

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 4 AUGUST 1949**

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**THURSDAY, 4 AUGUST, 1949.**

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

**QUESTIONS.**

**TULLY HYDRO-ELECTRIC SCHEME.**

**Mr. MAHER** (West Moreton) asked the Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation—

“1. Has any construction work yet been commenced in connection with the Tully Falls scheme?”

“2. What irrigation or hydro-electric schemes have reached the constructional stage, indicating the locality, the estimated total cost, the expenditure to date, and the main objects of each scheme, respectively?”

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

“1. This question together with that portion of part 2 relating to hydro-electric schemes should be addressed to the hon. the Minister for Mines and Immigration.

“2. The following works of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission for irrigation purposes, are under construction at the present time. (a) Weir on Walsh River near Dimbulah—estimated total cost, £44,500; expenditure to 30 June, 1949, £38,335. Object: To provide a storage of 800 acre feet for irrigation of adjoining lands, principally in connection with tobacco growing. This storage is the commencement of water conservation works on the Walsh River for irrigation purposes, and is the beginning of a scheme to build dams on the Walsh River and the Barron River to provide a total storage of 140,000 acre feet, with a Barron-Walsh diversion channel, irrigation channels and further weirs. It is estimated that such a scheme would permit the development of 32,000 acres under irrigation and increase the production of the Mareeba-Dimbulah area by £1,500,000 per annum. At the present time investigations of the foundations of the proposed dam site on the Walsh River, near Nullinga, by diamond drilling, are in progress. Topographic surveys are being made in the Dimbulah area from the proposed dam site to below Dimbulah and further weir sites are being surveyed. Arrangements have been made for carrying out an aerial survey of the area that might be submerged by the Nullinga Dam. (b) Weir on Tinaroo Creek near Mareeba—estimated total cost, £15,500; expenditure to 30 June, 1949, £4,884. Object: To provide a storage of 220 acre feet for irrigation, most of which will be utilised by passing downstream to lands below the weir. (c) Irrigation Scheme at Clare—estimated cost, £250,000; expenditure to 30 June, 1949, £37,304. This is the beginning of the Burdekin Irrigation Project. The Clare portion, which is designed for construction in three stages, provides for an ultimate development under irrigation of 88 farms, with a total area of 6,920 acres. At present the first of these stages

—to provide farms for 10 soldier settlers—is approaching completion. Water will be pumped from the Burdekin River and supplied by means of channels and pipelines to the farms. The main crop will be tobacco. The main Burdekin River Project of which the Clare scheme is a part, provides for the construction of a dam to a height of 138 feet above the general level of the river bed for the provision of a useful storage of 3,600,000 acre feet. Preliminary designs for a mass concrete dam have been prepared. Preliminary contour surveys for the Burdekin Project have been carried out for 100,000 acres of the 500,000 acres of potentially irrigable lands estimated to be available. Diamond drilling by the Mines Department is in hand at the main storage dam site at the Burdekin Falls. Surveys have been completed of the ponded area, and aerial surveys of some 3,000,000 acres of the ponded area and potential irrigable lands have been made.

(d) Weir on Burnett River at Mundubbera—estimated total cost, £114,000; expenditure to 30 June, 1949, £59,444. This is the first of a series of works on the Burnett River, and will provide a storage of 4,000 acre feet for irrigation purposes. (e) Weirs on Three Moon and Monal Creeks, near Monto—estimated total cost, £25,500; expenditure to 30 June, 1949, £9,019. Object: To provide storages of 405 acre feet for irrigation purposes mainly in connection with fodder crops. (f) Weir on Balonne River at St. George—estimated total cost—weir, £62,000; irrigation scheme, £42,500; expenditure to 30 June, 1949, £37,129. Object: To provide a storage of 3,900 acre feet. The water will be used to irrigate 1,200 acres, and provide a water supply for the town of St. George. (g) Weir on McIntyre Brook near Whetstone—estimated total cost, £20,000; expenditure to 30 June, 1949, £12,497. Object: To provide a storage of 410 acre feet for irrigation of adjoining lands mainly in connection with tobacco and fodder crops. (h) Weir on Dumaresq River near Bonshaw—estimated total cost, £31,500; expenditure to 30 June, 1949, £3,549. Object: To provide a storage of 930 acre feet, for irrigation purposes, fodder crops, tobacco, and fruit. This is the beginning of works provided for under the Queensland-New South Wales Border Rivers agreement which provides for a major storage dam at Mingoola with 11 other weirs. (i) Weir on Barker Creek near Nanango—estimated total cost, £10,000. Construction has just been commenced. Object: To provide a storage of 125 acre feet for irrigation purposes for fodder crops. In addition to the works enumerated above, the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission is proceeding with investigation of the water resources of the State with a view to the eventual construction of further water conservation works, and the Bureau of Investigation is providing assistance in relation to soil surveys of the potential irrigable lands. Works scheduled for the current year's works programme provide for the construction of 13 weirs, the development of

areas in the vicinity of existing weirs, together with domestic and stock watering schemes, and the establishment of watering facilities on stock routes. Information regarding irrigation schemes constructed during previous years is given in the Annual Report of the Commissioner for Irrigation and Water Supply for 1947-48."

#### NORTHERN TIMBER RESERVES.

**Mr. MACDONALD** (Stanley) asked the Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation—

"What is the total area of timber reserves north of Townsville?"

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

"Timber reserves, 1,827,733 acres; State forests, 352,806 acres; total, 2,180,539 acres. In addition, there are in this region sixty-one National parks with an aggregate area of 224,696 acres."

#### QUEENSLAND-BRITISH FOOD CORPORATION.

**Mr. McINTYRE** (Cunningham) asked the Premier—

"1. What holdings have been acquired for the purposes of the Queensland-British Food Corporation, showing the area of each holding, the price paid respectively, and the total acreage acquired to date?"

"2. What are the particulars of the following machinery and materials obtained to date for the purposes of the operations of the Corporation scheme, viz.:—(a) tractors, (b) harvesters, (c) combines, (d) other machines, (e) wire and wire netting, and (f) galvanised iron?"

"3. How many bushels of sorghum have been harvested by the Corporation at Peak Downs and what is its estimated net value?"

"4. What proportion of the grain has been classed as export quality?"

"5. What is the expenditure to date chargeable against grain production, excluding outlay on capital assets?"

"6. How many bullocks have been (a) purchased and (b) sold to date, and (c) how many are still remaining in possession of the Corporation?"

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca—Premier) replied—

"1. On 10 March, 1949, in answer to a question asked by the Leader of the Opposition, details of properties acquired by the Queensland-British Food Corporation at that date were given to this House. Since 10 March, 1949, the following properties have been acquired by the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works under the provisions of the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act on behalf of the Queensland-British Food Corporation:—Marmadilla, 25,000 acres at 16s. per acre; Retro, 71,764 acres at 18s. 3d. per acre; an area near Bajool, 678 acres at a total price of £6,025 10s. All these prices include improvements and plant. In addition to the above, negotiations have been completed for the acquisition of Orion Downs, 69,809 acres at 15s. 10d. per acre.

"2. (a) Tractors—25 Massey Harris 55K tractors, 4 Massey Harris 44K tractors, 2 Model LA Case tractors, 33 Fordson Major Diesels tractors, 4 Caterpillar D.6 tractors, 1 Ferguson tractor. (b) Harvesters—29 No. 4 Sunshine headers, 1 Shearer header. (c) Combines—43 24-row Suintyne combines, H. V. McKay-Massey Harris; 4 Shearer 24-row combines; 15 Horwood Bagshaw 24-row combines. (d)

Other machines (ploughs, harrows, &c.)—12 14-disc Sandercut ploughs, 12 14-disc Shearer ploughs, 1 14-disc Horwood-Bagshaw plough, 12 18-disc Horwood-Bagshaw ploughs, 25 18-disc Shearer ploughs, 24 20-section H. V. McKay-Massey Harris harrows, 1 15-section H. V. McKay-Massey Harris harrow, 20 Suntrail harrows—H. V. McKay-Massey Harris, 17 15-section Shearer harrows, 1 H. V. McKay-Massey Harris mower, 1 H. V. McKay-Massey Harris binder. (e) Wire and wire netting—262 x 5-chain coils pig fencing, 232 x ¼-mile coils barb wire. (f) Galvanised iron—64 tons 26-gauge galvanised roofing iron, 10 tons 24-gauge tank-making iron, 2 tons 72 x 36 x 26-gauge plain iron, ½ ton 72 x 36 x 24-gauge plain iron, 1½ tons 72 x 36 x 22-gauge plain iron.

"3. Harvesting operations have not yet been completed, consequently the net value of the crop has not been estimated at this stage.

"4. Classification of the grain for export has not yet been completed.

"5. Financial results from the start of operations to 31 March, 1949 (the close of the Corporation's financial year) appear in the Corporation's first annual report which was tabled on Tuesday last for the information of hon. members.

"6. Total number of cattle (bullocks and cows) purchased to date, 13,179; number sold, 2,900; number still owned by Corporation, 10,279."

#### BORINGS FOR COAL, NEBO.

**Mr. EVANS** (Mirani) asked the Premier—

"In reference to the statement in the Governor's Opening Speech that the Electric Supply Corporation (Overseas) Limited has assigned its rights and responsibilities to the Central Queensland Coal Development Company Pty. Ltd., has this company been given a right by either order in council or permit to conduct boring for coal operations in the Nebo area? If not, are such operations being conducted by the Government?"

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca—Premier) replied—

"I understand that M. R. Hornibrook Pty. Ltd. have conducted certain boring operations in the Nebo area, on behalf of the Electric Supply Corporation (Overseas) Limited. No order in council was necessary to enable this to be done. The agreement between the Electric Supply Corporation (Overseas) Limited and the Queensland Government, which of course has since

been assigned to the Central Queensland Coal Development Co. Pty. Ltd., entitles the company to obtain coal within a radius of five miles, from the railway station at Blair Athol. The agreement also authorises the company to conduct boring operations in any other area or areas to enable the route of the proposed railway line to be determined so that, if possible, the railway will pass through other coal-bearing areas. There is nothing in the Act to prevent any other interested person prospecting in those other areas."

#### RENTS OF RAILWAY DEPARTMENT HOUSES.

**Mr. CHALK** (East Toowoomba) asked the Minister for Transport—

"Has there been an increase in the rental charged to railway employees living in Railway homes owned by the State Government?"

"2. If so, has a standard percentage been adopted in each case, or how have the increases been arrived at?"

"3. Has such increase been approved by the Commissioner of Prices?"

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

"1. Yes, in the principal centres of the State.

"2. A standard percentage has been adopted in all cases in which increases were made.

"3. No. It is not a matter which comes within the jurisdiction of the Prices Commissioner. The formula adopted gives a lower return on capital invested than would be the case if charges were levied by the Queensland Housing Commission, Private Trustee Companies, or the Public Curator."

#### STATE HOUSING COMMISSION HOMES.

**Mr. CHALK** (East Toowoomba) asked the Secretary for Public Works, Housing and Local Government—

"1. Relating to The Governor's Opening Speech, which indicates that the Queensland Housing Commission, during the twelve months ended 30 June, 1949, completed 1,015 houses, had 618 in various stages of construction, and had approved of an additional 670 to be commenced, will he inform this House of the number of Commission homes—(a) finished, (b) being built, (c) approval granted, for the twelve months, in the following areas:—(a) Metropolitan, (b) South-Eastern Queensland, (c) Toowoomba and South-West, (d) Central and Mackay, (e) Northern.

"2. If he is not prepared to furnish this information, will he inform the House from what source the State Government Statistician obtains similar information for inclusion in his statistical bulletins dealing with building approvals, and will he table that information?"

**Hon. W. POWER** (Baroona) replied—

"1. (a) 3,137; (b) 618; (c) (1) 1,091; (2) 56; (3) 55; (4) 61; (5) 220.

"2. See answer to No. 1."

#### SUGGESTED VISIT TO COALFIELDS BY PREMIER.

**Mr. PIE** (Windsor) asked the Premier—

"In view of the reported success of the back-to-work meetings held by the Federal Minister for Information on the New South Wales coalfields and in the Sydney Domain on Sunday last, and in view of the indication from the unions in this State that the Queensland miners' decision could be influenced, will be—(a) Consider visiting the Ipswich coalfields himself and addressing the miners; (b) lead a group comprising both sections of the House to address them; or (c) arrange for the honourable members for Bremer and Maryborough, who have had a long association with the miners, to use their influence to get them to return to work, by addressing them?"

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca) replied—

"I have no personal knowledge of any overwhelming rush by New South Wales miners to return to work as a result of the particular meetings to which the hon. gentleman refers. So far as this State is concerned, I do know my Government has done, and will continue to do, everything possible within its constitutional powers to encourage an early resumption of work on all Queensland coalfields. In support of this policy, it will be recalled I made a State-wide broadcast a little over a week ago. My message which was delivered as Leader of the Government in this State was, I have reason to believe, heard by a far greater mining audience than could possibly have been the case if I had merely delivered an address in one particular mining centre. Reference has been made to the hon. member for Bremer and the hon. member for Maryborough. Unlike the hon. member for Windsor the two hon. members referred to know something of the coal-mining industry and the men engaged in it, and, in this connection, I would remind the hon. member for Windsor that it has been truly said actions speak louder than words."

#### NATIONALITIES OF ASSISTED IMMIGRANTS.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Nanango) asked the Secretary for Mines and Immigration—

"Will he kindly supply the figures relating to assisted immigration to Queensland since 1946, showing the total number during that period and the number of British migrants and the number of each other nationality included therein?"

**Hon. W. M. MOORE** (Merthyr) replied—

"The State Department of Immigration has within its jurisdiction migration from the United Kingdom only. Matters relating to migration from other countries come within the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Department of Immigration. Transport of British migrants to Australia under the present free and assisted passages agreement did not commence until 1947 and from July, 1947, to date, the total number of British migrants to arrive in this State is 5,385."

## IPSWICH BY-ELECTION.

**Mr. WANSTALL** (Toowong), without notice, asked the Premier—

“Can the Government state why the date has not yet been fixed for the by-election for the electorate of Ipswich, which became vacant on 14 May, almost twelve weeks ago?”

“Is there any truth in the current rumours that the Government have delayed setting a date for the by-election until the coal strike is over?”

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca—Premier) replied—

“The date of the by-election will be fixed by the Government in due course and the hon. member for Toowong, like everybody else in Queensland, will be informed. I remind the hon. member that rumour is a lying jade.”

## INTERJECTIONS DURING ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

Members of the Opposition interjecting during the Minister's reply to Question No. 1.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Hon. members complain if a Minister refuses to answer a question. They have the privilege of asking questions and they should give Ministers the opportunity to answer them.

## PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under the Rural Fires Act of 1946 (14 April, 23 June (2)).

## SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.

## TEMPORARY CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY AND WAYS AND MEANS.

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

“That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would otherwise prevent the constitution of Committees of Supply and Ways and Means, the receiving of Resolutions on the same day as they shall have passed in those Committees, and the passing of an Appropriation Bill through all its stages in one day.”

Motion agreed to.

## SUPPLY.

VOTE ON ACCOUNT—£15,500,000.

## MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR.

The **ACTING SPEAKER** announced the receipt from His Excellency the Governor of a message recommending that the following provision be made on account of the services for the year ending 30 June, 1950:—

From the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland (exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account) the sum of £7,000,000;

From the Trust and Special Funds the sum of £5,500,000; and

From the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account the sum of £3,000,000.

## COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Hilton, Carnarvon, in the chair.)

**Hon. J. LARCOMBE** (Rockhampton—Treasurer) (11.24 a.m.): I move—

“That there be granted to His Majesty on account for the service of the year 1949-50, a further sum not exceeding £15,500,000 towards defraying the expenses of the various departments and services of the State.”

The financial needs of the State render a Bill of this kind necessary early in each Session of Parliament. Such Bill has historic significance and serves to remind hon. members of the many constitutional and even physical battles that were fought to obtain and retain the power of the purse. It also serves to remind hon. members of the power of Parliament—that hon. members have that power without intimidation.

One historian states that on a certain occasion an impecunious King of England said to the Speaker of Parliament, “Get that Bill through tonight or off comes your head.” I am not suggesting anything sinister about the chairman, the Leader of the Opposition or his party but I shall certainly be pleased if this Bill is passed by Parliament not later than by tonight. Fortunately the Government are not impecunious. We believe that the Chamber will provide the extra supply that is asked. An Appropriation Bill reminds us that we should not forget that we do owe a great debt of gratitude to those who established our parliamentary institutions and reformed them.

Last year an Appropriation Bill was passed in which provision was made to meet the financial commitments of the State for the first period of the present financial year. That supply is almost exhausted and it is now necessary to supplement it. Money is required for the payment of salaries and wages to public servants; funds are required for housing, for advances to Agricultural Bank borrowers, for public works, for loans and subsidies to local authorities and for various other purposes.

In the Bill I will present for consideration provision is made for the following appropriations—

Consolidated Revenue Fund ..	£7,000,000
Trust and Special Funds ..	£5,500,000
Loan Fund .. .. .	£3,000,000
Total .. .. .	£15,500,000

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask hon. members to tone down their conversations. There is far too much noise in the Chamber. Those who are interested in the very important remarks the Treasurer is making would like to hear them.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** It reminds one of two lines from Goethe, the German poet—

“Cursed devils, how they murder,  
All attempts at keeping order.”

Appropriation Bill No. 1 approved by Parliament last year made the following allocation—

Consolidated Revenue Fund ..	£7,000,000
Trust and Special Funds ..	£5,500,000
Loan Fund .. .. .	£3,000,000
	<hr/>
	£15,500,000

Hon. members will note that the amount asked for in this Appropriation Bill is exactly the same as voted in No. 1 Appropriation Bill last year. In due course the Estimates and Financial Statement will supply full details of the financial transactions for 1948-49 and also outline the policy for 1949-50. Therefore, I can usefully defer till later on in the session a full-dress debate on the financial problems and affairs of the State.

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) (11.29 a.m.): As the Treasurer so aptly stated, the privilege we enjoy this morning of passing an Appropriation Bill is one of the greatest privileges enjoyed by a British Parliament. It is a privilege that was gained after a hard fight and it is a privilege we should endeavour to retain at all costs. I can assure the Treasurer that his fears in regard to both his head and the passage of this Bill can safely be allayed, because the Standing Orders provide that this Bill must be passed by tonight. I can assure the Treasurer that so far as the Opposition are concerned he need have no fear that they will chop his head off just yet.

**Mr. Hilton**, the financial position of the State is such that it no doubt gives the Treasurer a little bit of satisfaction in at least one respect, that is, that he has again managed to finish the financial year with a small surplus. In this respect he has been more fortunate than some of the other State Governments of Australia. No doubt that result has been achieved very largely as a result of the policy followed during those years when the State had ample finances and was unable to spend them, of putting aside sums of money into the Post-War Reconstruction and Development Trust Fund. That has helped to bring about another balanced Budget.

However, we have to look at the financial trend generally as it affects the State and the Commonwealth because in these days the finances of both are bound up very closely one with the other. The present financial trend indicates that from now on the affairs of the State will have to be treated with a great deal more caution than during the inflationary war and post-war periods, when the Treasurer had large surplus revenues, much of which was placed in the fund I have mentioned. The Treasurer will remember that during that period his Government, as well as other Governments, were almost embarrassed by the surplus of income. They

had about the same conditions as a cattle-buyer operating on a rising market. Over the last year or two Treasurers have been going through a honeymoon period, but it seems to me that the indications are now that the financial holiday is nearing an end and our Treasurer will have more difficulty in making ends meet and carrying on the activities of this State and ending the financial year with a surplus.

As I have said, it is not possible to consider State finances without looking at Commonwealth finances also because under the present financial set-up the two are very closely bound together. Our total tax receipts for the year 1948-49 were £12,833,000, but £8,832,000 of this amount came from the Commonwealth as income tax reimbursements grant. We are dependent on the good will of the Commonwealth for about two-thirds of our tax revenue; we are very dependent on the amount of money we receive from the Commonwealth.

