that they have no confidence in themselves. They lost that confidence long ago, with all the seats they lost.

Mr. Power: And their policy went with it.

Mr. O'SHEA: They never had a policy. It was a hybrid thing of some kind born in an hour when things were not good and the people were feeling rather desperate. The depression was approaching and the people thought they would change to the Country Party. They made the change but with what result to the masses of the people of Queensland? They still remember those days and are not likely to forget them.

Mr. Muller: They are coming back again.

Mr. O'SHEA: They are not coming back. That party has not shown up very well in the elections that took place since that time and now I think the Opposition have almost given up the ghost. They do not expect under any circumstances, a redistribution of seats or anything else, that they will ever be back on the Treasury benches of this Parliament. They have "given it away." The hon. member for West Moreton has become so desperate that he is flying to the shelter of the Old Men's Home at Canberra. (Laughter.) He knows very well that under the present set-up it is almost impossible for him to miss a seat in the Senate. The very best that either party can hope to win in this set-up is four out of seven seats.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is wandering from the matter before the Committee.

Mr. O'SHEA: I know I am off the track, just as so many other hon. members get off it so often. Many of the hon. members of this Assembly who rise to speak are happy if they can say something about anything, irrespective of the question under discussion.

I am convinced that on the Opposition there are a number of men who have a conscience and who really believe that there should be more representatives in this Chamber. There are some on that side who believe that more representation is necessary because of the change in conditions in the State over past years, including the period when the Moore Government reduced the number of seats. In my opinion it would have been better perhaps to increase the number at that time than to reduce it.

This Bill will give the people of Queensland something for which they have been crying out for a long time. It will give the people of the far West better representation. I can see no objection to the Bill, in view of the fact that the Country Party in Canberra—

Mr. Brand: Not one representation has been made for a greater number of members of Parliament.

Mr. O'SHEA: Hon. members opposite in general know that in Victoria a country representative can be elected by 5,000 electors where in the city of Melbourne it requires 25,000 electors. Another factor is that in Victoria they have an Upper House, a house elected on the property franchise, not on the principle of one man, one vote. With his textile mills, the hon. member for Windsor would have at least 25 or 30 votes if he were in Victoria, and I know how he would use them.

Mr. Muller: Are your people asking for any assistance for you in Warrego?

Mr. O'SHEA: Brush your hair back. (Laughter.) I support this measure because at least it will give the people of Queensland something that they had previously and at least make for better representation.

Mr. PIE (Windsor) (2.35 p.m.): I was indeed surprised at the attack made by the Premier on the Leader of the Opposition today. I have not seen such a display of political hypocrisy in this Chamber for many years.

I have a very high regard for the Premier outside this Chamber. He has the ability to do a job of work and the ability to tell the people the things that are right and wrong; but I have always held, and I still hold, that the Premier in this Chamber is an entirely different person. He brings things down to a level to which outside people would not believe he could descend. I have always said it and I have told him quite openly from the political platform that outside this Chamber he displays the attributes of statesmanship and the people believe that he is right, but inside this Chamber, if they could hear him, they would have an entirely different conception. Because I believe that in our civilisation hypocrisy in any degree is wrong the Premier and I have had bitter exchanges in this House. I cannot tolerate hypocrisy. I believe that a man should come into this Chamber and irrespective of party say what he thinks.

We have heard the Premier say that this Bill will give a greater representation in the far West, more people will go to the far West, more properties will be acquired, and so on. At the same time Parliament is putting through legislation acquiring property and all other things. I have the highest regard in certain respects for the hon. member for Warrego, but he rises in this Chamber and supports the Bill knowing in his mind that there is no more need for extra representation in his electorate than in any other electorate. No-one can say that the hon. member is not doing a good job in his electorate; no-one can say that the hon. member for Gregory is not doing a good job. The same remark applies to the hon. member for Carnarvon and to all those hon. members representing the West. You have only got to go into Coroners' Hotel at Charleville to hear the people laud the hon. member for Warrego and say what a good job of work he is doing and how he looks after them. But he comes into this Chamber and says in effect, "I want somebody to help me in my electorate; it is too big; I cannot represent it effectively."

Mr. O'Shea: I did not say that at all.

Mr. PIE: "I cannot represent 7,000 or 8,000 people; I want the number brought down to 4,000; distances are so great." Go out into the West and find out what the people think of the work he is doing. The same applies if you go out Longreach way. Those people know that their members are looking after their electorates.

What was the case made out in this very Chamber for an increase in remuneration of members of Parliament whilst the Premier was away? It was not that they could not represent their electorates effectively; they did the job well and never was there any mention that members of Parliament were not representing their electorates effectively. I

say that the hon. member for Kennedy—yes, and every one of them over there—is looking after his electorate effectively and doing a job of work without running himself into the ground. Nobody can deny that fact. I have represented two electorates. Hamilton in my opinion was an easy one to represent. Windsor, where there are more poorer people and where there is need round Breakfast Creek to do a job of work for the people and get things for them, is not so easy; but no-one could say that I have been running myself into the ground doing that work. (Government interruptions.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. PIE: So far as the Ministers are concerned I have no argument, as I say a Minister would find it very hard, with his ministerial duties, to represent properly an electorate in the far-back areas. The position of private members is different, because no-one of them is running himself into the ground looking after his electorate. There is silence from the other side. They are honest for the first time. They have had increases in salary of £400 a year over the past four years, and they have a superannuation fund. Surely we are not going to build up in Parliament—

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is getting away from the amendment.

Mr. PIE: I am coming back to it very quickly. Surely hon. members opposite are not going to say now, after 20 years, "We cannot represent our electorate effectively?" Are the hon. member for Warrego, the hon. member for Gregory and all the others going to say, "We have too much work to do in our electorate. We must divide our electorates. We cannot effectively represent 7,500 or 8,000 people and we want an electorate of only 4,000 people?" What dishonesty! It is dishonesty of the worst type. And that is my complaint about the Bill—its basis is dishonesty. There is not one hon. member in this Chamber who, if he is honest, can say that he is run into the ground with his work.

Let us get down to tin-tacks. What has legislation cost this State in the past few weeks? With increased salaries and increased members we are adding nearly £150,000. And then the Treasurer will tell you that his income is going down, or if it is going up because of the hand-out by the Commonwealth Government, he has not enough money to satisfy the needs of the Secretary for Public Works and Housing, the Secretary for Mines, or the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs. The Government have added £150,000 to the cost of parliamentary government in this State. When you run an ordinary business you adopt ordinary business methods. You do not overload your staff or put on more people than you need. You run your business effectively so as to supply your goods to the people at the lowest possible price. Surely the same should apply in Parliament? When you add to the cost of parliamentary government you merely add to the burden that must be borne by the people. This ever-increasing

cost of living, this ever-increasing spiral, sooner or later must stop. This high cost of government must stop, otherwise all the revenue of the country will be required to meet government expenditure.

What was the case made by the Leader of the Opposition? He pointed out clearly that the total number of electors in the State was 653,903. He pointed out also that the quota was 10,546, with a minimum of 8,437 and a maximum of 12,655. That basis is sound. What is wrong with adding the increased population and dividing the result by the present number of electorates? If hon. members opposite desire a lower quota than 10,000 and they are honest in saying they cannot look after 10,000, then let them come into this Chamber and say that they cannot look after that number. If they are honest they will say that they can do it effectively, and that they do not want their electorates divided. You do not want yours divided, Mr. Mann, and I do not want mine divided.

Mr. Power: Mine will do me.

Mr. PIE: There is an admission. I can see now from the admission by the Secretary for Public Works that he will see that his electorate is not altered or divided because he says, "Mine will do me."

Mr. POWER: Mr. Chairman, I rise to a point of order. The hon. member has no right to impute motives to me. I shall have nothing to do with the redistribution of electorates; that will be a matter for the commission.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Windsor must accept the explanation of the Secretary for Public Works.

Mr. PIE: I accept his explanation that his electorate will not be altered.

Let me hark back to the subject of honesty in politicians. If every man will be honest and get right down to the facts, he must admit that there is no need to increase the number of members of Parliament. Strange as it may seem, the people are looking for a lead from politicians. They still have faith in the men who represent them but I say very definitely that that faith is being rapidly destroyed by the misuse of privilege that is being exercised not only in this Parliament but in practically every Parliament throughout Australia today. The people are looking to the politicians for relief from the things that are not right but are finding that politicians are hopping in for their own chop and getting everything they can, including increased salaries and increased remuneration, and making their duties lighter and lighter in order to make soft jobs for themselves. That is what this legislation implies—a soft job for politicians. That is wrong. We are asking the people to get out and work more and more and produce more and more and in the very same breath we like hypocrites say, "We will do less and less work at a higher cost to the community. The principle is wrong. The whole set-up is wrong. We must come down to earth

eventually or democratic government will eventually destroy itself, not because it is wrong in principle but because its principles are being abused by the men exercising the powers under it.

The amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition is very right in principle because every man opposite, if he is honest for once, should divide Caucus on this matter and say, "Well, I can do my job, I do not want my electorate divided up. I have looked after my electorate for 20 years or more, I have made friends in my electorate and I do not want it divided, I do not want any part of my electorate taken away from me, I want to represent it honestly and faithfully." That is not being done. Hon. members opposite are destroying the very basis of our democratic system and bringing Parliament into disrepute because the people will eventually turn round and say, "This Government, this Parliament, and these members of Parliament are looking after themselves, are looking after No. 1 and are not worrying about their electors."

Mr. Aikens: Feathering their nests.

Mr. PIE: That is the word—feathering their nests. What is happening in the Federal sphere? I say very definitely respect for the political life of this country has gone down in the last few years.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in order in discussing Federal matters on this amendment.

Mr. PIE: I am not; I am only mentioning that in passing. The broadcast of the proceedings of Federal Parliament has brought Parliament down to a lower level than ever before.

Mr. Aikens: God help us if they ever have television here.

Mr. PIE: If we had television in this Chamber the people would know the abuse the Opposition have to put up with from the Government benches. I do not agree with the hon. member for Mundingburra very often but he did convince me that he has succeeded in convincing many members on the Labour side. I did not realise until he spoke that this south-eastern Zone, which cannot be regarded as the far back or the far West for which the Premier made such a great plea today, and which represents about one-tenth of the State, is to get seven more members in this redistribution whilst the North and the great far-western areas, for which a great plea has been made, are to get only six additional members. What great hypocrisy!

Let us come out into the open, and let the Government say, "We are frightened of being beaten at the next election, therefore we have decided that we will do these things so that we shall for ever remain in power."

The question of the A.W.U. has been brought up. I have always had a soft spot for the A.W.U. For one thing, it has fought Communism throughout the State. It has been said during the debate that this Bill enables A.W.U. domination to enter the ranks of this

Government. I only hope it does, because I am fed up with the Trades and Labour Council domination of the present Labour Caucus.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. PIE: If, for instance, as the hon. member for Gregory and others said—if it is going to mean more nominees of the A.W.U. coming in, it might be better for this Parliament. I am fed up with the Trades and Labour Council and the stooges put in under their guidance.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is out of order in discussing the Trades and Labour Council.

Mr. PIE: I most strongly support the amendment of the Leader of the Opposition. As I said before, every honest man in the Committee supports it. Every man, if he is honest—and I take it 70 or 80 per cent. of the men in the House are honest—must say to Caucus, to Parliament, to the people of Queensland and Australia, "We are doing our job effectively; we do not need more people in Parliament." We are asking the people to do more work and to produce more, we are giving them incentives to work, but members of Parliament had their incentives to work in the form of higher pay and superannuation and immediately they got those things they said, "We will do less work." What a great example to the people! What an example in leadership! That is what is wrong in this country—the examples of our leaders are destroying the people's faith in democracy. Yet you wonder why people are criticising Parliament when these things are happening—when through a Bill the power of acquisition comes into being.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. PIE: The whole system that we are working under in Australia today is planned for the complete socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange. I say that that will destroy this community. Let us get back to the state where every man does a fair day's work for a fair day's pay.

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

Mr. PIE: Yes. I am saying that every man in Parliament now can represent his electorate effectively if he does a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. The hon. member for Bremer does not want his electorate cut up, the hon. member for Rockhampton knows that he represents his electorate effectively, and so it goes right through. Is there any one member in this Committee who is not representing his people effectively and honestly? I say it is all wrong. This Parliament, by legislation such as this, brought down in such a hypocritical manner—talking with your tongue in your cheeks and not saying what you truly believe—is doing something that is all wrong in principle. A big responsibility rests on

this Parliament. I am getting heartily sick of the hypocrisy that is running through all our legislation. On the one hand they say, "I'm a Socialist; I believe in Socialism;" and then you see the prosperous front-benchers—Socialists at £2,500 a year plus a car and everything else. The whole system is wrong. Let us say clearly—let the hon. member for Maryborough say that he does not want his electorate cut up. Go to his electorate and see what the people think of him—because he has represented them effectively. If his electorate is made smaller he will not do his work more effectively; and this Chamber will not be more efficient with more members.

Instead of working out as has been suggested, this Bill may become a menace. What is to happen to the Labour Party if they have another ten members? It is bad enough now—the arguments they have within Caucus.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. PIE: What is going to happen with another 10 members?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in order.

Mr. PIE: That is private history. That is the inside story. (Government interjections.) I did not rise to in any way preach today, but have endeavoured to tell every member in this Committee that his honesty and integrity are at stake. If every hon. member could say honestly that he needed help, that he had too much to do, and could not represent his constituents in Parliament effectively, and that his job as a member of Parliament was too great for him, there might be a case for dividing the electorates, but there is not that need, consequently no honest member of Parliament if he believes in Queensland can oppose the amendment put forward by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. JESSON (Kennedy) (2.56 p.m.): The amendment before the Committee provides for the reduction of the seventy-five members proposed by the Bill to sixty-five. I doubt whether the hon. member for Windsor spoke about the amendment at all in the course of his speech, although occasionally he did use the word "amendment." He really gave the Committee a lecture on hypocrisy, with which I will deal in a moment.

Mr. Pie: I will get Mr. Kelly onto you.

Mr. JESSON: The hon. member can get who he likes; he has done his hardest already.

The amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition proves conclusively that he is in agreement with the principle that there should be three additional members. Although he opposed the Bill vitally in principle on the first and second reading, contending that no extra representation should be given, he now brings forward an amendment to increase the present representation by three.

Mr. Nicklin: I said it on the second-reading stage.

Mr. JESSON: On the second-reading he foreshadowed this amendment of increasing the number by three. In principle the Country Party has misled the people as to its views on the increase in members. Let me analyse the position. Where are these three electorates to be?

Mr. Muller: One in Cairns, one further down—

Mr. JESSON: You brush your hair and look after the cat in the vat. (Interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Muller: Never mind about asking who put the cat in the vat. Who put the rat in the seat for Kennedy?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would point out to hon. members that this is a very serious debate. We have just finished listening to an hon. member castigating hon. members on the lack of decorum in Parliament and its effect on public opinion. It is the duty of hon. members to conduct themselves with decorum and allow the debate to proceed in an orderly manner.

Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. JESSON: The hon. member for Fassifern made the interjection.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Members will not be in order in engaging in personalities.

Mr. JESSON: I am not engaging in personalities, and as a matter of fact, I object strongly to being called a rat by the hon. member for Fassifern.

As I was saying when I was so rudely interrupted, the Leader of the Opposition said distinctly on the first and second-reading stages that he disagreed with the principles of the Bill altogether, but now he brings forward an amendment to the clause that has the effect of increasing the present number of members by three. The Premier was responsible for the cat being let out of the bag when he asked the Leader of the Opposition where the extra seats would be—in the closely settled areas adjacent to the metropolitan areas which are represented by the Country Party? That is where the Country Party suggests the extra seats should be. The members of the Country Party are squealing for some unknown reason; because they think that at present they are on the winning horse.

Then why all this talk about hypocrisy? Why do not hon. members opposite move among the people and hear what they have to say? Look how they flocked to the meeting at the Albert Hall the other night when I heard the speech of the hon. member for Logan broadcast over Chandler's wireless station. I had never heard such an anaemic speech before. They did not record the hon. member for Toowong's speech, but they did record the hon. member for Logan's and it was the poorest case I have ever heard put up. As a matter of fact, they put up a plea for the metropolitan area, not the country people at all.

During the last election campaign they appointed their Cabinet, and whom did they appoint? They appointed only representatives of the metropolitan area. The hon. member for Enoggera was to be Secretary for Public Instruction, the hon. member for Toowong was to be Attorney-General, and the hon. member for Windsor was to be Premier. What a great dream they had, and what a nightmare it turned out to be!

They call this Government dishonest. What about the despicable and dishonest tactics they adopted during that election campaign? What about the gang of criminals and—and I use this word advisedly—bludgers they had working for them? That can be proved conclusively, yet they have the audacity to come here and give us a lecture on hypocrisy. I do not want to drag any skeletons out of the cupboard, but they are there rattling their bones, and any time I want to drag them out, out they will come. Yet here we have the hon. member for Windsor, with all the cheek and slime he can possibly put over, calling the Government dishonest. I have never been dragged through such muck, such filth, such stinking propaganda in all my life as that engaged in by the members of the Queensland People's Party during the last election campaign. And they have the audacity to come here and accuse the Government of being dishonest!

We have a further instance of their hypocrisy when in my electorate and other electorates represented by Labour, electorates such as Fitzroy and Rockhampton, he condemned the Labour members as hard as he could. Even the hon. member for Toowong got up in my electorate and said, "Jesson should live up here. He cannot look after your interests unless he is here. He should not be in Brisbane." Then we had the hon. member for Windsor congratulating me today on the way I looked after my electorate.

Mr. Sparkes interjected.

Mr. JESSON: You be quiet, Bluebeard.

That is the position in a nutshell. We have these hypocrites who come in here and give us a lecture on hypocrisy and who call us dishonest. Two of them were thrown out on their pink ears for making worse remarks than that.

Let us analyse the reasons for this measure. In the next three years I hope to see another 500,000 people from the Old Country in Queensland, in factories and on the land. There is great wealth almost untouched at the moment in the far North and in the far West in particular. We believe that there is oil to be found in those parts. What a great country Australia would be if we could produce our own oil! We have faith in Queensland. The Opposition have no faith in Queensland at all. They have been knockers ever since they have been here. In view of the knocking they do here, it is a wonder that the electorates in the far West of Queensland are not like those away up in the North-West of Western Australia, where one man represents 400.

This Government are looking ahead with hope and designing and planning for the future of this great State while the Opposition are trying to knock it down at every step. After doing this they have the audacity to come here and make such statements as they have, calling us hypocrites. In my heart I do not believe that in their hearts they call themselves Queenslanders and decent Australians. I really believe that when they claim to be Queenslanders and good Australians they are talking with their tongues in their cheeks. I do not believe that they will not admit to themselves that they are using this measure for their own political advantage.

We have had the spectacle of the hon. members for Isis and Windsor and others getting up in this Chamber with crocodile tears streaming down their faces and saying, "For God's sake withdraw the Bill; if you don't do it, you will be defeated." What hypocrisy, Mr. Mann; What do they care if we are defeated? The hon. member for Aubigny even mentioned it when he was leaning over the desk before him with his foot on the rail and pointing across to members on this side. What better example of hypocrisy could you want? He said, "You will lose your seats" and he was chuckling when he said it. Deep down in their hearts—they feel it in the marrow of their bones—they do not believe that this Bill is going to do a bit of harm; they are using it for political propaganda.

This morning, whilst I was downstairs seeing some of my constituents, I understand that the hon. member for Mundingburra mentioned the fact that he was a three-way-man—at least something to that effect; yes, he was a three-in-one man—which reminds me of the "cream-between" put up by Paul's ice cream. He is talking through the back of his neck. He likes to talk like that; he does not care how many lies he tells so long as he tells them.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is out of order in introducing personalities into the debate.

Mr. JESSON: I will withdraw that.

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. I did not call myself a machine-oil politician, Three-in-one, but I said that the people of Townsville referred to me as a machine-oil politician, Three-in-one.

Mr. JESSON: Perhaps the hon. member for Mundingburra will put me right again. I said I was not present this morning and I must defend myself when he makes statements that are not in accordance with facts. I understand he said, and he used the statement as an argument why the Bill should not go through, that the hon. members for Kennedy and Townsville could not do their jobs and that people went to him. If a person from the hon. member's electorate comes to me—they usually go direct to the A.L.P. if they want advice—I send him back to the hon. member with a letter. He knows that. I do not like him and his politics, but out of courtesy I

refer the business back to him with all the advice I can give. If he says that, he is not playing the game by the people who are endeavouring to play the game by him. I emphatically deny the statement that he does work for my electorate because I do not. He lives in his electorate because he cannot get a house down here in which to live. I live down here and it is the only way in which you can effectively work for your electorate. I am here on the spot.

Mr. Sparkes: You live in Brisbane.

Mr. JESSON: The hon. member spends most of his time down here at the cattle sales.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. JESSON: I say that the amendment is a simple matter and I cannot understand the stone-walling tactics that have been adopted. All that was needed was for the Leader of the Opposition to put his amendment before the Committee, the leader of the other party over there to say what he had to say, and the Premier to reply. The matter should have been concluded by half past 11 or a quarter to 12 this morning. No, this is the only chance the Opposition have in their warped imagination of flogging the Government, but they are betting on the wrong horse.

Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (3.10 p.m.): I support the amendment, and should like to say that I have been in this Chamber almost continuously during the last few days and have listened in vain for an argument to support the Bill.

The Premier has told us again and again that its purpose is to give the people better representation in Parliament. When I spoke on a previous occasion the Secretary for Public Works said I was only a part-time member, but I think every hon. member will concede that I have as much to do as any other hon. member in the Chamber. If the Secretary for Public Works is correct in saying that I am only a part-time member, it is logical to say that every other private member is only working part-time. No-one will attempt to say that I do not give as much attention to the business of my electorate as any other private member.

The more I look at the Bill, the more I am convinced that it was introduced for some ulterior purpose. I draw your attention, Mr. Mann, to the map itself, and I ask you to bear in mind that the Premier said that the object of the Bill was to give better or wider representation to the people. It is proposed to give 24 members to Zone 1, an area over which you could walk in a day or perhaps two days at the outside.

Mr. Power: What a stupid statement—an area of 300 square miles.

Mr. MULLER: I am replying to the contention that the Bill will give wider and better representation. Is the Premier giving the country better representation by giving better representation to Brisbane? That is what is happening in Zone 1. Now look at

Zone 2. It is proposed to increase the number of members in that area from 25 to 28. Look at the map again. What of all this talk about better and wider representation? Let me draw attention to the fact that in Zone 2 there are 24 electorates at the moment, and that to give effect to the proposal contained in the Bill it will be necessary to increase the area of 11 of them because the quota for this Zone is 9,500, but there are at present 11 electorates with fewer than 9,500 voters. They will have to be increased. For instance, the electorate of Aubigny must have another 700 voters to bring it up to the quota, which means that this country electorate will become larger than it is to-day. Carnarvon will have to be increased by 800 voters, Cunningham by 700, Gympie by 900, and so on. Stanley and Nanango will require additional voters and, therefore, additional areas.

Let us look at the other side of the picture to see how unscrupulous this proposal really is. For instance, take the Albert electorate, which embraces, mainly, Southport. You will be obliged to take away approximately 3,000 voters to bring it within the quota proposed in the Bill. In Bundaberg you will have to take away 3,000 voters, and from East Toowoomba approximately 600 voters.

Then you have Maryborough, Ipswich, and similar cities. Therefore you will have exactly the same position. You need to be blind, deaf and dumb not to be able to see through the intents and purposes of this Bill. You would have to be blind, deaf, dumb and silly not to be able to do so. That is where we are heading for—Zone 2 purports to give country districts greater representation, but the representation will go to the cities in the zone, not to the country.

Quite strong language has been used in opposition to this Bill, but the fact cannot be denied that the country districts are reasonably well represented now. The hon. member for Warrego said that his territory is too big. I agree that his electorate is a big one, that it is too big and wide for any human being to give it personal attention, but supposing it were reduced in size by half, could he give it very close attention? It is worked principally by correspondence from Brisbane. No-one could go over that territory very frequently, even if it was half the size. Therefore his argument falls to the ground.

Let us get right down to the essence of the situation. Can anyone tell me what improvement there is likely to be in legislation of this kind? An additional 13 members will be brought into this Chamber, and it is a well-known fact that there are not very many members who get sufficient time to speak as frequently as they would like today. It may be argued that if an additional 13 members are introduced into this Chamber we shall get the cream of the brains of the country, but that phase is wide open today. If any outstanding person is willing to make his services available he is invited and welcome to contest election for any of the seats.

One can see no justification for this legislation. The fact that there is wider representation in the Southern States means nothing at all. When the position is examined fully and the results from time to time observed, and we see what people have to say about it, we find that they do not require any more representatives to represent them. None of my electors require two representatives, nor do they complain that it is not possible for me to get round my electorate. I have not heard that complaint on one single occasion. No-one has mentioned that during the whole of this debate. I am sure the hon. member for Warrego will agree that the people in his electorate think that there is no need to provide an assistant for him. He admits that he is able to give it the attention it requires. Then for the life of me I cannot see why there is a need for additional members, if it is not for the express purpose of protecting the Government from any opposition.

Mr. Brown: The amendment advocates additional members.

Mr. MULLER: That is so.

Mr. Brown: But you do not want additional members.

