

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 3 AUGUST 1949

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"3. The original allocation of £3,350,000 for railway purposes has been fully expended. A further allocation of £660,100 was made by Order in Council in 1948-1949, the unexpended balance of which at 30 June, 1949, was £503,622 15s. 5d."

SORGHUM YIELD, QUEENSLAND-BRITISH FOOD CORPORATION.

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton) asked the Premier—

"What was the total yield in bushels of sorghum from 30,500 acres of farm lands, harvested by the Queensland-British Food Corporation at Peak Downs?"

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca) replied—

"The harvesting of 29,286 acres planted to grain sorghum at Peak Downs is not yet completed."

WEDNESDAY, 3 AUGUST, 1949.

The ACTING SPEAKER (The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES, Mr. Mann, Brisbane) took the chair at 11 a.m.

QUESTIONS.

ELECTORAL ENROLMENTS.

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

"1. What was the total enrolment for each State electoral district at 30 June, 1949?"

"2. What was the total enrolment at such date for all electorates?"

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory) replied—

"1 and 2. The information required is not available. It is not the regular practice to prepare these details for any period other than as for 31 December in each year, at which time annual rolls are compiled, or at the time of general or by-elections. Whenever these particulars have been available for any other period they had been specially compiled for a statistical or official purpose."

POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT TRUST FUND.

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

"1. At 30 June, 1949, what was the credit balance of the Post-War Reconstruction and Development Trust Fund?"

"2. What was the expenditure from that fund in 1948-49 for (a) railway, and (b) other purposes?"

"3. What was the balance of the fund at 30 June, 1949, set aside for railway purposes?"

Hon. J. LARCOMBE (Rockhampton) replied—

"1. £5,239,434 12s. 5d.

"2. (a) £945,335 7s. 1d. (b) £640,695 4s. 1d.

SECRET BALLOT OF MINERS.

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton) asked the Premier—

"Has he on behalf of the Government of Queensland, brought any pressure to bear on the Prime Minister, Mr. Chifley, to provide for a secret ballot amongst the miners, so that the men might have a truly democratic opportunity of deciding their attitude towards the Communist inspired and directed coal strike, which is creating unparalleled hardship to aged people, women, and children and those who are the indirect victims of the strike by unemployment?"

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca) replied—

"The Right Hon. the Prime Minister is quite capable of dealing with all matters coming within the immediate jurisdiction of the Commonwealth authorities. It is not within my province and it would certainly be highly improper for me to attempt to bring pressure to bear on the Prime Minister in the exercise of his responsible office."

BUILDING PERMITS, SOUTH COAST ZONE.

Mr. MACDONALD (Stanley), for **Mr. PLUNKETT** (Albert), asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

"1. How many applications have been received to date for permission to erect or extend buildings in the South Coast zone?"

"2. How many of such applications have been (a) approved, (b) refused, and (c) how many are still pending?"

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

"1 and 2. Complete information is not available by reason of the fact that prior to 6 April, 1948, local authorities in zone B were authorised to issue approvals for new buildings and [or] additions and alterations. Since 6 April, 1948, all applications covering expenditure of amounts in excess of £50 in zone B must be made to the Building Control Division. Information with respect to this period is being prepared."

MOTOR VEHICLE FEES.

Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) asked the Treasurer—

“1. What was the total amount received in 1948-49 for motor registration fees and collections under the State Transport Act?”

“2. Of the above amount, how much was (a) allocated to the Main Roads Fund and (b) retained for Consolidated Revenue purposes?”

Hon. J. LARCOMBE (Rockhampton) replied—

“1. (a) Motor vehicles registration fees, £1,056,812 16s. 10d. (b) The question as far as it relates to the State Transport Act should be addressed to the hon. the Minister for Transport.

“2. (a) The whole of the revenue received from motor vehicles registration fees was allocated to the Main Roads Fund. The total expenditure from the Main Roads Fund in 1948-49 was £3,563,572 16s. 3d. (b) See answer to No. 1.”

REPORT ON NEBO COAL DEPOSITS.

Mr. EVANS (Mirani) asked the Secretary for Mines—

“Has the report of Powell Duffryn Technical Services Ltd. on coal deposits in the Nebo area been received? If so, will it be made available to hon. members of this House? If not, will he give a summary of the report indicating the deposits that appear to be commercially usable and the deposits that appear to be capable of being mined successfully by open-cut methods?”

Hon. W. M. MOORE (Merthyr) replied—

“No. The attention of the hon. member is drawn to the reference to this report in the Governor's Speech delivered yesterday.”

PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamations under the Sugar Experiment Stations Acts, 1900 to 1948 (2 June).

Orders in Council under—

The Fauna Protection Act of 1937 (7).

The Milk Supply Act of 1938 (23 June).

The Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1946 (7).

Regulations under—

The Dairy Produce Acts, 1920 to 1944 (31 March).

The Diseases in Stock Acts, 1915 to 1948 (9, 30 June).

The Fauna Protection Act of 1937 (31 March).

The Fruit Marketing Organisation Acts, 1923 to 1945 (12 May, 6 June, 21 July).

The Poultry Industry Act of 1946 (21 July).

The Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1946 (6).

The Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Acts, 1915 to 1948 (21 July).

Orders in Council under the Labour and Industry Act of 1946 (7, 14 April).

Orders in Council under the Profiteering Prevention Act of 1948 (14 April (4); 5 May).

Regulation under the Fish Supply Management Acts, 1935 to 1946 (12 May).

Regulation under the Bread Delivery Act of 1946 (12 May).

Order in Council under the Profiteering Prevention Act of 1948 (26 May, 2 June (3)).

Order in Council under the Building Operations and Timber and Building Materials Control Acts, 1945 to 1948 (2 June).

Rule under the Factories and Shops Acts, 1900 to 1945 (7 July).

Regulations under the Apprentices and Minors' Acts, 1929 to 1948 (7 April).

Regulations under the Libraries Acts, 1943 to 1949 (5 May).

Regulation No. 12 governing the award of Foundation Travelling Scholarships, University of Queensland.