The Treasurer knows very well that the Commonwealth Treasurer is a hard man to get any additional money from, notwithstanding the fact that he has enjoyed revenues exceeding even his own expectations. In the last three years, as a result of the joint efforts of the State Treasurers, they have managed to get from the Commonwealth Government an annual increase of the moneys the Commonwealth gives to them. The total increase since 1945-46 has been £3,011,000, that is, over 51 per cent. for three years. It has been certainly required to cope with the heavy cost of the 40-hour week and the basic-wage increases which, with the standard hours of work, have been to a great extent responsible for the extra cost. When we look back we find that since the institution of the 40-hour week we have set in motion a spiral of rising costs and wages that is not only continuing but appears to be accelerating.

There does not seem to have been any check or review of the rising spiral of costs that is causing such a deal of worry to the Treasurer, no doubt because of the additional burden placed on State finances by increasing wages and salaries. In addition, there have been substantial increases in the cost of material and increased payments for overtime in departments where the work cannot be done within the standard hours. Considering these facts it is impossible to estimate with any degree of accuracy the total amount of the various costs imposed upon the State's finances because of the 40-hour week. We have asked questions in this Chamber in regard to the cost of the 40-hour week to the Railway Department and the Minister for Transport has answered the questions as far as he could but he intimated that it is impossible to state exactly what effect it has had. Similar replies have been given for other State departments. I should say the additional cost imposed on the State services as a result of the decrease in hours from 44 to 40 a week would run into millions of pounds from the time the 40-hour week was introduced. So far, the increased expenditure has been met from increases in railway fares and freights, increased transport fees, and the increase of over £3,000,000 in the amount of

the Commonwealth reimbursements. This latter sum was given to the State principally for the purpose of meeting the extra costs imposed by the 40-hour week.

Look back over the years and realise the position this country was in at the end of the war. We were virtually unscathed as a result of our engagement in the war as far as material damage was concerned. During that period we were able to go into top gear for war-time production and so the machinery was ready to go ahead with peace-time production to meet the urgent needs of the country. When peace came we had to try to make up the backlog of production that could not be put into train during the war years—thousands of houses required, the rehabilitation of our railway system that was run to earth in the war effort and so on. All these things had to be done. All our great primary-producing industries had years of backlog of repair and maintenance work. We were confronted with this position and in addition—and this in particular must not be forgotten—we had a world market waiting for our products. But at a time such as this, when the greatest need of the country was additional work we find that for political purposes hon. members opposite and members of their socialistic party throughout Australia, instead of facing up to realities and doing everything possible, instead of rolling up our sleeves and getting into hard work to rehabilitate Australia, gave Australia the biggest setback she ever had when they introduced, as hon. members did for electioneering purposes, the 40-hour week, which took 4 hours' work from the output of all workers in the community working under avaricious conditions and thus hampered the necessary increased production so much required.

**Mr. Foley:** Production figures are greater today than before.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** What nonsense! Hon. members opposite said when they introduced the 40-hour week that production would increase, but what do we find? Production on every hand has decreased. There are today greater shortages of manufactured material than ever before in the history of this country. Hon. members opposite know it, just as they know that the only reason why they introduced the 40-hour week was to help them with an election. The same action was taken by their colleagues in New South Wales and now the Treasurer, who has to care for the financial affairs of this State, is suffering greatly in his endeavour to make ends meet, because of the heavy increased costs imposed upon the departments administered by him. All other service departments, such as Transport, are also having their headaches and troubles as a result of the additional burden imposed upon them by this 40-hour week. That is the reason for the increasing spiral of prices and why nobody is able to check this increase, which has been brought about by the rot that was started when, for political reasons, the 40-hour week was introduced in our community.

Increases in prices and shortages of materials are growing worse, and it is now becoming a question of how long the States

will be able to continue while they have to depend, as they do now, on the bounty of the Commonwealth Government to cope with the additional charges imposed upon them. It is becoming a very serious question and must be giving great concern to the Treasurer who is a very serious-minded man and who must be well aware of the enormous burden he has to carry as a result of the 40-hour week.

In addition there has been an expansion in the note issue since 1939. We find that since 1939 the note issue of the Commonwealth Bank in the hands of the public has increased from £35,000,000 to approximately £185,000,000. The issue of paper money is one of the ways by which wars are financed. It is the easiest way of robbing the people of their incomes and reducing their savings. The expansion of currency has gone on since the war ended and has added greatly to this spiral of rising costs and this unfortunate growth of inflation in our midst. There has been a tremendous increase in the amount of currency in circulation.

The position would not be so bad if we had the volume of wealth production to back that increased currency. Unfortunately we have not. When we examine the production figures we find that instead of increasing they are going down. Hon. members on the Government side will possibly quote money figures in an endeavour to show that production is increasing, but money figures do not mean a thing; all that counts is the actual units of production. On the whole, our units of production are going down.

**Mr. Theodore:** Production of sugar has increased.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** Sugar has increased over the previous year, because we have had one of the best sugar seasons this State has ever experienced. Even so, sugar production still is not up to what it was a few years ago. Certainly it is better than it was the previous year, but it has yet to equal what the sugar industry of this State is capable of doing if it is relieved of the costs that are worrying it so seriously now and of the iniquitous burden it has to carry as a result of the introduction of the 40-hour week.

That is the position we have to face. Mr. Chifley has stated on several occasions that either production must increase or we shall be faced with disaster. That is only too true, but what is Mr. Chifley doing to bring about increased production? Unfortunately, nothing. Everything that his Government have done has made it harder to bring about increased production. I refer particularly to the exorbitant taxation that has been imposed. Mr. Chifley has done the best he could to kill the incentive to produce and as a result has brought about a serious decline in the real production in this community and at the same time he has started an orgy of extravagant governmental expenditure that has made no small contribution to the unfortunate financial position we find ourselves in.

The position financially is not a happy one and the States are in a very unenviable position. As I have said, one of the main reasons

that has brought about the present financial position has been the fact that Labour Governments have failed to face up to the realities of the position and have thought only of their own political skins and not of the things that really matter. There was the appalling political experiment in regard to the introduction of the 40-hour week at a time when it had a most serious effect on this community and made it very difficult financially for this State and its Treasurer.

**Mr. Foley:** Is not the 40-hour week on your platform?

**Mr. NICKLIN:** By legislation, no. Our platform is conciliation and arbitration; we aim at a reduction of hours when the time is opportune. It is not in our platform that we should bring in the legislation at the most inopportune time—when we had so much to do and when the people were prepared to do it if given the lead by their Governments. Unfortunately we had Governments in charge of the Federal sphere and the States of New South Wales and Queensland whose only idea was to save their own political skins. For the purpose of re-election, they introduced a shorter working week and as a result we are suffering today and shall continue to suffer for some considerable time.

Bound up with this question and one of the things adding to costs and bringing about decreased production in our community is that we still retain many unnecessary war-time controls. This is something that is always associated with a socialistic Government because they endeavour at all times to retain as much control over the people and the affairs of the people as they can. The fact that it was essential during time of war to establish various controls was seized on with great joy by hon. members opposite and they are continuing to hold onto those controls and restrictions like grim death and, as I said, many are unnecessary. We thought that when the powers were stripped from the Commonwealth by the people the States would take some notice of the people's wish in this respect and relinquish controls as fast as they could. The State is still hanging unnecessarily on to many of the war-time controls that could be wiped out immediately with advantage to the entire community and particularly to the finances of the State.

The first control that should be thrown overboard immediately is land-sales control, which the Government are hanging on to like grim death, for some reason or other.

**Mr. Larcombe:** What about butter?

**Mr. NICKLIN:** I will tell the hon. gentleman all about butter at the proper time but at the moment I am dealing with land-sales control. These controls are continued allegedly for the protection of the people, but actually they are having the other effect because the people are subjected unnecessarily to a black-market with virtually every land sale that takes place today. If the land-sales control was removed, black-marketing would be eliminated, just as the black-market in used cars disappeared when control in that respect was abolished. What value

are land-sales controls having at the present time? None whatsoever. The best way in which we can allow land to find its true value is to have a free market. I venture to say that if land-sales control was abolished, land, and especially rural land, would be sold at prices lower than it is bringing today on the black-market. Do not forget, too, that the Treasurer is losing a considerable amount of revenue because of the practice of selling land on the black-market and he for one should impress upon his Cabinet colleagues the absolute need for immediately throwing land-sales control overboard. At the present time he is losing revenue from stamp duty and transfer fees which he would get if the sales were made on the open market and in the light of day.

While we have these controls we also have the delays that take place in the approval of transactions. Anyone who has had any dealings in connection with land-sales control will know what delays can take place, especially through the interpretation of certain regulations dealing with these transactions. These delays are making the people sick and tired of this whole business with the result that they resort to the black-market to get their sales through. I suggest to the Treasurer that he give this matter his immediate attention and that he bring all possible pressure to bear on his colleagues to stop these unnecessary controls that exist at the present time, especially land-sales control, which are helping materially to nullify the efforts of free enterprise in this country and are playing into the hands of the Communists. The Government would be making a start on the journey back to individual liberty and progress and away from the goal of the Communists, by abolishing land-sales control which is simply creating an undesirable black-market in our midst.

I wish I had the time to deal with other controls and restrictions in operation at the present time but as my time is limited I can only suggest at the moment that land-sales control should be abolished immediately because such action would be of great advantage to the people of the State and a great advantage to the Treasurer too, because it would enable him to get in a great deal of revenue that he is losing today. It would also remove from our midst that very undesirable state of affairs so evident at the moment, the disregard of the law and the encouragement of black-marketing operations.

**Mr. JESSON (Kennedy) (11.55 a.m.):** I should first like to thank the Leader of the Opposition for being so kind yesterday as to recognise my great work on behalf of the northern people by calling me the champion of the North. That is quite true. All the people there know that for 15 years I have been their champion. I hope that if I do not get into any more trouble by running into big transport trucks I shall represent them and be their champion for many years to come.

I want to put both the Committee and the people right. Yesterday the Leader of the

Opposition blamed the State for what he described as the North Queensland lag. He is reported in the Press as stating—

“He had attended the inaugural meeting of the North Queensland Development League in Townsville, and had been impressed by the sincerity and purpose of the very large number of people present.”

I will not accuse the Leader of the Opposition of stating an untruth. I have always looked upon him as an honourable gentleman and one who is not guilty of telling an untruth, but I have in my hands a Press report of the first meeting of the North Queensland Development League. It is headed—

“N.Q. Development League Launched.  
All Sections of North Attend Most  
Enthusiastic Gathering.”

The report then goes on to mention those present and the election of vice-presidents and committee. It also proceeds to state that three Parliamentarians were present, namely, Messrs. A. M. Blain, M.H.R., Mr. T. Aitkens, M.L.A., and Mr. F. Paterson, M.L.A., but not a word about the Leader of the Opposition in the Queensland Parliament.

**Mr. Nicklin:** I was one of the mob.

**Mr. JESSON:** If the hon. gentleman was one of the mob he was not keen to disclose his identity. He hid his light under a bushel. Can anyone tell me that the Leader of the Opposition is politically unknown to the people of Townsville or the Tory Press? Either he was grossly ignored by the Press in Townsville, in other words insulted by it in not mentioning his presence, or he was disguised by a big curly mo or he was not there at all. Moreover, he got a very brief note of his report in the “Courier-Mail.” It appears that the “Courier-Mail” has dropped him too.

For a Leader of the Opposition the speech the hon. gentleman made yesterday in this Chamber was tragic. He devoted at least about 20 minutes of his time to talking about me and likening me to Sir Galahad. I very much appreciate the tribute paid to me by the Leader of the Country Party for my work in my electorate, which is a primary-producing area. It is one of the biggest tobacco producers on the coast and it is one of the biggest sugar producing areas. Its sugar turnover is about £2,500,000 per annum. Notwithstanding these facts, his party allowed the Kewpies, or the Queen Street party or the Liberals of Victoria, to run a candidate against me at the last election instead of running a candidate supporting its platform. Such a tribute from the Leader of the Opposition is very gratifying. He looks upon a Labour man as a champion of the northern people. They were not game to run a candidate in opposition to me and allowed the Q.P.P.-Liberals to run one. This is an important point.

I give the hon. member for Mirani top marks for a statement he made at his party conference. We must give him credit for being wide awake to political moves. He is not being gulled at Mr. Menzies and Mr. Fadden’s speaking off the same platform. He

will not be tricked by this political trickery. He is reported in the “Courier-Mail” of the 23 November, 1948—

“Northern Country Party executive member, Mr. E. Evans, M.L.A., said last night that the N.C.P. felt it could not trust the Q.P.P. after its manoeuvres at recent conferences.

“He said that the Q.P.P. had suggested amalgamation only for publicity purposes.

““They know we cannot and will not amalgamate, but that we will co-operate. The Q.P.P. also knows that its parliamentary members have agreed on a basis of co-operation, which is equitable.

““They know, too, that we will not be dictated to by vested interests and political job-hunters.””

I take my hat off to the member for Mirani. If my congratulations are worth anything, he has all that I can give him for exposing the political hypocrisy of these people who try to gull the people about co-operation at election time. There is no more co-operation between the Country Party and the Liberal Party than there is between a wild bull and a quiet bullock. It is only for political reasons. It is only proper that the people should be warned.

Let us go on a bit further with the North Queensland Development League. Somebody interjected that it was non-political and that was why the Leader of the Opposition did not make himself known. The chairman of the Townsville Electricity Regional Board, Mr. Kelly, whom the member for Windsor talks about so often—

**Mr. Pie:** He will oppose you.

**Mr. JESSON:** That is what the hon. member hopes. I can well imagine the member for Windsor yesterday, when it came over the air that I was slightly injured in a motor accident, saying, “We nearly had him that time.” That is the only chance he has of getting me. The league did not send an invitation to the Townsville Electricity Regional Board, which is one of the biggest Government instrumentalities in the work of developing North Queensland. They did not invite Mr. Kelly, because they know he is chairman of the Labour council. They did not invite the Hinchinbrook Shire Council because eight out of nine of its members belong to the Labour Party.

**An Opposition Member:** They sent you an invitation.

**Mr. JESSON:** I did not go, because I am political. I am honest. I could have said it was non-political and I could have got my name in the paper. They have sabotaged the cement works of North Queensland for donkeys’ years. The Premier told them about the money subscribed. Only £6,000 was subscribed up to about the middle of July.

**Mr. Gair:** A canvass by my officers showed very little support for a North Queensland cement company with Government backing.

**Mr. JESSON:** That confirms my statement. Various merchants in Townsville control the cement industry. Before the war they imported Portland cement and the Queensland railways carry cement to North Queensland for virtually nothing so that it can compete with the overseas product. They say that 60,000 tons of cement are sold north of Mackay. The commission on it is about 10s. a ton, so you can realise what a colossal sum the merchants whack up between them. Do they want to put money into the cement works when they can get huge dividends out of the imported cement?

**Mr. Muller:** Why not form a co-operative society?

**Mr. JESSON:** The hon. member must be deaf. I spent a quarter of an hour on Tuesday telling how I tried to form a co-operative society for the canning of fruit.

**An Opposition Member:** Talk English.

**Mr. JESSON:** I have fought for my country and that is more than the hon. member has. I can talk English just as well as he can.

**Mr. Muller:** If your argument is sound a co-operative society must succeed.

**Mr. JESSON:** Of course it would. It was quite obvious that it would have succeeded if it was built, but the big men of the town would not let it start. Where would the money be got to build a co-operative fruit cannery? This State Government and the Commonwealth Government were prepared to support it in every way, but the big people of the town knocked it down, yet they continually condemn the Government for what they have not been able to do. There is not one grazier or producer or any person who works in industry on the committee of the North Queensland Development League. All those in it are members of various organisations of Big Business. Although they say the North has gone to the dogs, their business with the South has increased. If these people who are continually knocking the North as they have been knocking it boosted North Queensland, they would be doing a greater service to the people of the North than they are. It is quite obvious that they are out to gain their own ends.

Dalgety & Co. have just bought out the establishment of McKimmins in Flinders Street, Townsville. Samuel Allen & Sons Pty. Ltd. have improved one of the large stores it controls. Why, the hon. member for Windsor established a branch of his business in Townsville. I am not complaining about that—in fact, I congratulate him on it—but the fact remains that these people would not go to the North if the North was so neglected, thrown to the dogs and forgotten, as they contend it is. It is merely political propaganda that comes up every election time.

This is an extract from the Townsville "Daily Bulletin" of 21 July, 1949, of a report of the chamber of commerce meeting held in Townsville on Wednesday, 20 July, 1949—

"Mr. Lawrence said he was disappointed at the response so far from business houses in the appeals for funds to carry on the North Queensland Development League."

There it is—they have had the splash. They find they are in the hands of the Communist Party, and the Big Business groups. There are not very many Big Business people in Townsville. The Big Business people are the big merchants who control the big houses. The small people would be interested in it and be putting money into it if they were not getting a good deal, but they are getting a good deal and consequently this organisation cannot get sufficient funds.

**An Opposition Member interjected.**

**Mr. JESSON:** There were no workers on this, only Commos—the secretary of the Seamen's Union and the Waterside Workers were represented. They held a meeting not long ago and those were the sort of people who attended it. Who have been the cause of any neglect in North Queensland? The Commos control the Seamen's Union and the waterside workers are controlled by Commos. They have caused increases in costs. They have been the cause of preventing shipments of iron from coming to the North because there were no ships available, yet at their meeting they have the audacity to condemn this Government and the Federal Government. If the people are mugs enough to take that, they will take anything.

In my speech in moving the adoption of the Address in Reply I referred very fondly to the hon. member for Cooroora. But that hon. member was very angry and said he did not say what I told the House he had said. At the time I told him I would produce the paper—I can produce all these sorts of things if I want them. In the Herbert River "Express" of 9 June, 1949, we find the following:—

"Country Party.

"Herbert Candidate at Ingham.

"A Country Party meeting was held in Ingham last Thursday evening in support of Mr. D. D. Jeffrey, who has received the party's endorsement for the Herbert electorate at the Federal elections this year. The speakers were Mr. Jeffrey, Mr. T. Flood Plunkett, M.L.A., member for Albert in the Queensland Parliament, and Mr. D. A. Low, M.L.A., member for Cooroora. Mr. C. Mylrea presided and introduced the speakers."

Mr. Jeffrey did not say a word about Federal politics. He spoke about the State Labor Party and Mr. Low spoke about local authorities in Queensland, making many wrong statements that will be pulled to pieces at the right time.

The article continues—

"The second question asked related to the pollution of the Herbert River and the serious menace it was to the health of the people. In view of the fact, the questioner continued, that there was an estimated wealth of £50,000,000 worth of tin still to be won in the Mt. Garnet area, was it not justified that the interests concerned should

be obliged to provide the means of diverting the sludge from the river to another area where it would not be a danger to the people, seeing that the cost was approximately set down at £80,000.

“Mr. Plunkett said that land to the water’s edge was owned by the individual in many cases, but water in a stream belonged to the people and his view was that if anything was done to endanger the people’s health by interference with that stream, then the operations of the company should be suspended until such time as they provided the means of effectively dealing with the danger.”

Even the hon. member for Windsor said they should be suspended during the last election campaign and he said that if they were returned to office they would deal with it straightaway.

**Mr. Muller:** What are the Government doing about it?

**Mr. JESSON:** We are doing what we can and we will close it down. We will give them plenty of rope with which to hang themselves and then out they will go.

**Mr. Pie:** You have put a Bill through.

**Mr. JESSON:** We have put a Bill through to obtain money from them in an endeavour to abate the nuisance. The company has set aside £75,000 but it does not want to do the work. I know for a positive fact that one of the directors said at a meeting in Sydney some time ago that they could abate the nuisance if they wanted to but they did not want to spend so much money. The hon. member for Logan knows that what I say is true.

**Mr. Hiley:** They cannot.

**Mr. JESSON:** They can.

**Mr. Hiley:** Tell us how.

**Mr. JESSON:** The hon. member knows how they can do it and they are going to be forced to do it if they will not do it voluntarily.