Mr. MULLER: That is a reasonable criticism. I said on the initiatory stage that the time had arrived for some redistribution. Population had moved; it had increased in one district and decreased in another. Therefore one would not object to a few additional seats in a redistribution. The number might be two, three, four or even five, but there is no justification for an increase of 13.

Mr. Brown: It is only a question of degree.

Mr. MULLER: It is only a question of population. There has been an increase in population but that increase could be spread over 65 seats without overworking any one representative. If that number was agreed on it could be left to the commission to say just where those seats were to be located. This system of zoning is a vicious one. To carry it out, you must have 75 seats. That will enable the Government to attain their objective. That number has been placed in the Bill expressly for the purpose of giving the Government a majority in a majority of zones.

Mr. Power: That is an unfair statement to make.

Mr. MULLER: The more you examine the Bill the more you are convinced that it is introduced for a certain purpose. Take East Toowoomba, which is in the country zone No. 2. With an elastic system of 20 per cent. over or below the quota, all you have to do at East Toowoomba is to take a little territory from it and East Toowoomba becomes a Labour seat. The same thing applies to Ipswich and Bremer, where you can fit in another Labour seat. It is an organised plan. A commission has been appointed that is supposed to be independent, but its hands are tied before it starts because of the vicious principle of first of all defining four zones;

and it has to work within those zones and map out 75 seats. One can come to no other conclusion than that the Government can easily be returned on a minority of perhaps under 40 per cent. of the votes. I prophesy that it will work out something like that at the next elections, judging from what has happened at the different by-elections in the various States during the last few years. This vicious clause providing for 75 seats will protect the Government against defeat when the next elections take place.

Mr. KEYATTA (Townsville) (3.22 p.m.): I have listened with interest to the debate. In principle the amendment agrees with the Bill in that it provides for an increase in numbers. No matter what system may be adopted anomalies will arise. The best possible arrangement has been made to give full and detailed representation to Queensland, whose population has grown considerably and will continue to grow in the future to a greater extent than that of any other State in the Commonwealth because of its great potentialities.

The principle in this clause has been accepted by all the States in the Commonwealth and I cannot see that there is any harm in the Bill. Notwithstanding the fear expressed by members of the Opposition I think there is much to commend in it. It will provide for effective representation. Take the electorate of Carpentaria, with 150,000 square miles, and Gregory, which is nearly as large. It is not humanly possible for two members to represent those two electorates effectively.

An Opposition Member: They do represent them effectively.

Mr. KEYATTA: They do their best to represent them effectively; they have done an excellent job under the circumstances, and that is shown by the vote of confidence expressed in them during the past elections. The Government are prepared to go further in their effort to give better representation to the people.

The clause should not be altered in the way asked for in the amendment. The people are the judges and if they think the Government have overstepped their authority or power they will record their votes accordingly at the next election. I was interested to hear the Premier say that persons cannot be made to vote as we would wish them to vote. We have still the freedom of the franchise and the people have the right to express their opinion through the ballot box.

I understand that today the hon. member for Mundingburra said there was no need for an increase in representation because he, as the member for Mundingburra, was representing three electorates, no doubt meaning his own, mine, and that of the hon. member for Kennedy.

Mr. Sparkes: He did not say that.

Mr. Aikens: I did not say that. I said the people said it.

Mr. KEYATTA: Knowing the hon. member for Mundingburra as I know him, I know him to be smart, to have a glib tongue and the ability to twist words and facts to suit his own point of view. The implication was that he was doing my Parliamentary work, but the fact is that the boot is on the other foot. Notwithstanding the times that I have been living temporarily in Brisbane I have been giving very effective representation to my electorate. My incoming mail proves that conclusively. I receive, if not the heaviest mail, a mail as heavy as that of any other private member in this Parliament. Before my marriage, when I was living in Townsville, I had an office in which I employed a girl to attend to office duties and callers, not only callers from my own electorates but other electorates during my absence. If the matter concerned another electorate I referred the elector to his or her representative but would be told that the elector had been to his residence and other places but he could not be found, so I was then asked to attend to the matter. Sooner than put the elector to further inconvenience I represented him, but I take no credit for doing that. It was done to help the elector and another member of Parliament. I did that without distinction of political views.

Mr. Pie: You have done it well, have you not?

Mr. KEYATTA: I was proud to be able to do it. I never quibbled about it and I never asked for the postage or other expenses incurred. These were paid from my own purse. Long before I became a member of Parliament I attended to matters concerning my people.

Mr. Sparkes: In other words if you represent your electors so well, why should there be any other member?

Mr. KEYATTA: I have represented the people of Townsville as effectively as I could and that is confirmed by the numerous letters I receive. My friend, the hon. member for Mundingburra, said that the people had said so-and-so. The Committee can see how clever the hon. member is. In all probability the people of Townsville have not said so-and-so.

Mr. Plunkett: It appears to me that you chaps up there have not nearly enough work to do.

Mr. KEYATTA: I can assure the hon. member that I have a great deal of work to do and that can be proven by the files in the various departments and the weight of my mail. I have no apologies to make at all but I could say that there has been an interference in my electorate.

Mr. Sparkes: The people there believe you are capable of representing the electorates adjoining.

Mr. KEYATTA: One would not put it that way. In conclusion I support the clause in the Bill and oppose the amendment.

Mr. BRAND (Isis) (3.30 p.m.): The hon. member who has just resumed his seat has been expressing himself on this matter

in the same terms as many other hon. members sitting behind the Government. All have contended that they can represent their electorates efficiently and well without any difficulty and without being overworked. Therefore, even if the Leader of the Opposition endeavours to temper the wind to the shorn lamb by moving an amendment to provide for three more representatives in Parliament, it does not signify that we on this side are satisfied that the present 62 members of Parliament cannot adequately do the job for which they are paid by the people.

Mr. Aikens: Why does not the amendment ask for 62 instead of 65?

Mr. BRAND: I have just said that we temper the wind to the shorn lamb, to try to meet the Government.

Mr. Aikens: Then you are suggesting that the amendment is a compromise?

Mr. BRAND: The amendment is a compromise to help the Labour members out of the difficulty in which they find themselves because of the expressions they have uttered.

What has been the gravamen of the charge of hon. members on the Government side? It has been a complaint that the Country Party should have supported this measure because we claim to be representatives of the country people and they suggest that more representation for the country should be the policy of our party. That was the suggestion by the hon. member for Warrego. Let me remind him that the Country Party does not believe for a moment that one extra member of Parliament would bring about any of the greater production that the Premier has suggested would take place in this State. The Premier says that the reason why we want more members is to give better service, so that Queensland will be developed. It does not require one extra member of Parliament to convince the returned soldiers that they are getting a bad deal with land settlement today.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Hilton) Order!

Mr. BRAND: Do you say that is out of order, Mr. Hilton?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: The Bill does not refer to soldier settlement.

Mr. BRAND: I am not referring to soldier settlement; I am referring to the Premier's claim. I say that an extra member of Parliament is not necessary to convince returned soldiers of the badness of the deal they are getting. They cannot be convinced that extra members of Parliament will improve land settlement for them.

Every person in the State realises that what is needed is an alteration in administrative policy. If the administration will alter their policy and give some inducement to develop Queensland, the State will be developed.

Mr. O'Shea: How do you suggest that should be done?

Mr. BRAND: If the hon. member has his way there will be no alteration in the administration, and he is taking fine care that there shall be no alteration. If anything can be read into the Bill it is a direction that Labour must hold office at all costs, and the hon. member is quite satisfied to have a party governing on a very small minority of votes. This legislation is aiming at perpetuating that position.

I say that the claim the Government are putting forward that we should give 10 votes to the squatters in Western Queensland against one vote to trade unionists in Brisbane is something we do not agree with. We do not agree with that policy. We do not agree that whatever might be a person's vocation in life or business in the community he is entitled to more votes than others in other parts of the State.

Under the 65 limit, as proposed in the amendment, and under the legislation as enacted in this State with the one-fifth margin each way, there could be adequate representation of the country against the city. I submit that the Leader of the Opposition has proved conclusively that the country life of Queensland can get this representation in a more just and equitable manner by the amendment than by the zoning principle in this Bill. I think he proved his case.

I hope that at least we are not going to commit this Parliament to the belief that 75 members are required to run this State of ours. I want to say clearly that I do not subscribe to any belief that the members of the Queensland Parliament are not doing a good job and that they are loafing. From my experience over many years I believe that the Queensland member of Parliament works very well and hard for those whom he represents and works in the interests of Queensland. I believe our members work hard indeed but they do not work so hard that it is necessary for more men and women to come into this Chamber to run our country.

It has been contended by hon. members who have spoken this afternoon that Queensland is on the verge of great development and that we are entitled to have more members of Parliament because of the great State Queensland will be. Queensland has not yet had the rapid development in population that some hon. members would desire and so far as I can see from the immigration coming to this country we cannot expect the large numbers to come to Queensland in the next few years that some hon. members expect. It will be a long time before this State can expect the number of people we require in it. At the same time I realise that there is no State in the Commonwealth with greater potentialities but it will be many years before our population will warrant an increase in the number of members of Parliament beyond the number specified by the Leader of the Opposition in his amendment. He is trying to meet the position by agreeing to some added representation and as the years roll by the Country Party will again endeavour to help the Government if more representation is needed. The amendment

goes far enough and the Country Party submits that we are doing our duty to the people we represent in the great country life of Queensland and it is opposing the Bill brought down by the Government. Hon. members on this side do not think that it is in the interests of Queensland and we feel that we are doing our duty in supporting the amendment.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (3.40 p.m.): Unlike the hon. member for Isis, who admitted that the amendment was a compromise, I am not going to compromise with the Government on this Bill. I am opposed to any increase in the number of members in this Parliament, consequently I intend to oppose both the amendment and the clause.

I was rather amused to hear the hon. member for Kennedy speak about Parliamentary ethics and ideals, and so forth and so on. I want to say that when I first came into this Parliament I was an easy-going chap with a simple nature and rather ingenuous. Consequently I was imposed upon by some hon. members. I am afraid that I am imposed upon still from time to time by some hon. members because of my native simplicity. I understood as a new member that I could make representations only in connection with matters affecting my own electorate. So I rigidly abided by that unwritten law of Parliamentary ethics until I saw certain things appearing in the Ayr "Advocate." Ayr is in the Mundingburra electorate and 50 miles from the boundary of the Townsville electorate and the Kennedy electorate. I would see in the columns of the Ayr "Advocate" letters and articles sent in by both Mr. Jesson and Mr. Keyatta as a result of representations they had made in connection with Ayr. So I said, "If that is going to be the game, and if there are going to be dog and goanna rules, Rafferty rules, I can play them as well as anybody else."

I do not want to indulge in a dog fight in this Chamber with the hon. member for Kennedy or the hon. member for Townsville as to what I believe the people of Townsville are saying. Suffice it to say that what I say in this Chamber is first-hand information about what the people of Townsville are saying. I am in a position to give the information at first hand, but the hon. member for Kennedy and the hon. member for Townsville can give this Chamber only second-hand information about what is going on in Townsville or what the people there are saying. They have to rely on what someone in Townsville tells them about what the people in Townsville are saying. I do not want to enter into a dog fight here with those hon. members. I am prepared to leave the issue with the people of Townsville themselves.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Hilton): Order! I have allowed the hon. member a good deal of latitude and now I ask him to connect his remarks with the amendment.

Mr. AIKENS: I will. I am not going to fall out with you either, Mr. Hilton. I

do not know what orders you have got or whether you have got any but I do not want to fall out with you.

Let us be honest and frank. That is why the Labour Party hate me, and they hate me with an undying hate—because I am always honest on the public platform and tell the truth about Parliament. What does an hon. member's work consist of mainly but interviewing his electors personally? If we live away from the electorate and in the capital city the amount of work in connection with representation to the Ministers and heads of departments in response to representations made to us by our electors is only a very small part of our work. Most of the work of an hon. member—and I think hon. members will agree with me—consists of giving advice and help right on the spot in his own electorate. Most of the people who come to see you personally in your electorate come for advice. Some of them come for help that you can render on the spot but 70 per cent. of my work consists of interviewing the electors of Mundingburra, and any of the electors of Kennedy and Townsville who may come to see me, and making representations on their behalf to the local heads of Government departments in Townsville— with the general manager of the railways, the supervisor of the Department of Public Works, the Social Service people, the Housing Commission people, and various other Government officers right there in my own home town. When I am home in Townsville the personal representations made to me amount to three times the amount of correspondence that I get from my electorate when I am in Brisbane while the House is sitting. Despite the fact that I handle quite a lot of inward and outward correspondence when in Brisbane, to which my stenographer can certify, it is not to be compared with that which I handle at home on the spot. That is because the people cannot come to see me here personally. Consequently, I do not have so much work to do here.

Members know that who go up to their electorates. I saw a northern Labour member who regularly visits his electorate for long periods come back from his electorate the other day with a sheaf of work four or five inches high, as a result of his visit and personal contact with his electors. Had he remained in Brisbane he would not have got one-tenth of that work. Every hon. member knows that I am speaking the truth. The greatest amount of work of an hon. member results from personal representations, and to enable those representations to be made, you must be right on the spot.

Hereafter the hon. members for Kennedy and Townsville have "an open go" to say what they like about their comparative jobs in Townsville, but I am quite willing to leave it to those people.

This clause proposes to increase the number of members of Parliament by 13. A conservative estimate of the resulting cost is at least £20,000. There will be over £13,000

for salaries with postage allowances, trunk-call allowances, stamp allowances, railway-warrant allowances, aeroplane allowances, and so on. I suppose an extra girl will have to be employed in the stenographers' room.

Mr. Barnes: And extra pension allowances.

Mr. AIKENS: That is so. I am putting the additional cost down, on a conservative estimate, of £20,000 a year. I am making what must be acknowledged to be a conservative estimate. Would it not be more in the interests of the State if, instead of appointing 13 additional members to Parliament and dipping the fingers into the Treasury purse to the extent of £20,000 a year, we put that money to a fund for the establishment of industries in the country, or amenities or, for instance, the establishment of a northern university, even if only to the extent this year of laying a blasted foundation stone? That would be doing something with the money and using it to pay dividends to the State. That would be preferable to putting 13 more members in here to doze and dream on the back-benches of the Labour Party, to immerse themselves in their day-dreams or in the pages of the daily newspaper.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: I have no quarrel with the general principle that provides that the country should have a lesser electoral quota than the city—I suggested that in this Chamber many years ago—but it should be done in an honest and decent way. It should be done by allowing the 62 members in this Chamber to remain. They are not only sufficient but they are more than sufficient. If the Government were "dinkum" in their expressed desire to give the country more representation in this Parliament, they should cut—at least five—I should not care if the number was eight—seats from the metropolitan, suburban, and urban area—from the stinking rat-ridden, cancerous areas in Brisbane—and distribute them in the northern centres. That is the honest way to do it, and the way it should be done.

Mr. TURNER (Kelvin Grove) (3.49 p.m.): I am opposed to the amendment. It savours of political propaganda. I liken it to several amendments that were moved by the Opposition when the Estimates were being discussed. When the Treasurer moves his Estimates we not infrequently find an amendment moved by the Opposition to reduce the Vote by £1 in order to gain the advantage of some political propaganda.

The amendment agrees with the principle that there should be an increase in the number of members. It says that the increase should be three only, or ten less than is proposed in the clause. I support the number in the Bill, as I want our Ministers to get a fair deal. At the moment we have eleven Ministers, although till recently we had ten only. Instead of their working 15 and 18 hours a day week after week and year after year, we have lightened their labours to some

extent. We know how the health of Ministers of the Crown has been wrecked over the years. That has happened in all spheres of our political life.

Take the late Right Hon. Joe Lyons, Jim Scullin, and John Curtin. Take our own ex-Premier, the late T. J. Ryan. What happened to him? He was the first Labour Premier in 1915 and, as a result of his application to his job, he was burnt out at 39, and when he got a slight illness he passed to the beyond. Take our own Premier. Since he became Premier we can see him being burnt up. It is not so much the actual work as that every time a Minister goes to bed, and particularly the Premier, he is wondering what vile vicious propaganda will appear in the morning Press against him. These are the things that these men are subject to. These are the men that I want to see relieved. There are 11 Ministers but there are still not enough of them. No man should be asked to work 16 hours a day as these men do.

Immediately a member becomes a Minister he is unable to give the services to his electors that he gave previously. That was exemplified in the case of Mr. T. L. Williams. When he was a private member he was able to attend very efficiently to his electorate, but after becoming a Minister he was not able to visit his electorate so frequently and consequently his electors became dissatisfied. The same thing is happening now to the hon. member for Townsville. The hon. member, as he told us, before he came to Brisbane had an office in Townsville, with a girl working there to attend to his constituents. Immediately he comes to Brisbane his opponents are working up propaganda against him, telling the people that he cannot give them the same efficient service as previously. I say that he is doing it more efficiently today because, when he gets correspondence, instead of having to write to the Minister and wait for a reply, he is able to present the case directly to the Minister and get a reply. Consequently he is serving his electors more efficiently by being resident here than by living in his electorate, and running backwards and forwards to present cases, particulars of which have accumulated from week to week.

There should be an increase in members to reduce the work of the Ministers. Every private member on the Government side or on the Opposition is clamouring for an appointment with one or other of the Ministers, to introduce a deputation or present a case on behalf of an elector. Frequently I have endeavoured to get an appointment with a Minister and he has been inundated with applications for appointments by other members. This morning I introduced a deputation to the Secretary for Public Works, Housing and Local Government, and each of the four representatives I introduced had his say, and the Minister had to listen to all of them. That goes on day after day. Ministers hear deputation after deputation and they have to go back at night and attend to their office work.

There is a further reason why there should be an increase in members. My memory goes back a year or two ago, when the hon. member for Gregory was asked to attend the centenary celebrations at Birdsville, which is 1,560 miles from Brisbane. It took him nine days' travelling to go there and back. He went from Brisbane to Winton, 965 miles by train.

He had to travel by coach to Boulia, a distance of 275 miles, and by coach the 325 miles additional to Birdsville, a total of 1,560 miles. He had to travel this distance to visit a part of his electorate that he had been unable to get to previously.

Mr. Sparkes: On your reckoning there should be about 100 members for the Northern Territory. That electorate is only a suburb compared with the Northern Territory

Mr. TURNER: I am speaking of electorates and representation! I am sure hon. members, if they are honest, must agree with the facts presented by the Premier and realise that something must be done to give these people of the outback equal representation with those who live in electorates such as Kelvin Grove in Brisbane. People at Birdsville get a mail only about once a fortnight and fresh supplies once in six weeks.

Would any member say that people living in the remote parts of the State, far from the centres of civilisation, are not entitled to the same representation as those living in a city electorate? Every person living in the State is entitled to equal representation. If there could be closer representation members could visit parts of their electorates more frequently, and discuss with the people their problems and the representations they want to make to the Government, to Cabinet, or to Ministers. In some country districts it takes a letter 14 days to reach the representative, and another 14 days for the reply, and anything could happen in a month.

Efforts have been made to cause disaffection among the people by this Bill. The Opposition have said that the State is administered by a Queen Street Cabinet. An attempt has been made to divide the people by that means, but I will give particulars of Ministers who have represented northern, central and western electorates since this Government came into power in 1915. The late T. J. Ryan, who became Premier, represented the seat now held by Mr. Davis. Mr. Bulcock, who followed him, became Secretary for Agriculture and Stock. He held the seat for many years. The present Secretary for Health and Home Affairs was a western representative; he now represents Charters Towers. The late W. McCormack, who became Premier, represented Cairns for many years. The late J. Mullan represented Flinders, and the late J. Dash Mundingburra. Townsville was held by the late M. Hynes. Mr. Forgan Smith, a former Premier, represented Mackay for many years, and the present Secretary for Public Instruction has represented the Tableland for many years. The Treasurer is a representative of the Central District and

the Secretary for Public Lands represents a western part of this State. The late Mr. H. Coyne represented Warrego, a western electorate. There was no complaint when the metropolitan area had only one representative in the Cabinet, and that was the Premier.

Mr. Sparkes: I do not think there is one Minister who does not live in Brisbane.

Mr. TURNER: Had the hon. member been listening he would have heard me make reference to Mr. T. Williams, who as a private member frequently visited his electorate, but who, on becoming a Minister, could not do so so frequently. A Cabinet Minister must live in Brisbane to attend to his ministerial duties. It would be nonsense to say he could live in his electorate and at the same time attend to his ministerial duties in Brisbane.

The hon. member for Fassifern made a ridiculous statement when he said he could walk round the Greater Brisbane area in a day. I have yet to learn of any human being who can walk 15½ miles an hour, and he would have to do that to walk round the metropolitan area in a day.

Mr. Sparkes: Of course he could do it, and carry you on his back, too.

Mr. TURNER: He could not drive around the boundaries of the metropolitan area in his motor-car or even in the motor-car used by the hon. member for Aubigny, which is capable of doing 80 miles an hour, in 24 hours. It is 378 square miles.

Mr. Muller: I will walk around in a couple of days.

Mr. TURNER: When the hon. member for Windsor rose to support the amendment he made a vicious attack on the Premier and referred to him as a political hypocrite. I resent such a reference to our Premier. I knew him as a lad, I went to school with him, and I was closely associated with him right up until the time he entered Parliament, and I know that no man living could justly accuse him of being hypocritical about anything he has done at any time in his life. The only fault the Premier has from the Opposition point of view, and from the point of view of the hon. member for Windsor in particular, is that he is too strong for them.

The hon. member for Windsor said also that when the Premier is in this Chamber he drags it down to the level of the gutter. Only two days ago this Chamber was dragged down to the level of the gutter, but not by the Premier or by any hon. member on this side. If the term "political hypocrite" can be applied to anyone, I know of no-one to whom it can be applied more aptly than the hon. member for Windsor. He complains about interjections. He objects to interjections, yet in a speech delivered by the Premier this session the hon. member for Windsor interjected no fewer than 37 times.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to get back to the matter before the Committee.

Mr. TURNER: I had to refer to those matters because the hon. member for Windsor attacked the Premier. Knowing the Premier as I do, I had to speak in his defence and I know beyond any doubt that no person can justly accuse him of being a political hypocrite. In this Chamber he has wiped the floor with the Opposition. The other night, after 10 hours of strong criticism by the Opposition the Premier, with a short speech, knocked them into cocked hats, especially when he told them what the Premier of Western Australia has done, when he told them that in the redistribution there provision is being made for more electorates and that four electorates will have less than 500 electors each. That alone justifies this measure.

I agree wholeheartedly with the statement by the hon. member for Gregory the other day, that if he had his way he would give the people of Birdsville 10 votes for every one in the city. Such people, who in the interests of the State, will isolate themselves from civilisation, are more deserving of their 10 votes than were the landlords and parasites who reside in the metropolitan area and who, before Labour attained office, were given votes according to the property they held. In those days any man who held 10 allotments was allowed 10 votes, and a man who had 20 allotments was allowed 20 votes, and so on. I hold the view that a man who in the interests of the State will isolate himself in such places as Birdsville is more entitled to his 10 votes than any such parasite in the city that I have mentioned.

Mr. PLUNKETT (Albert) (4.5 p.m.): I was amazed to hear the hon. member for Kelvin Grove defending the Premier and saying that he objected to somebody's saying something about the Premier because in the same breath he hurled abuse at hon. members on this side himself.

The amendment before the Committee is a very simple one, reducing the proposed number from 75 to 65. For the last 20 years we have had 62 members in this Assembly and during those long years there has been no agitation for an increase in number until now. Rather strangely, one hon. member after another supported the Bill for 75 members, saying that we were undermanned in this Parliament. Why did they not wake up to that fact years ago, if it was a fact?

Mr. Jesson: We are only restoring what the Moore Government took away and putting in three others.

Mr. PLUNKETT: This increase in the number of members of Parliament is the number to fit into the scheme of things to suit the Labour Party. I know that the Premier would not introduce a Bill until he knew how 75 would fit in to the advantage of Labour at the next elections.

I have heard various speakers trying to justify the Bill and I ask: why is the Labour Party prepared to hand away all its powers to the Commonwealth and yet want more members here?

Mr. Jesson: I'll bite; why?

Mr. PLUNKETT: The hon. member knows why—because it was told to do it. The Labour Government are prepared to nationalise the banks and hand over financial dealings to the Commonwealth. The other day hon. members opposite said that 62 members of Parliament were overworked; another Minister was appointed and the hon. member for Kelvin Grove said that there should be more Ministers. Well, why not make all the members of the party Ministers? In my opinion the number of 75 was arrived at to fit in with the scheme of things, to give Labour greater protection than it has had in the past, and the Government have had protection in the past, goodness only knows.

When introducing the Bill the other day the Premier claimed much credit for Labour for having had the principle of one vote, one value, put into effect. Now he is getting away from it and some of his supporters have got away from it to the extent of ten to one. They have said that the reason for wanting to give some people ten votes against the one of others was that they were real producers. I happen to be a real producer myself and I do not think I would claim ten votes to the other fellow's one and if an hon. member on that side of the Committee thinks that the real producer should get ten votes to the other's one he is out of step with his colleagues and should be on this side of the Chamber. It does not matter how much you say in this Chamber in favour of the Bill, the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

Let us look at the figures to see how the scheme will work out. First of all, it may not be a bad idea to insert a clause to the effect that no party may become a Government on a minority vote of the people.

Mr. Power: You may never have a Government then. Would you like a dictatorship?