Statutes of the University of Queensland (21 July).

SITTING DAYS.

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

“(1) That, unless otherwise ordered, the House will meet for the despatch of business at 10.30 o'clock a.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in each week, and that on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and after 2 o'clock p.m. on Thursdays, Government business shall take precedence of all other business.

“(2) That Standing Order No. 17—Debate on Address in Reply—shall be construed as if 5.30 o'clock p.m. were substituted for 10.30 o'clock p.m. wherever it occurs in the Standing Order, and 12 o'clock noon for 4.30 o'clock p.m.

“(3) That Standing Order No. 307—Days Allotted for Supply—shall be construed as if 25 minutes after 5 o'clock p.m. were substituted for 10.30 o'clock p.m. in paragraph 5, and 5 o'clock p.m. were substituted for 10 o'clock p.m. in paragraphs 6 and 7.

“On the last day but one of the days allotted for Supply, the sitting of the Committee and of the House shall be continued until the whole of the Estimates for the year, the Supplementary Estimates for the previous year, and the Vote on Account for the ensuing year have been decided, reported to the House, and an Order made for reception of the Resolutions. All such questions shall be put by Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Committees, as the case may be, without amendment or debate.

“On the last day allotted for Supply, it shall be within the discretion of the Leader of the House to extend the sitting for the purpose of dealing with and bringing to a conclusion all the necessary proceedings for the founding and passing of the Appropriation Bill through all its stages.

At 8 o'clock p.m., subject to the following proviso, the question under consideration and every question necessary to bring to a conclusion the proceedings of the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means and the passing through all stages of the Bill shall be put by Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Committees, as the case may be, without amendment or debate:

"Provided that if, at 8 o'clock p.m., the question for the Second reading of the Bill is under consideration the sitting may be further extended to enable the mover of the motion or his deputy to speak in reply.

"(4) On the days allotted for Supply, Government Business other than Supply may be proceeded with until 12 o'clock noon, at which hour the proceedings on such business shall be interrupted and the business of Supply proceeded with.

"Business interrupted under this paragraph shall stand as an Order of the Day for the next sitting day.

"(5) That, if occasion arises to put into operation Standing Order No. 249, the Standing Order shall be construed as if 11.30 o'clock a.m. were substituted for 4 o'clock p.m. and 5 o'clock p.m. were substituted for 10 o'clock p.m. in paragraph 2.

Motion agreed to.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.

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

"That the Standing Orders Committee for the present session consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Brand, Mr. Hanlon, Mr. Mann, Mr. Nicklin, Mr. Roberts, and Mr. Wanstall."

Motion agreed to.

LIBRARY, REFRESHMENT ROOMS, AND PARLIAMENTARY BUILDINGS COMMITTEES.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.

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

"That the Library, Refreshment Rooms, and Parliamentary Buildings Committees for the present session be constituted as follows:—

Library.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Davis, Mr. Dunstan, Mr. Keyatta, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Morris, and Mr. Russell.

Refreshment Rooms.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Brand, Mr. Chalk, Mr. Jesson, Mr. Maher, Mr. O'Shea, and Mr. J. R. Taylor.

Parliamentary Buildings.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Hiley, Mr. McIntyre, Mr. Müller, Mr. Smith, Mr. Theodore, and Mr. Turner."

Motion agreed to.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.

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

"That a Select Committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the printing to be executed by Order of the House, and for the purpose of selecting and arranging for printing returns and papers presented in pursuance of motions made by members. That such Committee consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Clark, Mr. Graham, Mr. Kerr, Mr. Low, Mr. Sparkes, and Mr. Turner."

Motion agreed to.

FEEES PAID BY CROWN TO BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS.

ORDER FOR RETURN.

Mr. CHALK (East Toowoomba): I move—

"That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing the payments made by the Government to barristers and solicitors for the year 1948-49, stating the names of the recipients and the amounts received, respectively."

Motion agreed to.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

ORDER FOR RETURN.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition): I move—

"That there be laid upon the table of the House a return, in the usual form, showing the number of Government employees at 30 June, 1939, and at 30 June, 1949 (all departments), paid from Consolidated Revenue, Trust Fund, and Loan Fund, respectively."

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL EXPENSES, 1948-49.

ORDER FOR RETURN.

Mr. MACDONALD (Stanley): I move—

"That there be laid upon the table of the House a return, in the usual form, of expenses of Ministers for the year 1948-49."

Motion agreed to.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Debate resumed from 2 August (see p. 24) on Mr. Jesson's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) (11.20 a.m.): Speaking to the motion before the House, I wish to be associated with that part of it in which we reaffirm our loyalty and affection towards

the Throne and the Person of our Most Gracious Sovereign, and with the expression in His Excellency's Speech of satisfaction that His Majesty's health has been restored. I join with His Excellency in the hope that the people of Queensland may have the opportunity of extending a personal welcome to His Majesty when His Majesty has the opportunity of paying us the visit that unfortunately was deferred last year.

I wish to say, particularly on behalf of the country people of the State, how much the actions of His Excellency the Governor and Lady Lavarack in their visits to the far-flung portions of Queensland are appreciated. The keen interest displayed in the affairs of the country people and the industries of our State is greatly appreciated by country people, and it is an encouragement to them to know that His Majesty's representative in Queensland pays such particular attention to their activities.

I should also like to endorse the remarks made by His Excellency as to the necessity of this State's exerting every effort it possibly can to meet the world's needs of food. There is an urgent demand for food throughout the world, and no country is more fitted than Queensland to make a major contribution towards meeting this need, and I join with His Excellency in the hope that good seasons and conditions may favour the producers in this State and help to enable them to make a major contribution to the world's needs.

I realise that to a very large extent the speech His Excellency presented to us yesterday—I refer particularly to that part for which his advisers are responsible—is more or less a propaganda medium. On looking through it, one finds that it is a mass of propaganda apparently designed with the idea of building up hon. members opposite for the forthcoming State election. On reading it, we fail to see any real constructive suggestion that might be implemented in the near future for the future development and welfare of this State. We find, too, only one tiny reference to the objective of hon. members opposite, the socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange—there is only one little reference to the socialistic experiment we see in progress in Central Queensland at the present moment. Moreover, the Premier, you might notice, Mr. Acting Speaker, is very coy when any question is directed to him about that matter.