Mr. Plunkett, the hon. member for Albert, said that the operations should be suspended until such time as they provided the means of effectively dealing with the danger. Then Mr. Low, the hon. member for Cooroora, said, according to the article—

“Mr. Low said he had only recently heard of the pollution in the river and the menace it was and he endorsed all that Mr. Plunkett said. No matter what the value of production was the people’s health was the first consideration.”

The hon. member denied yesterday that he had said this.

Now I propose reading another article. It states, at the Chamber of Commerce meeting—

“Mr. Johnson said the other night he asked two southern politicians what their attitude was towards the pollution of the Herbert River. One said he did not know about the pollution until he arrived in Ingham. The other said he had only recently heard about it.”

As a matter of fact, this morning I sent the hon. member for Cooroora a copy of the speech I made last year so that he would know all about it. The article continues—

“He thought they must have been asleep in Parliament when the pollution was discussed. He moved that the Leader of the Country Party, Mr. Nicklin, be supplied with a dossier of information regarding the pollution of the Herbert River. Seconded by Mr. Ridge and carried.”

I will leave that matter for the time being because I have one in mind that has me a little worried. At the present time we are in the grip of a war between the Communist Party and the people of Australia. I have no brief at any time for these people, who are dictated to by a foreign policy, and if I had my way in the matter I would ship them all back to Russia or put them on an island by themselves where they could practice Communism. Lord Mayor Chandler, who at one time batoned the workers in a tramway strike, is reported in this morning’s paper as having urged the formation of a Freedom League. He wants a league to fight the Reds.

**Mr. Muller:** Which side will you be on?

**Mr. JESSON:** On England’s side—the side I have always been on. Mr. Chandler wants the formation of a Freedom League and he appealed to the Ipswich Rotary Club members for a public movement to protect human rights, human liberties, and human freedom. In other words, he wants to take constitutional government out of the hands of the Government. Do not forget that Victoria is run by a Tory Government, and what are they doing about it? But listen to this—

“The first move to take action along the lines suggested by Alderman Chandler was taken immediately after a meeting. He and several Rotarians visited the home of another Rotarian and plans to form a Freedom League were discussed.”

He wants to start a form of Fascism, the same as Hitler. The Little Hitler of the Brisbane City Council wants to start a Fas ist Party to fight Communism against constitutional government. The same thing happened in Germany 15 or 16 years ago. This is inflaming the minds of the people to take control of law and order out of the hands of the constitutional Government. There is constitutional government in this country and we will deal with it in a democratic way.

I will prove to this Committee and the people of Queensland that Alderman Chandler has Fascist instincts. Let hon. members opposite read this article for themselves.

**Mr. Maher interjected.**

**Mr. JESSON:** You said you would line the Communists up and shoot them against a wall.

**Mr. MAHER:** Mr. Hilton, I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Kennedy stated a deliberate untruth when he said that I advocated lining people up against a wall

and shooting them. I never made that statement in this Parliament or out of it. I never said it. The remark is offensive to me and I ask for its withdrawal.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** I ask the hon. member for Kennedy to accept the denial of the hon. member for West Moreton.

**Mr. JESSON:** I accept it.

**Mr. MAHER:** I go further than that and say that it is an offensive and untruthful statement and I desire that it be withdrawn.

**Mr. JESSON:** I withdraw it unconditionally. I will go through my book and bring out his statement, and when I do I hope the hon. member will resign.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member for Kennedy has withdrawn unconditionally. He has also exhausted the time allowed him under the Standing Orders.

**Mr. HILEY (Logan) (12.20 p.m.):** When the Leader of the Opposition was speaking on the Address in Reply yesterday he drew the attention of the House to the fact that the hon. member for Kennedy was cast in the role of Sir Galahad and apparently for this session the hon. member for Kennedy is to be the chief forensic mouthpiece of the Government on all important questions. Here to-day we still find him cast in the role of Sir Galahad, which reminds me very much of the story of the person who went to the fancy-dress ball clad in armour as a knight of old. He went to the ball all right, but I do not suggest that he enjoyed himself in that rigout. When he came home he had the mortifying experience that he could not get out of his suit of armour, and his state of mind is described in a song thus—

“With a shoehorn and a shoer they got me in all right,  
But here I am stuck fast and can’t get out.”

One of the significant features of Appropriation Bills has been the extent to which they have reflected over the passing years the increased requirements of the State and the ever-mounting tide of the cost of government. They reflect the general inflationary trend at present throughout Australia, but perhaps on this occasion there is one special reason why we expect it to be high. On this occasion the Government have to provide for something that they have never had to provide for before and I hope will never have to provide for again. On this occasion they will have to provide for the cost that this State will have to bear for its imprudent intervention in the bank case, an intervention that placed them on the wrong and losing side. When that cheque is drawn it will not be a mission to Moscow, but will be a subscription to Moscow. It will remind the people of this State not only of the cost incurred by the Government but of the fact that the counsel it employed was one of the best-known Communists in Great Britain, Mr. Pritt, K.C., who will receive fees provided by this country through its Treasury.

**Mr. Gair:** Can you prove that he is a Communist?

**Mr. HILEY:** He is a Communist member of the House of Commons.

Let us consider the effect of the inflationary trend on the citizen of the State and finances of the country—I think we should consider just what are the gains and the losses of the inflationary trend. Looking at it first of all through the eyes of the citizen, we see that the tendency of inflation is to rob the average citizen. Every holder of insurance—and that goes for the great majority of the citizens of this country—finds the value of his contract shrinking in real benefit because of inflation. Every holder of Government bonds realises that the promise of the Government to pay a certain rate of interest on the money he has invested is, because of the inflationary trend, being honoured in depreciated currency, something that will buy infinitely less today than the money which he lent at the time he subscribed in response to the Government’s appeal.

**Mr. Paterson:** The same with war gratuities.

**Mr. HILEY:** Exactly. Let us see how inflation touches the Government. The point I want to make is that whereas the average citizen is the pitiful victim of inflation at work, many aspects of Government activities actually benefit and gain by inflation at work. In the first place, Government revenue rises, and I propose to give some directions in which it very clearly rises.

Take sales tax, for example. The inflation at work and the rising price levels of the community, with no more goods in circulation because of the rising price levels, mean that Government revenues are soaring with every passing day. Take income tax, particularly. During the period of inflation there is an illusion of great profits simply because rising prices give in a measure an annual profit but it is merely an apparent figure gain, and the merchant knows that the same money reinvested in stock will only buy a smaller number of the articles in question. Governments who impose taxes on business revenue find their revenue up because of the inflation at work.

It is equally true that many items of Government expenditure rise as a result of inflation but anyone who sets himself out to seek the net result of inflation cannot but form the conclusion that the Government who impose a tax on incomes and turnovers do in fact show a net benefit as a result of inflation at work. They are still committed to paying the same rate of interest on loans but they pay that interest in a currency of depreciated values, whereas it is creating increased revenue in depreciated pounds.

The conclusion I form is that the Commonwealth Government, who impose taxes on turnover in cases of sales tax and collect income-tax revenue, actually gains through the process of inflation at work. What of the States? Under the present system of income-tax reimbursement it is true that the formula does offer to the Treasurer some

prospect of enhancement of revenue but if the cost-of-living index rises there is a notable lag between the increase in the cost of living and its realisation. The result is that to the extent of the lag at any rate the State Government do not make a commensurate gain as a result of inflation at work.

The moral is that when we consider the machinery devised for controlling the powers of inflation, that is, the Central Bank policy of the Commonwealth Government, citizens generally cannot feel themselves safe in reposing solely in the hands of the Commonwealth the power of determining the extent of inflation in Australia. That Government are the only body in the community that stands any prospect of benefiting as a result of inflation at work. Today inflation is striking a cruel blow at many of our citizens. The mass of people who want to build, and the mass of people who want to furnish their houses, as well as all of us who experience the general rise of living costs—the way in which it rises in such services as increased telephone charges, increased electricity and gas charges, and so on—might very well remind themselves that at a time when they have to pay those increased costs the Commonwealth Government gain as a result of inflation at work. We should all remind ourselves that the Federal Treasurer, who is personally charged with the power of directing the policy of the Commonwealth Government in the matter of the Central Bank, is the sole beneficiary of inflation at work.

The second matter I want to have something to say about is the evidence we have of the failure of Labour Governments to command a permanent solution of the industrial problems of this country. I accord to the Labour Government, and other Governments who have consistently adhered to the principle, the credit for devising the very great principle of arbitration and of gradually improving and perfecting it to its present standard. But, Mr. Hilton, I want to remind the Committee that arbitration is not working as it was intended it should work and as it could work. It is not working because Governments in Australia pledged to the institution of arbitration are letting arbitration down. The Premier told us in reply to a question without notice this morning that the Government were taking every constitutional means within their power to deal with this dispute. That statement is not true, because there are several constitutional means open to the Government that they have not taken. It is a constitutional means for the Government as an employer in that industry—and the biggest employer in Queensland—to go to the Federal Coal Commission and ask for a ballot to be taken. That is one of the constitutional means available to the Government; and nobody has any doubt about the result of such an action. The trouble with Labour's approach to arbitration—the very instrument it parades in its platform as the most intelligent approach to the industrial problem—is that Labour will not treat arbitration as a compulsory branch of law, but as something that can be used if both sides want it and if one side says, "We will flout you," Labour will not take steps to ensure that arbitration is made to function.

This problem is not new; it has not escaped attention in other parts of the world. There have been many approaches to this question of trying to make arbitration function. Some countries—I think unwisely—have adopted the attitude of totally prohibiting strikes; others—Western Australia is an example—have adopted a system of insisting upon a cooling-off period between the development of the circumstances that lead to a strike and the permitting of that strike to come into operation. During the time when the strike is clearly becoming imminent, arbitration, instead of refusing to operate, puts its head down in an effort to carry out the task that arbitration was devised to carry out, in order to solve the problem.

We have more of a high-brow approach to this question. We do not insist on a cooling-off system. We say that the minute a strike is imminent the parties must notify the court and the court must hear and determine the issue. On paper that is an excellent approach to the problem, but in practice that precaution never operates because it is never allowed to do so. It does not do so because the facility of arbitration ceases to operate the minute a strike is in process or when a strike threat is issued. We find that the tendency in this State—as in this dispute—is for the Communists to prevent arbitration from functioning by getting the men out so quickly that arbitration goes to shelter and refuses to act.

We know there are three basic points in connection with this present dispute. They are long-service leave, the 35-hour week, and a rise in pay. Of those three points, the first reached the point where arbitration showed that it was going to function and it was going to grant it, and the date was fixed so that the necessary amendment could be written in to make that provision in the industrial laws.

What happened? Opportunity was taken of this weakness in our approach to the question of arbitration by threatening to strike or by getting the men out on strike before the Court could write these benefits into the award. The result is that with a weakness like that—and it is a weakness similar to what occurred on other occasions, the railway dispute and others—we have to devise some method of ensuring that arbitration is not to be treated only as an ideal approach to our industrial problems but becomes a system that functions inexorably, irrespective of the threat of stoppage. This business of putting a whole system of arbitration away in the cupboard and forgetting it because men are threatening to strike is the very weakness on which the Communist relies. You will notice that, Mr. Hilton, on these three issues the Communists never gave arbitration a chance to function. As soon as they saw the long-service leave benefits were to be given they went on strike to stop the court from operating. As to the other two benefits, the question of hours of work and the increase in pay, before the court had any possible time to deal with them the two applications were withdrawn in order to ensure that arbitration could not function.

The immediate challenge of the present hold-up is to see that the strike is ended. The Government charged with the responsibility of the community should exhaust every possible means open to them. These are the very words of the Premier himself. This Government should immediately, as an employer, exercise their right to go to the tribunal and ask that a ballot be taken. That is the plain right and duty of the Government. That is their short-term responsibility. The long-term responsibility in this emergency is to ensure that the sort of trouble that happened this year, last year and the year before will not be written into the pages of every year of our history. So long as this fundamental weakness remains in our conception of arbitration and so long as it is possible for a person to get men to threaten to strike or to go on strike and by so doing stop arbitration from functioning and so long as it is possible for this sort of thing to occur year after year, this, the front guard of the Communist Party, will stop our chosen instrument of arbitration from working. If we have any sense we shall recognise this weakness and diagnose a possible cure.

**Mr. BURROWS** (Port Curtis) (12.38 p.m.) : Listening to the political quacks this morning diagnosing the causes of our inflation, from which we undoubtedly suffer, I have not been impressed by the remedies they have suggested. They use the same old catch-cries. They concentrate on the unfortunate person, the worker, who has no organisation or forces in reserve to protect him, as have the classes hon. members opposite represent. It is all very well to condemn men for being Communists. That is a catch-cry. It is a popular one but is over-used. There are a number of other reasons for the inflation from which we are suffering than Communism.

**Mr. Pie**: Tell us about your neglect of Callide.

**Mr. BURROWS**: I will not disappoint the hon. member. I met him at Callide the other day but he came in by the back door. I invited him to come to Gladstone and we would take him in at the front door. At Callide we are going ahead and we there welcome everybody through the front door. There is no tradesmen's entrance there.

The Treasurer, in his Financial Statement, quoted figures and these to a very great extent are influenced by the price of coal. The Government are the biggest consumers of coal in Queensland and I propose to illustrate an anomaly that arises. We hear hon. members opposite and their parties talking about a capitalistic democracy, the strangest and most puzzling words I have ever encountered in my studies of political science. I am always amused to hear such conflicting words used to describe a party's policy. Hon. members opposite claim to represent a capitalistic democracy. I can never reconcile capitalism with democracy and I do not think anyone else can. They might have fooled the unfortunate people 50 years ago with such a doctrine, but, thanks to our educational system, with these words they are lucky today to gain even the few seats they hold on the Opposition.

**Mr. Pie**: What are you, a Socialist or a Communist?

**Mr. BURROWS**: I should hate to tell the hon. member what he is. Take the Callide that the hon. member challenged me to mention this morning. There is no need for him to challenge me because I will speak on the Callide mine and on coal. I believe all the time that the coal position is capable of being improved because coal plays such an important part in our community. The position with respect to Callide is that certain men hold leases there. They buy the coal from the Government at 6d. a ton and pay the tremendous rental of 1s. an acre a year. When a Bill was introduced here last year almost every hon. member opposite protested against it because it contained clauses requiring leaseholders to work their leases.

One of the causes of our inflation is the price of coal. One leaseholder at Callide is a commission agent in Queen street. He buys coal from the Government for 6d. a ton and the Government, indirectly, are paying him approximately 2s. 8d. for every ton of coal they buy from him. Of course, in the eyes of the Opposition, it is all right for the commission agent to do that because they represent the commission agent, the man who neither toils nor spins. We never hear the Opposition branding such men as Communists but there would be far less Communism in this country if there were fewer of the political colour of hon. members opposite. It is with such people that we find the breeding grounds of Communism. We shall never destroy Communism by swatting the Communists one at a time; we should get at their breeding grounds amongst the Opposition.

Take the position of a leaseholder who can sit in his office without working in the mine and who can sub-let the mine to another company that makes a profit. I do not grudge any man profit if he make it by his own exertion. These parasites who have never worked in a coal mine in their lives, are able to sit in their Queen street offices and draw 2s. or 3s. for every ton of coal that comes from up there—and believe me, there are millions of tons in those leases. These men are able to do that because they get leases over the people's coal from a benevolent Government. I bet that such a man would be embraced by the Queensland People's Party, or as it now calls itself, the Liberal Party. If any action was taken by the Government to remove this anomaly the Government would be attacked by hon. members opposite to their fullest ability.

I want hon. members of the Committee to know what happened when Mr. Kent Hughes was up here this time last year. He told me what price he was prepared to pay for Callide coal. The negotiations between the Callide men and Mr. Kent Hughes took place in the room I occupy downstairs. I was present at the time. It cannot be said that Mr. Kent Hughes has any political association with me—he wears a different coloured tie to me politically—and when these men asked Mr. Kent Hughes for 5s. 6d. a ton royalty and for the Victorian Government to pay the

working costs of the field, Mr. Kent Hughes turned and said to me, "If you were a member of the Opposition and you knew that we were paying 5s. 6d. a ton royalty, would you be silent?" He also said, "As a member of the Government, how can I justify that?" I said, "You cannot justify it for five minutes; I would not be a party to anything like that." I told him that I did not blame him for refusing the Callide coal at 62s. 11d. f.o.b. Gladstone because I knew in my own heart, much as I wanted to see the Callide coalfield developed, that I could not be honest and ask any Government or consumer to pay such a ridiculous price for coal.

**Mr. Pie:** Do you know what it cost the City Electric Light people?

**Mr. BURROWS:** Mr. Chandler's statement was that he was paying £6 a ton.

**Mr. Pie:** No, the City Electricity Light Company.

**Mr. BURROWS:** He said that they were paying £6 a ton for their coal. I would tell Mr. Cornwall that the price delivered in Victoria as soon as this industrial trouble is settled will be below £6 a ton. If he is forced to pay £6 a ton I suggest that he review his arrangements because I can say definitely that it is much too high. It will not be much over £5 a ton for that coal landed in Victoria.

**Mr. Pie:** The handling facilities here put the price up.

**Mr. BURROWS:** If Mr. Chandler had foresight he would have made preparations and looked ahead far enough to prepare for a contingency such as that.

I will admit that at the present time it is a case of coal being cheap at any price, that it is a question not so much of economy in price as economy in time in producing it. However, the time will come when we must get down to an economic level, but it can only be achieved by eliminating all unnecessary charges such as the royalties I have mentioned.

**Mr. Pie:** Road tax.

**Mr. BURROWS:** Road tax. If I am successful in my efforts there will be no road tax, there will be an up-to-date railway line, not a road. When I advocated that in this Chamber two years ago, did I get any support from hon. members opposite? No. Am I likely to get any support from them if I advocate it again? No. Last year when I rose to support an amendment of the Mining Act to compel these speculators, these people who neither toil nor spin but grab leases, every hon. member opposite to a man rose and defended the rights of these lessees. They were not even genuine prospectors. The poor unfortunate people who discovered the Callide field died motherless broke. Take the case of a man who has taken up a grazing selection, decides to live in Queen Street and to draw a royalty in respect of every pound of wool and every bullock taken off his property. He would not last long. He would be asked to show

cause why his lease should not be forfeited. The same should apply in connection with coal leases. In the case of coal lessees their value to the country is nil.

In conclusion I suggest that the next time the Government find it necessary to bring in legislation to prevent people from drawing exorbitant and unearned profits hon. members opposite will develop a conscience, get in behind the Government, and help us to do something really good for the country.

**Mr. EVANS (Mirani) (12.54 p.m.):** I listened with interest to the speech to-day by a northern member of the Government, the hon. member for Kennedy, and I as another northern hon. member accept his apology for the statements he made in his Address in Reply speech on Tuesday.

Notwithstanding the various statements made by the hon. member for Kennedy as to the Government's interest in the development of North Queensland, there is polluted water running in the Herbert River through the main town in his electorate, Ingham.

**Mr. Jesson:** Ask Tom Hiley about it.

**Mr. EVANS:** I am not concerned with Tom Hiley, but I am concerned with the Government and the power they have to rectify it, yet they have not the guts to do it.

**Opposition Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. EVANS:** When I was in the Ingham district I saw people living along the banks of one of the most beautiful streams of Queensland, whose water was polluted. It is a shame. It is the duty of the Government to see that it is stopped. Why do they not stop it?

**Mr. Gair:** It is like the molasses from the sugar mills that runs down the water-courses too.

**Mr. EVANS:** A special Act of Parliament was brought down to abate that nuisance. The sugar mill I am associated with spends thousands of pounds to divert its polluted water. No force was brought on us to keep our streams clean.

**Mr. Gair:** That is why the Act was passed.

**Mr. EVANS:** It is the duty of industry not to pollute our watercourses and it is the duty of the Government to see that such beautiful streams as the Herbert River, which is in the Kennedy electorate represented by the hon. member for Kennedy, are protected from sources of pollution. I can only come to the conclusion that the hon. member for Kennedy is recreant to his duty as the member for the district or that the people of North Queensland are different from the people of other parts of Queensland.