Mr. PLUNKETT: We have a Government at present elected on a minority vote of the people, and it is proposed to allow a Government to be elected on a still smaller minority vote. Why not insert a clause to say that a party must first obtain not only a majority of the seats but also a majority of the aggregate votes before it can form a Government? The Government party now consist of 35 members elected by 253,284 voters, yet 255,692 voters have only 23 members in this Chamber. Does that not clearly indicate that the situation in respect of representation is unbalanced?

Mr. Jesson: The same applies all over the world.

Mr. PLUNKETT: Is that any reason why we should do it? At the present time there are 20 seats in what will be Zone 1, 12 representing Labour and 8 the Opposition. It is proposed to increase the number in that zone by four. In Zone 2 there are 14 Labour representatives and 13 Opposition members and it is proposed to increase the number of electorates in that zone by three. Now look at Zone 3. At the moment there are 11 Labour members and only one representing

the Opposition. It is proposed to increase the number of electorates in Zone 3 by three—to give three more seats to Labour.

Mr. Power: No, the people will decide that.

Mr. PLUNKETT: The people have already decided by returning 11 Labour members and only one Opposition member.

Number 3 Zone embraces 97,000 people, yet it is proposed to increase the number of seats there by exactly the same number as it is proposed to increase the number of seats in Zone 2, with 255,000 electors. Again we see that the representation is unbalanced. Is it any reason that the people become suspicious and say, "What is the ulterior motive?"

Mr. Jesson: They are not becoming suspicious; you are trying to make them suspicious.

Mr. PLUNKETT: I could not make the hon. member suspicious.

Mr. Jesson: You have no need to make me suspicious. I am always suspicious of the Country Party.

Mr. PLUNKETT: I now come to Zone 4. I quote these figures because the system of representation is unbalanced. It is proposed to increase the number of seats without regard to the number of electors and without regard to the increase in other zones where the number of electors is far greater.

Under the zoning system certain parts of the State will possess more power in the selection of the Government than others. We are thus departing from the principle of justice. That is shown in the fact that 47,561 electors will get an additional three representatives as against 255,000 others. They will elect those three additional representatives. Labour at present holds all the seats in that zone, because it is highly industrialised. Can it be wondered at that I am charging the Government with bringing down this Bill to protect themselves?

Mr. Jesson: That is only your imagination.

Mr. PLUNKETT: It is not. I am willing to take a small wager that results will prove that I am right. The results that will follow the enactment of this measure will be shameful. If the Government want to be fair and reasonable they should accept the amendment. They could then work out zones and the allocation of members to the electorates within them. Everyone would then have a reasonable and fair opportunity of electing those they desire to represent them in this Parliament.

Mr. DECKER (Sandgate) (4.16 p.m.): I support the amendment. I would have been happier had the amendment sought to reduce the number of members instead of increasing them by three.

Mr. Sparkes: Hear, hear!

Mr. DECKER: I represent my electors very well. If they were asked whether they desired to increase or decrease the number

of electorates, or whether the number should remain as at present, I believe the majority would favour a reduction.

A lot of nonsense has been talked on this Bill. The area I represent is over the margin, according to the Act, yet I have found no great hardship in representing the 15,000 electors in my electorate. I should find it no greater hardship to represent 17,000 electors. There is no reason why the representation of this area should be increased by one single member. It is remarkable that the Government have not admitted that this city's population is increasing year by year in a greater proportion than that of any other part of the State. If we are to have members selected on a reduced quota, it will mean that in five, 10 or 15 years hence we shall have almost double the number of members in this Parliament than are now being provided for. I am speaking of city boundaries particularly. They do not expand in area; they only build up population. Their areas are only pocket-handkerchief boroughs. If an hon. member cannot look after one of these areas and the number of electors in it, there is something wrong with him. The Government cannot put a substantial case for an increase of even one member in the metropolitan area.

This clause will affect not only the size of this Parliament but it will affect the Brisbane City Council, whose aldermen will be increased by four. The additional cost will therefore not stop with the State Parliament; it will affect other bodies similarly, in representation and cost.

In a redistribution of State electorates it is wrong that the Cabinet should decide the zones and the quota of electors in each zone. That has never been done previously in Queensland's history. All that was laid down previously was the number of members who should be elected to this Parliament. That is the extent to which the Government should go. Having decided that number, they should appoint a commission to make the redistribution. This is a new and novel scheme for Queensland. What has brought it about? Only the fear, which has been growing for a number of years, that Labour is weakening. No hon. member can deny that year by year the Labour figures have been going down and the anti-Labour figures have been increasing, till we had the spectacle at the last election of the anti-Labour vote exceeding the Labour vote. No wonder the Government are taking some action to rectify the position not in the interests of the rights of the people, but in the interests of themselves, to retain control of the Government. No good argument can be put up for increased representation.

Mr. Jesson: There are 22,000 in the electorate of Logan.

Mr. DECKER: Has the hon. member for Logan complained about being overburdened, although he has the greatest number of voters in the State? Has any member squealed about not being able to give proper representation? This is a scheme that has been hatched in the minds of the Cabinet

in order to secure their position in office, and not with the idea of doing any good for the State. It is introduced, not with the object of helping Queensland, but of helping the party. I believe that it is a breach of our Constitution. That is a matter that we will deal with on another clause. The time will come when we, as representatives of the majority of the electors, can register an emphatic protest against the scheme of the Government to increase representation for the purpose of political gain.

Mr. BARNES (Bundaberg) (4.22 p.m.): When this Bill was introduced I told members the simple way out, if they were genuine; and that was not to give the Government new seats in the West and North Queensland, but to increase our votes in the cities—in the metropolitan area and in towns such as Bundaberg, Maryborough, Gympie, Townsville, Ipswich, Toowoomba, &c. It is much easier for me to work 15,000 people in my electorate than it is for the member for Stanley, for instance, to work 6,000 in his electorate, because it is a very scattered electorate. The principle introduced by the Premier taken to its logical conclusion really means that the Brisbane electorates, being compact, could stand an extra number of electors. I agree with that, but I do not agree with the principle that he is putting into operation. In the western territory there is 156,000 square miles in Carpentaria, and that is off-set by 1.5 square miles in Brisbane. If I had the cutting-up of the electorates and I had at heart the interests of the country—the Premier pretends he has—I would make the Brisbane electorates, say, three or five square miles, and so take those seats out of the city and extend them to the country. I would give the member for Albert, the member for Fassifern, the member for Aubigny, the member for Isis, the member for Cunningham, and the members on the Government side who represent electorates that are scattered, less area at the expense of the cities. There would be 15,000 in Bundaberg instead of 9,000.

There would be 15,000 instead of 9,000 on the roll of the Ipswich electorate and so on for all the city electorates in Queensland. It is much easier for me to work 15,000 in my electorate, which is virtually a metropolitan electorate, than it would be for a member representing a country electorate to work 6,000. If the Premier genuinely desires to help the country he would do something like that. He talks a great deal about giving help to the country but in cyclone relief he gives Cooktown a lousy £500 and the shire councils of Rockhampton and Gladstone only £2,000. That shows how much the Premier is concerned about the country.

To make matters worse, this loud song about help for the country has caught up with him in his own Bill. I have not to tell the Committee about it, as hon. members can read it. In Zone 1 he gives an extra four seats, an increase of 20 per cent. In Zone 2, a closely-settled country area, Rockhampton to the border and partly west, he gives an increase of only 12 per cent. Why has

he done this? The reason is perfectly obvious: all the Country Party members, with the exception of one, virtually come from that area. He is inconsistent in his argument about helping the country people in the Zone 2 when he gives them only a 12 per cent. increase compared with a 20 per cent. increase to Brisbane. I forget the exact figures for North and Western Queensland but the increase would be over 40 per cent.

If the Premier were genuine he would do what the Frank Barnes Labour Party proposed to do when it went before the people at the last elections. To help country people it would give a 10 per cent. freight reduction to places north of Yaamba near Rockhampton and to western points past such places as Toowoomba and, say, Rockhampton West. For longer distances the reduction in freight was to be 20 per cent. That was to help those in the West and the North. That was practical. Furthermore, on our platform was the request to the Federal Government to give to all producers a 10 per cent. reduction in taxation, thus encouraging them to remain on the land. The Premier has told us that that is very important at present. In addition to that primary producers in the North and West should be given an additional 10 per cent. reduction in taxation. The man on the land was to obtain loans interest-free for so many years. That would have been of practical help.

Mr. Bruce: Is this in the Protocols?

Mr. BARNES: This is in the Protocols, only they will do it after they absorb us. Our platform provided for the use of national credit which I have been advocating in this Parliament for eight years, for the Bradfield irrigation scheme and similar schemes for the North and West. That would be of practical assistance in populating the country and it can be done. I need only refer to Alberta in Canada and Alberta had not the sovereign prerogative that Queensland has. There they made use of the Treasury-bill system. Their money reform Bills were taken to court and most of them went to the Privy Council without success. Some of the higher-ups in Wall Street stopped them from winning. We could introduce our own banking system here tomorrow to finance these projects in the same way as the banks today finance schemes, the only difference being that we would do it without charge.

Will the Premier come forward and do that? No, he will not. He is not interested in help for Queensland; he is interested in retaining seats for his "Yes" men in Parliament, and nothing else. We are here fighting day in and day out, and what is happening? All that is happening is more and more chaos every day. In short, we are getting nowhere. You have to be blind, deaf and dumb not to be able to see or hear that. We are hitting up against a brick wall because our hands are tied.

If we get 13 more members in this Parliament, what is going to happen to them? It will give the Government more strength. They will have more power than they have

today, but it is possible that some of the Labour Party could cross the floor of the House and the plan would fail. There may be some who will object to being a party to the plot organised in Wall Street by the Learned Elders of Zion and put into operation in the parliaments throughout the world. There may be half-a-dozen who will have the courage to object to it, therefore the Premier has to see to it that he has another half-a-dozen men to replace them. These new men will not be trained in the arts of government, they will be raw, and the Premier will be able to handle them. In the meantime, that is a danger that has got to be overcome. If the present rank and file of the Labour Party were ignorant in 1941 when I came into this Parliament they are not ignorant today because I have brought documentary evidence here to prove that what I have said is correct.

What will the 13 new members do? I have shown that the children at school are taught in the sixth-class arithmetic syllabus untruths about the banking system, and I have shown that the Learned Elders of Zion have wanted the people to be taught untruths. When these 13 men come into Parliament as rank-and-file members, they will be used in the same way as anybody else. They will be taught according to the sixth-class school syllabus to protect the banking system at all costs.

In case some of the new hon. members have not heard me speak about the sixth-class school syllabus, let me inform them that it says that if a bank borrows £1,000 from Jones at 3 per cent. and lends that £1,000 to Smith at 5 per cent., then, with that 2 per cent., plus exchange charges, it makes its profit. That is definitely untrue because the Encyclopaedia Britannica says that banks create credit out of nothing and that is supported by other authorities. These new members will not buck the international banking clique in party politics.

Party politics smells to the high heavens. If we had independent members in this Parliament they would vote according to the way they think, not as has happened on many occasions in this Chamber. They have gone into Caucus—

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

Mr. BARNES: You're telling me, I am connecting my remarks. The people of Bundaberg sent me here to express my point of view, not the Opposition point of view, not Labour's point of view but my own, and I am expressing it. The people of Bundaberg sent me here because I preached this gospel to them for eight years, and if it offends anybody I am sorry for their ignorance. Of course, the man who has any spunk or decency in him will at least say, privately, "Yes, at least the hon. member for Bundaberg is right," but they are all men who are willing to sit on their backsides and take 20 a week for being "Yes" men.

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The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out to the hon. member that we are dealing now with the number of members of Parliament.

Mr. BARNES: That is right and I am against the amendment, just as I am against the motion, because it is unnecessary to put "Yes" men into this Parliament. It will cost at least £20,000 a year. I agree with the hon. member for Mundingburra, who suggests that if the Government spent that £20,000 in the West or up in the North they would be doing something useful; but no, they want security in this Chamber at any cost.

As my experience has shown me since I have been a member of this Assembly, when the going is against him the Premier gets dirty, but when the going is smooth I do not know a nicer man—and I am not kidding him. I do not know a worse man when the going is tough. The Premier, in defending what he is trying to do, has had a battle royal, as disclosed by the rowdysism in this Chamber and the members suspended from it. Why? All because the banking system has to be protected at all costs. That is the only reason why the Government are sitting there. They tell the people that they are representing them, they tell that to the majority of the people, who know no better. They cannot successfully tell it to the people in Bundaberg and in places further North.

I have told hon. members in this Chamber not once but on many occasions, and I repeat it here today—you have to choose between being "yes" men to the learned Elders of Zion and being cogs in the Communist machine. There will be no such thing as Labour and Tory in future politics. Such things will not exist. The Learned Elders of Zion said in 1905 that "the aristocracy of the goyim as a political force was spent, but as landowners they could be of considerable interest to us." As landowners they have already been absorbed, and absorbed by the Government. By the Blair Athol Bill the Government could take the mines from them; under the Food for Britain Scheme they could take the land from them, and under the Abattoirs Acts Amendment Bill they are taking their cattle. It is only a matter of time when the hon. member for Aubigny will be saying, "I, James Sparkes, do hand over my property situated in So-and-So Street, Dalby, to the Soviet State of Australia." The whole thing is being worked out through Wall Street. Now the Government want 13 more "Yes" men in this Chamber to cost the people of Queensland another £20,000 a year. They will not put it over me. The whole thing is hypocrisy.

My electorate is what you might term a metropolitan electorate, and it is a simple matter for me to work 15,000 electors—it would be a difficult matter for others to work even 6,000 or 8,000 electors. Why not give Rockhampton, Townsville, Mackay, Toowoomba, Warwick and similar places an extra number, the same as you treat the Brisbane people? What is the work of a member of Parliament? During the war 95 per cent. of the work I did was Federal work and I boast that I was more successful

in my work than any other hon. member. I had entree to places where others could not get. Because I had guts I was able to successfully approach departmental heads who dealt it out to me. When Labour men could not get things done for them they came to me and asked me to do the things for them. I had entree to some of the departments because I was the only hon. member to fight Communism correctly. I accused the ex-Deputy Premier of Queensland of making a pact with the Communists. He denied it but when Mr. Paterson became a member of this Assembly he confirmed it. The ex-Deputy Premier still denied it.

Mr. Aikens: And Walsh is squealing because the Communists are running a candidate for Lord Mayor.

Mr. BARNES: That is true. Out in Dalby the other day, while organising the A.L.P., Mr. Walsh said that the Communists were running a candidate in Brisbane and spoiling Labour's chances of winning the Lord Mayorship in Brisbane. He said that they would have had a good chance but for that.

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

Mr. BARNES: I am not getting away from the Bill. I am proving that I do not want 13 more "Yes" men in this Chamber. Subsequently Mr. Walsh by his Dalby statement proved that what I had said was true. He is hostile now because his bedmates, the Comms—and they were his bedmates in Mackay, too—are running a candidate and, according to him, ruining Labour's chances of winning the Lord Mayorship in Brisbane. I hope that I shall live to see the day when every hon. member opposite without exception will come on his bended knees to me and say, "I wish to God I had supported you years ago." Then it will be too late. After I was in hospital my doctor said to me, "How is it that you lived. It is a miracle that you lived," and I replied, "I live because I desire to live. I live because I represent truth and justice." I am not afraid of man or beast, hence I will apologise to nobody.

A Government Member: You did the other day.

Mr. BARNES: Let me answer that interjection. I apologised the other day for something I said but the day before I said something 6,000 times worse and I did not apologise because I had forgotten that my wife is about to have a baby. I did apologise but wait until she has the baby and see what happens. (Laughter.) I am not afraid of man or beast.

An Hon. Member interjected.

Mr. BARNES: The other day the hon. member for Carpentaria did a silly thing and gave me an opportunity for publicity. He spoiled the pact about withholding publicity from me.

During the war 90 per cent. of the work of a State member was in connection with Federal matters and now the war is over two-thirds of the work also relates to Federal matters. Federal members get free telephones and free telegram services, but we have to pay for that out of our own pockets and so instead of giving a better service by sending telegrams we send letters. We have to send a certain number of telegrams and make a certain number of telephone calls because we cannot avoid them. We cannot send telegrams all the time, because we cannot pay for them and so we use 2½d. stamp. If the Premier were genuine we would be able to give this service and it should not be necessary to ask for it if we cured the evils of the banking system, which is a glorified messenger service. At the very least the Premier could make representations to the Federal Government, Tory or not, to place us on an equal footing. I defy any hon. member to say that at least half his work is not in connection with Federal matters.

Much has been said about what has happened in the other States and the Premier has very cunningly referred to the matter. He is very capable of acting in a cunning way and I know of no-one better, unless it is the former Premier, the Hon. F. A. Cooper, who could talk for two hours about nothing and dodge the point at issue. He could pretend that he was talking on the objections.

The Premier outlined what was happening in other parts of Australia. He said that New South Wales had three electoral zones, including a zone for Sydney and a zone for Newcastle. The Newcastle zone might as well be included in the Sydney zone, as its population is round about 200,000. Newcastle is a big town. In other words, New South Wales has two big cities, which are in two separate zones, while the rest of the State is placed on equal terms. The Premier only touched on that point and to dodge the fact that the whole of the country district of New South Wales was on equal terms, he rushed away to Western Australia. He said that there were some electorates in the Geraldton and Broome areas of about 1,000 electors. If that is right—and I believe it is—it still does not interest me, because if Jones jumps down a well why should I? Because the Moore Government introduced a Bill for the redistribution of seats in 1931, and because Labour is now doing likewise, why should I support it? This is 1949. When I had my first vote I voted Tory. That is how much I knew about voting. I met a Mr. Cribb, who told me he was voting Labour, which made me think. I was then keeping company with a sister in the hospital whose uncle was the late Senator J. C. Stewart, who was a member of this Parliament also. I said to J.C. "I know nothing about politics. Tell me something that will enable me to think along the right lines." He lent me a book called, "Elements of Social Science." It was written by a doctor of medicine who was not game to put his name to it because if he did so he would have been ostracised. He wrote that book

in 1876. It said that irrespective of what you or I do towards exposing the monetary system the magnitude of the national debt would eventually expose it. There was no need to expose the fraud of the banking system for eventually it would expose itself by its influence on the National Debt.

(Time expired.)

Mr. BROWN (Buranda) (4.49 p.m.): I desire to make my contribution to this debate. I am only a young member of this Chamber. I have listened to a tirade of abuse from the Opposition of this measure, but I feel that its members are talking with their tongues in their cheeks. We are dealing with Clause 4, on which the Leader of the Opposition has moved an amendment. The clause makes provision for an additional 13 members to be elected to this Parliament, whereas the amendment asks for an additional three members. Therefore, the Opposition favour an increase in principle. It is only a question of degree—what the increase shall be.

Mr. Sparkes: What are you stonewalling it for?

Mr. BROWN: I am not stonewalling. Hon. members opposite have been talking a lot about nothing, which they can do pretty well. Our capacity to produce is increasing, and our population is increasing, and the time has arrived when the Government believe there is a need for a redistribution of seats.

Mr. Sparkes interjected.

Mr. BROWN: The hon. member for Aubigny might as well keep quiet because he cannot stop me from saying what I want to say.

Mr. Sparkes: I only want to put you right.

Mr. BROWN: The hon. member could not put anybody right.

Mr. Sparkes: You said they were increasing population in the West. I say you are wrong; it is decreasing.

Mr. BROWN: I am contending that with an increase in population in Queensland we should have an increase in seats. I did not say anything about a decrease or increase of population in the West. I talked of an increase in population in the State of Queensland.

Mr. Sparkes: That is in the city.

Mr. BROWN: If the hon. member keeps his ears open he will be able to understand what I say.

Owing to changed conditions it is necessary to have a redistribution of seats. Much has been said about the principle of one adult, one vote. The Opposition have been talking so much about it that they think this vital principle is going to be changed to suit this Labour Party. I wish I were able to think the same way.

Mr. Sparkes: Would it make your conscience feel all right?

Mr. BROWN: My conscience is clear. If the hon. member's conscience is as clear, he will be able to sleep as easily as I can.

I want to draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that the Opposition when in power during the period 1929-1932, brought down a Bill that did nothing in the way of giving effect to the principle of one adult, one vote. I am referring to a Bill that the Moore-Barnes Government introduced dealing with local government, which created a householders' franchise, not one adult, one vote. There are three members on the Opposition benches today who were members of that Government party; yet they have the effrontery, after supporting a Bill of that kind, to get up here now and say that they believe in the principle of one man, one vote. Their whole conduct is hypocritical.

Mr. Sparkes: You believe in 10 men having one vote.

Mr. BROWN: The hon. member did not think of it in 1929 when the Queensland citizens were deprived of their right of citizenship. It must be said to the everlasting praise of members of the Labour Party that when they were returned in 1932 their Government immediately brought in an adult franchise for local-government elections. (Opposition interjections.) It is the truth and hon. members opposite do not like it. It is no use trying to prevent me from saying what I want to say.

As we progress, we must make alterations to suit that progress. By adopting the zoning system we are following the example of other States, which are not governed by Labour. In some of the other States there is a three-to-one value in the sparsely settled areas, compared with the metropolitan area. In Western Australia, under the zoning system, the proportion is 30 to 1 in some districts, where a member is returned by about 400 votes, against one in the city.

The zoning system is well worthy of consideration, and I believe that it will result in putting the electorates of Queensland on a more equitable basis. Under the present system the larger centres of population have a big pull over country areas.

The hon. member for Fassifern said that the commission was already appointed.

Mr. Muller: The boundaries are defined.

Mr. BROWN: The boundaries are not defined. I should like to be in the position to force the hon. member for Fassifern to prove his case. He said the commission had been appointed.

Mr. Sparkes: No, he said the boundaries were fixed.

Mr. BROWN: No, it is only the commission that can fix the boundaries. (Opposition interjections.) It is only the boundaries of the zones that are fixed, not the boundaries of the electorates—which is a difference. The hon. member for Fassifern knows perfectly well but tries to pull wool over the eyes of the people.

Mr. Muller: Who will constitute the commission?

Mr. BROWN: I do not know; it might be the cat in the vat. Much has been said to the effect that the Government are in power on a minority. In my own quiet way I have been trying to understand the figures given by the hon. member for Albert. He stated that we were a minority Government because we had 35 seats in this Parliament representing in round figures 253,000 electors, whereas the Opposition representing 255,000 electors held only 23 seats. I take it that the hon. member combined the votes of the Country and Liberal Parties and compared the result with the votes of the Labour Party. Let us take the figures of the Labour Party and the Liberal Party and ascertain the figures of the Country Party, and we find that that party is a minority Opposition.

Mr. Plunkett: I gave the Opposition figures, not the Country Party figures.

Mr. BROWN: I was surprised at a statement made by the hon. member for Sandgate; he will vote for something he does not believe in. He supports the amendment but he does not subscribe to any increase at all.

Mr. Sparkes: I do not either.

Mr. BROWN: Then why is the hon. member voting for it?

Mr. Sparkes: If you cannot get a whole loaf of bread a little bit is very handy.

Mr. BROWN: That is all right, but the hon. member does not want any bread at all.

I interjected when the hon. member for Mundingburra mentioned something about somebody on the back benches who had given him some information and asked him to name the person.

Mr. Sparkes: He would not be so unfair.

Mr. Muller: He told me it was the hon. member for Buranda.

Mr. BROWN: I wish he had. The hon. member is given to this sort of thing and used to it: he conjures up these things in his own mind and brings them forward and hon. members opposite believe them. Unfortunately some of them over there believe them. They are only lies and built on foundations of sand.

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. I have no objection to hon. members disregarding anything I say, or disagreeing with it, but I think you have ruled that the word "lie" is unparliamentary and the hon. member for Buranda has said that the statements I made were lies. I object to the word "lie."

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Buranda to substitute a word for the word "lie," which is unparliamentary.

Mr. BROWN: I substitute the word "untruths." I thank the hon. member for Mundingburra for his eulogistic remarks about me.

Mr. Aikens: They were well merited.

Mr. BROWN: I appreciate them, even though the hon. member may think they are untrue. I hope he believes them.

I hope that the Committee will reject this amendment.

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton) (5.1 p.m.): The hon. member for Warrego sounded his pipes in support of what the Premier said this morning about the action of the Moore Government in reducing the number of electoral divisions in the State by ten. The Premier, of course, stated during the week that the Moore Government, in their redistribution in 1931 reduced country representation by nine and city representation by only one.

At that time 31 of the 75 electorates were outside the statutory limit under the Electoral Districts Act of 1910. The electorates represented by the Labour Party at the time were heavily below the minimum, and they were mostly in the western and north-western parts of the State. Many of them were mere pocket boroughs. A notable example, which is illustrative of the condition at the time, was the electorate of Flinders which was represented by the late Mr. Mullan, who was then Attorney-General. It had an enrolment of only 2,652, against the quota of 6,810 and a statutory minimum of 5,448. It was because no fewer than 31 of the total 72 seats at that time were in that position that the Moore Government were moved to take action for a redistribution to bring the electorates into accord with the provisions of the law. The result was that the Government decided to amalgamate a number of the small electorates and the effect of the total amalgamation throughout the State was to eliminate 10 seats that were considered unnecessary.

Mr. Power: Why did you cut out Paddington?

Mr. MAHER: That was the background of the happenings in 1931, but it is very obvious, from the intention of the Government today to restore the number of electoral districts in the State to the number that obtained 20 years ago, that they intend also to re-enact the abuses connected with the electoral districts of that time, because provision is being made lawfully today—it was unlawfully then—to constitute a number of electoral districts in the State in which the enrolment will be round about 4,800.