Whilst I admit that on the Government side of the House there are hon. members who only profess to be socialists, they must all accept the stigma of socialism because the Labour Party—and I include every hon. member opposite—adopted this socialistic objective in 1921, and every single member of the party has pledged himself to do all in his power to achieve that object. Why did they not put in His Excellency's Speech that is presented to the people of the State the statement that hon. members opposite still subscribe to the socialistic objective of their party? I suggest that the reason is that because of the approaching elections they wish to hide from the people the real objective of their party. That it is their

real objective they have demonstrated on many occasions, in that they have advocated and supported referendums to take away power from the people of the State and endeavoured to bring about centralised power in Canberra. Fortunately the people of the State had sufficient wisdom to reject their proposals. Centralisation of power is a major part of the socialistic conception of a glorified State and a servile people and hon. members opposite stand for it and their legislation and governmental activities have brought about undue centralisation of power and governmental activities in this State. They do that because it is part of their socialistic policy, because their conception of the ideal State is a glorified State and a servile people. Not only have hon. members opposite supported this principle but the Government have signed the socialistic pledge and have backed it up in legislation and administration.

Socialism, particularly the brand of socialism that hon. members opposite stand for, is like diphtheria—it is a strangling disease. Of course hon. members opposite are not as frank as their colleagues in the Federal House, who stand unashamedly for socialism, for the quick implementation of the socialistic objective of the Labour Party. Here in Queensland hon. members opposite are endeavouring to bring it about gradually, by gradually strangling the people; and when free enterprise has at last been choked, democracy will have disappeared and replaced by a socialistic dictatorship. Many people foolishly regard socialism as practised by hon. members opposite as a motherly old soul that gives hand-outs to her children. They fail to see the ultimate objective of totalitarian power; they do not realise that it is not motherly at all but a foster mother of Communism. As I proceed, I shall show the detrimental effect of the socialistic policy of the Government on development in this State.

It is very evident, from the fact that the Government selected the hon. member for Kennedy and the hon. member for Fitzroy as the members to move and second the Address in Reply yesterday, that the Government are worried to know that at last the people in the North and in the north-western parts of the State have wakened to a realisation of the fact that they have been sadly and disgracefully neglected by the present Government. But although the Government selected as their Sir Galahads these two hon. members opposite, when the hon. member for Kennedy endeavoured to emulate Sir Galahad he was not clad in shining armour but in the rusty armour of old political tricks and instead of carrying a flaming sword he had only the dirty little stiletto of innuendo.

The Government selected the hon. member for Kennedy as their Sir Galahad to win back the allegiance of the people of the North who at least are endeavouring to get the justice that is theirs and that has been denied to them by hon. members opposite and their Government for over 30 years. The hon. member for Kennedy used the same tactics as have always been used by hon. members opposite in an endeavour to break

up this virile attack upon the Government for lack of consideration of the North, by referring to the people who are members of that very active and virile body in the North, the North Queensland Development League, as Tories and Commos. Let me draw your attention to the fact, Mr. Acting Speaker, that on one occasion when the Trades and Labour Council of the North endeavoured to lead a movement to gain better conditions for the North its members were referred to by hon. members opposite as Commos—"You cannot have anything to do with them because they are Communists." Now the hon. member for Kennedy, speaking for hon. members opposite as the champion of the North, has endeavoured to break up this active and virile body by referring to them as a conglomeration of Tories and Commos.

I had the opportunity of sitting in on the League's inaugural meeting at Townsville. I was there just as one of the ordinary public (Government laughter) and unknown to anybody. I was impressed by the sincerity and purpose of the large number of people assembled there. I should say that the meeting was a cross-section of the people of the North. All sections of the North were represented, with one notable exception. I repeat—all sections of the North were represented, with one notable exception; and that notable exception was the Labour members of Parliament who allegedly represent the people of the North. Why did these gentlemen not accept the invitation to attend that meeting? If they were sincere in their representation of the North, if they were sincere in their desire to do anything for the North, they would have attended if not to join in with the people, at least to listen to what they had to say. That was their duty, as members of this Assembly and representatives of the people. Unfortunately, not one Labour member of Parliament was represented at that meeting.

Mr. Crowley: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN: Why?

Mr. Crowley: Because they were Commos.

Mr. NICKLIN: Were they frightened? Were they guilty? Did their absence acknowledge the fact that they had not given adequate representation and that their Government had not given the needs of the North fair and equitable consideration?

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

Mr. NICKLIN: I leave the hon. member for Cairns to answer to the people of the North. I am sure they will deal with him adequately when he goes up there. (Government interjections.)

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. NICKLIN: The people who attended that large meeting did so feeling that a gross injustice had been done to them by the Government, and they were there to see

that the Government gave them the recognition to which they were entitled and cared for their part of the State as it should be cared for.

Apparently, that large and representative gathering and the virile cross-section of the people backing that organisation had some effect on the Government, because shortly afterwards the Premier visited the North. But he did not go there to give those people the encouragement of any belief that their demands would receive due consideration by this Government. When he came back he gave those people a gratuitous insult when he said that all he found in the North was that there was no dissatisfaction but some feeble representations were made to him in regard to things required in the North.

Mr. Collins: Very feeble.

Mr. NICKLIN: Very feeble, says the Minister. Wait till the members in the hon. gentleman's electorate get hold of him.