**Mr. JESSON:** I rise to a point of order. I want to say for the benefit of the hon. member for Mirani that two-thirds of Australia's tin yield is produced in that particular area,

and that the Government have spent over £5,000 up to date to try to rectify the wrong being done by the huge tin-mining company concerned.

**Mr. EVANS:** It is the duty of the Government to see that the health of the people is protected, notwithstanding what amount of tin is won from that area. The sugar industry last year had a turnover of £23,000,000 worth of sugar. Practically every sugar mill in Queensland has refuse water that would pollute streams if it was run into them but it is dealt with. It is their duty to do so. If they do not, then it is the duty of the Government, if they govern, to see that they do so. But the Government do not govern. That is the sole cause of our industrial trouble today—we have a Government who are afraid to govern. They do not know which way to turn. They do not know which are Socialists and which are Communists.

**Mr. Power:** We know where the Fascists are.

**Mr. EVANS:** That is so; they are with the hon. member's party, where the Commos are.

The Speech refers to the people's coal. Let us hark back to last year when the Government gave a franchise over one of our very rich deposits of coal. One wonders whether the Deputy Premier has just come into the party or whether it had agreed to hand over one of our greatest and richest coal deposits and he merely consented to it. On that occasion we were misled. We were told about the value of the land and how the company holding the franchise would develop this coal deposit. We were told that it had the financial resources and the necessary materials to do so. But what do we find? We find now that the total resources of this company are 44,000 lousy quid.

Questions were asked in an endeavour to show us that we were wrong. We were told about all the interests this company had.

Before lunch I was talking of the statements made by the member for Port Curtis about capitalism and democracy: I was wondering, after listening to him and the hon. member for Kennedy, what they represent, whether they represent democracy or whether they represent capitalism; because the signing over, the handing over of the franchise to the Electric Supply Corporation (Overseas) Limited and further, the allowing of the transfer shows that they have fallen down on their job.

**Mr. Collins:** Do you not agree with private enterprise?

**Mr. EVANS:** I agree with private enterprise but not with monopolies. This is a monopoly. It is a monopoly because it has the sole right to handle that coal. The Government have handed over our greatest asset, coal, to a monopoly. The Act states that the Corporation has the exclusive right to handle only their own coal.

**Mr. Collins:** The State can take it over at any time.

**Mr. EVANS:** The Minister knows that the State will not take it over. He knows that there is a clause in that agreement contrary to common law that allows it to pay interest on dividends and that interest is charged to the cost of construction.

**Mr. Collins:** The State can take the whole concern over.

**Mr. EVANS:** Can the hon. gentleman tell me why that clause was put in? The Government have to take it over at cost. They are not going to. They will allow it to go on. They have allowed the company to assign it and there has been a consideration in that assignment. If that is democracy I am pleased that I do not belong to the Socialists but that I have the independence of being a member of the Country Party.

**Mr. Theodore:** You used to belong to them.

**Mr. EVANS:** I could not stay with them. When they got so bad that they got away from the policy, enunciated in the years gone by, decent people had to leave them. But there are people who will stay with them. There are people who are there honestly, and there are people who will stay with them because it is a job. I did not come here to look for a job. I have made my own way by my own efforts. I am not concerned with the remuneration of my position as a Member of Parliament. I came here because I was requested by all sections of the community; and I beat one of the leading members of the Government when I came here. With this zoning they may alter my electorate, but they are not going to put me out. I will come back again.

**Mr. Theodore** interjected.

**Mr. EVANS:** The hon. member will have to look out. He only has to look at your local authority elections to see that he is down to zero. Hon. members opposite tell us that the North is all right and that everything in the garden is lovely. Apparently they have not analysed the Townsville local-authority elections, which show that industrial labour polled thousands more than official Labour. There are an anti-Labour local-authority chairman and council. What has happened in Mackay? The people are sincere and they have proved it; they have shown the Government that at the ballot box. An anti-Labour mayor received a majority of 200 at the previous election and this year he received a majority of 1,500.

**Mr. Power** interjected.

**Mr. EVANS:** I welcome an interjection from the Secretary for Public Works. Their election there was fought on the town plan, but what happened? Mackay threw out Labour neck and crop.

**Mr. Power:** The McInnes plan.

**Mr. EVANS:** In Labour's headlines they had, "No more Dr. Langer, No more town-planning." What did the people say? The Secretary for Public Works was guided unwisely by a bunch of individuals who are now on the scrapheap.

**Mr. Power:** Baroona was the only electorate in the city of Brisbane in which Lord Mayor Chandler was defeated.

**Mr. EVANS:** The Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Mr. Chandler, got a larger majority than ever.

**Mr. Power:** He got well beaten in Baroona.

**Mr. EVANS:** The hon. gentleman knows that his party is on the run. Listening to the Governor's review of Labour's legislation and forecasting suggested legislation and the millions of pounds to be spent but the Labour Government are not spending them, merely talking it. They talk about weiring rivers but they were going to weir the Pioneer River in my electorate 10 years ago. Last December, when the river was almost dry and mills were stopping crushing, I wrote to the Department of Water Supply and Irrigation and asked that a private sugar mill be allowed to weir the river to protect the water supply for the farmer's cane. This was refused and the reply stated that the department was still planning, that there would be further investigations and that weirs would be built at suitable sites—the Government were not going to give a monopoly. Giving permission for people to dam water is not giving a monopoly. The weiring of a river conserves water. This weir would not only conserve water, which flows down the river into the sea but replenishes the underground water supply. This Government refused permission for the mill to dam the river to conserve water for itself and for its cane-farmers. Nevertheless the Government talk about expansion! Where is this expansion to be found? The people of North Queensland were justified in passing their resolution and they were justified in the decision they gave in the local elections.

**A Government Member:** How did the mayor of Cairns get on?

**Mr. EVANS:** He was always Labour, although he said he was not. The hon. member knows he was.

**Mr. Power:** How did the mayor of Ipswich get on?

**Mr. EVANS:** I am talking of Mackay, not Ipswich.

What has been done in the way of development? As I said formerly, the Government have handed over—sold out—the greatest coal seam in the world. They are now allowing the company to bore and trying to convince me and other people who know that district that the reason it is allowed to bore is to build a railway line on the location of the coal. Nothing is further from the truth. These people are not boring for that purpose but because, as I told hon. members when I spoke on the Bill giving the company the franchise, there is coal at Nebo and they want to come to Nebo. They do not want to develop Blair Athol. They will not go to Blair Athol. If the Government did their job and carried out their duty to their country, as they found out that they were go-getters and had put it over them, why do they not cancel the contract? Why do they not stand up to their responsibilities? They

are the Government of this State and talk about its potentialities and the development of its resources. Why do they not introduce legislation that will develop it? Why do they not do what the Premier said in Townsville it is the duty of the Government to do—build transport facilities so that then it was up to the people to develop the resources of the country? That is the duty of the Government and that is exactly what I have been saying. As to the building of railways.—I say this in all seriousness—if a railway creates development and settlement I am not concerned with its being a profitable undertaking or not. I believe that settlement comes first and population and defence come from the settlement. This is not political, this is only common sense, and a Government knowing their job and doing their duty by the people and justifying the sovereign powers reposed in them, will build these railway lines. Then we Australians will develop our resources.

We have heard talk of exporting millions of tons of coal. The Government are giving it away. Blair Athol has been estimated as having 200,000,000 tons and the Government are giving it away for £600,000 or £700,000. We want industry in Queensland, we want transport facilities, and this Socialist Government have proved that they are not big enough to do the job. By their legislation they have said, "We have the greatest coal deposit in the world but we are not bothering; it is too far away from Brisbane."

The Government can give away £700,000 to prevent the people of Brisbane from being required to pay for the Story Bridge and they can give away £1,800,000 for the sewerage scheme. A few days after that they introduce a Bill and talk about the electrification of Brisbane railways. What about the countryside? They do not represent the country people. They have not the knowledge, they have not the capacity to do the job they have been elected to do. Then we have the Government saying, "We are not going to lose power, we are going to stop here," and they bring in a redistribution.

In order to show how dissatisfied they are, I would tell the Committee that a meeting was held of the citizens of Mackay and district. The hall was packed to overflowing. I was present, not in a political capacity, but as a citizen, because I live there. At that meeting a petition was signed by 11,700 men, and I was asked, in conjunction with the hon. member for Mackay, to present that petition. The hon. member for Brisbane was handling Mr. Graham's correspondence. I received the following letter from the mayor of Mackay—

"Dear Mr. Evans,

"A public meeting of citizens of Mackay and district, at which I presided, was held in the Town Hall on 19th instant, when it was unanimously decided that the members for Mackay and Mirani, be requested to conjointly approach the Premier, to ascertain when and where it will be convenient for him to meet a deputation, desirous of presenting to him a petition, signed by

approximately 12,000 people, asking that a line be built from Mackay to the hinterland.

“Would you please contact Mr. Graham, and with him ascertain from the Premier his views on the matter of receiving the deputation?”

I arrived in Brisbane with that letter before Mr. Mann received his letter. I want to be honest here and say that I am sure Mr. Mann delivered the letter to the Premier. I waited. I would not deliver mine.

**Mr. Power:** Where does Mr. Mann come in?

**Mr. EVANS:** He was handling Mr. Graham's correspondence. I waited for Mr. Graham. I told him I had been talking to Mr. Mann and he had passed the matter on to the Premier. I said, “I want to have a talk to you before I write to the Premier because the letter requested you and me to approach the Premier conjointly.” Mr. Graham had received a reply from the Premier. I wrote to the Premier. I did my part of it honestly. In that letter to the Premier, I said—

“Dear Mr. Hanlon,

“I am enclosing copy of a letter which I have received from Mr. I. A. C. Wood, Mayor of Mackay, regarding a conjoint approach to you by the honourable member for Mackay and myself respecting the introduction of a deputation from the people of Mackay to present a petition signed by approximately 12,000 people asking that a line be built from Mackay to the hinterland.

“I would appreciate it if you would kindly let me know at an early date when you would be able to meet such a deputation.”

This is actually in my electorate. Almost the whole of the line is in my electorate, and this is the reply I received from the Premier this morning—

“I am in receipt of your letter of the 29th July concerning a proposal to present to me a petition from a number of people in the Mackay district seeking the construction of a railway from Mackay to the hinterland.

“Mr. F. D. Graham, M.L.A., has already been in touch with me in connection with the matter and I have undertaken to advise the deputationists, through him, as to the date on which I will receive the deputation.”

Is that right? Is that the procedure that Labour Ministers adopt? Is that correct? Is that decent? I have talked about the gutter but I cannot get down to the depths of the people who will do such things as this. It is ridiculous, it is unfair, it is unclean, it is not worthy of the Premier or any other Minister of the State!

I, and the other hon. members on this side of the Committee, respect most hon. members sitting opposite, but I expect an example of dignity and decency from the Premier. If I fight him here I fight him honestly, as I should fight anybody else, but

when you get a Premier of a State prepared to stoop to these depths to deprive me of the representation of those producers in the electorate I represent and who elected me, I tell you that he is not fit to be a Premier of the State.

**Hon. J. E. DUGGAN** (Toowoomba—Minister for Transport) (2.31 p.m.): I was rather surprised that the Appropriation Bill has been resisted so strenuously by certain hon. members of the Opposition. I think the Treasurer presents his Appropriation Bills very carefully; they reflect careful preparation in presentation and in reply he invariably justifies the requests he has submitted to this Chamber.

The Opposition have chosen this particular debate to indulge in propaganda to bolster up a case for the forthcoming election. We are consequently entitled to examine the arguments they have advanced as reasons why the Appropriation Bill should not be passed or that we should forfeit the support of the people who placed us in control of the government of the State. The hon. member who has just resumed his seat, and the Leader of the Opposition particularly, seemed to have made a great deal of the point that we have neglected to develop this country, that we have failed to implement a policy of decentralisation and they have attacked us because of our alleged inability to cope with the industrial situation, and they say that we have not attracted industry in volume to the State and that generally we have been recreant to our responsibilities as a responsible Government.

It is true that this Parliament is assembled at a time when the Australian economy has been gravely disrupted. It is a matter for regret that those in control of the mining industry of Australia, through the Miners' Federation, have seen fit to embark upon a policy repugnant to the ideals of the ordinary trade unionists in this country and have used the instrumentalities of their organisation for the purpose of introducing a political philosophy into Australia contrary to the wishes of the great majority of the Australian people. That has been the real problem that has arisen since the war. No person interested in democratic government can fail to recognise the challenges that have been presented to responsible Governments in all parts of the world. It does not matter whether it is a democratic Government, a republican or a monarchical form of Government, the economies of all countries have been challenged. In many countries there is evidence of the shaking of the economic foundation of those countries.

**Mr. Maher** interjected.

**Mr. DUGGAN:** The hon. member who interjected, about whom I shall have something to say at a later stage, will probably put forward Franco-Spain. It cannot be regarded as a Socialist country. It is not only crumbling but disintegrating and the standard of living has been subjected to a serious decline not because a Socialist party is in control but because of the failure to organise its economy and to give it stability.

In most of the European countries today challenges have been made, all kinds of regimes have been installed, and the ordinary person in the community is very disturbed at the trend of world events.

The people in the democracies today are looking for stability in government. I am prepared to say that the thoughtful members of the community who ordinarily might be prepared to vote for the Liberal Party or the Country Party or the Queensland People's Party are looking to an increasing extent to the Labour Party and are prepared to back the Labour Party because they realise that during the war years, when this country was subjected to the possibility of invasion and their assets were perhaps in danger of being captured by a foreign foe, that party did not object to the introduction of the measure of control and regimentation of this country which enabled a strong force to be mobilised in Australia and resources to be built up with which, with the aid of the American Army, we were able to repel the invader. But, the moment the country is free of the risk of invasion and their assets are preserved they want to abandon and relinquish those controls. Yet the same forces again today, because of the evidence of what has happened overseas, show clearly that they are looking for stabilised influences in government to prevent them from being dispossessed of their assets should any foreign ideology come into being. All this talk about the Labour Party's being hand in glove with the Communists is only so much bunkum. These people come forward now and say that the Labour Governments are inactive and do not do anything to control the present industrial situation. Anyone who says that either has no intelligence or is deliberately trying to mislead the people.

**Mr. Russell:** Have you not the same objective as the Communist Party?

**Mr. DUGGAN:** The objective of the Australian Labour Party is clearly defined in its platform and no-one on this side of the Chamber need go out and be ashamed of the objective of the Labour Party.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. DUGGAN:** However, we disagree fundamentally with the Communist Party in that the Labour Party believes in an evolutionary constitutional and transitional trend towards the ultimate objective of the public ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange. Will anyone say that if the will of the people demands the public ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange we should repudiate that mandate? The Labour Government of Great Britain have a mandate from the English people for the nationalisation of industry there, and I have that from a Conservative from Great Britain, the general manager of an English railroad company who recently came to Australia to report on transport problems for the Victorian Government. He told me quite clearly that although he was a Conservative and disagreed with the Attlee Government politically, he had no quarrel

with their policy of nationalisation, because they had received a mandate on the subject from the English people. Those who have been dispossessed of their assets in Great Britain have been adequately compensated, and that is a fair and logical arrangement.

The Australian Labour Party has never repudiated any of its obligations, nor does it intend to repudiate any of its obligations. It has been said that the Labour Governments are spineless and unable to measure up to their responsibilities, but I can recall with some interest the formation of the Hollway Government in Victoria. Mr. Hollway was regarded not as the champion of the North, as the Leader of the Opposition dubbed the hon. member for Kennedy, but as the champion of democracy, a man who would bring pressure to bear on the Communists. What has happened in Victoria? Like other southern States, Victoria has the misfortune to lack an adequate supply of black coal.

**Mr. Pie** interjected.

**Mr. DUGGAN:** Let me digress for a moment to address a question to the hon. member for Windsor. Is he sincere in his desire that coal should be won by the open-cut method in Queensland or Australia? I know of nobody in Queensland who is doing a greater disservice and placing so many obstacles and obstructions in the way and creating more political and industrial embarrassment than he.

**Mr. Pie:** Why?

**Mr. DUGGAN:** The reason why he is doing it is that he is politically inexperienced and unbalanced.

Let us get back to Mr. Hollway. Because the State of Victoria is in great need of black coal, the Hollway Government imported coal last year from India and South Africa.

**Mr. Maher:** What a joke when we have such deposits of coal here!

**Mr. DUGGAN:** Never mind about the joke. In February this year 7,000 tons of coal was imported from India by the Hollway Government at a cost of £6 a ton. The ship berthed in Melbourne. Because of union difficulties it was not possible to unload that coal. As a result of inactivity or the inability of the Victorian Government to negotiate with the A.C.T.U. or proper waterfront union, the ship incurred heavy berthage dues. They accumulated to a figure in excess of £30,000. Ultimately, because of the dangerous situation facing gas supplies in Victoria, an ultimatum was served by the Hollway Government on the trades-union movement that unless action was taken to unload this ship free labour would be employed to do so. Hon. members will see in the library advertisements in the Melbourne "Argus" asking for labour. Thousands of responses were supposed to have been received to the advertisements but there was a very great reluctance on the part of the Hollway Government, despite the spending of these large sums of money on advertisements to recruit free

labour, to use that labour. The action that Mr. Hollway ultimately took was to appeal on his knees to the Prime Minister.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. DUGGAN:** After incurring £70,000 expense in importing 6,000 tons of coal Mr. Hollway ultimately asked the Prime Minister to arrange for the unloading of this coal. That is an important point to remember.

What is happening at the present time? We find that the Leader of the Federal Country Party, Mr. Fadden, and the leader of the Federal Liberal Party, Mr. Menzies, are touring Queensland in complete amity and accord, yet in Victoria the official Opposition to the Hollway Government is none other than the Country Party.

Let us come nearer home and consider the position of that great person who is going to revive democracy and restore to the common person his complete freedom. I refer to none other than John Beals Chandler, Lord Mayor of the city of Brisbane. We remember when he represented a blue-ribbon seat in this Parliament but because he could not take heckling and could not "take it" in general he resigned his seat and went back to administering his responsibilities of Lord Mayor and, more recently, the forming of a freedom party in Queensland. Yet it was the provocative action of this very man that caused a tramway strike in this city, and that caused a transport paralysis in Brisbane. What did he do on that occasion? He capitulated to these very people. Not only did he agree to withdraw the summonses he had issued against the striking tramway men but he agreed to pay the costs of the summonses taken out against them. These are the very gentlemen who would have us believe that they would stand up to the industrial outlaws of the community.

My next point is that a certain element in the Opposition believe that this kid-glove handling of the industrial movement does not pay. There is the notorious instance of a certain gentleman who, apart from his political views, is not a bad sort of man.

He is the gentleman who thinks the way these people should be dealt with is to gaoil them. He, as well as other members opposite, said that what was required was strong, resolute action, and that if these men were incarcerated the coal strike would be over. Certain industrial outlaws are languishing in prison at the present time for contempt of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, but has coal been won? It has not, despite the fact that these leaders have been gaoled. The gaolings are perhaps indirectly responsible for the prolongation of the strike. (Opposition interjections.)

All this talk about how they will control these things is so much claptrap. What is the remedy? They say all these things are due to the fact that Labour Governments were composed of men who were not able to handle the situation. Mr. Charles Porter is the director of the Queensland People's Party—and one of the reasons why it has elected to change its name is that those great financial interests in the South, particularly

banking and insurance, refused to put more money into Queensland unless it came under the control of the Liberal organisation—and his party says that the only way to prevent the Socialist trend is to sweep from the Treasury benches those incompetent people who at present are entrusted with the management of the affairs of the people. They say that because they are not prepared to stand up to their responsibilities they should be replaced with more virile men. They are so endowed with these qualities of political sagacity and robust knowledge that they have to be coached by a man who is a dramatic critic. They are taught how to speak and how to reply to interjections and they are even furnished with the interjection. They lack the facility to handle an ordinary question and they have to be coached by Charles Porter, who has a flair for dramatic art. They are taught to speak with silky suave tongues, which is considered to be the hallmark of political efficiency. If some of us are regarded as rough old sorts I prefer that rather than the silky and suave speech of some of these gentlemen who cannot speak for themselves.