The Opposition, of course, object to the manipulation of the western and north-western areas of the State to suit the needs of the present Government. It objects to the manipulation of those electorates, which will have no other effect than to make a present of a number of seats to the Government on an undemocratic basis.

The Bill proposes to increase the number of members of Parliament to 75, the amendment of the Opposition to increase the number to 65. Without doubt the proposed increase in the Bill is designed to advance the interests of the Socialist Party. That

is the reason, and there is no other reason. No sound argument, no sound reason, nor any logical case has been submitted by the Premier or any member of his Government for the increase, because the real reason is too blatantly obvious.

The hon. member for Warrego spoke this afternoon and complained that his electorate contained 98,000 square miles and was far too big for one man to represent adequately. What does the representation of the Warrego seat entail? There are two main centres in the electorate, Charleville and Cunnamulla. They are the only two towns in the electorate; there are one or two villages, such as Wyandra, Hungerford and Eulo. There is no call upon the hon. member for Warrego to visit every part of his electorate, except perhaps those places at election time. When he goes to Charleville and Cunnamulla he hits the centres of his electorate and is able to get in touch with the people who want to see him. He makes himself available to the people who want to see him and thus can carry out effectively his representation of the Warrego seat. The mere cutting of the Warrego electorate in halves and making Cunnamulla the capital of the southern half and Charleville the capital of the northern will not confer any benefits upon the people of the West generally. It will only make it so much easier for the Labour member who will be elected. The square mileage of an electorate is not what counts. An hon. member does not represent square miles but people, and the bulk of the people are located in the towns I mentioned. It is physically impossible for any hon. member to get round to the big stations and meet individuals here and there over the broad area. The people do not expect it and are prepared when they know that their representative is coming to his electorate to go into Charleville or Cunnamulla and meet and discuss their problems with him.

The same thing applies to the electorate of Maranoa. In that electorate we have Roma, St. George, Surat and Mitchell as the towns that matter, and the hon. member for Maranoa need only in the course of his duty visit those four towns. It does not impose any disability or burden above what any other hon. member has to bear. I think hon. members representing electorates closer to the capital city have far many more calls on their time and more travelling to do to reach the towns and villages and farming settlements in their constituencies than those who represent the sparsely-populated electorates where the people do not expect the same consideration and the same time spent amongst them.

Therefore I say that there is no real reason for the decision to increase the representation in the western and north-western districts of the State. It is not increased representation that will help those districts today; action is wanted.

It is the policy to be implemented that will help to retain the diminishing population of the West and North-West where it belongs. The election of six more members from the far-western areas is not going to help the

Far West or Far North-West one iota. It is what we do in Parliament and the administration by the Government that have a big bearing on whether we can retain an effective population in the remote areas in the West and North-West. That is the real issue; that is the thing that counts. The Bill is only a palliative and is being used by the Government only for the purpose of trying to gull the people into believing that they are doing something real, something substantial in trying to develop the West by giving it increased representation. That is not the real reason for the Bill at all. The real reason is that the Government want to entrench themselves in power on a permanent dictatorship basis, and as evidence of that I propose to give some figures in relation to the zonal quotas.

Under the 1931 Act the quota fixed for the electorates of the State was 8,029, with a minimum marginal allowance reducing it to 6,424 and a maximum marginal allowance raising it to 9,634. Under the Bill the quota for Zone 2 will be 9,536, with a minimum of 7,629 and a maximum of 11,443. Let me take my own electorate of West Moreton as an example. The voters on the roll in 1948 numbered 8,962, which accords with the prescribed margin in the 1931 Elections Act. Under the Bill the quota for the zone in which my electorate is will be raised from 8,029 to 9,536, an increase of 1,507, and the maximum enrolment under the Bill goes up from 9,634 to 11,443, a rise of 1,809. That means that the West Moreton electorate can, and indeed will, attract at least 1,000 more voters under the distribution in terms of the Bill than are enrolled for West Moreton today.

Here we have revealed the Machiavellian cunning in the whole of the redistribution following on the creation of 13 new seats. Any reasonably minded elector would expect West Moreton to show a reduced enrolment. In other words, instead of having 8,962 on the electoral roll as it did last year, it should follow that with the creation of 13 new seats and a fair and equitable adjustment of voters, the number on the West Moreton roll should fall. But we have an entirely opposite result. With this utterly weird juggling that will take place the West Moreton enrolment will be increased, whereas every reasonably minded person would be entitled to expect the enrolment to decrease with the dislocation and adjustment involved through the creation of 13 more seats.

What applies in the West Moreton electorate will apply generally in every other seat in Zone 2.

Zone 2 is the zone that contains the electorates represented by every Country Party member in this Parliament, and Zone 2 is the area chosen by the Government for increased enrolments. That is where the Country Party strength is greatest. The object is to reduce the possibility of the Country Party's obtaining greater Parliamentary representation in that zone. That indicates the real reason why this Bill has been introduced, to provide for a permanent

Socialist dictatorship in this State because in western areas the vote, with a preponderance of shearers, stationhands and bush workers generally, invariably returns Socialist members to this Parliament. If the electorates are to be halved in that zone the number of Socialist members is to be greatly increased, but a particularly cunning scheme has been devised under which all of the electorates in Zone 2 represented by the Country Party will attract more votes, despite the fact that 13 more seats are being created, when the trend should be for fewer electors in each electorate in Zone 2. The whole thing is a dirty business, worked out with astuteness and cunning in order to ensure that this Government will be entrenched in power for many years to come. The whole thing is dirty. In fact, there is no other word in the English language to express it better.

A rumour is current in town that the Government are having difficulty in getting commissioners amongst decent public officers as they do not want to be associated with such a scandalous process of destroying democratic government in this State. I am not surprised at this for I think that any public officer who would lend himself to a proposal like this to destroy this democratic Parliament and the basis upon which it rests would not be worthy of the name of a public servant. Here it is, a dirty job. There is no other way in which one can describe it.

The Premier made reference to the boundary-rider in the far West who he stated was doing a big job and asked whether he was not entitled to more representation because he was employed in the far western districts. I am prepared to concede that the boundary-rider in the far West and Central West is doing a good job. All the people in those remote regions are in the same category. I do not think the boundary-rider out there, though, would think that he was entitled to double the representation of the boundary-rider down the Moonie, or about Tara or Meandarra and along the MacIntyre River west of Goondiwindi, all of which is contained within Zone 2. Is the boundary-rider who rides the boundary fences west of Goondiwindi, on the Monnie River, in the isolated parts of the State, entitled to less representation than the boundary-rider who rides the fences out west of Charleville and in the Roma districts? Knowing the Australian bushman as I do, knowing what a fair and decent fellow he is, I know that if it was put to him that, as the Premier states, he is entitled to greater representation because of his residence in the remote western areas he would be the first to repudiate it. All he would say in the good old bushman style would be, "All I want is a fair go."

Mr. Power: That is why he votes Labour.

Mr. MAHER: If all workers voted Labour every seat in this House would be represented by a Labour man. It is very clear that all workers do not vote Labour, happily for our democratic system of government.

I see very little variation in the vote value of country-dwellers. The country people, whether out on the Paroo or on the banks of the Condamine, live under very difficult conditions in lonely isolated places but I do not concede that the resident of the West is entitled to two members against the resident of the rural area shown in Zone 2 with only one member. I do not think that any country-dweller living in Zone 4, the western area, would ask or expect that he would have a double representation in this Parliament against his fellow worker and fellow country-dweller living in Zone 2. Yet this Bill creates a glaring injustice and strikes a deadly blow at our whole democratic set-up in this State.

It is said that those whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad. I am confident that when the full extent of the undemocratic basis of this Bill is explained and becomes understood by the people there will be a strong revulsion of feeling against this Government. Our fellow citizens in Queensland have a sporting instinct; they like a fair go in all things; whether they go to the stadium, the racecourse, the cricket or football field, a fair and equal opportunity is all that is asked from their competitors. That is the Australians' fine spirit. I think that when this matter is driven home and the great mass of our fellow citizens are able to understand what is involved in this undemocratic Bill there will be a revulsion of feeling against the Socialists who are not prepared to accept the fair and equal decision from the electors against the democratic groups that oppose them politically. The Government wish to handicap the Opposition out of the race and hold them down so that they have not a chance, in order to perpetuate their own hold upon the Parliament of Queensland.

It is absurd to say that six new members from the West and the North will do anything more for those regions than what has been done. If the West and the North are neglected, and are losing population—and there is evidence that they are—that is the fault of the men who sit on the Government benches in this Parliament today. This Government have the advice and good counsel of western and northern members who belong to their own party. I refer to members like yourself, Mr. Devries, the hon. member for Warrego, the hon. member for Carpentaria, the hon. member for Barcoo, and the hon. member for Maranoa. These men are racy products of the West; they understand the problems of the West; and there are five or six of them who sit in the Government party; and I have not the slightest doubt that they are quite capable of putting the western point of view before the Government and to the men who support this Government party; yet the evidence is there today of neglect of the West, evidence of declining population because of the general policy of the Socialist Administration and the domination of them by the more extreme elements representing the metropolitan and provincial city electorates of the State. They are able to outweigh these men from the West. The mere fact that we return six

more men from the West is not going to turn the scales. So that if the Government admit that things are bad in the West, that population is diminishing and there is evidence of neglect on all sides, they stand self-condemned because of their own failure to tackle the very vital problem affecting the development and progress of an important part of the State. All the six new members to come from the north and North-West can do is to give additional strength to the present Government; the western and northern parts of Queensland have over the years consistently sent Government supporters to this Parliament, and unless there is a strong revulsion of feeling against the Government this Government will get the six new members on seats based on a quota of only 4,783.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HILTON (Carnarvon) (5.25 p.m.): I rise to voice my opposition to the amendment before the Committee. I listened intently to the observations made by the hon. member for West Moreton, who endeavoured to camouflage the issue and make a case against the Government's alleged unfair discrimination against what is known as the South-eastern Zone. He laid particular stress on the likely alteration in his own district. He emphasised the fact that his electorate would be increased by 1,000 votes but omitted to state that other electorates in this zone will be in the same position. My electorate, that of Carnarvon, is in the same zone as West Moreton, and if the hon. member makes out that there is to be unfair discrimination in respect of his electorate, I would remind him there would be an increase in some other electorates, and Labour electorates, in that zone. They will receive similar treatment. Consequently, how can the hon. member contend that there will be undue or unfair discrimination in that respect?

Mr. Maher: I was talking about additional representation for the country areas.

Mr. HILTON: Let us deal with the matter in its true perspective. After listening to this debate very intently, and with my knowledge of the position, I find two major principles are involved so far as the country is concerned. Everybody has freely admitted a definite need for a reduction of the large western and north western electorates. The electors of those districts should have at least the opportunity of making personal contact with their representatives from time to time. No member of this Committee can honestly say that with the present large areas members who representing them, giving attention to their duties in Brisbane, can visit the centres in their electorates and make personal contact even with the greater number of their constituents in a three-year period. I think there is an unanswerable case for a reduction in the size of these electorates.

Again, admitting that principle and trying to apply it with mathematical equality, as it were, we must realise, of course, that it is impossible to retain the old slogan of equal voting value. Although the people in those electorates are not enjoying two or more

votes, as Opposition members say, there must, of course, be some irregularity in numbers, and as has been pointed out by the Premier that principle has been attempted in most of the other States. It is applied in Great Britain and the U.S.A. Considering the great degree of development necessary in these large electorates there is need for a reduction in size. I therefore readily subscribe to the view that there should be greater country representation in this Parliament, but I am amazed to think that the Country Party opposes this measure because the very factor that brought that Party into existence was the cry that was raised in the far-off days that the city Liberals dominated the whole of Government to the detriment of the country. That was the cry that went up when these men formed the Country Party years ago, the cry for greater country representation, that the country was being dominated by city interests, and on that score the Country Party was formed. Now the members of that party have the temerity to stand up and argue against effective increased country representation.

This Parliament deals with the affairs of the State as a whole. Can anybody logically argue that with greater country representation in this Parliament country interests, irrespective of who represents particular electorates, will not receive greater consideration? I heartily subscribe to the view that the city should not entirely dominate the country, and I welcome the generous attitude of the Government in agreeing that there should be more effective or greater country representation in this Parliament.

Mr. Sparkes: But this Bill gives more members to the city than to any other part of the country.

Mr. HILTON: By far the greatest of the proposed increases will be in the country areas.

Mr. Aikens: In the South-eastern corner.

Mr. HILTON: Excluding the metropolitan area, surely the hon. member for Mundingburra does not argue that the Darling Downs and the area right out several hundred miles inland are not country areas?

Mr. Sparkes: You do not give them the same representation as you do the man at Charleville.

Mr. HILTON: Unless hon. members are prepared to reduce to an even smaller number the quotas for the Far West and the North-West, there must be some inequality so far as the number of electors in each constituency is concerned, but nobody could argue that after this Bill becomes law there will not be greater representation for the country parts of Queensland in this Parliament.

Mr. Aikens: Have a look at the map. I do not think you have seen it.

Mr. HILTON: The hon. member for Mundingburra has made many absurd observations today, and when he makes an absurd interjection like that I really should not waste my time taking any notice of him.

Mr. Sparkes: You must know that there is going to be an alteration in Carnarvon.

Mr. HILTON: My knowledge of the zones is the same as that which has been placed before every hon. member. I realise that my electorate is in the same zone as that of the hon. member for West Moreton. I realise that that particular part of the country is more developed than far-western places. It cannot be argued that those people are disadvantaged to the same extent as people in the far-western and north-western areas.

Mr. Maher: There are to be 13 new seats yet your seat and my seat are going to increase in enrolment.

Mr. HILTON: Quite so, but a while ago the hon. member was trying to lead the Committee to believe that only Country Party electorates were being treated in that fashion. I raised the point that Labour electorates are being treated likewise.

Mr. Sparkes: Only yours.

Mr. HILTON: There are several of them. Let the hon. member go through the zones and look at the electorates roughly contained in those zones and he will realise that what I have said is correct.

The salient point that nobody can deny is that in this Parliament, after this Bill becomes law, there will be a predominance of country representation as against city representation.

Mr. Aikens: That is not true, and you know it.

Mr. HILTON: It is true. Whilst the hon. member for Mundingburra might be so stupid as to say black is white, he cannot mathematically get away from the suggestion I have put forward. He can speak until he is black in the face and he cannot disprove that fact.

As I was observing, this inequality in electorates is not peculiar to Australia. In the Mother of Parliaments, the cradle of democracy, there has always been a great disparity in the people enrolled for the various electorates. If you make a brief review of the position in Great Britain and look at the last election held, you will find that electorates varied in numbers from 19,000 to over 100,000. A few years ago legislation was brought in to rectify that state of affairs, and although a permanent commission was appointed to equalise matters, there is a differentiation in quotas in the various electorates for the House of Commons. Despite the terms of the Act appointing the commission that principle still holds good over there. Men with university qualifications may have two votes, men with business qualifications are entitled in certain electorates to two votes. Admittedly those people cannot cast their two votes in one particular electorate, but the idea of one man, one vote has never obtained there. I am taking the point that in the cradle of democracy—

Mr. Sparkes: Do you believe in one man, one vote?

Mr. HILTON: I believe in it but I am not saying that it can be applied with mathematical exactitude in all circumstances. In the cradle of British democracy, the principle still obtains whereby certain people, because they have university degrees or certain business interests, are able to exercise two votes—

Mr. Nicklin: This Bill kicks democracy out of the cradle.

Mr. HILTON: I know that the word democracy has been hacked about in recent years, but if you want to get true appreciation of it cast your thoughts to the Mother Parliament—the cradle of democracy—and observe the principles that obtain in Great Britain and the United States. In America, I was reliably informed by a person interested in political matters there—an American citizen in this country during the war—that in some of the States representation to the State Parliament was based on an area basis purely and simply. In some electorates there might only be 200 or 300 electors, whereas in other electorates there would be thousands of voters. When we talk of this principle of democracy and what has happened down through the ages in Great Britain and is happening there in the United States of America at the present time—and the United States was the country that gave the world a classical definition of democracy—and find that those two major countries of the world, which solidly adhere to the principles of democracy, have seen the wisdom, in an endeavour to provide effective and honest government for their citizens, to depart from the principle of one man, one vote, I think we are justified in the circumstances in Queensland to do what we now propose in order to give the country more effective representation. We are following the example set in those countries, and set in this by parties other than Labour in the other States of Australia. The amendment would defeat the very fine objective the Government have set themselves of providing equitably for greater country representation. I represent a country electorate, and of course I realise that progress and development in the country are vital to the progress of the State and I must earnestly oppose the amendment by the Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (5.40 p.m.): Almost every hon. member opposite who has spoken has missed the main object of the Bill in giving additional representation to the far-out parts of the State, and that is that the people there are deserving of more service than they can get today. By giving 10 members to the western parts of the State we shall be able to give the people scattered over that huge area, to those thinly-populated districts, a greater service than it is possible to give them with seven members. No-one suggests that the seven members representing those constituencies today have not given of their very best to these people; but it must be obvious to every hon. member that if there are 10 members in this Chamber representing western constituencies each will have less ground to cover,

each will be able to make greater contact with the people and thus give them a better service than it is possible for them to have today.

The same applies to North Queensland. The additional representative will enable better service to be given to the people of the North, just as if you have a busy shop additional shop assistants enable your customers to get better attention. It is a physical impossibility for a man to get over those vast areas in the West and if we give them additional representatives they will be able to get a better service individually and collectively from their representatives.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (5.42 p.m.): Mr. Mann,—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed him under the Standing Orders.

Question—That the word proposed to be omitted from clause 4 (Mr. Nicklin's amendment) stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 31.

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

NOES, 17.

Mr. Barnes	Mr. Nicklin
" Bjelke-Petersen	" Plunkett
" Brand	" Sparkes
" Heading	" Taylor, H. B.
" Luckins	" Wanstall
" Madsen	
" Maher	
" McIntyre	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Morris	Mr. Decker
" Müller	" Low

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Collins	Mr. Macdonald
" Copley	" Chalk
" Gledson	" Pie
" Roberts	" Hiley

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That Clause 4, as read, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 29.

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

NOES, 18.

Mr. Barnes	Mr. Morris
" Bjelke-Petersen	" Müller
" Decker	" Nicklin
" Heading	" Plunkett
" Low	" Taylor, H. B.
" Luckins	" Wanstall
" Madsen	
" Maher	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Marriott	Mr. Aikens
" McIntyre	" Sparkes

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Collins	Mr. Macdonald
" Copley	" Chalk
" Gledson	" Pie
" Roberts	" Hiley

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 5—Zones—

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) (5.52 p.m.): This clause is a particularly important one in that it provides for the system of zoning to which we take keen exception, for the simple reason that by dividing the State into zones as this clause does we more or less tie the hands of the electoral Commissioners in the redistribution they will have to make under this Bill. They will be limited in their investigations by the fact that they are confined to particular areas in the allocation of the electoral boundaries.

Mr. Hanlon: Each zone has a similar interest within the zone itself. It has an interest apart from the others. There are the grazing zone, the mining zone, the farming zone, and the metropolitan zone.

Mr. NICKLIN: I do not know whether the argument of the Premier will stand examination. With the exception of Zone 1, all the zones to a greater or lesser extent have varied interests. Take Zone 2. We have virtually every industry in the State. We have every agricultural interest and we have big city interests, mining interests, and pastoral interests. Such a reason for the creation of zones is therefore unsound. It is a different argument to the one used by the Premier on the introductory stage. I understood by the remarks of the Premier on the introductory stage that the main reason for the zoning principle was the fact that it would bring about decentralisation in this State and it would stop the metropolitan area from being over-represented at the expense of the rest of the State.

Look at it from these two angles; first of all, decentralisation. This Bill will accentuate centralisation and not in any way bring about decentralisation, as was contended by the Premier. The only thing that will bring about real decentralisation in this State is Government policy that will take back to our denuded country areas the people who have been attracted from them since the advent of the Labour Government to the Treasury benches. That is the way in which to tackle this vital problem of centralisation—put into effect a policy of decentralisation and not a policy of centralisation such as has been followed up to the present.

A study of the census returns for all States recently compiled discloses that Queensland has a greater increase in the metropolitan area than any other State in the Commonwealth. The percentage increases are—

New South Wales	20.17
Victoria	23.69
Queensland	34.17
South Australia	22.39
West Australia	31.40
Tasmania	26.75

The fact that the greatest increase is in Queensland indicates, as I said previously, the need for a real policy of decentralisation in this State. There should not be legislation such as that under discussion, which will have the effect of increasing rather than decreasing centralisation.

Mr. Jones: Do you know that 51 per cent. of the people of Victoria are in Melbourne?

Mr. NICKLIN: I know that and I hope the Minister is not aiming at having 51 per cent. of the people of Queensland living in Brisbane.

Mr. Jones: No.

Mr. NICKLIN: We do not want that to happen. We do not want Queensland to be similar to New South Wales and Victoria, with virtually half of the population in the capital city. The census figures disclose that the same thing is rapidly being brought about in Queensland and something must be done to stop it.

Let me point to the effect of this electoral redistribution. Zone 1 is the metropolitan area, and after the passage of this legislation will have gained five seats since 1932 for an increase of 63,577 electors, an extra seat for each 12,715 electors. The Premier accuses the Country Party of being interested only in Zone 2 because that party represents the majority of electors in that area, but how has that zone been treated as compared with the metropolitan area over the same period? Zone 2 is not only an important rural area but contains large cities and covers varied interests, virtually all those to be found in the State. This area will have gained two seats for an increase of 48,981, or one extra seat for each 24,490 electors in the zone. Is that fair treatment?

That is how the country gets consideration as compared with the city, and this is the real test of the Government's alleged regard for the encouragement and expansion of rural population—to give them an extra seat for each 24,000 electors while in the metropolitan area they get an extra seat for each additional 12,700 electors.

The Premier says we in the Country Party are concerned only about the position in Zone 2. When such a disparity exists, does he not think we should be concerned? It is a rank injustice, one of the most marked injustices in this Bill, which is full of them.

The Bill also provides for reduced quotas for such cities as Rockhampton, Townsville and Toowoomba and gives them a decided advantage over country districts; yet the

whole theme of the Premier's argument in support of the system was, to use his own words,—

“By establishing the zones we will ensure for all time that the city of Brisbane will not gain representation at the expense of the country.”

Why, he has laid it down that the City of Brisbane shall gain representation at the expense of the country—indeed, at the expense of the most populous section of the country! If hon. members on the Government side have any sense of fairness or decency in the principle of electoral representation at all, they should be ashamed of this provision.

I make these points to show the rank injustice of the zoning system and to give reasons why we oppose it. Under the system of zones as laid down in this Bill the Government have tied the hands of the Commission that is to be appointed. The Commission cannot do anything but allocate the electorates in a way that will be favourable to hon. members on the Government side; but we should not be surprised at that, because the whole purpose of the Bill is to give them a stranglehold on the Treasury benches.

It would be better if hon. members opposite endeavoured to bring about decentralisation, which the State so badly needs, by a policy to that effect. This clause contains one of the most objectionable principles in the whole Bill and we strongly oppose it.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) (7.21 p.m.): As stated by my leader, this clause contains the most objectionable part of the Bill and I heartily agree with his remarks. I should be right behind the Premier if he would be honest and say, “Yes, we will give all the country that privilege”—the privilege they propose to give to a part of the State. I cannot see the need for any distinction.

I know the western men and I know that their work entails mostly riding; there is fencing to be done and there is no difference between the fencing done out there and that done near the coast. There is no difference between putting up posts on the Darling Downs and putting up mulga posts. In fact, it is harder to put up posts on the Downs, because you cut mulga in the West.

Mr. Hanlon: You do not go out for a life of ease.

Mr. SPARKES: I would not let the Premier have a life of ease if he started to put up posts for me.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is getting away from the clause.

Mr. SPARKES: I am dealing with the principle of zoning, to which I object. Why should a privilege be given to one part of the State by the zoning system? That is what I do not like. It is foreign to my conception of justice. If you extend the same privilege to all country people then I shall be right behind the Premier. A worker is a worker whether at Birdsville or Dalby

and the men who work for me do no different work from those who work on the coast mustering cattle. Zone 2 produces every commodity that is grown within the State, including sugar-cane. The best wool in the State is grown in that zone. (Government laughter.) The hon. member for Kelvin Grove may say "Ha, ha," but he would not know wool from horse-hair.

Mr. Burrows interjected.

Mr. SPARKES: I challenge the hon. member to disprove that the highest price for wool sold in Queensland was for wool produced within Zone 2. Let the wool men on that side of the Chamber deny that.

Mr. Devries: Fluked the market.

Mr. SPARKES: To suit the market. Every time the hon. member opens his mouth he puts his foot in it. He has slipped; he is getting the Queen Street atmosphere, the town atmosphere, and is losing his Western view. All his Western knowledge is leaving him. He said that it suited the market.

Mr. Devries: Fluked the market.

Mr. SPARKES: I thought he might have referred to fluke in sheep but I will let him have it in wool too. These wool-growers must have been good flukers because they have got the highest price for their wool over the years. I go further and say that every year they get the highest price for wool in the State. Will the hon. member for Gregory say that is a fluke?