The Premier came back with the feeble excuse, "What is private enterprise doing?" I admit that there is an obligation on private enterprise; and private enterprise is doing its bit and is prepared to do its bit but there are limits to what private enterprise can do without Government encouragement and Government backing. Let us not forget that we live in the days of the bureaucrat, when the Government have a stranglehold on industry and all commercial activities, and on the allocation and utilisation of materials. Yet the Premier says, "What is private enterprise doing?" What are the Government doing to meet their undoubted obligation in respect of the construction of roads and bridges, hospitals, schools, and universities, agricultural colleges, railways, irrigation projects, stock routes and harbours, all of which are Government responsibilities? What are they doing? The champion of the North yesterday said that since he has been here he has been advocating a certain thing in regard to the Herbert River; yet the Government have taken no notice of his representations. (Opposition laughter.) That is the answer of the Government to their own champion. After hearing the hon. member yesterday tilting at this and that, one can only conclude that instead of terming him Sir Galahad it would be more appropriate to call him Sancho Panza.

Let us not forget this one salient fact: whatever is wrong with the North, whatever is wrong with the West, and whatever is wrong with the central parts of this State, hon. members of the Government Party must accept the responsibility. They must accept the responsibility because for the last 34 years, with the exception of three years, they have been the Government of the State. Again I make this statement and I challenge any member opposite successfully to contradict it: In the three years during which they were not the Government more was done for the northern portion of the State than was done during their term of office. (Government interjections.) Let the hon. members opposite attempt to challenge that statement.

Let us look at the effect of Government inactivity in regard to the proper development of this State over the years, and of Labour's policy of decentralisation, which is a Socialist policy.

When you examine these things, you will find the real reason why the people of the North and other parts of the State are making urgent and justifiable demands on the Government to give them a fair deal.

Let me refer to the Governor's Speech delivered in this Chamber last year. I will quote a small passage to remind hon. members—

“There has been raised recently the question of a new State in the northern portion of Queensland. My Advisers, over the years, have expressed strongly the need for the development and population of Northern Australia, as being the only way to safeguard the peace and security of the Commonwealth, and have spared no pains to develop North Queensland.”

They spared no pains to develop North Queensland? It may be nice to be told that the Government have expressed strongly the need for the development and population of Northern Australia but that statement would be much more impressive if there was the slightest tangible evidence that the Government had really, to use their own words, “spared no pains to develop North Queensland.” If the Government had really spared no pains in that direction, one would expect their efforts to be reflected in increased population in these areas, but when one examines the last census figures one sees the opposite trend; in fact, they make very sad reading. Anybody who has any regard at all for the development of this great State cannot but be alarmed at the tragic story that the last census figures reveal of the lack of development of the parts of this State that should have No. 1 Priority in development from any Government who have any regard for their responsibility as the Government and any regard as to how this State should be equitably and properly developed.

The real acid test of Government policy and administration and the soundness or unsoundness of the Government's claim to have given special consideration to North Queensland is the movement of population revealed in the intercensal period between 1933 and 1947. In that period of 14 years, the population of the State increased by 158,735. To that increase the city of Brisbane contributed 102,424; the eleven other cities 41,245, and towns 18,725. That makes a total for the cities and towns of 162,394, or 3,659 more than the total increase for the State. These are staggering figures and the deplorable fact emerges that the areas of the State outside the cities and towns showed a loss of 3,659 people in that period of 14 years. That is the answer as to the success or failure of Government policy and administration; instead of bringing about the development of our State in the parts that should be developed, they have depopulated strategic and important sectors of our State. Are hon. members opposite proud of that record? Are they happy about the condition

of affairs that exists today? They cannot be, if they are real Queenslanders and have any regard for the future of Queensland.

Let us analyse exactly what has happened in those vital areas of the State in the West and Far North, where tragic losses of population are shown. They lost population to an extent equal to the whole of their natural increase, which should have averaged 14 per cent., plus an additional number. For example, the Roma division lost an additional 1,101; the Far West 569; the York Peninsula 1,031; and the North-West 1,550. It is tragic when we think that to the north of us we have those millions of Asiatics who are casting covetous eyes on our empty lands and who would welcome an opportunity to come here and who, if we do not do something about it, will come here whether we like it or not. Despite this, hon. members on the Government side sit back complacently and do nothing, either administratively or by legislation, to stop this drift from those strategic parts of the State; they have allowed those parts to become more and more depopulated, thus aggravating the position, so that the Asiatic peoples who are crowded for room will be looking to these empty spaces of ours, spaces that we should be filling but which, as a result of lack of perspective in the Government's view of the real problems that face this State, are becoming denuded of population.

A still more astounding fact that emerges from an examination of the figures is that if we leave out the cities and towns not one division in the State showed an increase in population anything like what should have been the natural increase by excess of births over deaths. In the rich agricultural area of the Darling Downs, leaving out the cities of Toowoomba and Warwick and the towns of Dalby and Goondiwindi, there has been an increase of only 771 people in the 14 years to which I have referred. In the Rockhampton division, leaving out Rockhampton and Gladstone, there was an increase of only 528. In the Townsville division, leaving out Townsville, Charters Towers and Bowen, there was a decline of 2,066. In the Cairns division, leaving out the city of Cairns, there was a decline of 3,626. When we place those figures alongside the rich potentialities of the various areas, those in the North in particular, they become alarming; indeed, they are worse, they are tragic.

That in itself is adequate answer to the Premier's recent criticism of the North Queensland Development League when he said he found no real cause for dissatisfaction in the North and the representations made by the League to him were feeble. That is entirely contrary to my own experience in the North and the experience of the parliamentary colleagues who accompanied me on a tour of North Queensland recently. Without uttering one more word, I can say that those figures alone are sufficient to condemn the Government for all time for their inactivity in connection with the development of this State, in particular those parts of it that are crying out for development and urgently need to be developed.

However, in addition to the fact that hon. members opposite stand for socialisation and centralisation we can see that there is another significant fact that has led them to follow this policy and has brought about such mal-development in the State. Of the 35 hon. members sitting opposite supporting the Government's policy 21 represent city electorates. Can you wonder, Mr. Acting Speaker, at the cities of this State getting such a wonderful deal in regard to governmental activities and development at the expense of the rest of the State? Those hon. members represent the cities and their outlook has become bounded by the areas they represent, and they cannot see that this great State, vast and boundless in area and potentialities, requires consideration as a whole and not the consideration of cities and towns as has been the policy of the Government up to the present.