We have to the charge that this Government are neglecting the country areas. I was not permitted to be present at the last convention of the Queensland People's Party, but in the case of the Darling Downs constituency, represented by the Hon. A. W. Fadden, that hon. gentleman was afraid to face the electors; despite the prestige that attaches to a leader of a party, he ran away from the Downs seat.

**Mr. Chalk interjected.**

**Mr. DUGGAN:** No-one received worse treatment than the hon. member did. When Mr. Farquharson nominated as an Independent Country Party man he was rebuked for having the temerity to challenge the right of the Queensland People's Party to select an anti-Labour candidate. Mr. Farquharson said, "Why should I as a candidate for a country constituency be compelled to follow a secret junta in Brisbane that directs the activities of the Q.P.P.?" Amongst other things, that is what he had to say—

"That the Queensland People's Party is, in its executive control a city party, is clearly revealed by the list of officials and committees elected at the 1948 Convention of the party in Brisbane. The Executive Committee consists of 26 members. Of these, 22 represent Brisbane city electorates, one represents the city of Ipswich, one represents the city of Rockhampton, one represents East Toowoomba, and one Ingham."

"The Political Education Committee of nine members is composed entirely of representatives of Brisbane city electorates. The Policy Committee of seven members has six representing Brisbane city electorates. The Constitution Committees of nine members are all representatives of Brisbane city electorates. The Services Committee of 17 members are all representatives of Brisbane city electorates. The Women's Advisory Committee of 16 members has 15 members representing Brisbane

city electorates. The Credentials Committee of one is a representative of a Brisbane city electorate."

Is it any wonder the Queensland People's Party saw fit to change its name. Its members should hang their heads in shame.

As to all this talk of neglect in the development of this State, in His Excellency's Speech read in this Chamber only a few days ago we learned of the Government's expenditure in development. What was the expenditure incurred to develop the transport facilities in this State? The sum of £400,000 is being spent on the elimination of the rack railway from Rockhampton to Mount Morgan; not only has it been authorised but tenders are open at present. The sum of £100,000 is being expended on regrading the Emerald-Blair Athol line to permit of the haulage of the heavier trains of coal. During the present restricted train services, how have the country people been affected? Not one load of cattle, one load of wheat or sugar has been refused. To the primary producers of this State we have given absolute priority. Train services have been curtailed in my own electorate. Services in the metropolitan area have been drastically curtailed. We have drastically curtailed the services to Toowoomba and to Gympie but as far as the primary producers are concerned we have not done so, as we appreciate the work they are doing and we are prepared to allow the people of Brisbane and the other closely settled areas suffer some inconvenience in order that the primary producers may market their products as freely and as speedily as before.

Where are bridge projects being undertaken? Not in Brisbane but in the North—the Burdekin, Haughton and Elliott Rivers. These bridge undertakings are going on at the present time. The only expenditure on railway station buildings is at Cairns and despite the jibes of the hon. member for Mirani, I would remind him that although these people are a thousand miles from Brisbane they do not show resentment at Government policy, as was exemplified at the municipal elections of a few months ago when they returned record Labour representation in the municipality of Cairns.

**Mr. Pie:** What about the Rockhampton railway station? That was promised.

**Mr. DUGGAN:** Work is proceeding on that at the present time. Tenders have been called for the buildings at Cairns and so soon as the plans are completed—and the architects are working at the present time on the preparation of plans for Rockhampton—that will be proceeded with. If I have the honour to remain the Minister for Transport the next railway station to be built will be at Ipswich. That will be the order of construction.

The time has been inadequate to deal with all the charges made against my party, but I feel I have answered some adequately and believe that the mass of the people of Queensland are satisfied with the majority representation in this Parliament and that the record of achievement we are able to show will be reflected by the majority we shall attain in the 1950 elections.

**Mr. TURNER** (Kelvin Grove) (2.53 p.m.): The hon. member for Mirani endeavoured to discredit the Government and also the hon. member for Kennedy as to the pollution of the Herbert River. That hon. member knows very well that the hon. member for Kennedy has continually urged in this Chamber that something be done to abate that nuisance. He moreover chides the hon. member for Logan, as a representative of that company, for not doing something in the interests of the people of the Kennedy electorate. He knows, too, that the hon. member for Kennedy has raised this question in this Chamber; at least, if he does not know that, he must have been absent on every occasion.

As the result of the efforts of the hon. member for Kennedy, the Government have made many attempts to abate this nuisance. On one occasion it was suggested that the tin dredging project be closed. I understand that the greater part of £3,000,000 has been invested in it. Australia requires 3,000 tons of tin annually for local requirements. Two thousand tons of these requirements are produced in this State and two-thirds of that production comes from this project at Mount Garnet. It has been suggested that the project be closed until this nuisance is abated, if it can be.

Would the hon. member for Mirani sit here and agree to the closing down of that project and in a year's time have no tin to make containers for the treacle, syrup, and other by-products of the sugar in which he is interested? I venture to say that he would not. The Government are not prepared to close down this project.

It is generally agreed by all hon. members that the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, Mr. Kemp, is the most able man in the Commonwealth. He and all his scientific officers investigated the matter at the request of the Government and have been unable to find an absolute solution. The Government also obtained the loan of the services of Mr. Strom, a member of the Victorian Sludge Abatement Board, who made a thorough investigation of the matter, and the only solution he could offer was to get rid of it by evaporation. The Secretary for Public Lands has had a conference with the representatives of the company, who are happy to do anything humanly possible to abate the nuisance. The only suggestion that can have any claim to success is too costly. We have to decide between spending a tremendous amount of money on abating the nuisance and closing down the enterprise.

It is wrong for any hon. member to come in here and attempt, as the hon. member for Mirani did, to discredit not only the Government but the representative of that electorate, who has done so much at every possible opportunity to get the Government to do something, while the Government in their turn have done everything possible to overcome the difficulty. In their efforts to defeat the hon. member for Kennedy at the last election, representatives of the Liberal Party told the people in the electorate if they were returned they would abate the nuisance. If these people have the capacity to abate the

nuisance, they now have an opportunity to give the necessary information to the Government so that it can be done in the interests of those people about whom the hon. member for Mirani claimed to be so concerned this morning.

The Leader of the Opposition did his best to bolster up the appeal for another State in North Queensland. I suggest that the people who are so active in this movement should become bigger Queenslanders before suggesting that we split the State up. I have returned only recently from the North, and I was horrified to find that among the people most prominent in this appeal for a new State—they were the big merchants and business people of the North—in 95 per cent. of the cases have big displays in their windows offering goods from southern States. They sell very little from their own State. Their windows are dressed with southern foods, jams, and preserves. Hon. members of the Country Party are keenly interested also in this big concern into which the Government have put £300,000, the C.O.D. cannery.

**Mr. Nicklin:** The Government have not put one penny into it.

**Mr. TURNER:** They have guaranteed it to that amount, and I venture the opinion that the project would not have been undertaken if the Government had not given that guarantee. Why are not these country representatives up in the North urging those people in business there to try to create sales for this enterprise, which is working entirely in the interests of the fruit and vegetable growers of this State?

At this stage I wish to pay tribute to the mighty job done by this cannery and I wish to say something in its defence. As one who has been keenly interested in food production over the last 29 or 30 years, I issue a word of warning to these people that if they do not take action very quickly and get the Government to give them protective legislation against unscrupulous southern competition, they will go to the wall. Those who have interested themselves in these industries of ours and know what is going on will view with alarm the quality of goods coming into Queensland from the South.

**Mr. Luckins:** Why don't you protect them by law?

**Mr. TURNER:** I am bringing the matter before the Committee today. According to the laws in relation to the export of canned fruit to other parts of the world, a certain quantity of fruit has to be placed in each tin and the syrup or juice has to have a certain density. You do not find that in the stuff coming in from the South, because some of the tins coming from the South have as low as 17 ounces of fruit in them and the syrup in the containers does not measure up to the density of that required by law for export.

**Mr. Morris:** Do not the Pure Food Regulations control that?

**Mr. TURNER:** No; I am urging that some form of legislation be brought in to remedy the matter. If you take a teaspoon

of sugar out of each container of canned fruit coming from the South, you can imagine the quantity of sugar these people are saving in the tinning of their commodities. And if you took out 3 oz. of fruit from each tin, you can imagine the number of extra cans that would be got out of a given quantity of fruit. I say to these people who are urging a new deal for the north of Queensland that they should first of all make themselves good Queenslanders.

The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs disclosed that his department has spent £3,500,000 on hospitals in the area north of Mackay, and that figure represents £1,000,000 more than was spent in the area south of Mackay to the border. Does that sound like neglect?

**Mr. Kerr:** That is not right.

**Mr. TURNER:** It is right and I defy the hon. member for Oxley to deny it. I think that these people should start to look after Queensland first and get the people in the North to become big Queenslanders.

During the remaining time at my disposal I wish to deal with charges made against the State and Federal Governments that they are retarding the progress of industry in this State by taxation. The hon. member for Logan made reference to the subject this morning and said that people were tired of all this taxation. I cannot repeat his exact words, as I was not in the Chamber. During the last election campaign Mr. Chifley, in delivering his policy speech, told the people that he would reduce taxation when and where possible. He made no promises of any kind. Mr. Menzies came out and said that if his party was returned to power he would reduce taxation by 20 per cent., and within a few days Mr. Fadden said that his party if returned to power would reduce taxation by 28 per cent. The newspapers tried to embroil the Prime Minister in a controversy on taxation as to which party would make the greatest reduction. The Prime Minister, however, replied that he would not enter into a controversy with these people but repeated that he would reduce taxation when and where warranted. I contend that since he made that statement he has done more than he expected to do.

The reduction in taxation by the present Federal Labor Government since the end of the war amounts to 86½ per cent. Today taxation is lower than it has ever been in the history of the Commonwealth. From 1 July a single worker earning up to £500 a year pays no income tax whatever. Did anyone ever hear of a better concession than that?

**Mr. Maher:** I suggest that the hon. member should go and speak to the dairymen.

**Mr. TURNER:** I did speak to the dairymen and I proved conclusively to them how little the hon. member for West Moreton knew about the dairying industry. He contradicted me when I said that it took two gallons of milk to produce one pound of commercial butter. Some time later a farmer's journal issued by a co-operative

company endorsed my statement, yet the hon. member for West Moreton stood up and told me that I knew nothing about the dairying industry. I know that he does not forget the remark he made about the goat on the same night as he contradicted my statement.

Let me get back to the subject of taxation. From 1 July a man with a dependant wife and five children under the age of 16 years can earn £995 and be subject to no income taxation. Did anyone ever hear of such a thing before? Let me give hon. members these interesting figures showing the amounts that may be earned by the different classes of taxpayers from 1 July, 1949, without being subject to income taxation, together with the amounts prior to that date.

	Prior to 1st July, 1949.	From 1st July, 1949.
	Per annum £	Per annum £
Single taxpayer without dependents .. .. .	315	500
Taxpayer with dependent wife .. .. .	501	660
Taxpayer, dependent wife and one child .. .. .	613	771
Taxpayer, wife and two children .. .. .	..	827
Taxpayer, wife and three children .. .. .	..	883
Taxpayer, wife and four children .. .. .	..	939
Taxpayer, wife and five children .. .. .	..	995

Hon. members opposite say that taxation is ruining the country, that it is bleeding the country white and preventing production. It would be interesting to hear the opinions of Mr. Menzies and his colleagues over the years on the subject of taxation when they were in control of the Federal Government. Mr. Menzies is reported in the daily "Telegraph" of 4 April, 1946, as follows:—

"The Government must risk taxation cuts to increase production."

In the same year Dr. Page said—

"If the Government would halve taxation it would encourage production."

That was when they sat in Opposition and their opinions differed widely from what they said when they were in Government.

This is what Dr. Page said in 1920 and his remarks are contained in "Hansard" at page 5565—

"I make no complaint of the incidence of taxation. I do not complain of its being high because in my view, now is the time when we should tax ourselves with the object of reducing our public debt."

He then sat in Opposition. Speaking in 1921 he said—

"How can taxation be reduced if our indebtedness and interest bill is increased."

Mainly on account of the war, our public debt and interest bill have increased considerably and although Australia is today in a better economic position than it has ever been before, the Liberal-Country Party asks that the wealthy man, the large commercial and financial interests, be relieved of paying a

fair share to meet war costs, the re-establishment of our ex-service men and women and other necessary post-war commitments.

Taxation is not crippling industry. That taxation is not crippling industry is indicated by the large growth of industry throughout Australia and the large amounts of British and American capital that have been invested here.

This is important. Mr. S. Ricketson, chairman of Capel Court Investment Company, an organisation holding investments in no fewer than 217 companies, mostly in Australia and New Zealand, said on 22 March, 1948—

"Some Australians may perhaps over-emphasise their own political and industrial troubles, but careful examination of political, financial and economic conditions in all countries will disclose that Australia now is predominantly the best practicable field, the one offering the most attractions for investment of British capital, both directly or indirectly in the stocks of existing stable and expanding companies."

That is the statement of a man who does not support these cries about high taxation.

The following table bears out this statement:—

Year.	Profits before Tax.	Income Taxes Paid.	Profits after Tax.	Dividends Paid.
1938-39 ..	84	15	69	27
1939-40 ..	99	19	80	30
1940-41 ..	103	29	79	33
1941-42 ..	116	45	71	36
1942-43 ..	123	48	75	35
1943-44 ..	135	50	85	38
1944-45 ..	134	58	76	35
1945-46 ..	131	53	78	34
1946-47 ..	155	51	104	36
1947-48 ..	167	67	100	41

Yet they tell us that taxation is retarding production! What has produced these high profits? Has it not been greater production?

The most important thing to me is that the dividends paid have increased, too. That is exemplified in the following table:—

Year.	Per cent.
1941-42 .. .. .	36
1942-43 .. .. .	35
1943-44 .. .. .	38
1944-45 .. .. .	35
1945-46 .. .. .	34
1946-47 .. .. .	36
1947-48 .. .. .	41

That table reveals that an increase of 52 per cent. was paid in dividends to shareholders. Does that sound like high taxation crippling industry and retarding production? As the hon. member for Bremer pointed out last session, the greater demand is causing the present shortages rather than a shortage of production.

The promises made by the Liberal-Country Party to reduce taxation must be considered in the light of previous experience. In the past they have given taxation reduction that has benefited the wealthy and have often done so at the expense of the least favoured people. In 1933 the U.A.P. Government made remissions in taxation that benefited 700 people,

of a population of 7,000,000. The salaries of these people averaged £5,200 a year. This was done at the expense of those in less fortunate circumstances. The Government saved these people £500,000 in taxation! It will not be forgotten that in the depression years of 1932-33 the U.A.P. Government reduced pensions and at the same time made taxation reductions that considerably benefited big land- and property-owners and companies to the extent of millions of pounds. They were not concerned about the poor creatures walking the streets looking for jobs and without a loaf of bread. They reduced old-age pensions and at the same time reduced the taxation on wealthy people to the extent of millions of pounds.

Nor will it be forgotten that although there were thousands of people unemployed in 1936, 1937 and 1938 the Liberal Government made available only £150,000 to be spent on works as Christmas relief for 1936; £100,000 in 1937 and nothing in 1938. They were not concerned a scrap about the poor people who were unemployed. They did not care whether they had anything on their table for Christmas dinner, or whether they could give their children a happy Christmas or not, so long as they were able to give big tax reductions to the people they represented.

The Liberal-Country Party during those years of distress would not ask the wealthy to pay a little more to help those who had nothing and were on the dole. As a consequence, it was no wonder that Archbishop, now Cardinal, Gilroy, declared in November, 1940, that the Government's plans for increased taxes to help finance the war showed that—

“Before the war they were guilty of cant and humbug in saying they could not find the money to relieve the unemployed and homeless.”

That statement appeared in the “Sydney Morning Herald” of 25 November, 1940.

The reason for the Liberal Party's advocacy for an all-round reduction is obvious. It would mean that the man with a large income would receive very considerable reductions, whereas the man on the lower income would receive only a small benefit. For instance, an all-round decrease of 20 per cent., as proposed by Mr. Menzies in August, 1946, would have meant that a married man, with a wife and two children, earning £300 a year, would benefit by £2 7s. a year, 10d. a week, whereas the man with a wife and two children on £5,000 would benefit by £569 a year.

Labour Governments realise to the full that in sacrificing portions of his income the rich man does not make sacrifices that are physical. He is still able to live in comfort and afford the many luxuries that money can buy, and as a consequence should be willing to contribute largely to the expenses brought about by the war and to effect an amelioration of the conditions of the people in less favourable circumstances.

Since the war the Government have progressively reduced taxation, with the result that most of the taxpayers now pay half—and many less than half—of the amount they

paid during the war on corresponding incomes. In making these reductions the Government have had special regard for those on the lower and middle incomes.

I think that proves conclusively that the Government have been able to do what they promised. Having done it, they have earned the praise of a Sydney daily paper, the “Sunday Herald.” I quote from the issue of that paper dated 30 January, 1949.

“Financial Review.

“Australia is Rapidly Becoming a Creditor-Nation.

“Strength for Emergency.

“Australia, 17 years ago one of the world's embarrassed debtors, is now within measurable distance of becoming a creditor-nation. Two or three export seasons like the present one should enable this milestone in national maturity to be passed.

“A net amount of only about £195,000,000 is now owed to residents of Britain and America.

“Reserves of international currency (in gold and balances abroad) of more than £338,000,000 offset long-term debts of Commonwealth and State Governments amounting to £533,000,000.”

As I notice you are about to tell me that my time is up, Mr. Keyatta, I will conclude.

**Mr. MAHER** (West Moreton) (3.19 p.m.): I notice from the Governor's Speech on the opening day that the receipts in the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the year ended 30 June, 1949, amounted to £32,979,078, and the expenditure to £32,929,355, showing a surplus of £49,723. I note, too, that the Treasurer apparently made a bad blue that would necessitate brushing up his mathematics, because he was no less than £1,486,000 out in his estimate of expenditure in the Railway Department for the year.

That is an enormous sum for the Treasurer to be out in his forecast for the year's operation and by the same token he was deeply astray in his expected railway revenue for the year, as £1,403,000 more than his estimate was actually collected. Had I made an error like that in the days when I went to school in New South Wales the schoolmaster would have called me out for a “sixer.”

It would be well for members of the Government to realise the tremendous drift taking place in this country in respect of the depreciation of the value of our currency. It is all very well to point to figures showing the value of production and the tremendous increase in the monetary turnover in every direction today, but let us not forget the cold fact that the value of our pound is at least half what it was and is still tending downwards. Hon. members of the Government should read the very timely remarks of Mr. Colin Clark before members of the Economic Society, in which he pointed out the dangers inherent in the present inflationary drift. He pointed out that unless the Government were prepared to face up to it and take remedial action, unpopular though it might be, we could find ourselves in the difficulties that other countries in the world have

had to face because of the failure of democratic Governments to face the same issue. The hon. member for Logan pointed out that different sections of the community were being paid today in what is, in effect, bad money—the pensioner or the person deriving income from investment in bonds and shares is not receiving any increase in the fixed amount.

**Mr. Macdonald:** The new poor.

**Mr. MAHER:** They become the new poor in the community. The fall in the value of our currency is responsible for much of the unrest in the industrial life of the nation today and something must be done about it. It would be well for the Treasurer to give some thought to this important matter. The whole country could be ruined, and nobody worse than the workers, because in every country it is the worker who suffers the most. It was the working man who suffered the most in Germany and in Russia when the value of the currency there fell after the first world war. As Mr. Colin Clark quoted, this is so in every instance. It was a Minister of the French Parliament who told the workers of France, if they were to get £50 a week, they would not be better off than in the days of £3 a week because the increase would affect the cost of everything produced and manufactured in the country and this would also make it increasingly difficult for the country to export its goods in competition with other countries in other parts of the world that had sound currency. That is only a passing thought, but I should like the Treasurer to give some consideration to it.