These zones, so ingeniously designed, do not give what the Premier would have us believe. There is a nigger in the woodpile. Of course, he says that the Government will appoint a very independent commission to redistribute the seats in the zones, but as I said before the hands of the commission will be tied. The commission will have to do what it is told in connection with the zones. The Government could even appoint me the commissioner and under this zoning system it would make no difference. The Premier has ingeniously worked out these zones so that he can safely appoint a commission to redistribute the electorates. There is unfairness in the system and for that reason I strongly oppose the Bill.

The Premier said that he was concerned about these far-distant places—Birdsville, Boulia, and so on. If these long distances warrant the Premier in providing for additional members there should be at least a dozen members to represent the Northern Territory in the Federal Parliament. Why, one station in the Territory, Victoria River Downs, is nearly half the size of the electorate of the hon. member for Warrego.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That matter does not come into the Bill.

Mr. SPARKES: I know that, but I thought the Premier might be able to use his persuasive powers to have something done in that connection. Then there are long distances into the desert in Central Australia. Perhaps he could do something about that.

There is nothing in the clause to show that it is for the benefit of the country people. Is the proposal to give three additional members going to lead to any more employment in those areas or to the production of one more sheep, one more bullock, or any increase in population whatever? If the Premier can show me that it does I will vote for the clause.

Mr. Roberts: Would three more members in the South-eastern district make any difference?

Mr. SPARKES: That is not suggested.

Mr. Roberts: Oh yes, it is.

Mr. SPARKES: No, the hon. member is trying to imagine something. Hon. members opposite will not even now wait until you say what you want to say. They are trying to anticipate what I might say. I made it plain earlier today and I will do so again, by saying that I should prefer to see a lesser number of members of Parliament.

Mr. Hanlon: I know you would. Would one, two or three be sufficient?

Mr. SPARKES: After all, we hear much about the will of the people, and we are told that the people must be served. All right. Let the hon. gentleman submit the matter to the will of the people. He can ask them three questions, "Do you approve of more members of Parliament," "Do you approve of the same number of members as at present," and "Do you approve of a lesser number?" I know what the will of the people will reveal. It would be for a lesser number of members.

Mr. Hanlon: They would out your way.

Mr. SPARKES: The people believe that they have an ample supply, an over-supply of members. I am a bit with them. I oppose the clause and I intend to vote against it.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (7.32 p.m.): I intend to oppose the clause. Frankly, when I first saw the map with the lines upon it, I did not have my glasses on. I saw the lines twisting and turning all over the place. I thought they had been drawn by a jitterbug in the last stages of St. Vitus's Dance. When I put my glasses on and examined the map much more closely I saw why the lines on the map took such curious twistings and turnings. I saw why in that northern part the line representing the dividing line between the Northern Zone and the Western Zone looked like a battle line on the western front during the last war in the Battle of the Bulge. I wondered why the bulge was there. When I looked more closely I saw that the bulge was to place Chillagoe, Mareeba, Forsayth, Almaden, Mt. Molloy and Mt. Garnet and all those places in the Northern Zone, despite the fact that they are 250 miles from the coast and in spite of the fact that they are depopulated and ghost towns because of the centralised policy of the Labour Government. Then I saw a great bend as if the Allies had made a tremendous thrust towards the Rhine or Berlin and I found that tremendous thrust by the Allies was really a sweep of the pen to place Charters Towers in the Western Zone and there are various other anomalies.

Mr. Barnes: How far is Charters Towers from the coast?

Mr. AIKENS: Charters Towers is virtually a suburb of Townsville and is only 82 miles from the coast, whereas Forsayth is nearly 300 miles from the coast. Yet it is in this northern coastal zone while Charters Towers is included in the Western Zone.

Mr. Barnes: How far is Charters Towers from the coast?

Mr. AIKENS: About 82 miles by rail and by a dog-leg railway at that.

Mr. Brand: It is too obvious why it is there.

Mr. AIKENS: It is obvious. It is to bring Charters Towers within the 4,500 quota.

The Premier in his last speech, by one of those deft twists of the wrist with his ostrich fan, covered the vital spot at the psychological moment. He told the Committee that the reason why he was giving the Western Zone three members was that it needed greater representation and he rolled his r's like a Scotchman in a Highland dew and said he was giving the Northern Zone on the coast three extra members, and then at once swerved the ostrich fan with a deft twist of the wrist and knocked off there. He did not go any further. I wanted him to explain why, if he wanted to give the Northern and Western Zones greater representation he found it necessary to give No. 2 Zone down in the South-eastern corner an extra three representatives and why he wanted to give his beloved metropolis another four.

When he wants to give extra representation to the West and the North he finds it necessary to only give them six seats combined and he gives his beloved south-eastern corner seven seats.

Mr. Hanlon: You prove now that we are making no alteration at all—there is nothing new to oppose?

Mr. AIKENS: I should not like to follow the tortuous twists of the hon. Premier's line of logic, or I might finish up like a jitterbug with St. Vitus's dance. We have heard a great deal about the number of people who have voted for the Government, the number who voted for the Country Party, and the number who voted for the Queensland People's Party; but nothing has been said yet and no figures have been quoted to show the number of people who would not vote for either the Labour candidates, the Country Party candidates, or the Queensland People's Party candidates.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is getting away from the matter of zoning.

Mr. AIKENS: I was leading up to the question of the zoning system. If you will allow me to make my point, I want to say this: there are four members in this Assembly who represent neither the Labour Party, the Country Party, nor the Queensland People's Party, and we represent the greatest proportional number of voters. In the last election

no fewer than 58,979 people would not vote for either of the three major parties. We four—the hon. member for Bulimba, the hon. member for Bundaberg, the hon. member for Bowen, and I represent on the average 14,744 voters. And of course, because I have a sense of humour—and I have been blessed or cursed with that since I was born—I point out that there were 8,000 people who would not vote for anyone at all: they made their votes informal.

Because the zoning as outlined in the schedule and prepared on the map is so obviously crooked in more senses than one, literally and metaphorically speaking, I intend to vote against the clause.

Mr. WANSTALL (Toowong) (7.38 p.m.): I intend to vote against this clause, which is the one round which was centred virtually the whole of the opposition to the measure. The principle of zoning is the key principle to the whole Bill. To use a more appropriate metaphor, it is the lead in the loaded dice that is being rolled out by the Government in this Bill.

I will deal with the argument advanced by the Premier to support the zoning principle. First of all there was the exploded one that he intended to give greater representation to the North and the West. That has been demonstrated to be completely fallacious reasoning. The Premier, driven to excuse his party's action, fell back on the plea that it was done in order to keep within the bounds of community interest. He endeavoured to explain the perigrinations of that line, explained by the hon. member for Mundingburra in a more picturesque illustration, as being necessary to keep within the bounds of community of interest. That argument will not stand up to analysis with the map. I ask you to look at this map where the line takes over from the border and you will find that Thallon is in the Western Zone and Goondiwindi is in the South-Eastern Zone. Is there any pretence of community of interest in that division? What diversity of interest is there between Thallon on the one hand and Goondiwindi on the other?

Mr. Hanlon: There must be two adjoining places wherever you draw it.

Mr. WANSTALL: You can get one drawn where the common interest finishes and another type of interest begins. The argument of the Premier might have a little colour of truth in it if the Premier followed the topographical features of the country.

If, for instance, it followed the Great Dividing Range there might be some people who would fall for that specious argument. But he has not done that. He has crossed and re-crossed the Great Dividing Range, ducked up one dry gully in one shire and down the same dry gully in the next shire in order to retain his community of interest about which he has shed so many crocodile tears. (Opposition interjections.) The Premier had a very bright beacon ahead of him, which was rather in the nature of the magnetic North Pole.

Now let me examine some of these instances of community of interest, which the Premier said is necessary in order to put a line between the Western Zone and the South-Eastern Zone where it is. Look at the western railway line. Roma, Wallumbilla and Yuleba are in the western zone. Continuing down the line we find Jackson, Dulacca, Miles and Chinchilla—all townships with interests identically the same as those of Wallumbilla and Yuleba and indistinguishable from them so far as character of the people and pursuits are concerned.

A Government Member: You want each to be in the western zone.

Mr. WANSTALL: If it is right to put Roma, Yuleba, and Wallumbilla in the western zone, it is equally right to put Miles, Chinchilla and Dulacca in the same zone. If they are put in different zones it is done for another reason than the retention of community interest. That is my point. They have been put in different zones, therefore the Premier's argument on community interests is shown to be hollow and without foundation.

To proceed further along the course of this boundary we find that it travels in the direction of Taroom for a certain distance, makes a right-hand turn and then makes a left-hand turn and wanders into the North. On one side of the line we find Craow and on the other Eidsvold. What is the difference between Craow and Eidsvold? Is not Eidsvold the trading centre from which Craow was originally supplied and developed? Of course it is, and it is now.

Mr. Brand: The Normanby electorate comes in.

Mr. WANSTALL: Ah! (Interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. WANSTALL: Mr. Mann, the further one goes into outlining the zones the crooked they become, in both the physical and in the moral sense. Going further North we find on one side of the line Theodore in the western zone and Monto, its twin in every respect, on the eastern side and in the South-Eastern Zone. That reminds me, of course, of the reason, that is, to create a new electorate founded on Monto. I even know who is considered to be the favoured in the A.L.P. selection for that seat.

We find Biloela in the South-Eastern Zone and across to the left Thangool. Yet these towns are twins in every respect.

An Opposition Member: Only 10 miles apart.

Mr. WANSTALL: I would not be sure of that. We find Baralaba on one side of the line and Rannes on the other. These are almost next-door stations on the same railway line. Was it in order to retain community of interests with Cunnamulla and Charleville that Baralaba has been put in the Western Zone? Has it the same community of interests with Cunnamulla and Charleville

and the country where we find that station hand of the hon. member for Gregory? Baralaba must have the same community of interest as Cunnamulla, Birdsville and Betoota. Rannes, the town next to it on the railway line, is in the South-Eastern Zone. Has it no similarity of outlook or interest with Baralaba? They are separated. One is found in the South-Eastern Zone.

Have not hon. members heard enough to indicate to them that even this last resource the Premier was put to like his desire to serve the western and northern areas, is equally fallacious?

Then you follow the line through that coal country to Nebo about which we hear so much in this Chamber from time to time, and you come to what is undoubtedly the worst example of the drawing of the zones in the whole of the map of the State. That is shown in the vicinity of the electorates of Mirani and Mackay. Here you find that Nebo, for which Mackay is the natural outlet, indeed the only outlet, and all the hinterland of Mackay centering round Nebo cut off and put in the Western Zone.

Mr. Brand: They voted for Evans.

Mr. WANSTALL: Therefore it is necessary to load the quota against the people who will be putting up Ernie Evans again, the Country Party. So this line goes through all its crooked meanderings, meanderings worse than those of the river of that name which has given that coined word to the English language.

So we follow the boundary through until it makes for the Gulf of Carpentaria and however you examine the fixing of those zones you are irresistably driven to the conclusion that the zone scheme has been devised and designed in order to make it impossible for the commissioners appointed under the Act to do anything other than create electorates that will return Labour members. That is the only conclusion that any sensible person can draw from these inexplicable contortions of boundaries between the various zones.

A commission is to be appointed merely to dispose of the corpse of democracy and parliamentary government that has been destroyed by the Labour Party's machinations as expressed for all time and for all to see on this zoned photostatic map of Queensland, a map that should be preserved in the rogues' gallery of this State, a map that is entitled to take its place in the rogues' gallery of the C.I. Branch, along with the pistols, daggers and other exhibits of crime that are recorded there. Here is a political crime.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is using extravagant language and I suggest that he might be more moderate.

Mr. WANSTALL: I am using strong language. I have not used any word that is not to be found in the best of the English language or that is unparliamentary. If I have used an unparliamentary expression I will gladly withdraw it. That expresses my

idea very forcibly. This is the sort of legislation about which no hon. member can use pussy-language. This is an occasion that requires the very strongest of criticism in order to awaken the people to what this Government are doing.

It is the duty and responsibility of the Opposition in this Parliament to expose the arguments that are put up by the Government to justify this thing. Every argument the Premier has advanced has been demonstrated beyond doubt to be entirely unfounded upon any reason or logic, to be entirely unborne out by the facts he advanced in favour of it. The results that the Premier says will emerge from this zoning scheme have been shown by the speeches of hon. members of the Opposition to be completely misstated by the Premier as arguments. It has been shown, for instance, by the hon. member for Mundingburra that in the south-eastern corner of the State, within 150 miles of Brisbane or thereabouts, there are to be seven seats whereas there are to be only six new seats for the other nine-tenths of the State. It has been demonstrated ever since this debate opened that all the Premier's protestations of desire to help the far West and the far North are unfounded upon fact because, wherever you look at the zones, wherever you set about creating an additional three seats in each of Zones 3 and 4 you cannot get these areas with the stated quotas except in the environments of the towns and cities that are dotted through those zones. I mention Townsville, Mackay, Cairns and so on. That is where you will get the new seats and so far as the rural areas are concerned there will be no new member for them. For Cape York Peninsula there will be no more seats than we have at present and the three new seats will be along the closely-settled areas.

That demonstrates how hollow the argument is and what a sham it is and the people of this State must be told through the Opposition what the position is and how completely wide of the mark is the Premier's attempted justification of the Bill on the score that he wants to give better services to the people in the North and the West. You cannot get it under this scheme and once the scheme is exploded it stands in its naked shame as a disgrace to democracy.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (7.51 p.m.): The debate has taken an entirely new turn. The Leader of the Opposition debated it merely as a clause providing for zones. That is all there is in the clause. The zoning system is designed, as I stated in my introductory speech, to see that there is fair representation for each part of the State.

Mr. Maher: It is not doing that. It is really designed for absolutely the opposite purpose.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member will have the opportunity to speak later.

Mr. Maher: It is sinister.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member has probably heard about the proposed abolition of the Senate and is wanting to come back into this House. However, to get on with the story: zoning is proposed for the purpose of seeing that each part of the State gets fair representation. It prevents, no matter how the population of the State might grow, any particular part of the State from getting control of the whole of it. With fixed representation in this Chamber for the metropolitan area of 24 members in a House of 75 there must be always the 51 representatives in this Chamber of areas outside the capital city. The capital city includes a big area—it is not merely Queen Street and a few adjoining blocks; it has a radius of 10 or more miles from the City Hall. No matter how great it may become—like other cities in the Commonwealth it might grow to contain 50 per cent. of the population of the State—it can have only 24 representatives in this Assembly. If development takes place in Central Queensland, as we hope it will, and the population increases, it is not entitled to more seats than it has now. The quota is merely raised.

That is the advantage I see in zoning the State, and it is the practice accepted by Liberal and Country Party Governments in New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia. A commission was appointed in South Australia to do exactly the same thing. There you have numerically large seats of small size and numerically small seats in the country on large areas. Of course South Australia has the geographical advantage of having the great bulk of its population within 100 miles of Adelaide.

Tasmania has the proportional representation system, which we do not like. New Zealand loads the city as against the country and there is neither a Labour nor Country Party government in the Commonwealth that will have the one vote, one value system.

The classic example of zoning, as I pointed out, is the Western Australian system where the possible range could be from 12,000 in the city of Perth to 450 in the North-west. That is a recent redistribution by the newly-elected anti-Labour Government in Western Australia.

Mr. Maher: Two wrongs do not make a right.

Mr. HANLON: Let the hon. member contain himself. He can have his say later on. After all the abuse of the Bill by the hon. member for Mundingburra and the hon. member for Toowong, the hon. member for Mundingburra gets up and says that the Bill is not giving any advantage at all to the outside people. He demonstrated that we were giving so many new members to the Northern Zone, so many new members to the Western Zone, as many new members to the South-Eastern Zone, and so many new members to the Metropolitan Zone. Then he added that there was no difference at all and that we were not doing anything to change anything. The hon. member for Toowong supported him.

Mr. Aikens: You are giving the North a plate of soup and giving Brisbane a three-course meal.

Mr. HANLON: Noise will not get the hon. member anywhere. He said that the proposal contained in the Bill did not make any difference. If it is not making any difference, then why all this excitement by the hon. member in talking about an alteration? He demonstrated that there was to be no alteration in representation at all.

The hon. member for Aubigny indulged in a nice new line of reasoning. He demonstrated to his own satisfaction that a worker in Birdsville was exactly the same as a worker in Dalby.

Mr. Sparkes: I said a boundary rider in Birdsville and a boundary rider in Dalby.

Mr. HANLON: Never mind about boundary riding, although that would not make much difference, I suppose. The hon. member said that a worker in Birdsville was the same as a worker in Dalby, 1,000 miles nearer the coast and in a farming area. If that is so, then the hon. member for West Moreton would probably say that a worker in Dalby is no different from a worker in the West Moreton electorate, and then I am entitled to say that a worker in the West Moreton district is no different from a worker at Graceville or Darra. If we accept that, there is nothing wrong in saying that there should be the same quota in the metropolitan area as there is out in the country. No half-cases will be accepted here. If the hon. member proposes to put up a case then I must follow it to its logical conclusion, and according to him he has shown to his own satisfaction that there is no difference between a worker in Birdsville and a worker in Dalby, and consequently he has demonstrated that there is no difference between Dalby and Brisbane and all should be on the same quota. According to his reasoning the metropolitan area should have equal representation with country areas, and so in the next decade 50 per cent. of the members of this Parliament would be metropolitan members. I do not think that any hon. member opposite, I do not care which party he belongs to or whether he belongs to any party at all, will agree that the majority of the members or 50 per cent. of them should be elected in the purely metropolitan area.

That is all I wish to say about the debate so far. The two hon. members who have spoken against the clause have said that there is nothing new in it at all, so what is there to growl about?

According to the Leader of the Opposition, the objectionable part of the clause is the zones, a system adopted by his own party in other States. According to him it is not only objectionable but—what did he call it?—malicious or unscrupulous. Exactly the same system has been adopted by their own party in other parts of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Nicklin: Give me one zone in any other State of Australia.

Mr. HANLON: New South Wales—the metropolitan zone.

Mr. Nicklin: There is no zone there at all.

Mr. HANLON: The metropolitan zone, the Newcastle zone. . . . Victoria—

Mr. Sparkes: Stop at New South Wales.

Mr. HANLON: New South Wales has so many members elected from Sydney and so many from Newcastle.

Mr. Sparkes: And the balance from the rest of the country.

Mr. HANLON: If the hon. member will only be quiet for a moment, I will tell him. Sydney elects a given number of members, Newcastle a given number of members, and the rest of New South Wales elects the balance.

Mr. Wanstall: All on the same level.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HANLON: I am not arguing whether the zones— (Opposition interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope hon. members will obey my call to order and allow the Premier to make his speech.

Mr. Sparkes interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. member does not cease interjecting I will name him.

Mr. Sparkes: Name me.

The CHAIRMAN: I name the hon. member for Aubigny for disregarding the call of the Chair.

Mr. Sparkes: I have done nothing at all.

Mr. HANLON: I am going to ask the hon. member to do the right thing. We discussed this matter in the smoking room and I agreed with him that any hon. member should obey the Chair. I do not think there is any reason to do anything but what he this afternoon decided was the right thing to do.

Mr. SPARKES: I always obey the Chair. I have been here since 1932 and I have never been named by the Chair. I never did anything to disobey the Chair. All I did was what every hon. member does and that is to interject.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I want to point out that continuous interjections are highly disorderly.

Mr. HANLON: I am glad that the hon. member for Aubigny is doing the decent thing.

Mr. Sparkes: I have always done the decent thing.

Mr. HANLON: I am glad he has done so. I do not think anything can be gained by having unseemly brawls.

When, as my illustrious predecessor would say, I was so rudely interrupted—(laughter)—I was pointing out that in New South Wales there is a metropolitan zone, a Newcastle zone, and a rural zone. Western Australia has a metropolitan zone, a closely settled zone, a pastoral and mining zone, and a north-western zone.

Mr. Aikens: They are clearly defined, not divided by a dog's hind leg line.

Mr. HANLON: I am not discussing whether they are. I say that the zoning system there is supported by both the Liberal and Country Parties and by the Labour Party.

Boiled down, the discussion in the last analysis has been a dispute on degree. Hon. members opposite have admitted that there should be more members, and more country members than city members. All we are disputing is how many members the city zone should be increased by and how many the country.

Mr. Sparkes: But you are tying the hands of the commission.

Mr. HANLON: I said that we have all agreed on these particular principles, that there should be some increase in members, and that country electorates should have a smaller quota than those in the metropolitan area. We disagree on the degree, we disagree on how many members there should be and how the increase in the number of members in the country should take place. The Bill provides for a maximum of 24 members for the metropolitan area in a House of 75. Although this city today is well over one-third of the population of the State the Bill fixes its representatives at one-third of the total strength of the House and it keeps its hands on that one-third no matter how rapidly the population may grow here. The quotas will never be stationary within the zones. They will have to be altered with the population.

We have endeavoured to provide that the major part of the State will have adequate representation. The hon. member for Toowoong endeavoured to illustrate, and with a great deal of success, that we cannot draw a line within the State without having some parts of Queensland on each side of the line.

He has convinced me that that is true. I cannot see any way, after his explanation, whereby you can do that. If we draw a dividing line anywhere there will be some part of Queensland on each side of the line. If the hon. member can devise any way of drawing lines to divide off sections of this country without having parts of it on each side of the line close to one another, he is a smarter man than I am. We may dispute the way the lines should go. The clause is providing for the division of the country into zones and no matter how the boundaries are drawn, I do not think it possible to draw a line dividing the State into zones that would be suitable to every member.

Mr. Nicklin: There is one boundary we could all agree on and that is the metropolitan boundary.

Mr. HANLON: I do not know. Some members in the outer part of the metropolitan area might think they should be included in the larger zones. The hon. member for Sandgate or the hon. member for Wynnum might contend that those areas, being so large, should have a smaller quota than the more populated parts like Spring Hill and Woolloongabba.

The clause we are proposing is that those zones shall be created. I am not expecting that members on this side or that side are going to be happy about the exact location. The clause provides zones, and no matter how we draw the lines we shall have arguments.

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton) (8.7 p.m.): The hon. gentleman has spoken on occasions to this Bill and always with the object of obscuring the real design behind the Bill. He talked of the innocent provisions relating to the division of the State into four ones and he went on to quote New South Wales and the other States as having admitted and operated the same principle. When challenged by interjection, the Premier was unable to produce any evidence to show that any State in Australia is mapped out into zones and has provided by statute for the creation of zones as suggested. Admittedly in other States there is a metropolitan area, and there is what might be termed an extra-metropolitan area, which includes other cities and their environs in New South Wales, for instance, and there is the country area. There are the three different areas. There are no maps provided in New South Wales or any other State showing by lines where those boundaries run. There are no specific boundaries; they are grouped loosely as metropolitan, other cities, and country electorates.

The important principle to bear in mind, looked at from the Country Party angle, is the way electors are grouped together. Generally speaking, the quotas remain on an equal basis in other States in the rural areas whereas the Premier takes the country electorates in Queensland and divides them into two groups. He gives those sections of the country districts which are favourable, by virtue of the industries conducted there, to the Socialists and likely to return Socialist members, a quota as low as 4,800; whereas in Zone 2, which contains all the Country Party members returned to this Parliament and provides the greatest scope for increased Country Party membership in this Parliament, he actually raises the quota by 1,500 votes to the level of 9,536 voters.

This extraordinary position arises: in Zone 2 there are electorates represented by Country Party members that will attract possibly 1,000 to 1,500 additional voters once this Bill comes into force, despite the fact that 13 new electorates have been created in the State. The natural expectation would be that if 13 electorates were created, each of the remaining country electorates would shrink in numbers, that in my electorate of West Moreton, for example, I should have

fewer electors and less work to do, but the contrary prevails. The Bill provides for 13 new seats but my own electorate and many other rural electorates in Zone 2 will attract 1,000 or 1,200 additional voters.

Mr. Morris: Your electors have committed the cardinal sin of voting against the Labour Party.

Mr. MAHER: Of course they have. The democracy of the State has been penalised with the deliberate intention of depriving the Country Party of any chance of expansion. The principle is: give them additional voters on their rolls for the type of people who will vote for them, isolate them, fence them off, give them no opportunity of expanding or increasing their numbers in this Parliament.

Take Zone 4, the Western Zone, and the nature of the pastoral industry, where the bush workers generally predominate in numbers and return Socialists to this Parliament. The Government will win all the seats there, so they will gain six new members.

Mr. Hanlon: That is not true.

Mr. MAHER: This means a present of six new seats for the Socialists in this Parliament but the Country Party cannot expand at all. It will be difficult for it to maintain its strength under the zoning system whereas the Socialists must inevitably strengthen. That is the position the Premier seeks to impose upon the democracy of the country.

The Premier repeated ad nauseam that the object of the Bill was to give greater representation to the country than to the metropolitan area. The claim has been repeated so often, headlined so frequently by the metropolitan newspapers, the Premier has stated it so glibly and plausibly, but the fact remains that the country is not getting the increased representation at the expense of the metropolitan areas.

It is said that one cannot repeat a good thing too often and I will emphasise to the Committee the statement of the Leader of the Opposition when he gave this comparison this evening. Since 1932 the city of Brisbane will have gained five seats on an increase of 63,577 votes. That is one extra seat for each 12,715 electors in the area. Zone 2, a rural zone, which contains the whole of the Country Party membership of this Parliament and is the most important rural area on the basis of production, will have gained two seats for an increase of 48,981. That is one extra seat for each 24,490 electors.