Referring once more to the Speech delivered by His Excellency last year, we find that it was stated—

“My Advisers are prepared to recommend the establishment of additional States in Queensland when, as a result of their developmental policy, the new States will have a reasonable degree of financial and economic stability.”

In those words you can see that the Government have no intention whatever of creating new States in those parts that desire them. They raise the boggy that such States could not finance themselves if they were established. I am convinced that the Government have no intention whatever of departing from their hide-bound policy of socialism and centralisation. The people in the far-flung parts of this State cannot hope for, nor will they get, consideration from hon. members opposite because it would be contrary to their policy and contrary to their administrative actions up to the present.

Mr. Power: They cannot forget the days of the Moore Government.

Mr. NICKLIN: The Minister has an obsession with regard to the Moore Government and I ask him to accept the challenge I threw out in regard to that Government's actions in the North.

Mr. Power: I will accept any challenge you like to throw out to me.

Mr. NICKLIN: Possibly if he accepted that challenge he might find himself in a spot of difficulty.

I repeat that many of the difficulties we find in the northern and western parts of the State are mainly attributable to the fact that the people are remote from the seat of government and their only hope for a rapid change for the better is through the creation of a separate northern State. That statement applies with equal force to the Northern Territory and the northern part of Western Australia. The rapid development of those vital parts can be brought about only by giving them their own seats of government. It is only by this method that the people in the north of Queensland could get action.

Hon. members opposite run away from their responsibilities for the proper development of this State. They refused to meet the people of the North when they called a meeting to consider the disabilities from which the North is suffering.

Let us see what happened when Queensland first became a Colony, when it was separated from New South Wales in 1859. The population of Queensland then was 25,000 and let us not forget, too, that we started off with only 7½d. in the Treasury. It has been said that some nefarious person stole the 7½d. out of the Treasury and so we started off from scratch. Look at the development that has taken place since then. It clearly shows that if we create new States in Queensland and give them a share of the assets comprised within the State and ask them to accept their share of the public debt, there is no doubt that they will be able to finance themselves and bring about the additional development so urgently required in those parts of Queensland.

In looking through the Speech we find pages and pages given over to spectacular schemes visualised by the Government, schemes that will cost many millions of pounds and would even under normal conditions take half a century to complete. The Government are simply blue-printing, star-gazing and planning, completely overlooking matters that should be receiving their urgent attention. They toss to one side the small, urgently needed and quickly constructed production schemes in favour of a grandiose scheme like the Burdekin dam. The Burdekin dam cannot be completed at the moment because we have not the man-power and material to do it. The Government are concentrating on these huge schemes, which cannot be of benefit to Queensland for some time to come, instead of concentrating on things that can be constructed quickly and give immediate benefit to the State.

It is stated in the Speech that the Burdekin dam proposal has the backing and financial support of the Federal Government, but let me refer to a question that Mr. Chifley answered in the Federal Parliament on 26 May last when he said in respect of the Burdekin scheme, “When detailed plans of the Burdekin scheme were available they would be examined by a Works Department official, a Treasury official, and probably another Government officer to determine whether arrangements could be made for the Commonwealth to co-operate with the Queensland Government. These plans were not available because of a shortage of technicians.” What is the position in regard to this project? Are we being backed by the Federal Government or are we not? On the one hand we have the Premier's statement, made in Parliament this year, in the Speech, that it is being backed by the Federal Government; and on the other hand the statement by the Prime Minister that he knows nothing about it. The Prime Minister simply says that when the plans are presented to him he will give the matter consideration. This House is entitled to know and the people of Queensland are entitled to know exactly what is the

position in regard to this project—is it being backed by the Federal Government or is it not? When we know that the Federal Government are putting such huge sums of money into the Snowy River scheme to implement an alleged defence project we in Queensland are entitled to know and the Premier is entitled to get from the Prime Minister something more than apparently he has got up to the present time in regard to the attitude of the Federal Government towards the Burdekin dam proposal.

(Time expired.)

Mr. J. R. TAYLOR (Maranoa) (12 noon): I want first of all to join with hon. members who have already spoken on this motion in complimenting the Governor on the Speech he delivered in this Chamber yesterday. I desire also to compliment my two colleagues, the hon. members for Kennedy and Fitzroy, on the excellent speeches they delivered in moving and seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. The case put forward by both hon. members was a very sound one. I am sure too that the electors in their respective electorates will feel both pleased and proud of the speeches they delivered.

Before proceeding further, I want to repeat what I believe is the wish held by every hon. member that we shall all be pleased when the Speaker, Mr. Brassington, is restored to his usual health and returns to us again.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. J. R. TAYLOR: We have heard this morning a good deal of criticism from the Leader of the Opposition of the Government's administration of the northern part of the State. If there is any charge to be laid against this Government, it is the charge of being too modest—(Opposition laughter)—of not telling the people what they are doing. I have lived and worked in the northern part of Queensland and I have mixed very freely with the people there. On no occasion have I heard any growls or complaints about their treatment by the Government. In fact, the people there are very happy. I can assure hon. members opposite that those people are also very happy with the Labour Government and the treatment they are getting from them. (Opposition laughter.) It is only recently that I was fortunate to be a member of the party that accompanied the Secretary for Public Lands on a tour. I was agreeably surprised on hearing him deliver addresses to learn of the work that is being done in the North and the work that the Government envisage doing there. The North is being treated as justly as any other part of the State. I am sure that the people realise that is so.

Mr. Crowley: They do that.

Mr. J. R. TAYLOR: I am sure that when the figures go up at the next election they will prove that the people are satisfied.

As I said, during this tour with the Secretary for Public Lands I was agreeably surprised with the work that the Government

were doing. I have said on numerous occasions in this Chamber that I believe the only salvation for the inland areas is water conservation and irrigation.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. J. R. TAYLOR: After listening to the programme of such works outlined by the Secretary for Public Lands I am satisfied that this Government have become conscious of the fact, and that the irrigation projects they have in hand will prove my contention to be correct.