Yesterday I asked the Premier a question to which he made this reply—

“It would be highly improper for the Queensland Government to press the Prime Minister for the provision of a secret ballot to afford the miners an opportunity of declaring for a return to work.”

Where does it become improper for the Government of the State that is feeling the effects of the coal strike, that has miners on strike—and these miners are covered by Federal awards—to press the Prime Minister to afford lawful means whereby the miners might declare themselves, under secret conditions, in favour of going back to work? The Premier's answer that it would be highly improper, and his general evasion of the proposal will be coldly received by thousands of workless people in this State and across the border in New South Wales, by aged folk, by small business men, and by women and children who are suffering from the effects of the coal strike.

**Mr. Theodore:** The Premier said he thought the Prime Minister was quite capable of handling this question without any interference.

**Mr. MAHER:** The Prime Minister has proved himself signally incapable of handling the situation and a little stimulus from other directions might help him to see things in the right perspective. The victims of the strike will derive no consolation from the

knowledge that the Queensland Government are not prepared to do all in their power to break the stranglehold that the militant strike leaders have on the miners. It is generally agreed by close observers in New South Wales, and in Queensland especially, that the majority of the miners today want to get back to work. The leaders, however, in conferences in New South Wales, have decided against the calling of aggregate meetings of the striking miners and therefore the striking miners have no method of escape from the vice-like grip in which they are held by those militant leaders.

The Premier, in a broadcast on 25 July, urged the miners to return to work, and I want to give him credit for that. This was the broadcast in which the Australian Broadcasting Commission refused the Premier the right to talk over the national network. I found a certain measure of grim humour in the Premier's wrangle with the Australian Broadcasting Commission. The Australian Broadcasting Commission represents a nationalised radio system. The Premier is a Socialist who has signed on the dotted line for the nationalisation of industry. The humour lies in the fact that the Premier, being a staunch pillar of the nationalisation of industry, became the victim of the machine in which he believes and which he seeks to impose upon the will of the community and which he helped to create. If the Premier of a sovereign State can be denied the right of speech over the air on a nationalised radio, what chance has the ordinary citizen got? If we apply the same principle in another direction, I can visualise the Premier, if Mr. Chifley were to get his way—God forbid in the interests of the country!—and establish nationalisation of banking with one gigantic monopoly of banking by the Commonwealth, as he proposes, going into the manager of the one and only bank and asking for an overdraft and being refused.

He could be refused just as he was refused by the nationalised radio system of the right to state his case. When there is only one banking system or authority, where all opposition is swept aside in the interests of this nationalisation of industry what chance has a man got when the powers that be say “No” to a legitimate request? What redress has he got? Where can he turn? There is no competition and if the bureaucrat in charge does not like the colour of the applicant's hair or if the applicant does not wear the old school tie that he wears, he can say, “No,” and there is no appeal from Caesar whatever. In this fight that the Premier had with the A.B.C.—I had a good deal of sympathy with him—he became the victim of the system he believes in and of the tyranny he is trying to impose upon us all. It reminds me of the story of the man who invented the guillotine in France. His head was the first to fall into the basket from the machine of his own creation—hoist with his own petard. That was the position in respect to the Premier and the A.B.C.

In his broadcast the Premier referred to the coal strike as senseless strife and he

went further and said that the community is conscious that a war is being waged upon it and true to its Australian character is fighting back. Those are the Premier's own words. Quite right that the community is fighting back, but what support is the community getting from the Queensland Government? What have the State Government done to get the miners back to work? Talk gives very little help indeed. We heard an eloquent and interesting contribution to the debate by the Minister for Transport but not a word of what he said would bring in one more skip of coal or offer constructive thought to getting the men back to work. The majority of the men want to get back to work. Of that I am sure. I ask again: what are the Queensland Government doing? What have the Government of New South Wales done, a Government led by Mr. McGirr? I say that Mr. Hanlon has pursued the same technique in the present coal strike as he did in the meat strike, which dragged on for four long months, and in the transport strike, that lasted for six or seven weeks. He is sitting tight and hoping to wear the strikers down by attrition and to force them back to work in due time. His colleague in New South Wales is doing the same thing.

Mr. Chifley is not prepared to give the miners a secret ballot because it would offend trade union leaders who derive much of their power over big bodies of men by the open vote at mass meetings. The men in many cases are afraid to speak and from my talks to them, watersiders and coal-miners are terrified in many cases to raise their hands against the demand of the union executive. In today's Press we read of bashings in New South Wales by the extreme element and of the police being called in.

It is fear on the part of a large number of workers of being bashed or being framed or being hounded off the job that causes them to vote for a strike when a decision is made by a show of hands at a mass meeting. That is why the secret ballot is essential—to give these men the opportunity to vote according to their consciences, according to their inclinations and decisions made in the quiet of their homes with the advice of their families.

Mr. Chifley has been urged time and again in the Federal House and in previous disputes to introduce the secret ballot. He has been pressed on all sides during the present trouble to give the men this democratic right but he has remained adamant and fixed in his determination not to do so. Mr. Chifley, however, is prepared to use the armed forces to break the strike in New South Wales, quite contrary to the platform and policy of the Australian Labour Party, which clearly says that the armed forces shall not be used to break up industrial disputes. He has violated his own policy in employing the armed forces. This method, I will admit, is at least bringing in some coal but in my opinion—it is only my own personal opinion—the armed forces should not be used to mine coal except in the last resort, when every other lawful method has failed. There is no need to use the armed forces to mine coal. There

are plenty of men willing to work the open-cuts in New South Wales and Queensland, and good unionists at that. Why use the members of the armed forces when you can get good unionists who are prepared in the hour of crisis in the nation to do the job?

Mr. Chifley also provided for the freezing of union funds but did so in such clumsy fashion that the unions concerned were able to withdraw their funds from the banks before the law became effective. Although a number of strike leaders have been gaoled, the gaoing was not done by any act or direction of the Chifley Government. It is important to note this as the Prime Minister's apologists are using this argument as evidence of his strength in dealing with the strike leaders. The men in gaol are there because they violated the rules of the court by disobeying the court's order.

**Mr. Moore** interjected.

**Mr. MAHER:** The Secretary for Mines does not like this. He does not like the truth. It hurts him. Why is no move made by Mr. Chifley's Government to give the men a secret vote on this issue? Why does he burke the question?

Again, why does the Prime Minister not move to ban the Communist Party and impose drastic penalties on Communists or others who disobey our industrial laws? Again, why does he not move to debar Communists from holding executive office in any trades union? It is too great a risk to the safety and well-being of this country to have men of doubtful loyalty in full charge of key industries. But, no, Mr. Chifley will continue his policy of appeasement like Mr. Hanlon, like Mr. McGirr, no matter who suffers or for how long he suffers.

This appeasement policy is not new. It was the policy adopted towards the southern miners during the war period by the Government led by the late Mr. Curtin. Away back in 1942, on many occasions, Mr. Curtin condemned the actions of the miners and their leaders. On 26 February, 1942, he said—

“The action of two New South Wales south-coast pits in stopping work is contemptible and contemptuous. Appropriate action will be taken by the Federal Government against all concerned.”

I could quote you a dozen other statements made by Mr. Curtin, but time will not permit. Despite all these passionate appeals by Mr. Curtin and strong statements that Mr. Curtin made in the Federal Parliament and throughout the country, when it came to a show-down Mr. Curtin invariably gave in and appeased the striking elements. Now Mr. Chifley is doing exactly the same thing. It is the cumulative effect of continuous appeasement by our Federal Labour Governments who have constantly yielded ground that has encouraged the extreme elements in Australia to believe that they could with safety paralyse industry dominate Governments and run the country by Rafferty rules.

Newspaper reports suggest that the Federal elections will be deferred until December although they are due next month on the

ground that it will give time for the people to forget the failure of the Federal Labour Government to defend the people's rights at this critical time. There should be an urgent demand on Mr. Chifley to fix the election round about its due time to give the people an opportunity to deal with those who are responsible very largely for the industrial lawlessness, mass unemployment and disruption of industry in Australia today.

**Mr. THEODORE** (Herbert) (3.43 p.m.): This debate lends itself to the discussion of a wide scope of subjects and criticism of the various policies or subjects affecting vital questions. The Opposition have taken full advantage of the opportunity afforded them to criticise the Government in their activities and to condemn their actions without restraint. We know that at the moment conditions are very disturbed. We know too that our economy is upset, not as a result of something that the Government have not done or are doing but as a result of the intrusion into this country of a set of circumstances and people who are endeavouring to destroy our political economy. They are endeavouring to destroy the Government and our institutions. They are endeavouring to make the people believe that their representatives are not acting in the interests of the workers they have been elected to represent but are acting in the interests of people opposed entirely to the interests of the workers. By this means they are attempting to introduce into this country an ideology quite foreign to the people and one that the people do not desire at all. We realise that these attacks are being made not only in this State but throughout the Commonwealth. They are directed principally against our institutions for the sole purpose of destroying them and our Australian way of life. The action of these people has created many of the problems and difficulties that confront the Government.

The Leader of the Opposition has attributed to the 40-hour week a great deal of the loss of production and loss of revenue to this State, but the responsibility cannot be laid entirely at the door of the 40-hour week.

I believe that members of the Opposition did not think the 40-hour week would be detrimental to the economy of the State if those who benefited by it played their part and made a fair effort. If the men worked and gave good service the 40-hour week would not seriously affect the economy of the State at all. The trouble is that in certain industries the workers have been interfered with and the result has been a detrimental effect on the economy of this country. When you examine the industries where the workers are not interfered with and where they are giving the employers a fair deal, you find that those industries are not complaining about the 40-hour week. The object of the 40-hour week was a sound one. The only thing is perhaps that because of the lack of man-power and the great demand for goods it was introduced too soon.

In the sugar industry we do not complain about the work of the men under the 40-hour week. It has had some effect in our industry

because it has been difficult to get adequate and competent labour to handle the cane required to keep the mills going. Instead of having a surplus of cane to start with at the beginning of the week, we found that owing to the 40-hour week the crushing was reduced to 35, 36 or 37 hours. In order to overcome that difficulty we shall have to adopt the practice of burning and cutting sufficient cane in each week to carry us over the week-end. That will have a detrimental effect on the economy of the industry, owing to deterioration.

As I said, no-one in the sugar industry complains about go-slow on the part of the men engaged in it, but it is apparent that there is serious interference in many other industries. I believe this is not because of the desire of the men themselves to adopt these methods, but because of interference by people who are endeavouring to create a position that will suit them by bringing about dissatisfaction, discord and discontent in an industry and in its train misery and want among the people. This result is being exploited by those who are in an industry for the sole purpose of creating disruption. This has accentuated the opinion that the introduction of the 40-hour week is responsible for a great deal of lag in production and that sort of thing. Certainly it has resulted in some shortages, but nobody would complain about that if the men working the 40-hour week were allowed to give a fair day's work.

**Mr. Morris:** What do you mean by "allowed?"

**Mr. THEODORE:** As I have pointed out, there is interference with the men by Communists and the result of that interference is the adoption of go-slow tactics and that kind of thing. It is idle to close one's eyes to the fact that this is being done. Very often stoppages occur because some man comes along and has a short talk with a few men on a job and then other workmen are held up. This is an easy matter for such disruptionists. They are well trained. It is their job to interfere with production by causing hold-ups. This is witnessed almost every week throughout the State.

I believe there is some ground for complaint, as alleged by some of the members of the Opposition—that the 40-hour week is responsible for some loss, but I would remind them that members of the Opposition supported the Bill introducing that system when it passed through the House. They realised that it was a step in the right direction. It will be of advantage to the country in such a time as we must experience in the near future or perhaps later, when there will be unemployment, and when it will be only reasonable to expect people to share whatever employment is available. That is one of the logical reasons for the introduction of the 40-hour week. However, at the present time there is more work than men: there are numbers of jobs going begging, and certain persons have taken advantage of that position; consequently the 40-hour week has not worked out immediately as it was expected

it would do so. But I believe it is a step in the right direction. It is not only here that the system has been adopted; New Zealand has had a 40-hour week for years, and there it has worked very satisfactorily.

The Leader of the Opposition blamed the Government for the loss in production. We are not getting the production which we are entitled to expect, for various reasons.

I do not know of any country in the world that is not suffering somewhat similarly from the same causes, but to say that production is falling in all industries is not correct because, as I pointed out by way of interjection this morning, the sugar industry produced a record crop last season. The Leader of the Opposition said that was due to the good season. That is a contributing factor, but the fact remains that the crop had to be harvested. It certainly was harvested, but under difficulties because, owing to the war and all the other things that follow as the result of war, we had new and inexperienced men in the industry; but notwithstanding that we harvested the crop.

I wish to emphasise that the Government cannot be blamed for any loss of production that is caused by matters over which they have no control. It is only fair to point out that often they are blamed wrongly for things that happen through causes over which they have no control. As I have stated, in the sugar industry, which is conducted efficiently, we get satisfactory results from the men engaged in it.

I come now to the vexed question of the Herbert River pollution. This is an important matter and a small part of my electorate is affected by that pollution. It is time that some drastic measures were taken to deal with the problem. Whether the Government would have power to close down the dredge until some means of coping with the nuisance was discovered, I do not know. If the Government decided to give the company the alternatives of closing down or remedying the trouble, I doubt whether they would have power to order that it should close down. The fact is that something should be done to meet the position. That hon. members opposite who are concerned with the problem stated during the last election campaign that they would immediately cope with the problem if they were returned to power shows that they realise its seriousness. I do not know whether they were sincere.

**Mr. Morris:** They are always sincere.

**Mr. THEODORE:** They have not done much to help the Government to abate the nuisance, if they know how to do it. They have failed to tell us the extent to which they would be prepared to go in order to carry out the promise they made to the people, but when they made that promise they knew they would have no possible chance of honouring it because they knew they would not be returned to power.

I have a word or two more to say about the sugar industry. Much criticism has been levelled against the Government in regard to matters in the minds of the hon. members of the Opposition who have spoken but I take

this opportunity of making reference to the proposed expansion within the industry. That proposed expansion is of vital importance to many people who have long lived in North Queensland in the hope that some day they would get out of the rut they are in at present. Part of the 137,000 tons added to the mill peaks will be allocated to bringing up the acreages of some of the growers who are now regarded as having less than a living area. The extra assignments to these men will not account for much of the 137,000 tons, because there are not many in that position and a considerable amount will be allocated to new farmers.

It is very desirable that new farmers be brought into the industry. The new men will be keen cane farmers because they have a guaranteed market at an assured price and they will devote their energies to the job. I believe that the extra assignments should be given in the first place to those men who have so long lived on the land and who failed to get assignments when the mills were first built, many of them because they lived just outside the areas of those mills. Now they will be included in the assigned areas, given assignments of cane, and lifted out of their present difficulties.

No-one owning a large tract of land will be able to sell the land at high prices to those buying it for the purpose of sugar-growing. Established men with mixed-farming areas who, because of their inability to make a living from their holdings, have had to take employment under local councils or do other work to get sufficient to live on, should get consideration. It is desirable that preference be given to those men, most of them married with families who have lived in the sugar-growing areas in the hope that some day the time would come when they would get assignments. It was expected, for instance, when the Tully sugar mill was built that the Australian consumption would increase to the extent of requiring a new mill equal to the Tully mill every three years. But things have not worked out like that. As a result of the introduction of new varieties and better methods of cultivation, our production per acre has increased enormously.

The necessary increase therefore has largely been made up by improved production on areas already under cultivation, but now that increased peaks have been approved new sugar mills will shortly be required, and in the course of a few years two new mills will be needed. That will give an opportunity for the opening up of some of the very fine rich land in North Queensland. I refer particularly to some of the Tully land and land down as far as Ingham where there is sufficient to warrant another new mill. In the meantime I hope that those who will be deputed to allot the additional areas will consider those men who have waited so long and struggled hard under trying conditions to make a living from the land. They should get additional areas.

**Mr. RUSSELL (Dalby) (4.7 p.m.):** After visiting the Queensland-British Food Corporation's project at Peak Downs, I am left with

the impression that all is not as it should be. While the officers and the various officials in charge of the organisation are very courteous one is again left with the impression that they are trying to justify a socialistic experiment that is following the pattern of most Government enterprises.

To bear out that suggestion, I point to the fact that recently when a party of politicians visited the area operations were deliberately moved from where they were being carried out on an average crop to where the crop was richest so as to give the impression of greater success, better yield, and so on. Surely there is no need for such boosting as it is not in the interests of the corporation itself or of the State in general.

This land is very like the Darling Downs. It has a rainfall equal to it, but more of it falls in the summer months. The soil is of volcanic origin, friable, and lends itself to cultivation. The heavy rainfall, coupled with the friable nature of the soil, is responsible for its richness. It is equal to anything in Australia.

The first evidence of its possibilities, from an agricultural point of view, is to be seen in the weed growth that is there. There is evidence of all the weeds that grow on the Darling Downs and others in addition. There are mint weed, the castor-oil plant, rosella, bullhead, and others that go with rich agricultural soil. The castor-oil plant is not bad at the moment, but there is plenty of evidence of it, and I am afraid that in a few years' time it is going to be a very severe menace.

In passing I should like to mention that in the past an export licence would not have been granted for the export of sorghum seed from the Darling Downs carrying castor-oil seed. I saw plenty of evidence at Peak Downs of the presence of the castor-oil seed.

Before passing from the problem of weed growth, I want to emphasise a problem that is going to face the project in growing summer crops at the same time as this weed growth naturally appears.

We find that the weeds virtually take charge of the country, particularly when a sorghum crop cannot be grown every year. The Corporation should have some plan of growing alternate crops or cultivating the country to keep weeds off it.

The method of growing sorghum adopted is that every second row of the combine is stopped up in order to get a fair width of soil between the rows. That will allow mint weed, castor-oil and other weeds to grow with it. The Corporation will be very fortunate indeed if it can obtain a clean crop in a few years' time. This is a very serious factor that has not been considered in this project.

Moreover, the friable and mulching nature of the soil make it very prone to erosion. This erosion is greatly in evidence on all the slopes and contours. The only way to avoid serious erosion in this type of land is by contour ploughing and from my observation insufficient attention is being paid to the need for it. If this is not done, and

this country is ploughed up on a very large scale, as it is suggested will be done, a tremendous area will be lost to future generations. I urge the Corporation and the Government to inquire as to the proper handling of this soil in the direction of paying more attention to contour ploughing.

The yield this year is disappointing. The original estimate was 1,250,000 bushels of sorghum, but it would appear now that it will be closer to 300,000 bushels. The grain generally is poor by Darling Downs standards.

Quite a large percentage of the grain is at present on the ground. This could have been saved by closer attention to header adjustment. Some of the larger grain is being cracked by machinery and lost in the straw in the process of threshing. This again could have been avoided by header adjustments. Alternatively, better results could have been got by moving the machinery more quickly through it. Farming is an individual's job and cannot be done on a mass scale like this because uninterested labour does not pay proper attention to the job.

We heard something this morning about machinery in answer to questions. The machinery I saw is all in good order because it is new, but what does concern us on the Darling Downs is the measure of priority that this corporation is getting. Four weeks ago 25 new ploughs from the Shearer company were sent to Cullin-la-ringo to start the new operations there. This is rightly resented by many farmers on the Downs who have been waiting for a longer period for these ploughs than this food corporation has been in existence. It is very disturbing to realise that a newcomer in the form of this socialistic organisation can get prior claim on Australian and dollar sources for machinery that is denied to Downs farmers and is being severely rationed to them.

**Mr. Hanlon:** That would cut out all machinery for soldier settlement.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** Farmers on the Downs are not getting the supplies that have been ordered and yet this machinery is going up there. This is proof that the Queensland farmers are being misled. They are being told that there is no steel for these products and yet we find these machines are going up there. The answer to the question this morning is proof of the correctness of what I state.