That works this way. In the metropolitan area at the last redistribution in 1935 one new seat was created, Baroona, represented by the Secretary for Public Works but one Country Party seat was eliminated, Murilla. The effect of that was, having regard to the terms of the Bill before the Committee, that since 1932 the seat of Baroona has been created within the metropolitan area—

Mr. Power: In 1935.

Mr. MAHER: I was quoting as from 1932 but I will take as from 1935 if the hon. gentleman prefers it. It is neither here nor there.

The terms of this Bill provide for four new metropolitan seats, so that in 1935 the Baroona seat was newly created and this, with the four new seats under the Bill means that the metropolitan area gains five seats since 1935 and the increase of electors in the metropolitan area in that time is 63,577. When you divide that increase by the five seats you get one seat for each 12,000 electors enrolled in the metropolitan area.

On the other hand, in Zone 2 Murilla was lost to the Country Party in the 1935 redistribution, when it was eliminated. This Bill will give three new seats to Zone 2. If we subtract Murilla, which was lost in the 1935 redistribution, it means that the net gain in Zone No. 2 is two seats, against an increased enrolment of 48,000 in the same period. So that in Zone 2 since 1935 one extra seat is provided in this Bill for each 20,000 electors, whilst in the metropolitan area there are five new seats in the same period, one seat to each 12,000 electors.

That entirely debunks the plausible argument of the Premier that he is giving greater representation to the rural districts than he is to the metropolitan area, but when he gets down behind the closed doors of the A.L.P. meeting at Ithaca he will wink his eye at the A.L.P. supporters and tell them how he hoodwinked the country people of Queensland, how he gulled them into believing, by his alleged cleverness, that he was really giving them rabbits out of the hat, that he was giving them more seats than he was giving the metropolitan area. Then, of course, he will pull up his sleeve and show them the real position where the metropolitan area is really gaining at the expense of the rural districts. He will then satisfy all those elements in the A.L.P. meeting who were thinking that he was giving representation on a far greater scale to the country than he was to the metropolitan area.

Mr. Power: Your mathematics are very bad.

Mr. MAHER: The mathematics cannot be controverted. I invite the Minister to controvert the case to show that it is not the position.

That is the deal the Premier has meted out to the Country Party. It is a spurious claim that is being put up by the Premier that the country districts are getting greater representation. The real facts are that the Country Party is being unjustly and undemocratically cut off, with not much opportunity of breaking through the ramparts that have been erected by this Bill against it, whilst on the other hand six new seats in the Western and Northern Zones of the State will make six certain seats for the Socialist party.

Mr. Hanlon: I hope you are right.

Mr. MAHER: Those six new seats for the Socialist party will offset any possible losses to the Queensland People's Party in the metropolitan area. The whole effect is to perpetuate minority rule. Everybody in the

State who takes an interest in politics today knows that this Government are functioning on a minority aggregate vote of the people of Queensland, that they polled fewer votes than the other political groups opposed to them in this Parliament, yet, because of gerrymandering of the electoral boundaries and manipulation of electoral divisions, they actually exercise power in this State with a big majority in this Parliament, although they were defeated on an aggregate vote throughout the State at the last election. They realise, too, that the tide of public opinion is ebbing away from them.

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

Mr. MAHER: I have pointed out that the effect is to prevent the fair exercise of the people's will at the polls. That is the whole effect of it. The object of the Bill is to give the Government power on a minority vote to perpetuate—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We are now dealing with clause 5, a matter of zoning.

Mr. MAHER: We are being zoned out of the race. If you put too much lead on the horse he will not win the race; here we are handicapped and hobbled, and have no chance of standing up against the force against us—the force that is paying lip-service to democracy, the force that would certainly cry out if anybody suggested that it was totalitarian or autocratic or supported a system of government that stood for dictatorship. But, in fact, that is what is happening. Hitler achieved the same end in Germany by armed strength and secret police, Mussolini did the same thing in Italy and Stalin in Russia, and of course the system there, which we are gradually tending towards—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have allowed the hon. member considerable latitude. I think he is stretching it a great deal.

Mr. MAHER: A principle of the Bill relates to the method of electing the Government and zoning is the method under which the Government will be elected in the future, and therefore I am entitled, I submit that I am on the beam in arguing that we are trending away from democratic ideals and principles and we are gradually moving towards dictatorship and a perpetual socialist dictatorship in this State, but, instead of what was done by dictators in other countries who achieved their object by armed force, this is being done under the guise of democracy. The people are being lulled into a sense of false security. The Socialists are on the march and heading towards their objective and propose to get there by fair means or foul.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to connect his remarks with clause 5. He is making a second-reading speech in Committee and I ask him again to connect his remarks with clause 5.

Mr. MAHER: I hold, seeing the principle providing for an increase in members is the main one and the crux of the Bill, that I am as much entitled to make a second-reading speech in addressing myself to this clause—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in order in making a second-reading speech on clause 5. He must confine himself to the clause.

Mr. MAHER: Far be it from me to differ from you, Mr. Mann. I accept your ruling but still I am justified in saying that democracy is being zoned out of this State and we are reaching the position where the stage is set and those opposed to the Socialists are handicapped out of the political race. All who believe in fairness and democracy should be told the implications of the zoning system so that they will realise how unfairly treated the groups have been that stand in opposition to the Socialists. There is hope that a freedom-loving people will revolt against the autocratic socialists, when they go to the poll, and we might live to see the time when the Government will rue the step they have taken today to make themselves safe in power for many years to come.

I strongly oppose this objectionable clause of zoning designed not to give the democrats of this State a fair and equal right to express themselves as to which party they wish to vote for at the elections, but designed to maintain the Socialists in power ad infinitum. I oppose it as being highly objectionable, thoroughly undemocratic and rotten to the core.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (8.25 p.m.): My memory does not serve me so well in my advancing years as it did and every time I hear these little tarradiddles I feel that if I sit down too long I may forget them and so I propose to deal with them one by one. I am sorry that the hon. member for West Moreton should be suffering from such a nightmare. He does not deserve it. He deserves an easier mind.

The hon. member made a statement attacking my assertion that New South Wales had zones. They are actually called areas, although the title makes no difference. If it will make hon. members opposite happy we will make the title "area" in this Bill.

Mr. Maher: You equalise the country quota and we will go with you.

Mr. HANLON: I am dealing with the story that the hon. member for West Moreton told tonight. I listened carefully to what he said and he told the Committee that there were no zones, divided by a line, in New South Wales. Now let me call his attention to the Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act published in the New South Wales Parliamentary Handbook; Section 21A, at page 371 where it says—

"New South Wales shall be divided into three parts which are respectively referred to in this section as 'the Sydney area,' 'the Newcastle area,' and 'the country area.'"

It goes on to say—

“The Sydney area shall comprise that portion of New South Wales which is included within the boundaries set out in Division A of Schedule Twenty-one to this Act.”

Division A of Schedule Twenty-one starts off—

“Commencing on the shore of the South Pacific Ocean at Barranjoey and bounded thence by a line westerly to West Head”

and so on. That is exactly the same in form as the schedule in the Bill before us. Hon. members opposite should not get up without knowing what they are speaking about.

Mr. Maher: I admitted there were areas, but not zones.

Mr. HANLON: I listened very carefully to what the hon. member said and he said that they were not divided into areas, not divided by line. How could you have areas without lines? There must be a line, some outer boundary, and some places must be on one side of the line and some on the other, each being close together but each on opposite sides of the line. You cannot avoid that.

I wanted to deal at once with that story that there was no zoning in New South Wales.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) (8.28 p.m.): The Premier is not going to get away with that. I know this area in New South Wales very well. In the Bill he has divided the Far West from the other areas of the State but in New South Wales all the country area is in one, including the Hunter River, New England, right out to Broken Hill, with stations having an area of 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 acres. They are all in the same area. If the hon. gentleman will do that in Queensland we shall not complain. If he wants to bring Queensland into line with New South Wales, he will say, “We will make Brisbane a zone or area, make the other big cities areas too, and leave all the country or producing areas in one area, as is done in New South Wales.”

You can go from White Cliffs, right down on the South Australian border, and from Broken Hill almost into Sydney, where there are little farms of 200 and 300 acres, and find that they are in one electoral area with one quota.

Mr. Hilton: New South Wales is a much smaller State than Queensland.

Mr. SPARKES: That is so, but there are much bigger pastoral areas there. There are more sheep there than in Queensland. One of the biggest sheep stations in Australia is found in New South Wales.

Mr. Bruce: But they have not got a vote.

Mr. SPARKES: But the Government are giving them a vote here. New South Wales rightly says that it does not matter where the primary producers are; it puts them all together. Take the property of Molong, where I went as a boy. It is included in the

same area as the 200- or 300-acre farms in the Orange or Blayney districts. That is the difference between the lines the Premier draws in his map. He has divided this State into three zones and increased the quota in one zone and lowered it to glory in the other.

Mr. Hanlon: We have made a pastoral area, a northern and mining area, and a farming area.

Mr. SPARKES: I should like to take the hon. gentleman down to start farming in the Goondiwindi district.

Mr. Hanlon: There are farms down in the Goondiwindi district.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. gentleman will not get any soldier settlers settled on farms in the Goondiwindi district.

Mr. Hanlon: It is a well-known sheep-growing area.

Mr. SPARKES: Of course it is a sheep-growing area. If he was going in for sheep, he would go there. You cannot get better sheep than are grown there, but it is not by any means a small-farm area. It is a grazing area. That is where the Premier's plan is at fault. It does not divide the pastoral areas from the more settled areas. A large number of cattle properties are in Zone 2. Anyone going to farm in Zone 2 would be uphill.

Mr. Hanlon: A lot of it will be farmed before many years are over.

Mr. SPARKES: If you start farming there, there will be a lot of poor farmers.

If the Premier will do the same as was done in New South Wales and put the farming and producing areas into one area and give them the same quotas I feel sure he will not have any opposition, certainly not from me.

Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (8.34 p.m.): Some 60 years ago there existed in Victoria a gang known as the Kelly Gang, consisting among others of Ned Kelly, Dan Kelly, Joe Byrnes, and Steve Hart. In 1949 there has become established in Queensland a gang known as the fencing gang.

I want to say something about the areas or zones defined in New South Wales. The Premier knows that there the lines or zones, call them what you like, are all clear-cut and distinguish the city areas from the country areas.

Mr. Hanlon: They are zones.

Mr. MULLER: Call them zones if you like.

One can appreciate that there is some argument for dividing those areas and separating the city area from the country area in New South Wales and you can justify the policy in Victoria, which followed similar lines. There is some degree of fairness in a policy of that kind, but when you look at this map and see the starting point at the southern border it is amazing how the designers found their way almost to the

coast a little south of Mackay. When you look at that line you have first of all to congratulate the fencing gang on their ingenuity in getting round the little points and peaks in the way that they have. This was dealt with by the hon. member for Toowong when he asked the reason for taking out an area here and there. It was different from what was done in New South Wales and Victoria. In those cases the object was to give the country people greater representation than the city people. This is not done for that purpose.

In Queensland you have four distinct zones. At my home I have a small library and a few souvenirs. One place is set aside for books in connection with the activities of the Kelly Gang. I say right here that I have a soft spot in my heart for what those men did under those circumstances. The whole of the time they were subject to the utmost rigour of the law; they knew that if they were caught they would be hanged; but we have a gang here in Queensland legalising the action of these men—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is using very extravagant language. I ask him to be more temperate in his language.

Mr. MULLER: I have not referred to anyone in particular. (Government interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. Members interjecting.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have been continually asking hon. members to allow the debate to go on without continual interruption. We have heard plenty of talk about the way the debates have been carried on in the last two days and I ask hon. members to help me to maintain some dignity and decorum.

Mr. MULLER: I should like the Premier to tell us what prompted the body of men—whatever you like to call them—these clever Ales, who provided these lines. I tried to extract from the Premier who is responsible but he did not seem inclined to tell me. The principle we object to is not what hon. members opposite call the redistribution to provide greater representation; what we object to is unfair representation. A few unkind remarks have been made about it. I am sure I do not want to be unparliamentary, but we may forgive those hon. members who found their way out for having expressed themselves with force on this measure. You cannot justify a thing that is so unfair and unscrupulous. You must expect the whole of the people to object to it.

The real bone of contention is not so much how many seats there are. I know there is a question of an extra cost to the State of £20,000, which may cause some argument, but if it is going to give the State greater service you cannot quibble about the money. We do expect, however, that if it is to be done under the system of zoning it should be done in such a way that each section has the same chance of electing representatives to Parliament as the other section.

One looks at the map and sees the zig-zag lines in connection with the areas that we are conversant with and sees a little bit of country fenced out here in the south-eastern zone and fenced into the western zone. How can you, Mr. Mann, by any stretch of imagination say that the country just outside of Sarina south of Mackay should be in the western zone? That is perfectly absurd. If a line had been drawn from one point to another through the whole of the State there might be some justification for it but when the line is drawn from here to there for political purposes one cannot blame people for saying what they are saying about this business.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (8.41 p.m.): Hon. members want to know why these lines were drawn in this way. Capable as our engineers are we would not suggest that they are capable of straightening mountain ranges, rivers or other natural obstacles that exist in the country. An endeavour has been made to include pastoral areas in the pastoral country.

The hon. member for Aubigny wants to know why Goondiwindi is included in Zone 2. Sooner or later Goondiwindi will be the centre of a very big populous farming country. Splendid wheat is grown there. There are pastoralists who take the view that it is better perhaps to have a lazy time and run sheep on their properties but others grow crops to keep the sheep alive and the grain grown there is as good as that grown anywhere in Queensland. As the hon. member should know, there is an agreement with New South Wales for a border dam scheme and all that country will come under irrigation. It will be closely settled country. When the zone has to be moved it will be moved west out of that country because the country right as far as Dirranbandi will come within the irrigation project. I would tell the hon. member now that if he thinks these great rich plains will be left for ever merely carrying a few sheep or cattle he "has another think coming to him." They will be closely settled and will be farmed. These great rich plains that come within reach of the water to be provided by the border dam scheme will be under crops and that country will, in a few years probably, be just as closely settled as is the country north of Brisbane.

Mr. Sparkes: You know that is not true. There may be a farm or two within half a mile of the river but not out on the plain.

Mr. HANLON: That is the kind of story that has damned Queensland ever since Separation—that there cannot be these things in Queensland. Does the hon. member know that that district has a rainfall of 24 inches? According to hon. members opposite, sorghum could not be grown at Peak Downs. We hear all these stories of what cannot be done in Queensland but we are going to show the people what can be done. It is only a few people on the Opposition benches and their supporters who want to keep Queensland down. The hon. member knows it is ridiculous to suggest that the rich country of the

south-western border rivers will never be closely settled. All that area, if it is possible, will be closely settled and then the pastoral industry will have to move out. As I said before, it would be impossible to draw a line to satisfy everybody.

Mr. Sparkes: Where will the sheep and cattle be?

Mr. HANLON: It may be mixed farming that will be carried on. I cannot say how many sheep or bushels of wheat will be produced but they will be produced. Hon. members opposite stick to the old stick-in-the-mud policy that this State has gone as far as it can in development and cannot go further but members of my party do not take that view.

Mr. Sparkes: Your Government started farming at Theodore 20 years ago and with what sort of success?

Mr. HANLON: That is beside the point. The point I am trying to make is that as far as possible an attempt will be made to separate the areas that will be grazing country for a very long time to come from areas that are in the development belt and will be subject to closer settlement in the nearer years to come.

I am not going to pretend for one moment that hon. members opposite will agree with the Cabinet on where the lines should be drawn. I have already found out that members of my own party do not agree on the way these lines are drawn. All we can do is hope that the lines that are satisfactory to the majority will be agreed to.

Mr. BARNES (Bundaberg) (8.45 p.m.): If the Premier takes his argument to its logical conclusion he should tell us how he reconciles his action in taking out the small farming areas from the Mirani seat, those near Nebo in particular.

In international politics, there are various means of getting control of a country, and for arranging for a party to come into power. For argument's sake, take the position that occurred in Germany and the boyish plot of Munich Hall for handing over power from Hindenburg to Hitler. Things were so arranged there that Hitler had to do 13 months in gaol and so become a national hero for it and finally Hitler took over Germany at the elections and created the Nazi Germany that we all know now.

Then we go through Nazi Germany to Fascist Italy and see how the Fascists took over. By introducing gerrymandering with the political position in Italy and so manipulating the machinery of the elections at the polls Mussolini was able to take over on a 25 per cent. vote. Now this Bill is designed to outdo Hitler and outdo Mussolini. It out-Herods Herod.

Irrespective of what you or I may say, Mr. Mann, when orders come from Wall Street on how to handle this situation the Premier springs to it, the same as any head does. These orders have been put into operation from Wall Street with the object

of keeping the Socialist Government in power in Queensland, knowing that at the last election the Socialist Government got only 43 per cent. of the votes while their opponents got 57 per cent. Knowing this, Wall Street, with the Learned Elders of Zion at the helm, with brains unsurpassed, thought these arguments out for the Premier to put into operation. It is not clever, when all is said and done, particularly when we remember that in Wall Street they are trained in the arts of government because the Protocols say, "We will select people to control the goyim governments who are not trained in the art of government." In other words, they select dills. Have a look at the back benches and see how right they are.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in order in referring to hon. members as dills. I ask him to withdraw the remark. It is unparliamentary.

Mr. BARNES: Yes, I withdraw it.

These people who control the destinies of the world, the people who hold the destinies of all people in the hollow of their hands, make these "yes" men in Parliament do what they want them to do. If, for argument's sake, this was not good enough to retain a Socialist Government in power in Queensland, the electorates would be so gerrymandered that there would be 16 seats in the West and 16 seats in the North, 40 seats in Brisbane and only one in No. 2 Zone, if it suited them.

We are not dealing with A.L.P. influence; we are not dealing with trade unions in this Bill; we are not dealing with the wharfies; we are dealing with some super power behind the whole thing, not only in this Bill but in every Bill of importance that comes before us. The drawing of that jitterbug line referred to by the hon. member for Mundingburra on the map is the work of an artist. No ordinary painter could draw it. Why is it done in this way? It is done because, for instance, in Stanthorpe at the last election, the Labour member was in a very dicky position and had to be strengthened to protect the Socialist Government. In Warwick the Country Party won their old seat back, so that has got to be reinforced in favour of Labour. It is likely now that the township of Warwick will become a single electorate and Labour hopes to win it back.

Then there is the glaring attempt at Mirani, which they would have tried at Bundaberg but it would not have made any difference. They could have cut the outside, the inside, the backside or the frontside out of Bundaberg but they could not get me out, because I have 4,000 crusaders in Bundaberg and 1,000 voters. They are not common voters but crusaders. They oppose "Yes" men and "Yes" men Government—the international bankers "Yes" men.

Let us go a bit further. The Government want to get Mirani and to do so are going to cut out the back country, the useful country referred to by the Premier. He is going to cut out the small farms in the

country because the hon. member for Mirani has been a thorn in the side of the Government. He stands up on facts. The electorate of Mirani has to be strengthened. The hon. member for that electorate is temporarily out of the Chamber. Thank God he has the guts to stand up to them. He helped to expose this gigantic racket and swindle.

Then we pass from Mirani up north and come to the great Western Zone. You can stand on the hills of Charters Towers and dive into the ocean and yet this is classed as Zone 4. It suits the Government to do this. The Premier, in an effort to support his case, turned to New South Wales and not finding this suitable, as the country is in one zone there, he then jumped over to Western Australia and talked about the electorates of Geraldton and Broome where a man is elected on a small number of votes.

Mr. Power interjected.

Mr. BARNES: I have more brains than the hon. gentleman and if I could buy him at my price and sell him at his price I should be a millionaire.

The position is that the Learned Elders of Zion want a Socialist Government in power and what they want they will get. The Government for the past two or three days have fought to qualify what they are doing. The Premier in his introductory speech concerning zoning said that it was to cut the territory up and give the country people greater representation. The hon. member for Wide Bay pointed out that Brisbane has been given four seats or 20 per cent. increase and Zone 2, which is the biggest farming area in Queensland, has been given a 12 per cent. increase. So much for the help that the Premier wants to give the people in Zone 2! He is giving them a 12 per cent. increase in representation and is making a 20 per cent. increase in the representation of Brisbane. He tried to gull the Opposition, and nearly succeeded in doing so, until the hon. member for Wide Bay pointed out the other night how he was helping the country people.

This zoning was brought about with no other object than to make it certain for a Labour Government to be returned at the next election. If necessary, at following elections they will do as was suggested by the hon. member for Gregory—give the jackeroo on the station at Birdsville, Cunnamulla or Timbuctoo, 10 votes to the city man's one. The Premier was genuinely concerned about Labour members losing their seats. I have studied the position and I know what it is. I know where every electorate is going to be and I told hon. members all about it before the Bill came before the House. There is only one Labour man who might be ruined by the cutting up of the electorates—in the zoning—and that is the hon. member for Herbert. As the map is drawn it is probable that he will lose his seat. The way they are trying to gerrymander the electorates by strengthening some and weakening others will throw the hon. member out of his seat.

There is no doubt that every other Labour man in this Chamber has been assured of a return to power. The plans are to get Warwick back—

A Government Member: Bundaberg.

Mr. BARNES: Rats! They have no chance of getting Bundaberg back. They want Warwick and Mirani and they will retain Port Curtis.

They will regain one other seat, that of Dalby, plus three or four others. As I said before, I bet that they win nine out of 13 and they may get 10 out of 13. Even if they finish the elections with only a small majority, they will give effect to the suggestion by the hon. member for Gregory of 10 votes out amongst the gum trees for one in the city if Wall Street orders it. When the Protocols say what you have to do you have to fall into line; and the Protocols say that the learned elders will select a number of the goyim, a number of the cattle, or Gentiles as they call them, people not trained in the art of government, because, "They will be obedient to our rule." Mr. Mann, cast your left eye over your right shoulder and glance at the intelligentsia that rule this country.

Mr. Aikens: Did you say "reptiles" or "Gentiles?"

Mr. BARNES: Reptiles they are, but I said "Gentiles." They will out-Herod Herod. Ned Kelly was a thorough gentleman compared with the Bill, because he ran the risk of being pinched. The Government are taking no such risk. They just get fat sitting on their backsides on the Treasury benches for the next six years.

Mr. PLUNKETT (Albert) (8.57 p.m.): The Premier said that a map had been drawn to keep pastoral areas separate, and that suggests to me how democracy is going too. It means that any Government can have a redistribution and make the political position safe for themselves for the next 100 years. That is not the democratic way of doing things at all and we have reached such a stage that there may be a revolt against it, perhaps the sooner the better. Why is an election held? It is to give the people an opportunity of electing the Government to make the laws that they must obey. That is sound. If they must obey the laws they should have the opportunity of electing the Government to make those laws. If you are to give the people democratic rights you must give them the right to elect their Government, but the Bill is getting as far away from that idea as possible. For instance, Zone 1 is to have a quota of 10,716; Zone 2 is to have 9,536, Zone 3 is to have 7,852, and Zone 4 is to have 4,783. That means that one zone will have 4,783 and it will have the same rights as another zone with 10,716. We are getting away from the principle of democracy, which is unjust to Parliament itself, the highest tribunal in the land. The Bill makes the political position of the Government more secure than ever before. We are living in changing times. We are being subject to pressure politics and pressure zoning. This

Bill is designed to give greater security for Labour candidates through pressure zones. That is how I see it. Under this zoning and quota system it is possible for the Government to get into power and there will be no hope of ever getting them out. The Government are putting certain districts where they evidently know how the people vote into certain zones.

Mr. Power: How do you know how the people will vote?

Mr. PLUNKETT: That is obvious. The districts that now elect Labour representatives are to be given three additional seats under the redistribution and their quota is to be reduced to 4,783. The democratic rights of the people are being filched from their representatives for the sake of political expediency and power. The sooner we get away from that the better. This Bill shows whither we are drifting and that politics is counting more than the welfare of the people.

Mr. ROBERTS (Nundah) (9.2 p.m.): Once again we on this side of the Chamber have been subjected to a tirade of abuse by hon. members opposite. They have used most extraordinary language in a vain endeavour to condemn this clause. I have been astounded to hear hon. members opposite question the Premier's statement as to the actual position of representation in New South Wales and other States of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Sparkes: I would keep off that point if I were you.

Mr. ROBERTS: The hon. member for Aubigny advises me to keep of this point.

Mr. Sparkes: Because I know you will get into the mud and flounder.

Mr. ROBERTS: The hon. member obviously questions the Premier's statement but I doubt whether he will be so emphatic in his condemnation when he hears the statement of one very near and dear to his heart, the Hon. Robert Ross McDonald, the anti-Labour Attorney-General in Western Australia. In 1947 the new Parliament in Western Australia saw fit to amend its electoral boundaries, and the Bill was brought down by Mr. McDonald. I will read in full, for the information if not of all members for the information of the hon. member for Aubigny, what Mr. McDonald said when dealing with these matters which the Premier has reiterated over and over again in moving the second reading of the Bill. He said—

“In the New South Wales Parliament the number of seats for different areas is laid down. The Sydney area is given 43 in the House of 90, or nearly one-half. The Newcastle area has five seats and the country is given 42. So the Sydney area has 43 seats against 42 in the country areas. In Victoria there are three areas, metropolitan, urban and country. There are 32 metropolitan seats as against 33 for the combined urban and country areas so that nearly half the seats in Victoria go to the metropolitan area.