When I came into this Chamber about five years ago we had no water supply at Dirranbandi. After some agitation I was able to get the department that controls irrigation to become interested in building a weir on the river at that town. I do not know whether there are many members here who are familiar with Dirranbandi, but I can assure them that since that weir was constructed Dirranbandi has gone ahead by leaps and bounds. I will admit that previously it was not the best place in Queensland in which to live, I am not going to say it is yet the best place, but I do say that the irrigation system that was put in by the Government at a small cost to the ratepayers has resulted in great improvement and today it is a flourishing little town, whose inhabitants are happy and contented. They have a good water supply not only for their domestic needs but also for their gardens and through the enterprise of a few gentlemen down there they have electric lighting. Their experience is further evidence that a water supply is essential to any town.

I know the department has in mind a plan for building weirs right up that river. Today a number of men are employed in St. George building a weir over the Balonne River, which will cost in the vicinity of £100,000. The water reticulation for the town is almost ready for use and it is only a matter of a few weeks before the Premier or one of the Ministers will be invited to St. George to turn on the water supply. The weir, being a much bigger job, cannot be completed in time for the turning on of the water; however, provision will be made so that water will be pumped out of the river to give the people a supply before the weir is completed.

Travelling further up the river, we come to Surat, which has been dependent upon tanks for its water supply since the first settlement took place there. The Government have made it possible for the local council to begin the construction of a weir to provide a permanent supply that will be a great advantage to that town. The people in that area are happy about the efforts that have been made.

Coming further up the river, I know the Government have officers out surveying different sites for weirs.

The reason why I mention these things is that if they are going on in my electorate they must be going on in others, although perhaps not to such a great extent, because

the rivers there may not lend themselves to weiring and water conservation as readily as they do in this part of the State. But I know that in other parts of the State the department is interested in weiring and supplying water to the people and, if that is going on in my electorate, it is going on in others and in the North. Consequently I not only feel that the people are satisfied; I know they are.

From time to time we hear that the Labour Party does this and that; that it gets its finance here and there; that it is supported by the Communists and this one and that one. I would tell this House that only recently I was on a property and the owner told me—and I do not think the gentleman who told me what I am about to tell the House would stoop to tell a lie; he not only told me but he told some of my colleagues—that he was finished with the Country Party and the Opposition and would join the Labour Party. He pulled down off the wall, although I did not read it, what he told us was his share, of “paying in” to the funds of the Liberal Party or the Country Party.

Mr. Gair: Two shillings a bale.

Mr. J. R. TAYLOR: £2 a bale. This gentleman said, “I shear 1,000 bales of wool and I should be “up” for £2,000.” I have every reason to believe this to be correct. If what he told me is not correct it is not I who am telling the falsehood. I assure every hon. member opposite that the Labour Party does not get any finance like that.

From time to time we hear that the Government are not doing this and that but, as I have said, I think the Government are too modest. For instance, I think the State Housing Commission is doing an excellent job. We started a movement in Roma to build houses. We had the Minister come out and there we put our proposal to him. He very quickly told us that if we could get a suitable site the commission would build the houses for the people. We were able to get a piece of land and a contract has been signed. The builder is almost ready to begin; he has already ordered a quantity of his material. Wherever one travels one sees evidence of the work of the commission in building houses for the people.

Mr. Pie: How many are you building?

Mr. J. R. TAYLOR: We are building six to begin with, and others will be erected later.

We find similar evidence at Injune, which I admit is not a very big place but is very important to Queensland because the best steaming coal in Australia comes from there. The only difficulty is that the seams are not big enough. If they were big seams that could be worked by the open-cut method, Injune would be one of the most important places in this State. It cannot be denied that it is the best steaming coal in Australia and there is an immense area of coal there and I know that the Mines Department has it in mind to make a survey of the whole area at an early date.

One hon. member asked by way of interjection how many houses they were building. I have said already that we are building six in Roma now, with more to follow. When I mentioned to the Minister that we should like some houses built at Injune, he immediately had his officers communicate with the authorities at Roma and has now promised to build four houses at Injune. I know that the commission is interested in building houses in St. George and Mitchell also. All these things prove that the Government take the broad view, that they do not consider only the metropolitan area but give consideration to the inland also.

It is only recently that I mentioned to the department that the people of Injune were depending on tanks and an unsatisfactory bore for their water. Within three days an engineer was out there investigating the possibilities of a weir and of increasing the flow from the bore. If the Government do that in one part of the State it is only reasonable to assume that they do it in others and I can assure every hon. member in the Chamber that the people out there are quite happy with the Labour Government, as are the big majority in Queensland.

Another development out there which is important not only to that part but to the whole of Queensland is the search for oil. We know that in the past many attempts have been made to discover oil, but nothing of the magnitude of the present endeavour has been undertaken. The Shell Oil Co. has made a thorough investigation of the area, as has another private company backed by the Federal Government. I have kept in close touch with the engineers, scientists and geologists who have been working in Roma over the past 18 months.

I was amazed at the data these people have collected. The scientists and geologists informed me only recently that the prospects of finding oil in the Roma district were favourable and better today than at any other period in their investigation. They are going into the question scientifically with the use of the latest equipment and the data collected, and I feel sure that within a few months there will be a development in Roma in regard to the finding of oil that probably may startle this State:

I do not feel that my electorate is getting everything and other electorates are getting nothing. To put it plainly, I am “doing all right” and I think every other hon. member is doing likewise. I cannot see any reason for squealing on the part of anybody. Recently £50,000 or £60,000 was granted by the Government for the building of nurses’ quarters out that way. I do not stand still in one place; I have my ear to the ground all the time and I think that every electorate is getting a fair “crack of the whip.” On my trips about the country I do not hear of complaints; I feel, therefore, that everything is going along all right.

There is one department of State about which I think insufficient mention is made and I refer to the Brisbane Dental Clinic.