In the matter of buildings, it was interesting to note the large igloo building that was there. It represented an extravagant amount of shed space for the maintenance and housing of the machinery. I point this out because it is being denied to the farmers of the Downs. At the present time iron cannot be obtained at all. When our traders had the initiative to go down to Newcastle with their own trucks to buy iron they were not allowed to sell it because they could not get permission to put a surcharge representing the road carriage on the iron. There were 50 tons held by one firm in Brisbane

in this manner. Orders were prevented from being supplied on the Downs and elsewhere by the prices branch and that department eventually gave permission to add the surcharge, provided the traders supplied it to the Government; so the iron was given to the Government and not to the farmers. Now our people are being told to buy Japanese iron at £72 a ton, which is about £30 a ton dearer than the iron they were not allowed to purchase by reason of the price-fixing authorities here.

I had an opportunity while in the Peak Downs area to look at a farm four miles from Capella owned by Mr. W. Tweedie. I noticed that the soil was similar and the yield of the crop was four times better. This man had no storage for grain. He had to put his grain on the trucks as it was harvested. He asked permission to use the surplus shed accommodation made available at Capella for the Queensland-British Food Corporation, but it was not given.

In addition to this, Mr. Tweedie was using second-hand bags. I saw some of the bags and he had stuffed the holes with paper. I said to him, "Why are you not using new bags?" and he replied, "We cannot get them." I saw thousands of bags stacked in these empty sheds—bales of them—and they are using new bags in the Queensland-British Food Corporation project, yet the sorghum-growers on the Downs and Mr. Tweedie are unable to get new bags in which to put the sorghum and consequently they would probably be denied export licences.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I rise to a point of order. I do not expect in this Chamber to hear statements that are incorrect and untruthful in the interests of the State.

**Hon. Members** interjecting.

**Mr. Barnes:** Shut up, you mug!

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Hilton): I ask the hon. member for Bundaberg to withdraw that statement.

**Mr. Barnes:** I withdraw it.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** There is no point of order regarding the statements made by the hon. member. It is political comment and every member has the right to express his opinions.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** Recently the corporation entered the field of grazing. It has purchased approximately 412,000 acres in connection with its various activities.

The cattle there are doing very well. They are feeding on the grain because half the crop is on the ground. The cattle have a variety of feed: they have the natural pastures that were there always and the added nutriment in the grain lying on the ground. I think this grazing undertaking of the corporation will be very successful, provided the corporation does not charge the cost of growing the grain against the cattle-raising.

One of the serious effects is the drawing from private owners much of the available station labour. That was, I feel, not the

original intention of this organisation. When we, as the Opposition, gave qualified support to the general principles of growing food for Britain, we felt that one of the first things to be done would be to bring people from Great Britain but there are no migrants at all there.

Recently, when in London, I spoke to the Agent-General for Queensland, who told me he was concerned that there were not sufficient nominations from Queensland to fill the likely available shipping space. In this project we have an instance of the British Government's making an investment and no British migrants on the project at all. This is not solving the British problem.

Australians may not realise that there is plenty of food in America. The wheat crop there is now being restricted. There is plenty of pig-meat available, which the British Government cannot buy because of the shortage of dollars.

This socialistic experiment being carried out under the guise of food for Britain will not bear out the promises of success and I feel the way things are moving in England it will probably be beyond the pockets of the British taxpayer to pay it. The British problem is lack of purchasing power and Britain ultimately, if she goes on with her socialistic experiment in the way she has been doing, is just as likely to be short of sterling as she is of dollars.

I feel no prudent person can deny the possibility of a slump in so far as British trade is concerned and if that happens the "planners" will have to realise very soon that the only way to create real wealth is by hard work, and that plans will not get them out of their present difficulties.

At the present time British economy is being propped up by extended credits from America and other parts of the world. At any rate, it will be our problem to get paid for our products.

The presence of this organisation, with its unfair priorities and the resultant restrictions being placed on the ordinary farmers on the Darling Downs, has resulted in less production for the State and for Great Britain than would be the case otherwise. One finds in all Government undertakings a top-heaviness of management, which does not occur in private undertakings. I was interested when visiting this undertaking recently to see at one particular place, the farm stores section, a staff of seven clerks at work. I saw the same thing at the head station. I do not know how many office clerks would be employed in the Brisbane office.

I would ask the Minister whether it is the ultimate intention to cut up this huge area for the benefit of closer settlement. Surely it is inconsistent, to say the least of it, that the Government should be cutting up areas on the Darling Downs not very dissimilar from this. They are forcing closer settlement there and at the same time they are creating in this other area the biggest farm in the world.

**Mr. Hanlon:** You do not believe in that?

**Mr. RUSSELL:** Not for agricultural purposes. The compulsory acquisition of these areas is foreign to our sense of fair play and justice. They are taking these lands at their price—I refer particularly to Wolfang—

**Mr. Hanlon:** That is not true. Every bit of ground was obtained by negotiation.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** They had to agree. They had the choice of a kick in the pants or a punch in the jaw. The point is that if this corporation does not get eventually into collective farming, it will ultimately sell the land for probably £2 an acre or something in excess of that, and who is going to get that money?

It follows the same lines as the British Overseas Food Corporation projects in other parts of the world. I have a cutting from the London "Times" dated 10 May, 1949, that cites the bad luck associated with all its projects—one of the things this organisation seems to deal in very extensively is bad luck. I have not the time to read the whole of that cutting, but it reads inter alia—

"More modest pilot schemes in a number of different districts might have saved the taxpayer many millions and avoided the hectic reorganisation in which the chairman of the Overseas Food Corporation is now engaged."

That is what should have been done at Peak Downs. I urge the Government, before it is too late, to look where it is going, to see what they are going to do with the resultant product before they ruin large areas of country up there.

There is no question that this country is suitable for closer settlement. I said that—my remarks may be seen in "Hansard"—before the Queensland-British Food Corporation was ever thought of, but the form of settlement being adopted is liable to be ruinous because not enough individual attention is given to the areas that are farmed. The only solution of the problem is to get more people. The original intention was to have more people here to tend the land, and that would have contributed towards solving the British problem also. Basically, and without going into detail, the British problem is that she has far too many people for her shrunken economy to maintain. That is where we could come in and help, but it will not be solved by growing food to maintain that heavy population in the Old Country. The economies of the whole thing are wrong.

I suggest that this corporation is just working blindly. It sets out to grow an enormous amount of grain sorghum without knowing what it is going to do with it or whether the country can do it successfully year after year. I have cited the problems that are likely to arise so far as thick weed growth is concerned. It is a difficulty that has prevented the continual growing of grain sorghum on the Darling Downs. We have found we cannot do it every year.

With no limit to the costs of production, any crop can be cited as successful, and that

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is what they have done. In my opinion this year's crop would not be worth more than £100,000.

Compare that with the enormous expenditure up there and visualise what could have been produced on the Darling Downs had the Government said, "We will give you a decent export price and give you the machines to do the work." We should have produced far more than has been produced at Peak Downs. Generally the grain produced by the Queensland-British Food Corporation would not be up to export standards as we have known them.

**Mr. PATERSON (Bowen) (4.31 p.m.):** Several speakers during the debate have touched on the coal strike and the coal position. It is interesting to note that the hon. member for Logan admitted that the arbitration system has one serious defect in that when a strike threatens and particularly once a strike has broken out, the Arbitration Court decides to sit pat and refuses to do anything until the men go back to work.

The Minister for Transport quite rightly admitted that there was widespread discontent in many parts of the world and if I understood him correctly he implied that the Federal Government or the Federal Court of Conciliation and Arbitration made a serious mistake in sending to gaol a number of the miners' leaders because he correctly stated that in spite of the fact that leaders were gaoled coal had not been obtained. I propose to deal with this question as fully as I can in the limited time at my disposal.

It is well known that the four main claims of the Miners' Federation that led up to this strike were—

1. A demand for a weekly increase of 30s. in wages;
2. The introduction of a 35-hour week;
3. The introduction of long-service leave; and
4. Considerable improvements in pit and town amenities.

Those who know the situation well and know the conditions of the miners will agree, I think, that each of these demands is justified. The cost of the necessaries of life has gone up at a higher rate than wages and the 30s. a week increase would not be too much to compensate miners for the increase in the cost of living.

The 35-hour week is not too short a week for miners, particularly in relation to the 40-hour week for workers in general industry. Already the New Zealand Government have recognised this and in New Zealand a 35-hour week for miners operates. Furthermore, for 30-odd years a 35-hour week has been in operation at Broken Hill.

Long-service leave, although to some it may be a strange demand for miners, is not strange when you realise that long-service leave is already granted to certain sections of the working class. The Public Service and railway workers have enjoyed that privilege for a long time; the employees of the Joint Coal Board itself enjoy it. There is no reason why the manual worker in private

industry should not be entitled to this privilege in the same way as certain employees employed by the Government.

Those who have visited mining towns will agree that whilst in some places an attempt has been made to improve pit and town amenities, nevertheless the vast majority of pit and town amenities in coal-mining towns leave much to be desired.

Those who understand the miners' position will agree that all their claims are just. The Government find fault with the miners because they went on strike for those conditions rather than wait for the Coal Industry Tribunal to give its decision. An examination of the facts, in my opinion, justifies the miners' suspicions that the chairman of the tribunal had no intention whatsoever of granting their demands. The miners were also justly incensed by the long delay that had taken place in coming to a decision. For instance, the claim for the 35-hour week was lodged more than two years ago and even at the time of the strike in July last the decision had not been given. It is true that it is now being said that Mr. Gallagher's mind had been made up and that he was ready to give a decision but it is strange that, although the claim for the 35-hour week was made two years ago, a decision had not been made at the time the strike started.

**Mr. Hiley:** How long did it take the federation to submit its case?

**Mr. PATERSON:** I propose to make my speech in my own way. I did not interrupt the hon. member when he was speaking.

The long-service leave scheme was considered by the Coal Industry Tribunal before the strike started, but Mr. Gallagher made it perfectly plain that it would be granted subject to very onerous conditions. In fact, in a year like 1948, when production was only 88,000 tons less than the record year of 1942, not one single miner would have been entitled to long-service leave. The privilege was to be hedged about with conditions such as continuity of work, and so on.

Let us compare that, for instance, with the position of the railway workers last year when they went on strike. It is true that during the strike the threat was made by the Premier that if the men did not go back to work when they were ordered to go back they would be dismissed and lose certain privileges but once the strike was over the fact is the men were not dismissed and they did not forfeit any of their privileges, including their long-service leave. Yet Mr. Gallagher made it plain that he was going to insert a condition—even at a time when there was no strike and no threat of a strike—that it was to be subject to continuity of work and so on. If these conditions were not fulfilled long-service leave would be denied to the men. How could you expect the miners under those conditions to have any confidence in that tribunal?

Now let me deal with the town and pit amenities. It is true that the Commonwealth Government have published several advertisements setting out what the Coal Board has

done in regard to this matter, but what it has done exists only in the blue-print stage. Very little has been done by the Joint Coal Board beyond the planning stage despite the fact that the board has been in existence for two years.

Let us contrast the plans with the actual achievements, and these facts are taken from the report of the Joint Coal Board for 1948. Only five bathrooms have been completed to the required standard, or less than 6 per cent. of the number admittedly required. Only one unit of service sanitation has been completed, which is less than 2 per cent. of the number that would be required. Only two surface crib-rooms have been completed, or approximately 2 per cent. of the number admittedly required. Underground sanitation has been installed in only four mines. That is the evidence taken from the Joint Coal Board's own report.

Every effort has been made by the Governments and the Press to cloud the real issue. Instead of discussing the real issues, the demands, and determining whether they were just or not the Governments and the Press have resorted again to the old Red boggy.

Here again we have the old story of Communist conspiracies, Communist plots, political strikes, and so on. We were told exactly the same thing in the meat strike of 1946; we were told the same story in the railway strike last year; and we are told the same story now in the coal strike. Such propaganda does not solve the problem. The use of these tactics does not bring the parties one bit nearer to the solution of the problem. The way to solve it is to hold a conference between the respective parties, to get together and discuss their differences and come to terms on the actual demands of the miners themselves. All this talk about Red conspiracies and plots and so on does not bring the parties one bit nearer a solution.

However, I propose to examine those charges. It is suggested on the one hand that the strike is a plot to kill arbitration and those who suggest that in some cases are screaming out for secret ballots. That suggestion was put forward today by the hon. member for West Moreton. He chided both the Federal and State Labour Governments for not demanding or enforcing a secret ballot in the coal-mining industry. Let us consider just how far secret ballots in strikes take the workers and see whether they have been the effective solution that has been suggested.

Let us consider the tramways strike that took place early this year. The tramwaymen took a secret ballot and by a big majority decided in favour of a one-day strike each week until their demands were granted. They took the secret ballot, and abided by the arbitration law of this State. Did that get them anywhere? Did it bring the granting of their demands one day closer? Not on your life! Immediately the Brisbane City Council went to the Industrial Court and asked for an order to order the men back to work, that is, to cease their one-day strikes. The men had taken their secret ballot, but they were

no better off than men who did not. Fortunately, in this particular case reason did prevail ultimately, and the Brisbane City Council or the Lord Mayor did agree to meet the Tramways Union in conference. He tried to get the union to give up their one-day strikes or threat of strike. The union refused, but its representatives agreed to temporarily suspend the one-day strikes while the conference was on. As a result of that conference an amicable decision was reached and the strike was settled.

Take the railway strike last year. A number of railway unions took a secret ballot. Some, however, did not. They decided in favour of a strike at mass meetings, but those who did take a secret ballot were not placed in any more favourable position than those who did not, because on that particular occasion the Government went to the Industrial Court and asked for an order ordering the men back to work and the order was given. Then came the threat from the Government that if the men did not obey this order and go back to work they could consider themselves dismissed from the railway service and would forfeit all their privileges. Fortunately when the strike was over the Government did not carry out that threat and the men were not dismissed and they did not forfeit their privileges.

I mention these things in order to stress the fact that notwithstanding the fact that some of these unions took a secret ballot it did not bring them any nearer a solution of their problems. It did not bring them any nearer to the granting of their just demands. It placed them in the same position as those who had not taken a secret ballot. Let those who suggest that arbitration is the effective solution offer something more effective than this solution of taking secret ballots.

It has also been suggested that this is a political strike, that it was a Communist strike, and that it is a plot to create chaos. If that is so, if the Government really believe that, then they stand condemned in the eyes of every Australian in that they did not seek to nip that plot in the bud.

They could have ended that chaos immediately. It is said, by the apologists for the Government, that Mr. Gallagher had his mind made up and he was ready to give his decision. If it is true that there was such a plot it could have been smashed immediately by Mr. Gallagher's giving his decision. But he did not do it; and he has not done it to-day.

We may well ask: why has he not given his decision? If we examine the facts we shall come to the conclusion that he has not given his decision because he had no intention of granting the miners their demands; he knows in his own heart that he would not grant the miners' demands and he has not been game to give his decision because he realises that if he gave that decision the miners would immediately be awake to the hypocrisy of the Coal Industry Tribunal. I repeat that if there is any truth at all in the allegation that this is a communist plot to create chaos,

that plot could have been smashed immediately by prompt action on the part of the Commonwealth Government or Mr. Gallagher, the chairman of the tribunal.

It is suggested that the strike is a plot to create a depression. The Communists and anybody else connected with the workers need not spend one minute trying to create a depression; the depression will come without any activity on our part whatsoever. As a matter of fact, it is only a few months ago that the Tory Press, even in Brisbane, was suggesting that Communists were trying to create a defeatist atmosphere by issuing propaganda that a depression would break out. What do we find today? The Press is telling us that there is a serious dollar crisis. That is a polite term to describe the great world economic crisis.

Some members of the Opposition have stated that Britain is on the way to bankruptcy although, for political reasons, they suggest that the explanation is that Britain has a socialist Government. That is not the explanation. Britain is suffering from the dollar crisis and other adverse economic factors, not because she has a so-called socialist Government but because she is caught in the grip of the opening stages of the world economic crisis. It does not matter whether Mr. Attlee or Mr. Churchill is Prime Minister. If the latter were Prime Minister, Britain would be in the same difficult position.

All this propaganda is false. It is spread about merely to cloud the real issues and hide from the people the real demands of the miners and the true history of the case.

As I said before, the hon. member for Logan, quite properly admitted that the Arbitration Court has its defects. He admitted that for some reason or other at the time when it should function effectively it ceases to function altogether. His words might well have been applied to the functioning of the Coal Industry Tribunal in this case. Yet the Commonwealth Government, backed by the New South Wales State Government, have resorted to a strike-breaking action unparalleled in the history of the Commonwealth. I wonder what the New South Wales Premier or the Prime Minister would have said if a Tory Government had passed legislation similar to that passed by the Commonwealth Government during this strike. I wonder what would have been said by supporters of the Labour Party throughout Australia if a Tory Government passed legislation freezing union funds? Yet that is exactly what has been done in this strike. The funds were frozen to prevent relief assistance from being given to the miners and their families, not because it was to be used for any other purpose than to provide relief for the miners and their families. That is the position we must face. No-one is to be allowed to collect or distribute funds for the miners and their families.

The Government were not content to pass this legislation and prescribe certain penalties for a breach thereof, for they realised that if they had relied solely on that legislation they would have had to depend upon the principles of criminal law in order to obtain

a conviction and inflict punishment. It was left, therefore, to a Labour Government, not a Tory Government, to cast aside the principle of the criminal law and adopt the new technique of using the Court of Conciliation and Arbitration and the injunction to try to intimidate the miners.

Had the miners or any of their officials been prosecuted on a criminal charge it would have been necessary for the Crown to satisfy the court beyond a reasonable doubt that the men were guilty, and it would have been necessary for the Crown to produce the evidence to show that the men were guilty. Under our criminal law a person charged is not bound to go into the witness box or answer any questions in order to escape a conviction and its penalty, but in this strike the Commonwealth Government adopted, as I have said, the method of the injunction in the Court of Conciliation and Arbitration because they were able thus to cast aside the principles of the criminal law. They were able then to force the person charged into the witness box—and to avoid calling any evidence against him. They were able to put him in the witness box and make him answer questions to disprove his guilt or prove his innocence. If such a person refuses to answer a question he is liable for contempt of court and can be gaoled. Under the Act the maximum penalty he could have suffered was six months' imprisonment, but in contempt-of-court proceedings there is no maximum, the penalty for contempt of court is unlimited, and in this particular instance the judge sentenced a number of the men to 12 months' imprisonment.

**Mr. Roberts:** For a period not exceeding 12 months.

**Mr. PATERSON:** The period of imprisonment will last until they purge their contempt, even if it be 12 months.

It is interesting to note that two of the men sentenced were not members of the Communist Party. Two of them were members of the Australian Labour Party. The general secretary of the Miners' Federation is a well-known member of the New South Wales branch of the Australian Labour Party and so is one other miner who was sentenced to imprisonment. This gives the lie direct to those who contend that it is the Communists who are plotting this strike. It shows clearly that members of the Labour Party are taking sides with members of the Communist Party.

**Mr. Morris:** There is not much difference between the Communists and the Labour Party.

**Mr. PATERSON:** I am not going into that now. This strike could be solved immediately and could have been solved without any dislocation of industry if the Government, instead of digging in their heels and saying "Arbitration or nothing," had been prepared to use conciliation or direct negotiation.

Both the Commonwealth and New South Wales Governments have under the relevant legislation power to direct the policy of the

Coal Board; in other words, the Coal Board represents these two Governments. There was nothing to prevent these two Governments from directing the Coal Board to enter into negotiations with the Miners' Federation, apart altogether from the Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, to grant the miners these just demands, and it is noteworthy that up to the present neither Government have attempted to suggest the demands are not just.

This brings us to this important question: which is to be supreme in the State or Commonwealth, Parliament or the Court of Conciliation and Arbitration?

**Mr. Maher:** Which do you say?

**Mr. PATERSON:** Parliament.

**Mr. Maher:** So does the A.L.P.: they say the same thing.

**Mr. PATERSON:** I have never made any secret about it; I have always contended that Parliament is supreme and should be supreme. It is interesting to note that Judge Foster, who sentenced some union leaders to gaol and fined others, is the same judge who when speaking to the Melbourne Constitutional Club in 1947, had this to say—

"The dictatorship I propose to speak about is me, and it is exercised by the court in which I sit . . ."