“Under Victorian legislation the quota for the metropolitan district is 25,000 electors, for the urban district 19,500, and for the country 13,800. So there is a ratio of less than two to one. South Australia has no commission and no ratio. The distribution is made by the House itself and in a House of 39 districts there are 26 in the country and 13 in the city.”

Mr. Hanlon: More than half the population of the State.

Mr. ROBERTS: With more than half the population in the city of Adelaide.

That is the true picture in the other States of the Commonwealth. Hon. members opposite have denied vociferously that there is any such thing as zoning in the other States. Technically, they may be correct but we do not expect hon. members of this Committee to quibble because it is definitely laid down in the statutes of other States that what are termed zones in this Bill are termed areas in those States.

Mr. Sparkes: They did not divide country areas in N.S.W.

Mr. ROBERTS: The latest amendment to the electoral districts of any of the States in the Commonwealth was made in Western Australia. I looked to that for some guidance.

That Bill was brought down by an anti-Labour Government and it is much against my grain to stand here quoting the remarks of and the legislation brought down by anti-Labour Governments. In the Electoral Districts Bill, which was passed in 1947, while they do not speak of zones, in Section 4 we find this proviso—

“For the purpose of carrying out the duties referred to in the next preceding section the commissioners—”

This is mandatory; there is nothing optional about it—

“(a) shall regard the State as divided into three areas as follows:—

1. The metropolitan area;
2. The north-west area;
3. The agricultural, mining and pastoral areas.”

They are not zones, certainly, but they are areas.

When we return to the schedule to that enactment we find what we term zones defined.

The position in Western Australia was this: prior to this amending Act there were four areas or four zones in that State: the metropolitan area, the northern area, the agricultural area, and the mining and pastoral area. Under this Bill the agricultural area was merged with the mining and pastoral area. We find as a result of the elections then just over that in the northern area, which now becomes the north-west area, there are only 3,200-odd voters altogether and four electorates. By this amendment the electorates in the north-western area were reduced by one to three. So today in Western Australia we have three electorates in the north-west area with a total electoral

population of 3,200-odd people. In other words, they have a quota of just over the 1,000 and it has been pointed out that at least one has an electoral population below that figure. We in Queensland can look for some guidance in the matter now before the Committee to Western Australia, because that State is similar in many respects to ours; both comprise great distances. As was pointed out by the Attorney-General when introducing the Bill in Western Australia, that was one of the considerations for the necessity of the amendment.

In the course of the debate it was pointed out that Tasmania had proportional representation; incidentally, it was also pointed out that Queensland was one of the States that preserved the principle of one vote, one value, to all intents and purposes. However, both the Government and Labour Opposition agreed that because of the sparsity of population, the wide spaces, and the difficulties of transport it was necessary to modify that principle, and in order to do that equitably they found it necessary to divide the State, according to the 1947 amendment into three areas or zones.

This might be of some help to hon. members of the Queensland People's Party in coming to a rational conclusion or determination as to the merits of this Bill: it was provided under this Bill that in the agricultural, mining and pastoral area, as it is termed, each vote would be worth two votes for each vote in the metropolitan area. That is approximately in accord with the provisions of the Bill now before the Committee.

I listened with some concern to the extravagant language used in the debate on this clause, and, like other members, no doubt, was amazed at the length to which hon. members opposite will go in their casuistry to destructively criticise and condemn any measure brought down by this Government.

Mr. Nicklin: You are not suggesting that they do everything perfectly?

Mr. ROBERTS: Not for one minute, and I do not want it to go on record that the Government I am pleased to support do everything perfectly.

The Opposition have criticised the boundary of these zones. They have termed them dog-leg lines. The hon. member for Toowong pointed out what he considered to be certain anomalies, but I think hon. members opposite fail to realise that in defining any boundary, in fact in doing any type of survey work of this kind, two of the primary considerations are physical features and community of interest. (Opposition interjections.) How in the name of goodness could we draw a straight line, as has been suggested by hon. members opposite, that would follow physical features and have regard to community of interests I do not know, and I am sure hon. members opposite cannot tell me.

Hon. members opposite condemn this clause because it brings too much of the State into what is called the Western Zone, or the zone with the lowest quota. The hon. member for Toowong pointed out that Thallon is in the Western Zone and Goondiwindi in the South-Eastern Zone; he would have us believe that there is a community of interest between those two places and argued that consequently both localities should be in the same zone. The Premier has just told us why they should not both be in the same zone; but apart from that, we must infer from the hon. member for Toowong's statement that he would have Goondiwindi included in the Western Zone. That could only mean an enlargement of the Western Zone or a greater number of people coming within the lowest-quota area.

He also pointed out the same thing with Theodore and Monto, and with Thangool and Biloela, in which he says there is a community of interest. Apparently the hon. member has not looked at the map very closely because Thangool and Biloela are both in the South-Eastern Zone.

Mr. Sparkes: The hon. member for Port Curtis told you that, and you believe it.

Mr. ROBERTS: It is right. However, that is a mistake anybody is likely to make.

Mr. Wanstall: If you take the beginning of the name it is in one area and the end is in another.

Mr. ROBERTS: The hon. member pointed out that Theodore and Monto are in different zones, and he says the community of interest is the same. He said the same about Roma and Chinchilla. According to him they should be in the same zone. The only inference we can draw from that is that the hon. member would have us create a much wider and larger Western Zone than we have already. It has been pointed out that if you have a line between two places it must divide the localities or areas on either side of it.

The position is that for the better representation of the people of Queensland in this Parliament we are doing the wise thing in following the example set by the State of Western Australia. We are not going beyond the bounds of reason in modifying the principle of "one vote, one value" by making the provision we have in this Bill for the creation of certain zones within the State.

I am satisfied, and I am sure every reasonable person in this Chamber and every citizen outside who has an interest in the welfare of this State will be satisfied, that the Government have brought down a measure that is in the interests of the welfare of the State of Queensland.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (9.19 p.m.): One of the things that have always amused me since I came into this Parliament is the attitude of the Labour Party towards the trend in debate. When any member of the Labour Party stands up to speak on any

measure he enlightens the Chamber, he enriches it with irrefutable logic, he graces it in the eyes of the Labour Party; but when a non-Labour member stands up and makes his contribution to the debate, then, in the eyes of the Labour Party, he indulges in a tirade of abuse. We heard that from the hon. member for Nundah just a minute ago.

When I went to secondary school, we used to take a physics course and we used to amuse ourselves at times when the teacher was not looking by putting a small globule of mercury on the table and then trying to put our fingers on it. Of course, it is a physical impossibility because, once you touch the globule of mercury, it will immediately shoot off in some direction. Trying to pin the Premier down to hard, solid facts, trying to pin the Premier down to the truth and political honesty, is about as much a physical impossibility as trying to put your finger on the globule of mercury. I have been trying to get the Premier to explain to the people of Queensland why it is necessary, if he desires by this zoning system to give the West and the North, for whose interests he apparently feels so concerned, extra representation, he at the same time should feel it necessary to give greater representation to the favoured south-eastern corner of the State and his beloved metropolitan area.

The Premier's attitude reminds me of the old story of the fellow who took some food to two of his friends. To the one he did not like very much he gave a corned-beef sandwich and to the other fellow with whom he wished to ingratiate himself he gave an invitation to the Lord Mayor's banquet. We are to get six extra members and the Premier has stood up and extolled the nutritive value of a corned-beef sandwich and he has told the people of the West how lucky they are in getting a corned-beef sandwich.

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

Mr. AIKENS: Which is the zoning system. The Premier fails to mention the fact that the whole of the Northern and Western Zones will get a corned-beef sandwich in the shape of six seats. The favoured south-east portion of the State and the metropolitan area will get the ticket to the Lord Mayor's banquet in the seven seats. You have heard, Mr. Mann, of the old story of the bus-driver who at the end of his run had a bag full of two-shilling pieces.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: Mr. Mann, surely I can quote an analogy in respect of the zoning system. I am dealing with the treatment meted out by the Government to the North and the West, as compared with the treatment meted out to the south-east part of the State and the metropolitan zone. I am stating an argument for the complete reallocation of the zones and I think I am making

pretty fair weather of it, despite the fact that it does not appear to find favour with you. It has at least kept the vociferous members of the Labour Party silent.

As I was saying: this bus-driver came home and was counting out his stack of two-shilling pieces and he started to divide them in this way—one for the boss, one for me; one for the boss, two for me; one for the boss and three for me, and so he went on. With the Premier, it is one two-shilling piece for the North and two and three and four two-shilling pieces for the favoured South-Eastern Zone and the Metropolitan Zone. That is an irrefutable point and I challenge the Premier to explain to the people of Queensland why it is that with the zoning system the North, for which the Premier shed tears of pity and compassion, and the great western area of the State from the border of New South Wales to the Gulf, comprising nine-tenths of this great State of ours, will have only 23 seats in Parliament and the remaining one-tenth of the State, comprising the favoured South-Eastern Zone and the Metropolitan Zone, will have 52 seats. Is that giving the country adequate representation, the representation so long denied it and balancing equally or trying to adjust the balance between country and the city?

Where do we get with all this balderdash, blarney and hooey that we heard from the Premier over the last three or four days? He will give to the western people and to the northern people the extra representation they have needed so long! As a matter of fact, I have worn out two handkerchiefs. My eyes have been dry with unshed tears listening to the Premier and his explanation of this rotten, stupid, stinking Bill which favours one-tenth of the State—this Garden of Eden in the eyes of the Premier—and will receive 52 seats and the great reservoir of wealth of the State and the marvellous North and West will have a lousy 23 seats.

The Premier gave us a little more eyewash and blarney when he said that the Bill provided that as the State expanded and population poured in from overseas in a never-ending stream, Brisbane would be confined to 24 members, the South-Eastern Zone to 28 members, the Northern Zone to 13 members, and the Western Zone to 10 members. I wonder whether the Premier thinks anyone is silly enough to believe that. The moment the population starts to pour into this country the Premier will see that they pour into Brisbane and the south-eastern corner of the State and whenever he feels it necessary to do so, in order to protect his own frippery political hide, will amend the Bill. He will bring down a brand new Bill providing for more new zones with some basis of representation for those new zones. Does the Premier believe that we are stupid and silly enough to think that the Bill we are passing now will be like the laws of the Medes and Persians? Does he think the people are mad enough to believe that the Bill will stand engraved for all times on the statute book and be unalterable?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Committee is dealing with Clause 5.

Mr. AIKENS: If he believes it to be in the interests of his own party he will amend the Act.

Let me deal with the zones, as I have been doing all along. We heard the hon. member for Nundah in a faltering, stumbling way trying to defend the indefensible, trying to tell us that the line that was drawn by the jitterbug in the last stages of delirium tremens is a line that followed the physical structure of the country and community interest. Let me quote only two cases of this shameful, shocking zoning system to explode that argument, and what I say about these two is applicable to many other centres in the State.

Charters Towers is in the Western Zone. The hon. member for Nundah said that Charters Towers was in the agricultural, mining and pastoral zone. I wrote those words down when he said them. The population of Charters Towers consists almost entirely of schoolboys, pensioners and, very shortly, lunatics. As a matter of fact, nearly the whole of the population of Charters Towers comprises pensioners and schoolboys. I say nothing against pensioners and schoolboys because I was a schoolboy myself once and if I remain as honest and as incorruptible as I am today I shall ultimately finish up a pensioner. So that I have nothing against the schoolboy or the pensioner.

(Time expired.)

Question—That Clause 5. as read, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 29.

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

NOES, 17.

Mr. Barnes	Mr. Müller
.. Bjelke-Petersen	.. Nicklin
.. Heading	.. Plunkett
.. Hiley	.. Sparkes
.. Low	.. Wanstall
.. Madsen	
.. Maher	<i>Tellers:</i>
.. Marriott	Mr. Aikens
.. McIntyre	.. Luckins
.. Morris	

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Collins	Mr. Macdonald
.. Farrell	.. Brand
.. Gledson	.. Pie
.. Jesson	.. Taylor, H. B.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 6—Number of Electoral Districts in Respective Zones—

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton) (9.33 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

“On page 3, lines 25 to 30 inclusive, omit sub-clauses (1), (2), and (3),—

“1. Zone 1 (the Metropolitan Zone) shall be divided into twenty-four electoral districts.

“2. Zone 2 (the South-Eastern Zone) shall be divided into twenty-eight electoral districts.

“3. Zone 3 (the Northern Zone) shall be divided into thirteen electoral districts.”

and insert in lieu thereof the following—

“1. Zone 1 (the Metropolitan Zone) shall be divided into twenty electoral districts.

“2. Zone 2 (the South-Eastern Zone) shall be divided into thirty-one electoral districts.

“3. Zone 3 (the Northern Zone) shall be divided into fourteen electoral districts.”

If the amendment is agreed to it will mean that a redistribution will be made on the basis of 65 electoral divisions, as against 75 proposed in the clause. It would give effect to an increase of three members in place of 13 as proposed in the Bill.

Mr. AIKENS: Mr. Mann, I rise to a point of order. Does not the proposed amendment contravene Clause 4, which has already been agreed to?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have not yet heard the explanation of the hon. member for West Moreton, but when I do I will give a decision.

Mr. MAHER: The advantage of the adoption of this plan will be that a basis of redistribution will be established to give effect to a fairer and more equitable approach to the problem than is contained in the Bill.

For example, we could do with 20 members in the metropolitan area instead of 24 provided for in the Bill, and we could take from the other cities and their environs—cities like Ipswich, Bundaberg, Gympie, Maryborough, Toowoomba, Warwick, Rockhampton, Mackay, Charters Towers, Townsville, and Cairns—they could be given 11 seats and the country electorates could have 34 seats.

The important point from our angle would be that all the country seats would be grouped together on an equal-quota basis. That would provide a fair means of adjusting the electoral divisions of the State. That would give us 65 members instead of 75 proposed. Under this system we should strike a quota for the metropolitan area of 12,655 voters and for the other cities of the State 10,100, and for the country voters 8,500. This would give proper effect to what the Premier has been talking of, namely, greater representation for the country areas than for the metropolitan area. That would be a true and correct method of giving that greater representation

the country districts upon the basis that one to the rural districts; and it would not divide section of the country would have increased quotas while another section would carry decreased quotas.

Under this plan the total enrolment for the State, based on the 1948 rolls, runs into 653,000 voters. The 65 electorates, divided on the basis I have suggested, would give a fairly equitable division of the different areas, and give the country districts what the Premier has talked about but has not given, namely, a greater measure of representation.

Mr. Hanlon: You propose to leave Zone 4 as it is under this amendment?

Mr. MAHER: Yes, that is the effect of the amendment—leave Zone 4 as it is, but reduce the number of electorates in the State as proposed in this Bill by 10—65 instead of 75.

Mr. Hanlon: You have not read your brief.

Mr. MAHER: Sixty-five in the three, leaving Zone 4 as it is. I have pleasure in submitting the amendment.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) amendment moved by the hon. member for West Moreton. It is all right for hon. members to suggest that the 10 seats in the Western Zone are proposed with the idea of securing additional members for the Labour (9.39 p.m.): Mr. Mann, far be it from me to suggest that there is any motive behind the Party, but the hon. member then suggests that the whole majority of the new seats be transferred to the area in which his party is strongest.

I will not suggest for a moment that the hon. member has moved the amendment with the idea of obtaining additional seats for the Country Party. I should not like to say that the amendment has been moved with that idea but it is all right for them to say that sort of thing about the Government.

Taking this amendment in conjunction with an amendment of which notice has been given and which provides for quotas for provincial cities within that zone, the hon. member is seeking to exaggerate immensely the very evil that hon. members opposite have complained of all day—the policy of the equality of the value of votes. While hon. members agree that they do not wish to carry that out strictly, they want some favour towards the country. They say that we are going too far in fixing quotas ranging from 4,611 to 10,795. Every hon. member on the Opposition who has spoken has objected to the vast difference between the value of a vote in Western Queensland under the Bill as presented but now hon. members are suggesting that we should make that difference plainer. Not only that, but the suggestion is that we should have nine zones instead of four zones. As a consequence of an amendment that will be moved later nine zones are suggested by this amendment.

In this particular amendment it is proposed to move the new seats predominantly into the closely-settled farming districts that hon. members opposite represent, as I said, with the idea of course of doing their best in the public interest and from no other motive. They then will move a further amendment to the effect that all the cities contained in that electorate should have the same quota as the metropolitan area, and that electorates that comprise part city and part country shall have a quota below that. The effect of the two amendments combined would be to have one metropolitan zone with 20 electorates. The South-Eastern Zone marked on the map would be divided into three zones, one urban, one partly urban, and one country.

Mr. Nicklin: How do you make that out?

Mr. HANLON: One urban district of five electorates in the south-eastern area and one partly urban with six electorates and one purely country with 20 electorates. In the northern area there would be also three zones; one would be urban with three electorates, the second, partly urban with two electorates, and the third, country with nine electorates. In the western division there would be one partly urban with one electorate; one country with nine electorates. This would mean that a total of nine zones would be created by this and a consequential amendment. Let us see what that would mean. It would mean that where the quotas are altered, instead of a range of quotas from 4,611 to 10,795, as we propose, the hon. member would take quotas from 4,070, that is, 500-odd lower than we go, up to 12,954.

Mr. Nicklin: No.

Mr. HANLON: Yes, that would be the highest quota, 12,954.

Mr. Nicklin: No, 12,600.

Mr. HANLON: I asked the Principal Electoral Officer to analyse the effect the proposal would have.

Mr. Nicklin: You are not working on the 1948 roll.

Mr. HANLON: I do not know what roll, but he worked on the figures and I presume the Principal Electoral Officer would have a fair idea of the enrolments.

The figures work out this way: applying the marginal allowance above and below the quotas provided in the Bill which hon. members have so vigorously stated here today would further exaggerate the difference, the minimum number of electors in an electorate would be 3,689 and the maximum 12,954. That would be the extreme possible under the Bill.

Under the proposal of the Opposition this extreme possible range would be from 3,256 to 15,544. What confusion would be created in this very nice little attempt to secure the bulk of the additional representation in the area represented by members of the Country Party! There would be nine distinct zones in Queensland and the quotas would be extended and possible electorates, allowing for the extremes that could be allowed but are not likely to be allowed, would range from 3,256 to 15,544 and there would be complete and utter confusion of zones.

First of all, there would be three zones. One of these, the metropolitan, would be on its own and each of the others would be split into separate zones. In the South-Eastern Zone there would be three inner zones, there would be three in the Northern Zone, and the Western Zone would have two inner zones. Charters Towers would be in the Western Zone and, being a city, it would have a high quota and so would be on a different quota in the Western Zone from the rest of the Western Zone.

Mr. Aikens: And so would Hughenden. Hughenden is a town.

Mr. HANLON: But it is not a city. The amendment does not go as far as towns. If it did the quota would range from about 1 to about 30,000. Rockhampton would contain at least two city seats. Bundaberg, Maryborough, Gympie, and Ipswich would have one, Toowoomba would have two, and Warwick would have one. They would all be on city quotas, consequently the quota for the rest of the agricultural areas round about them would drop to 6,028 in the South-Eastern Zone.

I pointed this out at the second-reading stage. I anticipated it and explained the position with a view to letting hon. members see that by what they were proposing to do they would accentuate immensely the very thing they said was the evil of the Bill. I think that if hon. members give it a little more consideration they will agree that they could well drop the suggestion.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) (9.48 p.m.): As is usual, the Premier raises an Aunt Sally and then endeavours to knock it over. He is completely wrong in the contention he put forward that the effects of this amendment will be to create nine or ten zones. It will do nothing of the sort. The only thing that would be done would be to put the provisions of the Bill into operation. As the Premier well knows, the Bill provides that the Commissioners shall take into account, in fixing the quotas allocated under the Bill, community or diversity of interests. What greater community of interest could there be than that within city boundaries, and what greater diversity of interest is there than what you have between part of a city and part of the country? That is all the amendment under discussion and the later amendment to which the Premier referred seek to do.

This amendment is moved with the purpose of testing the sincerity of the Premier, of testing whether he stands for the principle he has enunciated time and time again in connection with the need for zoning the representation of the metropolitan area within a certain limit.

It is limited and it will not dominate the rest of the State. As the hon. member for West Moreton and I pointed out on a previous amendment, the metropolitan area has been rewarded for the fact that it has increased its population since 1932 by just on 63,000 electors by an additional five seats, whereas the South-Eastern Zone, which has made a gain in that period of 48,981 electors, has been rewarded with two extra seats. Do you not think that this vast productive area contained in the South-Eastern Zone of the State and one of the richest areas of Queensland, which has shown a rise in population comparable to that of the metropolitan area is entitled at least to recognition similar to that accorded to that zone? We find that it takes 24,000 electors to get an extra seat in the South-Eastern Zone, against one-half that number in the Metropolitan Zone. That is the answer to the Premier's sincerity with regard to this question of giving better representation to country districts.

Mr. Aikens: Did you ever think he was really sincere?

Mr. NICKLIN: I had hoped he was. This amendment is the acid test of his sincerity and he can demonstrate his sincerity by accepting it. If he does not accept the amendment he demonstrates fully that he does not care a tinker's cuss for the better representation of the country districts. All he is concerned about is to ensure that he and his party will retain occupancy of the Treasury benches.

Let us examine this question of variation of quotas. The Premier in his second-reading speech made the same statement as he made tonight with regard to the variation that would be possible under the amendment. The only figures we can work on are the figures on the 1948 roll. We quoted those figures on a previous amendment to show that in the metropolitan area, where there are 20 electorates, the average is 12,655 or a total of 253,100 electors, whereas the actual enrolments are 253,284, a difference of 184.

Mr. Hanlon: The figures I used were based on the 1949 rolls.

Mr. NICKLIN: So that is where the difference comes in? Those figures are not available to us.

Mr. Hanlon: They have just come out.

Mr. NICKLIN: They are not yet issued. The majority of the metropolitan rolls but not many of the country rolls are available.

Mr. Hanlon: They are with the printer and in the Electoral Office.

Mr. NICKLIN: That is where the difference comes about, because the figures I quoted were based on the actual enrolments in 1948, the only complete figures available to hon. members.

Mr. Hanlon: We were working on the figures that will be used by the commission. I am sorry that I did not explain that.

Mr. NICKLIN: That accounts for the difference between the figures quoted by me and those quoted by the Premier.

Apart from that, the purpose of the amendment is first to test the sincerity of the Premier in regard to his many protestations in respect of better representation for the country and secondly to put into effect the provisions contained in the Bill which direct the commissioners to take into account community of interest and diversity of interest. The question of community of interest and diversity of interest will be subject to an amendment later on that we have forecast. It will place the other cities of the State on a comparable basis with the great city of Brisbane, and those electorates that are part city and part country will be dealt with on the basis provided in the Bill and in accordance with the variation of quotas that will be permitted. Therefore, we shall have not the eight, nine, or ten zones that the Premier mentioned but simply the four zones, with consideration to be given to community of interest and diversity of interest and the variation of quotas permitted by the Bill at the discretion of the commissioners.

We have already established the principle of 75 seats and the principle of four zones. The object of the amendment is to bring about a better division of the electorates between the zones so that we shall have better representation for all sections of the community where community of interest and diversity of interest will be recognised and all the other factors contained in the Bill will be taken into account by the commissioners in their redistribution of the electorates.

I move the amendment.

Mr. HILEY (Logan) (9.57 p.m.): In his reply to the amendment moved by the hon. member for West Moreton the Premier spent most of his time discussing the projected amendment to Clause 10. The amendment we are discussing is capable of operation quite independently of whether amendment to Clause 10 is carried or not. That amendment will be considered in due course and I have an open mind about it, but I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the amendment now under consideration puts the acid test on the Government's intentions. We heard from the lips of the Premier that the two main reasons for the introduction of the measure were the need to avoid domination of the other electoral districts of the State by the capital city and the ad-miseracordiam plea for the scattered North and West.

One great objection that I have to the Government's argument that the country should have a certain advantage is the very plain distinction between sections of the country, which applies in such a manner as to make for inherent unfairness in the

application of the whole measure and consequently completely destroys the general application of the argument that the Premier advanced. It is perfectly clear that there can be no benefit to any zone in the State that is subject to the second-most unfavourable quota with a zone which is substantially country in character. That is Zone 2. If there is any merit to be attached to the argument advanced by the Premier as the real reason for introducing the Bill, can he tell the Committee quite logically the reason why the farmers on the Darling Downs, in the Kingaroy district, on the Burnett River or on the cane lands between Rockhampton and Mackay should be subject to the second-worst quota of the whole lot?

The quota of a seat close to the capital city, on the present basis of allocation, has a variation of about 10 per cent. less than that commanded under the Act that at present applies, which will be revealed when this Bill becomes law. In practice, the 20 per cent. variation at present permitted from the quota means that districts in the area have a greater advantage under the present law than this method of fixing a quota proposes to apply to them.

When I considered the numbers proposed for these various districts and heard the Premier's plea for suppressing the dominating interests of the capital, I asked why the number of metropolitan seats was increased to 24. The conclusion I reached, as is well known, was that in the metropolitan area the Government have a very substantial minority of votes but the boundaries of those electorates were so conveniently arranged that they obtained 12 seats with relatively low margins, as against eight secured by Opposition members with relatively substantial margins.

Mr. Hanlon: Those votes were taken since these seats were divided.