When I first entered this Assembly I had an opportunity of going through the clinic. I do not suppose I was expected to know where it was until I was told. I was amazed at the work being done there and since that time I have been through the institution quite frequently. If for no other reason, the people of Queensland should return the present Government to office for their work in connection with that dental clinic. It is a wonderful institution. Only last Monday I was up there discussing with those in authority some matters connected with their work, and I believe that the service given to the people by this institution is something of which the Government can be justly proud. No case is too difficult or too small for that institution to deal with; nobody is turned away. I admit that it is of more help to those not in a position to pay than those in a position to pay. The clinic will take up any case presented to it and if it does not do the actual work it will report on it, and I feel that the Government can be justly proud of the work being done in this direction.

One of the most important duties of the Government is to care for the sick and whether one sits in this Chamber or listens to debates in other places one never hears of complaints against the hospital system of Queensland. Its high standard is well known throughout the world, and other countries have copied it. They have even sent experts to Queensland to inquire into our system. I know that the Government have something in mind in regard to Dalby and I have no fear that the Dalby hospital will not be brought up to the high standard required by the Government.

Reference was made to the State Government Insurance Office yesterday. It has done a wonderful job and whether our opponents like it or not, it can be justly said that if it had not been for the S.G.I.O. the premiums charged by private insurance offices would not be as low as they are today. The Government have done a good job in bringing about a reduction in premiums alone. One could refer in similar terms to the splendid work of all the other Government departments. No justifiable criticism can be levelled against any one of them. We know that times are difficult and that today it is not as easy to do things as it was before the war but good times will return and this State will come into its own.

Mention was made in the Governor's Speech of the industries that it was intended to start in this State and we have it from the Premier that as a result of his visit overseas people in other countries have become interested in Queensland and its possibilities. As time goes on and material and man-power become more plentiful, Queensland will cease to be the Cinderella State that it has been in the past and will rank as No. 1 State in Australia. It is only a matter of getting the material. Industrial hold-ups have to some extent been responsible for some of the shortages but I will never agree that this is the crux of the whole matter.

Mr. Russell: Who is responsible for the industrial hold-ups?

Mr. J. R. TAYLOR: The Tory Party. Seeing that the hon. member has asked me for my opinion, I can honestly and sincerely say I believe that the party behind them is financed by the Liberal Party and his party. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. Crowley: You are not far wrong there.

Mr. J. R. TAYLOR: I believe it gets its finance from those sources.

Mr. Pie: You are not serious?

Mr. J. R. TAYLOR: Hon. members opposite have asked for it.

There is one thing that the Opposition do not recognise that was referred to by the Governor in his Speech, and that is the increase in the number of marriages. The number has increased by nearly 300 per cent. since the war. That alone supplies one of the reasons for the shortage of materials. The people producing materials we need are working at top pressure. The Secretary for Public Works, Housing and Local Government went South and personally interviewed the manufacturers of housing materials, and he was told by them that they were producing more today than before the war, but the demand today was greater.

This Government will come out on top in the finish. I can assure hon. members that everything is all right, that the people are quite happy with the Labour Government, and that we shall all be here again next year. The people are quite satisfied, despite what we have heard from the Leader of the Opposition. I can certainly speak for my own electorate. We are short of some things but in the final analysis we shall get them and when we do we shall be all right.

Mr. KERR (Oxley) (12.33 p.m.): I want to add to that of other hon. members my small meed of appreciation of the great work that the Governor is doing in the interests of the people and the nation as a whole. He has shown in every way, as we witness from day to day, his great versatility. I was particularly struck with one statement in his Speech yesterday. He said, *inter alia*—and this is the most outstanding statement he made, because, as the Leader of the Opposition stated, a great deal of the contents of his Speech was initiated by his advisers and is merely propaganda—

“In this land of ours, a land so richly endowed and able to provide an ample living for a population much greater than we have now, it is rather amazing and certainly regrettable to learn that many hundreds of thousands can be thrown out of work, industry paralysed, and the whole nation brought to a condition bordering on chaos when the necessary laws and procedure exist for the settlement of all industrial disputes.”

He goes on to say that he hopes saner counsels will prevail in the future. How are saner counsels going to prevail in the future if Governments continue their complacency and their inactivity; if Governments, particularly in the Federal sphere, allow this lawlessness to continue? It can be said that industrial, monetary and political turbulence is rampant in this country today. We witness the lawlessness of unionism and disregard and contempt for the law. They have reached a point where they must be dealt with drastically. It is the duty of every member of every Government in the Commonwealth to curb the lawlessness that is going on. If we do not, where shall we end? Are we prepared to accept Communism? That is what faces the people. We must do a lot more than what is being done today. We find the miners' leaders are in their proper places for the contempt that they have shown to the court, but they have not yet been brought to book for breaking the industrial laws. The Federal and State Governments have done nothing about it. It is a remarkable thing that the very people who defy our laws are the people who are responsible for the Government in the Federal and this State sphere. They are the people who put the Federal Government and this State Government into power—the people who are responsible for the breaking of our laws.

There was a time when I believed that on some occasions Labour could govern labour much better than other parties. I am satisfied that today I have to change my opinion completely. I now believe that Labour cannot govern its own people. We have seen proof of that during the last three or four years. These law-breakers and disruptionists of the peace know no loyalty other than to their own egotism and arrogance. Emotionalism prevails over common sense, and decency and intelligence for the time being are relegated to the rear. Wise counsels are ignored entirely and are scoffed at. We have seen our own leaders approach these union leaders asking them to show common sense and to play the game. The result only bears out what I say—that common sense has gone by the board. They took no notice of their political leaders and they are concerned only with their own industrial union leaders.

In the main, who are the leaders of these major unions? Mostly Communists. There can be no denial of that statement. They have got there by their own efforts. Surely some measure should be brought about whereby that state of affairs can be brought to an end? Our party has suggested many ways. The secret ballot is one, the correct way. The time will come when the Labour Party of Australia will bring it about. It is the only way to correct this industrial lawlessness and disruption that is taking place and will continue to take place so long as this attitude towards the industrial affairs and control of industrialism continues.

We find, and there is no doubt about this, that those on the lowest rung of the ladder—and I do not say this in a snobbish way in any respect—those on the lowest rung

of the social set-up, those in the industrial field today, who I might term the circus, have control of the ring. It is just a case of the exaltation of the third division. That is what it amounts to and that is something we should not tolerate.

In our community we have many knowledgeable, reasonable and capable men who are competent both intellectually and in the ways of management of industry and commerce—

Mr. Power: They are all on this side of the Chamber.

Mr. KERR: I could scarcely say that hon. members opposite are highlights in industry and commerce. It is surprising how few of these well-informed people come into public life in Australia today.

Mr. Bruce: The people are awake to them.

Mr. KERR: I can tell the hon gentleman that the people are awake to the Labour Governments in Australia today. Something has happened in this last strike that has never happened before. The people have been put to such great physical discomfort that they will not forget it. This discomfort and the financial loss that has been incurred by thousands of families in Australia have been allowed to occur because of the non-intervention of the Governments who rule Australia. They have allowed hundreds of thousands to go through these physical sufferings and financial losses and nothing is being done about it.

Mr. Power: What have the Victorian Government done about it?

Mr. KERR: They are doing something about it. It is obvious that public opinion in all matters of great import—and the strike is one of these—is well in advance of the policies and actions of present-day Labour Governments; I should say, Labour-Socialist Governments, as that is what they amount to. The day of Labour Governments has gone. (Government interjections.) It is a Socialistic regime that is operating in Australia today but where have they got the people of Australia? We find them going down gradually every year and this decline cannot be cured by Socialism. Socialism is something absolutely beyond the human individual. No political party can hope to bring about salvation or the solution of industrial trouble through the medium of Socialism. Australian Governments today lag well behind public opinion. The gap between constructive public opinion and Governments widens day by day. We find Governments acting after certain things have taken place and after many months have elapsed, because they had been hoping that things would right themselves, that the people would work out their own salvation. An instance is with us now. But there has been enough of that sort of thing. Governments should foresee these results and act accordingly.

Mr. Gair: In Victoria you have a Liberal Government.

Mr. KERR: They have been in power for only a few weeks.

Mr. Gair: Months.

Mr. KERR: The Government here have been in power for 30 years. Governments today are controlled by the passions of a highly organised, highly efficient, self-seeking, lawless minority. Imagine any man who calls himself a man, or any Government allowing minorities to call the tune! The Government admit by their own words that these men are in the minority. Are the great number of unionists Commos? Are they led by the Communists.

Mr. Power: No.

Mr. KERR: Yes. Mr. Acting Speaker, you will have noticed the silence of the Secretary for Public Works when I asked whether they were led by the Communists. He was as silent as the grave. He goes out to a tinpot show where there are two or three Communists and he browbeats them. Then he goes to the Domain, but the Governments are controlled by the passions of the highly-organised minority who have brought about a deadlock in industry. I admit the public must accept a certain amount of the guilt, but in the main the Labour Socialist Governments are responsible for the greater part of the blame. Down through the years they have placed many things on the sideboard for these people—and I give them full marks for that because I should have done it myself—but it must be appreciated that we can over-indulge people. I believe that the rank and file of Labour have been over-indulged in Australia and we see the repercussions in their activities today. They have become indolent in their own union affairs. They have allowed Communists to take control of their unions and call the tune, and they are too dilatory to take action against it, with the result that they are suffering great physical hardship and financial loss. That is one of the reasons why chaos prevails in industry today.

Then the existing electoral system has something to do with the trouble. The Government have control of the electoral laws and it is the hardest thing in the world to defeat them. The effect of all this is an absolute travesty of democracy. Could we have any better ground for social, political and economic revolution than we have today? This ground has been well ploughed for the Communist sower. It has been ploughed thoroughly by Labour socialistic ideas for the Communists to come in and sow the seed. It cannot be denied that the Communist calls the tune and gets his will today. Today he is getting his will. Let hon. members opposite deny that if they can. They should do something about it, because we have to curb this kind of thing. It cannot go on forever.

Mr. Evans: You should find out who the Commos are.

Mr. KERR: You can find out who the Commos are—

Mr. Ingram interjected.

Mr. KERR: You get inane interjections from back-benchers. If the hon. member is not a Commo he is a fellow traveller. He is not prepared to say it on the public platform. The large body of our citizens cannot and will not see the doctrine being unfolded before their very eyes. The Minister opposite to me knows that I am putting up a very good case. The Secretary for Public Works, Housing, and Local Government knows it full well. There can be no doubting Thomases in the community to-day when we see before our eyes the doctrines of Marx, Lenin, and Engels being expounded and implemented. Now the Premier comes in.

Mr. Hanlon: I never said a word.

Mr. KERR: His face speaks for him. As I said, Governments know full well what powerful miners' leaders can do and what they have done and what they are doing and what they will continue to do. If they do not do it in one major union it is done in another. The Premier sits with a smile on his face; with a supercilious smile he sits there, but he does not say, "I will not do anything about it." He and his party behind him are allowing this thing to go on. The Government, who are closely associated with industrial unionism, must have known that these things were going to happen.

We had an experience in the State and in this connection I must say that the Premier handled the matter very well. I hand that bouquet to him, because in certain respects he handled it well. What is he doing about the state of affairs existing today? With this great miners' union he can do nothing. I remember when the Bill relating to Blair Athol went through this House, although we on this side questioned some things, in the main we acquiesced in the Bill. I believe that the hon. member for Windsor argued that the field should be worked by the A.W.U. Now here comes the hon. member for Bremer, who is sitting alongside his mining colleague, the hon. member for Maryborough. When the hon. member for Windsor urged that open-cut mines should be worked by the A.W.U., those hon. members were up in arms.

Mr. Power: It is a matter for the A.W.U.

Mr. KERR: Nothing of the kind. The Blair Athol field is being worked under the Miners' Federation and the Minister knows it. If the suggestion of the hon. member for Windsor had been listened to, the Blair Athol and Callide fields would never have been idle.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Has the hon. member for Oxley the permission of the House to continue his speech to-morrow?

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

The House adjourned at 12.56 p.m.