Mr. HILEY: Exactly. If there was a real redistribution of seats in the metropolitan area on a fair basis, nothing would save hon. members opposite in the Kelvin Grove, Buranda and Nundah electorates. The plain fact is that on any fair distribution in the metropolitan area the Government at the most would not get ten seats.

Mr. Hanlon: We will give you a pain in the neck at the next election in any distribution that is made.

Mr. HILEY: That is the reason why in setting out the number of seats under this plan the capital has been allotted four extra seats, which are so defined as to save the skins of those metropolitan members whose seats are considered doubtful. If the present ratio of voting strength is maintained I doubt whether the Government would win more than 9 of the existing 20 seats.

Mr. Hanlon: You are claiming credit for all votes cast for the five or six parties.

Mr. HILEY: If the Premier reads his own official Year Book he will read the total number of votes cast for our party and the total number of votes cast for his party.

They are very clearly set out. The reason why four extra metropolitan seats have been defined is to save the doubtful seats of Nundah, Buranda and Kelvin Grove.

If the Government reject the amendment it will demonstrate the shallowness of the Premier's reasons for introducing this measure, namely, to get better representation for the country as against the metropolis. Such an argument in no way justifies, nor does it provide any measure of excuse, for the position that a certain area of country, and an important area, has been set a most onerous quota.

That is the real position. When you measure that against the sure and certain knowledge that on all recent tests those areas with very low quotas are those where the Government influence dominates and those with the big quotas are where the Government's influence is least, I do not think any member of the Committee can have any regard for the genuineness of the reasons advanced by the Government. Their attitude to this amendment, to my way of thinking, clearly shows what a pretext the reason advanced for the Bill really is.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (10.6 p.m.): The hon. gentleman has changed his tune immensely. When he was talking earlier he did not want the country to lose seats and he thought the extra seats should be in Brisbane.

Mr. Hiley: He did not.

Mr. HANLON: He said there should be more seats; he did not want the country to lose any but he did not want to give it any more. Where are we going to put them? We have to put them somewhere. If they are not in the country they must be in the city. He now proposes to exaggerate immensely the evil, as he calls it, in this Bill. He says that the evil is destroying the principle of one vote, one value. The fact is that that principle is preserved whereas he is supporting an amendment that with the following amendment actually gives an increase of sub-zones on the quota. That is the actual fact.

Mr. Hiley: That is irrelevant.

Mr. HANLON: It leaves it in a pretty awkward position if it is not done. Members of the Opposition simply say, "Right; we will have the extra seats, but we will have them where we can win them." They are accusing us of doing that. That is the effect of the proposal of hon. members. What is the good of suggesting that the Bill is designed by the Government to create more seats where we think we can win them and then saying, "Transfer them to where we can win them?"

The hon. member went on to say that the reason why the seats are increased to 24 in Brisbane is that if there was a redistribution on the 20 seats Labour would lose their seats. It will make no difference whether it is 20, 30, 40 or 50 in the metropolitan area, because they have to be redistributed on an equitable basis with a quota. There is no way you can get beyond that, however many

seats there are in the redistribution in the metropolitan area on a quota. Whether it is divided by 20 or 30 or 40. If they are going to get the vast majority of them, it will not matter how many there are; the more there are the more in the killing. Why complain about having more slaughtered? Whether it is 20 or 24, the commission can only divide them equitably within that zone. It cannot take an elector out of the zone and put him outside the metropolitan area or put one in. (Opposition interjections.) If they were going to be dishonest with 24, they would be dishonest with 20. I do not like the suggestion that high public servants are dishonest. It is suggested that these people, because a Labour Government are in power, will be dishonest. I do not like it. (Opposition interjections.)

The hon. member quoted from a speech I made in 1931. I challenged him to read it right through. It gave a list of the charges of corruption against the 1921 commission which redistributed the State—that they were bribed because later on they got promotion. The Opposition then charged that every one of them was corrupt. That was the reason why we took the attitude we did in the Bill about the commissioners.

It was because of the charges by members of the Opposition Party that men connected with those commissions, men who had been given a commission by His Excellency and had been commissioned to do their job, had been corrupt and had been bribed by the Government. The same suggestion is being made now—that there will be dishonesty in the commission. If there is going to be dishonesty, how can it matter whether there are 24 or 20, if hon. members opposite are going to get a majority of votes, as they say they must?

Mr. Hiley: Is not a majority of 24 a greater number than a majority of 20?

Mr. HANLON: There is not a majority of 20.

Mr. Hiley: Assume the same proportion of majority.

Mr. HANLON: The point I am making is that you must win the same proportion of the 24 as you do of the 20.

Mr. Hiley: Exactly, and that is my point.

Mr. HANLON: That is exactly my point too. It will not make any difference whatever to the Government.

As for the hon. member's innuendoes—and he must have meant them—that three certain seats would be exterminated, that it would be impossible for Labour men to hold them, that is presupposing he knows exactly what the commission will do. If he does, he knows more than I do. We do not know what it will do. We are laying down the method it must adopt. How it places the boundaries within the zones is no concern of ours.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (10.12 p.m.): I have never heard so much irrelevant bunkum and nonsense talked on a simple amendment as has been talked on this.

Mr. Hanlon: You are talking of yourself.

Mr. AIKENS: To be quite candid, as I interjected when the hon. member for Logan was speaking, the Premier in order to try to defeat the amendment or cloud it or throw a smoke screen over it, to use the vernacular, got out of bed before he got in. He began to talk of an amendment suggested in relation to Clause 10 and we are dealing with Clause 6.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would correct the hon. member. The Premier was dealing with a consequential amendment, which is proposed to be put in Clause 6 after this amendment is disposed of.

Mr. AIKENS: The Premier, as usual, went on a Cook's tour over the world and took a couple of back-handers at the Opposition on the way and finished up more or less speaking vaguely about Clause 6. That clause simply provides that there shall be four zones, that there shall be Zone 1, a Metropolitan Zone which shall have 24 electoral districts; Zone 2, a South-Eastern Zone, which shall be divided into 28 electoral districts; Zone 3, a Northern Zone, which shall be divided into 13 electoral districts, and Zone 4, a Western Zone, which shall be divided into 10 electoral districts. The amendment simply provides—

Zone 1 shall have 20 electoral districts;
Zone 2 shall have 31 electoral districts;
Zone 3 shall have 14 electoral districts;
Zone 4 shall have 10 electoral districts.

In other words, the amendment provides that four of the proposed metropolitan seats shall be taken from the metropolitan area and that three of these given to Zone 2, the South-Eastern corner Zone, and the fourth given to the Northern Zone. That is plain enough for anyone to read and understand, if he really wants to understand, but there are none so blind as those who do not want to see and none so stupid as those who will not try to understand. I am not suggesting that the Premier is stupid; he is more cunning and astute than stupid and consequently he drew a smoke screen over a simple amendment.

This amendment does not go as far as I should like. I should like the four seats proposed to be taken from the metropolitan area to go to the Northern and Western Zones, nevertheless this amendment is better than the original Bill and I propose to vote for it. If I cannot get all I desire, I get as much as I possibly can.

The Premier, I think, innocently let the cat out of the bag. There is such a thing as a process of attrition.

You can gradually wear a thing down by the constant application of friction. That is called the process of attrition. Just as you can wear metals and minerals down, so also can you wear a human being down. The Premier has been withstanding a pretty constant barrage over the last two days and he has been withstanding it fairly well, but he is starting to weaken, we are beginning

to find the flaws in his armour, and tonight he let the cat out of the bag when he virtually admitted that the 28 seats had already been cut up. He said, "Er, er, er, how can the Commission cut it up? Er, er, er—"

Mr. Hanlon: What did he say? No quibbling, now.

Mr. AIKENS: I do not know what he said because that is exactly the way he was going on. He was all confused, all at sea. He sort of half realised that he was letting the cat out of the bag and just as it was getting out he grabbed it by the tail and pulled it back into the bag. I was waiting for the cat to get right out, but he just got a glimmer of intelligence and realised that, "Oh, I have made a blunder, I had better not go too far." The Opposition will clearly remember, because their memories are fairly retentive and fairly keen, and we are standing up to the attack better than the Premier is standing up to the defence, because we have not weakened yet and we do not intend to weaken, how the Premier started to talk about the Commission and suddenly got onto something else.

If this amendment is carried the Commission will be required to cut the metropolitan area up into 20 seats, the No. 2 South-Eastern (Country) Zone into 31 seats, the Northern (Coastal and Peninsula) Zone into 14 seats and the Western Zone into 10 seats. Is not that simple enough?

Mr. Power: No.

Mr. AIKENS: Why not?

Mr. Power: It is stupid.

Mr. AIKENS: It is not simple enough because that sturdy yeoman from Baroona with the Bathurst burrs thick upon him, gathered from his rolling pastoral property on Petrie Terrace, realises that this would take four seats away from his beloved capital of Brisbane, yet the Premier has been blowing out his bags for the last two days about his intense and deep concern for the people of the North and for the people of the country. Here is an opportunity, here is a straightout test put right at the Premier's feet, the gauntlet has been thrown down by the Leader of the Opposition for the Premier to prove his sincerity and prove his concern for the country people and the country districts of this State by taking away four of his beloved metropolitan seats and giving them to the country.

Mr. Sparkes: He does not want the city to grow.

Mr. AIKENS: He says he does not want the city to grow and he does not want the city influence to predominate. Although he did not say it, I was going to tell him, as a matter of fact, that he has been saying that he does not want the State of Queensland to become like Imperial Rome in the fourth century where the proudest boast was, "Civis Romanus sum—I am a citizen of Rome," where you had to be a citizen of Rome before you could vote or

have any say in the country. Shortly in this country the proud boast will be "Civis Brisbanus sum—I am a citizen of Brisbane." That will be the hall-mark of quality, the hall-mark of administrative competence so far as this Government are concerned.

Here is the test. I can already see the arrow quivering in the Achilles heel of the Premier. I can see him politically and mentally disintegrated. Here is the test. Take four seats away from this filthy, dirty, rotten, rat-infested, flea-ridden city of Brisbane and give them to the country.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (10.21 p.m.): I want to call attention to the very blatant exhibition of intemperance displayed in this debate by the hon. member for Mundingburra.

Mr. Maher: He has got you rattled.

Mr. HANLON: I know he has, and the hon. member will have all the rattling he wants before this debate is through.

Mr. Aikens: It is the death-rattle you can hear.

Mr. HANLON: It might have slipped the notice of "Hansard" and I want recorded the deliberate attempt he made to put a falsity over this Committee.

Mr. Aikens: If you don't alter your "Hansard" proofs we will see it.

Mr. HANLON: He said that I said "Er, er," and he went on with a lot of rubbish that "Hansard" could not possibly report but he would lead the people to think that I said a certain thing.

Mr. Aikens: You damned near said that.

Mr. HANLON: When I asked the hon. member what he said, he said he did not know. (Interruption.)

Mr. Aikens: Probably like a child with an all-day sucker.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I should like to appeal to the hon. members for Bundaberg, Mundingburra and others to behave themselves in a manner befitting this Chamber. I cannot be continually calling them to order.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member is not going to escape. He said that he could see the arrow quivering in the Achilles heel of the Premier.

Mr. HILEY (Logan) (10.21 p.m.): If I might resume the consideration of the question, I might say that the Premier told the Committee— (Interruption.)

Mr. O'Shea interjected.

Mr. Barnes: You are drunk as usual.

Mr. O'Shea: It is all right about you.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HILEY: He told us that he could not see that the position would be affected at all, whether the seats in the metropolitan

area were 20 or 24, and what I ask the Committee to consider is this: let us suppose a position in Brisbane where there was an exact equality of votes cast for the two parties, the Labour Party getting 50 per cent. of the votes cast and our party 50 per cent. For the moment forget the Independents. If there were 20 seats in the metropolitan area that would mean 10 seats for each party.

Mr. Hanlon: It could not be done.

Mr. HILEY: Why not?

Mr. Hanlon: There is no possible way to ensure it. One seat might be won by 1,000 and another by 50.

Mr. HILEY: With that I agree. Apply the same hypothesis to 24 seats in the area and if you have the same equality of voting the tendency would be towards 12 for each party. I admit that you will not strike directly on it because of the varying margins of wins and losses.

This brings me to the real point. In the 1947 election in the city of Brisbane the votes cast for official Labour, as published by the department, were 112,540 and with that number it won 11 seats. Our party obtained 121,654 votes or 10,000-odd more, for which we got eight seats. I am defying anybody to suggest on an equitable distribution, if the number of seats remained at 20, that the Government could continue to hold 11 out of the 20. I say it is clear that the reason why the Premier had to increase the number to 24 was to permit the Government to have a chance of retaining 11 members, if the same voting tendency was preserved. I am not attempting to prophesy what the tendency will be. It will be miraculous if there is no ebb or flow one way or the other.

Let us examine the position to see the real reason that prompted the Government to increase the quota of seats in the metropolitan area at a time when the Premier tells us the real reason for introducing the measure is to kill the dominating interest of the metropolis and protect the country. That is the point.

Mr. Hanlon: It is what the Bill will do.

Mr. HILEY: If that is the guiding purpose, it is illogical that the Bill should increase the number of seats in the metropolitan area. We then look for the other reasons for the Bill.

I submit that the reasons and the figures that I have submitted to the Committee show that the real purpose of the Bill is to ensure that with the greater number of seats to be divided, even though they fail to get 50 per cent. of the votes in the metropolitan area, the Government will have a chance of retaining 11 seats. If the number of seats stopped at 20, and the redistribution was in any way equitable, it is unlikely that the Government could hold more than nine. That would be

the probability. The Premier surely will not attempt to tell the Committee that with an equitable distribution and with 20 seats in the metropolitan area the Government could continue—

Mr. Power: How do you know how the people will vote?

Mr. HILEY: I am assuming that the tendency will continue. No-one suggested how the people would vote. I am simply saying that if the tendency of the last election is repeated it is perfectly clear that with an equitable system of distribution the Government could not hope to continue to obtain a majority of seats in the metropolitan area on a minority of votes. The Premier has told us in language that I have to respect that if there is an equitable distribution, apart from the action of the several margins, that it should fairly portray the wishes of the people in the zone. If the number of seats stopped at 20, then unless the Government succeeded in securing a majority of the votes in the metropolitan area, which is something they have not done in the last two elections, they could not obtain 11 out of the 20 seats. That is the point. The object of the Premier was to increase the number to 24 to make sure that there would be no casualties amongst his party in the metropolis.

Mr. BARNES (Bundaberg) (10.27 p.m.): When the Learned Elders of Zion get a copy of this debate, I am afraid they will dismiss the Premier because he has made such a horrible mess of things. Parliament has caught up with him. The amendment puts him in the position where he has to say either that what he said on a previous debate amounted to an attempt to gull the people or that what he now says is correct. When this debate reaches New York the Learned Elders of Zion will berate the Premier and tell him to resign. Then Mr. Gair will come into his position, hoping that he will be able to do the work better in introducing a Bill to gull the people properly and hoping that Parliament will not catch up with him too and find him out.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) (10.28 p.m.): There is only one factor to be considered. The Premier has said that the city must not dominate the country. Does it not follow that if Brisbane has only 20 seats instead of 24 there will be less chance of domination? Will the Premier not admit that? That would be four fewer seats for the metropolitan area, with those four to go to the country, one to the North and three to other parts of the country.

Mr. Hanlon: You want to raise the maximum now.

Mr. SPARKES: No, we want to keep the city down. Will the domination not be reduced if the number of seats given to the metropolitan area is 20 instead of 24?

That is the issue—whether you want Brisbane to get more seats or not. Nothing else can cloud the issue. We will see when the division bells ring whether hon. members

opposite are sincere in their cry that they want greater representation for the country and less for the city. Here is a chance for western members to support that principle.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (10.31 p.m.): In my 20-odd years' experience in this Parliament I have never participated in a debate in which so much inconsistency has been displayed in speeches. One of the principles on which hon. members opposite attack this Bill from its first presentation was the tremendous difference in the value of the vote in the city as against that in the country. Every hon. member of the Opposition who has spoken said it was wrong that a vote in the country should be so much more valuable than in some other parts of the State. Under this amendment it is proposed to raise the maximum quota from 10,795 to 12,954.

Mr. Sparkes: In the city?

Mr. Aikens: Why not?

Mr. HANLON: This is a Queensland Bill. The complaint has been that there has been too much difference between the value of the votes in areas of high quotas—(Opposition interjections). If hon. members will not be so rude I will get on with what I want to say. The complaint has been about the great distinction between quotas of 4,611 and 10,795. It is now proposed that the lowest quota be reduced to 4,070 and the greatest quota be raised to 12,954. I never heard so much rubbish talked by hon. members opposite as has been talked on this Bill.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted from Clause 6 (Mr. Maher's amendment) stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 29.

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

NOES, 17.

Mr. Aikens	Mr. Müller
" Barnes	" Nicklin
" Bjelke-Petersen	" Plunkett
" Heading	" Sparkes
" Hiley	" Taylor, H. B.
" Low	
" Luckins	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Madsen	Mr. McIntyre
" Maher	" Morris
" Marriott	

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Collins	Mr. Macdonald
" Farrell	" Pie
" Gledson	" Brand
" Jesson	" Russell

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 6, as read, agreed to.

Clause 7—Distribution of Zones into electoral districts—as read, agreed to.

Clause 8—Appointment of Commissioners—

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) (10.38 p.m.): I have an amendment on this clause which reads as follows—

“On page 4, line 4, after the word ‘Commissioners,’ insert the proviso—

‘Provided that such three Electoral Commissioners as aforesaid shall comprise the following persons, namely:—

(a) the Elections Tribunal Judge for the time being;

(b) the Surveyor-General for the time being; and

(c) The Principal Electoral Officer for the time being.’ ”

The purpose of the amendment is to make Parliament appoint the electoral commission. At the present time it is provided that the commission shall be appointed by the Governor in Council.

I am going to adopt a rather novel method tonight. I am going to ask the Premier to move this amendment for me. I will now quote word for word what was said by the Premier in 1931 when he supported a similar amendment in the Electoral Districts Act. The following appears at page 796 of “Hansard” for 1931:—

“It would be only decent for the Attorney-General to accept the amendment. That would clear the Government from any charge that this party might lay against them that they were prepared to gain political advantage by the exercise of their power as a Government. Hon. members opposite claim that the Government are reducing the number of seats by 10 in the interests of economy. We will take their statement at its face value, and assume they are doing so in the interests of economy. By accepting this amendment it will be a gesture to the public that they are not desirous of gaining any strategic advantage from their position as a Government—that they are going to accept a commission suggested by this side of the Chamber, against whose members no hon. member opposite can say a word. Not one hon. member opposite can say that some one better could be appointed, because nobody can deny that the Surveyor-General and the Principal Electoral Officer are particularly suited for the job. The Minister, for all I know, may have them in view as members of the commission. If that is the case, and he will accept this amendment, he will be relieved of any charge of having ‘rigged’ the commission.’ ”

After hearing me read those words, uttered by the Premier in support of that amendment, the Premier can do nothing but accept my amendment. He has stated the case for me and it is not necessary for me to say another word, merely to endorse what the Premier said on a similar amendment in 1931. I endorse word for word what the

Premier said on an amendment moved by his then leader, the Hon. W. Forgan Smith. To be consistent I feel the Premier must have exactly the same feeling as to the composition of the commission as he did on that occasion.

Mr. Foley: Why are you somersaulting now?

Mr. NICKLIN: Why does the Secretary for Public Lands want to enter this argument? In fact, it is not an argument. The Premier and I are in full agreement on this very principle. I endorse every word the Premier said on that occasion when I submit this amendment.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (10.44 p.m.): Mr. Mann, I will adopt the same attitude as the Leader of the Opposition and use the words of the Attorney-General of the Moore Government, who replied that the appointment of the commission is the responsibility of the Executive Council. As to whom he appointed I have no recollection, but officers will be appointed who we trust will do an honest and straightforward job.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (10.45 p.m.): I hope the Premier will not deny what he just said, because we all heard it very clearly. He said in effect, that he can afford to be an honest Labour man when he is in opposition but when he is the Leader of the Government it is an entirely different matter.

I do not know who the members of the commission are to be. I usually get some very good oil, and in view of the fact that Cilento has gone home to his Fascist and Nazi friends and Tommy Hope has gone on the Meat Board, I have been told the three commissioners—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: I can talk on the clause dealing with the appointment of the commission, surely to goodness?

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member will confine his remarks to that.

Mr. AIKENS: I will. In the absence of Cilento and Tom Hope, I have been told—I do not know the gentleman very well—that the commissioners are to be—

E. J. Walsh,
J. A. Speedy,
S. J. Bryan and
G. Whiteside, as first emergency.

At any rate, this amendment pins the Government down to probably the three most competent public officers in the State. I do not know any of the gentlemen. I do not know the Elections Tribunal judge, I do not know the Surveyor-General and I do not know the Principal Electoral Officer, but I do know that, occupying the high and responsible positions they do, they must be men of some capability, responsibility and integrity, and I really think that if we are going to have an electoral redistribution there can be nothing wrong with Parliament's appointing the three officers named in the amendment.

Because the Opposition, who were then the Government, did not accept the amendment moved by the then Leader of the Opposition—I take it it was Mr. Forgan Smith—is that any reason why two wrongs should make a right? The present Opposition, the infamous Moore Government, about which we never cease to hear from the members of the Labour Party—as a matter of fact, that is all some members of the Labour Party can say; all they can do is repeat the parrot cry, “What about 1929 to 1932? What about 1929 to 1932? What about 1929 to 1932?” until we are getting heartily sick of it—they were the Government who in the opinion of Labour members were rotten, corrupt and infamous beyond comparison, yet we find the Premier tonight doing the very thing that was done by the Moore Government, a Government that hon. members of his party are always condemning.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) (10.48 p.m.): We have already had one vote to show the sincerity of the Premier and I am sorry to say he has twisted on it. Here is another vote and again the Premier shows signs of completing a somersault. His colleague on his left also supported this amendment. His name appears in “Hansard” too. The hon. member for Normanby supported this very amendment. As soon as I saw the hon. member for Normanby getting worried tonight I thought I would get the little book. My thoughts were that he was in trouble too, and sure enough his name appears in “Hansard” praising the integrity of the three men suggested and giving reasons why they should be appointed. Of course, he might still come with us, so I shall not condemn him completely.

Mr. Hanlon: Ask the hon. member for West Moreton to tell you why he voted against the amendment you are now proposing.

Mr. SPARKES: Let me ask the Premier: if it was right when he supported it what happened since to make it wrong? Tonight we heard the Premier say that hon. members on this side of the Committee are always castigating these high public servants, that we have nothing good to say about them. I do not know these three men. I should not know them if they walked into this Chamber. I am putting them up because they are in these high positions. Knowing the ability of the Hon. Forgan Smith and of the present Premier, I think we cannot do better than follow the lead given by those men.

Knowing the important positions these men held I thought, “This looks the goods.” I have been fortified by having the Secretary for Public Lands support it. It seemed “real easy” for the Premier, and I thought he would get up and say, “I have pleasure in accepting the amendment.” That is exactly what I felt. I know that in his heart the Secretary for Public Lands would like to support the amendment. Let him get up and do so. Can you, Mr. Mann, or can the Government tell us any reason for not accepting it?

Mr. Hanlon: They might be the officers selected for all I know.

Mr. SPARKES: There are two vital points at stake—

Mr. Hanlon: You want to know who they are so that you can get to work on them.

Mr. SPARKES: Shame on the Premier for saying that I might approach them! He is suggesting that those gentlemen would be corrupt. I am surprised that the Premier would suggest improper motives in such high officers of State.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. SPARKES: Of course, he has even suggested that I would stoop to bribing those officers, too. No, we want to know the reason for it. A big principle is at stake. We have heard that Parliament will decide this and Parliament will decide that, so why does Parliament not decide it? Is it not the proper body?

Mr. Hanlon: Parliament will decide what will be done.

Mr. SPARKES: They have tied the hands and feet of the Commission and they will not let Parliament appoint it. Can you blame us on this side of the Chamber for having a sinister feeling that everything is not fair and aboveboard when they will not do the decent thing? The hon. gentleman said, “Why not do the decent thing?” Those are his words in this little book. Apparently on his own findings the Premier is condemned as doing the indecent thing tonight. The Secretary for Public Lands is supporting him. Shame on him! I have great respect for that hon. gentleman. I should imagine that he would be the last member in this Committee to do a thing like that.

I do not think the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs was in the House at the time.

Mr. Jones: Look it up.

Mr. SPARKES: Sure enough, here he is. Did you notice, Mr. Mann, how silent the Minister was until I drew attention to it. He voted for it, too. There is no Minister in this Chamber—and I say this with all sincerity—for whom I have a greater respect than the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs, and I am not throwing idle bouquets.

I cannot believe that the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs would do a thing like that of his own free will. If the Government will not accept the amendment, then by heavens I am sure they are afraid the whips are going to crack. The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs voted for the proposal when he was in Opposition. I know that there were two Joneses in political life at one time and I gave the Secretary for

Health and Home Affairs the benefit of the doubt, thinking that it might have been Mr. A. J. Jones, at one time Mayor of Brisbane, but it is the present Secretary for Health and Home Affairs all right.

The Government are forced into the position now that they must say that they do not trust the three men mentioned in the amendment and there must be some reason for that. I am giving them a way out. If they will not accept the amendment they can say that we do not trust them. But of course it follows also that they think that Parliament has no right to decide who shall be the commissioners.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 10.58 p.m.