The judge was referring to the Federal Court of Conciliation and Arbitration—

" . . . The machinery of Government should enable the will of the people to be given effect on all matters closely affecting them. It should not place in the hands of any man or group save a majority of the people, power to affect gravely their national wellbeing."

"To my mind it is amazing that your fellows should entrust the industrial destinies of the country to three men.—"

He there meant the three judges of the Court of Conciliation and Arbitration—

"It may be that the three dictators are expressing the will of the community, but they are not your representatives; they are beyond your control; they are appointed for life; and they could flout your will and the will of your State Parliaments altogether."

That statement really strikes at the heart of the question. At least Parliament consists of the elected representatives of the people. The people have the right, every three years or less, to decide which of those elected representatives will continue to represent them or not. But the Federal Court of Conciliation and Arbitration is not in such a position. Strange to say, it is the creature of Parliament, yet Parliament has allowed it to be superior to it, to be able to dictate to it and to be able to dictate to the people. Parliament has shown in the past on occasions that it is prepared to legislate on industrial matters. This Parliament itself passed legislation introducing the 40-hour week. The New South Wales Parliament passed legislation introducing the 40-hour week.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. BROWN** (Buranda) (4.57 p.m.): At the outset I join with the Leader of the Opposition in extending my congratulations to the Treasurer upon again achieving a surplus for the last 12 months.

After listening with interest to the various speakers today, I have come to the conclusion that most speakers have forgotten something. Every speech made by the Opposition, both Country and Liberal Party, has been based upon pounds, shillings and pence, and upon profits. All have forgotten the golden rule of the brotherhood of man.

**Mr. Maher:** You do not get much of it in the Socialist ideology.

**Mr. BROWN:** You do not get any of it at all from the Country and Liberal Parties.

**Mr. Morris:** The Socialist Party preaches class hatred.

**Mr. BROWN:** The Socialist hates nobody. I am speaking of the Socialism that was preached nearly 2,000 years ago when the meek and lowly Nazarene went into the temple of Jerusalem and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and cast them out of the temple. That was one of the first revolutions on record and it was created by the meek and lowly Nazarene who came here and did so much for humanity. We have forgotten the golden rule to follow Him in that particular way.

When we look back and try to discover the owners of those tables we find that they were the members of the business community of the day who were simply robbing the poor and doing everything they were told not to do. What happened as a result is recorded in Holy Writ.

We often talk of these things but do very little to put them into practice. From the debate I have listened to today, I am satisfied that we are simply leading our people to believe that there is only one thing in the world worth living for and that is the God gold. The sooner we get off that track the sooner we shall bring about real Christian Socialism because Socialism properly understood is Christianity at large. As I said, that came about nearly 2,000 years ago.

The Leader of the Opposition mentioned something to the effect that the people were getting their legs pulled in connection with taxation.

**Mr. Barnes:** Tell them how you sit on your backside and get £20 a week for doing nothing.

**Mr. BROWN:** Tell them yourself. The hon. member for Bundaberg cannot lead me off the track. The Leader of the Opposition's reference to taxation was capably answered by the hon. member for Kelvin Grove, who pointed out that the working-class people, who can ill afford income tax, were never better off than they are today in respect of exemptions from taxation. Taxation has been gradually reduced and today you have exemptions from taxation the like of which we have never had since Australia has been a continent. I am not so much concerned

about the men with plenty to get what they want but with the great mass of human beings, the working class, who are starving at times because of present conditions, conditions brought about because the moneyed class want more profits, and more profits still.

The hon. member for Logan said that the Liberal Party was a great believer in arbitration. Arbitration Courts were first brought about by the agitation by Labour people.

**Mr. Luckins:** Introduced by a Liberal Government.

**Mr. BROWN:** All the progress made in this State and in Australia and in other British countries has been the result of agitation by the Labor Party whilst in Opposition and by Labour legislation as soon as that party came into power. When we know that this turmoil in Australia today is causing such a great amount of distress we do not hear hon. members of the Opposition complaining that their cronies are going out on strike.

Let me refer to the threatened bakers' strike in Brisbane a few years ago. The master bakers threatened to stop baking bread, but they did not have sufficient "insides" to go on with that. They later decided that they would not produce the 2-lb. loaf but would bake only bread rolls, and so get more bread out of the quantity of dough required to make a 2-lb. loaf and so get a better return for themselves. That was a strike in just the same way as a refusal to work is a strike.

Now let me come to the strike by the members of the British Medical Association. Some years ago a referendum was taken in Australia on the question of giving power to the Federal Government to introduce a system of social service. It was sponsored unanimously by all political parties in Australia, and the people gave an overwhelming vote in the affirmative. Then the Federal Labour Government began to introduce the system and what has happened? The B.M.A. has taken a stand and unfortunately the Government cannot deal with it in the same way as they have been able to deal with some of the miners' leaders. It all comes back to the point I made at the beginning, that the evil lies in the power of gold, the greed for gold, so as to get power over the people.

I think it was the hon. member for West Moreton who said something to the effect that pensioners were never worse off than they are today, but I venture to say they were never better off. And apart from the present industrial turmoil the people generally were never better off than they are today. The primary producer was never better off. The big companies and the syndicates were never better off than they are today. They are declaring bigger dividends and getting better profits on the sale of a smaller volume of goods than they sold before. However, the time will come when someone, some organisation, or some authorised body will have to assume control so as to bring about a system providing for the limitation of profits for everybody. How often have we heard it said that

every increase in the basic wage means an increase in the cost of living? I want to refute that argument and to say that there is not one hon. member in this Chamber who will deny the assertion that no Industrial Court or tribunal has ever been prepared to increase the basic wage until it first has been established that the cost of living justified it. That is the point. It is not a question of the cost of living following wages; it is a question of wages following the cost of living.

I listened attentively to the hon. member for Dalby dealing with the Peak Downs sorghum-growing undertaking. I had an opportunity of going there and having a look at it. Whilst I cannot be classed as a farmer, I did see there a sight that was good for sore eyes. Whilst that hon. member may not like to see a large organisation established for the wholesale production of produce, or of any particular article, I think it is the only scheme that we can adopt if we are going to keep pace with the use of machinery in the production of such produce. If, as the hon. member for West Moreton said during the debate on the Queensland-British Food Production Bill in the 1947-48 session, this is socialism, then I say, "Give us a lot more of it." Nothing that I saw there could be improved on, with the exception of the use of better and bigger machinery. I saw 22 headers going into the sorghum crop one after the other, each taking a row of 12 feet of sorghum. It was a wonderful sight and it was wonderful to know that such a project could be established in Queensland. We must remember that it had to be left to the British Government and the Queensland Labour Government to bring about such a scheme to produce on a mass scale. The farmers had an opportunity to do this but they failed, because of the fact that they are too individualistic. All they want to know is what they will get for their crop and then employ as little as they can to grow it.

**Mr. ROBERTS** (Nundah) (5.13 p.m.): I find that generally speaking all are interested in the present coal strike. All of us begin with an attitude of sympathy to the coalmining fraternity. It is a very unusual thing. If there is a railway strike, you generally find the public are opposed to it before they know anything about it. If there is a strike of watersiders, the people are opposed to it before they know anything about it, but no sooner do coal-miners threaten a strike than the average person, because of the nature of the coal-miners' employment, is at least sympathetic.

Having listened to the hon. member for Bowen I am satisfied that we should immediately congratulate ourselves upon the fact that we in Queensland stayed out of the Commonwealth-New South Wales Joint Coal Board. We have done the wise thing in establishing our own Coal Board in this State. Much of the present overwhelming tendency of the coal-miners in this State to return to work is due to the fact that we have established our own Coal Board in this

State whereas in New South Wales in particular they seem to find some dissatisfaction with the operation of the Commonwealth-New South Wales Joint Coal Board.

The hon. member for Bowen spent quite a deal of his time in attempting to justify what he called the just demands of the coal-miners.

Personally, I do not think the question whether or not their demands were just is in issue one bit. That is quite an irrelevant consideration. The point at issue is whether or not the demands, whether just or unjust, should have been determined by the constitutional authority set up for that purpose, or whether the leaders of the coal-miners should have taken unto themselves the big gun, as it were, and held it at the head of this nation, saying, "Our demands are just; give us what we want or else."

The hon. member for Bowen at the end of his speech asked the question, "Who shall be supreme, Parliament or the Court of Conciliation and Arbitration?" Again, that is quite an irrelevant consideration because the court is an instrumentality of the people; it is an instrumentality of the Parliament that established it. The relevant consideration for the hon. member and every decent Australian is: who shall be supreme—Parliament and its instrumentality, the court, or a pressure group, in this instance the Communist-dominated Miners' Federation?

While I am on this question of pressure groups let me say that I am not only opposed to a pressure group dominated by Communists, but I am equally opposed to a pressure group such as that suggested in this morning's paper by the Lord Mayor when he urged pressure groups in order to get more finance for local authorities. One is a Fascist ideal and the other is a Communist ideal. As the premier has said on more than one occasion, in a democratic country such as this we do not want a pressure group or dictatorship either of the left or the right.

The hon. member for Bowen went on to enlarge upon his remarks by saying that he could see good ground why the Miners' Federation should suspect or did suspect that the Coal Industry Tribunal was not going to grant what he termed their just demands. That is a hypothetical question in support of which he endeavoured to make some ground, but, as I pointed out earlier, it was quite an irrelevant consideration. Personally—and I think every hon. member of this Committee will agree with me—I would rather be a member of Parliament than a coal-miner. I would not go and work in a coal-mine if I could find a more congenial occupation, even if they earned up to £50 a week. Most people are of the same mind.

**Mr. Maher:** There are plenty of jobs that are just as hard without the same money.

**Mr. ROBERTS:** There are other hard jobs but I am of the opinion that coal-mining is probably the hardest job a man can be asked to do. I have nothing to say about whether the miners are entitled to

a 35-hour week, because certain public servants have it; that is a question to be settled by the Court of Conciliation and Arbitration. I am not saying that they are not entitled to more money than they are getting. But there is no reason why the Miners' Federation should believe that Mr. Gallagher was not going to grant these concessions they were asking for. The fact remains that the Communists in control of that union saw in the set-up an opportunity to tie up the whole of the industrial affairs of this country; not only to tie up the industrial affairs of the country but, as it were, to drive a knife into the back of every decent man and woman engaged in industry. The Communists in this instance have shown by their actions that they are devoid of any soul or any conscience whatsoever. They seized upon the coldest time of the year, and nobody who has been in New South Wales, particularly in Sydney, during the last month or five weeks will forget the horror the Communists have brought upon that part of this country.

We in Brisbane are suffering certain short-ages and restrictions but they are nothing when compared with what they are suffering in southern places. The Communist has shown that he has no consideration or sympathy whatever for any person and in particular the women and children of those parts of Australia.

In addition: what of his attitude towards his fellow workers, as he terms them? The coal-miner is in receipt of a remuneration greatly in excess of that received by many other employees in industry. I do not say that he is not entitled to it because I think he has one of the worst of jobs, but he is in better financial circumstances than other workers. In other words, he can financially afford to lay off for a few weeks and to strike but what about those who are dependent upon the commodity he produces for their employment, those who are in certainly more congenial occupations but in receipt of lower wages? They cannot afford to stand down and twiddle their thumbs as the miner can afford to do for weeks on end every 12 months or so. These people have shown no consideration whatever for the women and children especially, when they bring on this strike at the coldest part of the year, nor have they shown consideration for workers in other industries.

The hon. member for Bowen states that the matter could easily be adjusted by conference. He, being a legal man, undoubtedly knows that in legal circles there are certain people who, when they have an action, will always suggest a conference and settlement. But the terms of the settlement are these, "All right, you give us all we ask for plus our costs to date and we shall be satisfied." The Communist is asking for that on this occasion. The Miners' Federation goes into the conference room and says, "We want our 35-hour working week. We want our increase in wages, and we want our long-service leave and certain amenities in our employment and so on. Give us these and we will settle. Do not give us them and we will stay out on strike." That is not settlement by any stretch of the imagination, therefore I would point out

that rather than criticise as one or two hon. members have attempted to do, we should congratulate the Federal Labour Government on the stand they have taken.

**Mr. Maher** interjected.

**Mr. ROBERTS:** We should congratulate them for standing up to this menace to this country; standing up to the Communist Party as no Country Party or Liberal Party or any other party, whatever name one gives it, has ever done. (Opposition interjections.)

In addition, we must not overlook the fact that the Federal Labour Government have been assisted in this instance morally and practically by the Labour Premiers in the various States of the Commonwealth—not by the Liberal Party whose members talk so much about standing up to the Communists and put forward all sorts of threats but fail to put their expressed intentions into practice.

The hon. member for Dalby began his speech by saying that he was under the impression that all was not as it might be at Peak Downs. A number of hon. members took the opportunity during the recess of visiting that project. I congratulate them, whether they be on this or the other side of the Chamber, for the interest taken in it.

It is a gigantic undertaking and I think that was appreciated by every hon. member when it was first proposed, but we can only speak of it as we are impressed by it on a personal visit. I propose to give the Committee my impressions.

Arriving at Peak Downs, the first impression that must strike any person who has any knowledge whatsoever of land matters, and who remembers the pictures that have been painted of that district as a pastoral area in the past, is the woeful neglect by the people who have been responsible for farming that area in the past. The overriding impression was that those who for years have been entitled to take from that land the profits of it, whether by grazing or anything else, have taken every penny possible from it without putting one farthing back. It was land that you could see had been rich in grasses and natural herbage in the past. It is now covered with weeds of every kind. Hon. members opposite who have visited the district know that. I do not know what the carrying capacity of the district was 70 or 80 years ago but I do know that in its present state its carrying capacity would be infinitely less than it was then.

Then we come on to this project, and the first thing that struck me when I looked at the fields of sorghum there was the fact that contour ploughing had been adopted. That was obvious to any person who has the slightest knowledge of farming, yet the hon. member for Dalby questioned that it had been contour-ploughed. He spoke of erosion, and the mention of erosion reminds me of the fact that there has been mention in the Press of the very shallow surface soils in that locality. Hon. members who went there must have been struck by the fact that

wherever there was a creek or anything of that kind, you could see 14 or 15 feet of rich black soil exposed. The danger of erosion in that district is as nothing compared with what it is in many other parts of the State. In addition, it is being farmed properly because contour ploughing has been adopted.

Still mindful of the fact that I had seen some headlines printed about statements made by hon. members opposite concerning this great big octopus that acquires compulsorily the property of private people, driving across Peak Downs it was impossible for me not to notice certain survey pegs in different parts. I asked what they were and was told—and I verily believe it to be true—that before the Peak Downs project was mooted the private owners of that land had a survey started for the purpose of cutting it up and selling it themselves. They were about to sell it.

**Mr. Maher:** What is wrong with that?

**Mr. ROBERTS:** There is nothing wrong with that. The point is that hon. members opposite—I do not know whether the hon. member for West Moreton was one of them—have said that this Government have compulsorily acquired this land. Those people were ready and willing to sell it because they had taken from it everything they possibly could.

When the Government first negotiated in the purchasing of the land they were only too willing to sell for £1 an acre, because they thought they were getting a good deal and “doing” the Government. Hon. members opposite only 12 months ago were saying that the project must be a failure and that you could not grow sorghum in Central Queensland. Look at the venture today!

Another reaction of mine was this: on the way there, remembering all the adverse criticism of the scheme, I thought to myself that it was just as well that we had a good season, although we know we cannot expect a good season every year. When I arrived at the farm and spoke to those responsible for its administration I learned that the past year had been anything but a good year. They had the records of the rainfall going back sixty years. We found that the first rainfall for sowing was later by far than the usual time for rain. Furthermore, there were two such heavy falls of rain within 24 hours as had happened only once or twice in a long period of years. Topping off those adverse conditions was the fact that about the time the grain was to ripen there was a frost such as very few of the old identities in that district could ever remember. Those are matters we should remember.

We should also remember that the properties under the scheme have not been compulsorily acquired but were disposed of voluntarily and freely by the owners. We should remember that the year was not as propitious as we might have been led to believe by newspaper reports. There is no doubt that so far as that project is concerned it has made Central Queensland, whereas

before the private individuals who owned the land had denuded it of everything that made it of any value.

**Mr. Maher:** That is wrong.

**Mr. ROBERTS:** It is correct. The hon. member for West Moreton obviously has not visited that project, because if he was honest he must admit that the land had been denuded of everything of value by the people who owned it. They took every pound they could out of it, putting nothing back into it.

For some ten years or so we in this Chamber have been told time and time again by hon. members opposite of the wonderful conditions prevailing in the U.S.A. You will remember, Mr. Hilton, how prior to the referendum on prices we were taken across the water to the U.S.A. and told, “Why can’t we do here the same as they have done? They have lifted price control and they have done this and they have done that, and look at what a great industrial country they are.” In the time at my disposal I would point out that at present we see reports in the paper that prices of commodities there are falling and, to use a term made famous by the Prime Minister, the country is in the throes of a mild recession, and in addition there is the over-riding factor that in the U.S.A. today there is unemployment of 4,000,000 persons. So we find that those people who have been endeavouring to get us to adopt the same methods in this country as they have in the U.S.A. have been anxious to kill this policy of full-time employment that has been so successfully implemented by the Federal Labour Government.

**Mr. Maher:** Without their help socialistic England and Europe would go down the drain tomorrow.

**Mr. ROBERTS:** Reference is made from time to time to the socialistic octopus, but what greater octopus could there be than the present system of control by the American dollar which controls not only international finance but also the lives of everyone throughout the world? Such is the power of the mighty American dollar. The position is that on the one hand we have to fight Communism and on the other a Fascist organisation which, while not out in the open, is nevertheless still there latent and working relentlessly, and in addition we have to be continually fighting the mighty American dollar because it is moulding our lives and making it more and more difficult for people to lead the life that they would like to lead.

The Leader of the Opposition suggested the lifting of land-sales control and he staggered me when he said that we on this side seized every opportunity to impose controls and imposed them with great joy. We have from time to time been complimented on having considerable political “nous” or considerable political acumen but that compliment comes from hon. members opposite only when it suits them. The point I am trying to make is that no politician will impose any control that is unpopular unless he is satisfied that it is in the interests of the welfare

of the country that he is governing. He would not impose unpopular controls unless he felt that he was doing the right thing thereby. Land-sales control is not popular but the Government responsible for it realise that it is required to counter the present inflationary trend to some extent and that is something the Leader of the Opposition would condemn.

But the Leader of the Opposition is not consistent. On the one hand he says abolish land-sales control and on the other he complains of the inflationary trend. We must have some of these controls if we are to do the right thing by the people. They were hoodwinked by hon. members opposite and their political parties into believing that the Commonwealth Government could not administer these controls as well as the State and when a referendum on the proposal was taken at the hands of the Commonwealth Government the proposal was overwhelmingly turned down by the people of Australia.

**Mr. SMITH (Carpentaria) (5.39 p.m.):** I want to compliment the Treasurer on his handling of the finances of the State and speaking as a representative of the northern and north-western part of Queensland I want to say that he has been most generous in the financial assistance that he has extended to local authorities and other bodies and in the establishing of industries in that part of Queensland.

I feel that I am in a position to answer some of the criticisms that were made at a recent conference in Townsville by that organisation now known as the North Queensland Development League.

I recognise that over a period of years the Government are to be highly commended for the assistance they have rendered in many ways to that part of this State. I read all the northern newspapers extensively. I read the criticism meted out by the league and the criticism the southern members of Parliament, on their return to Brisbane after their visit to the North, levelled at the Government for their neglect of northern Queensland and north-western Queensland. It is my honest and sincere belief that the Government have over a period of years, through the Treasury, afforded financial assistance through advances for the establishment of amenities in that part of the State. It was this Government that established the decentralisation of local government in order that their policy could be implemented. If local authorities in northern and north-western Queensland apply themselves to their job of administering local affairs we should see a considerable advance in the establishment of amenities in the North-West. The Government have helped them in this respect by a reasonable and generous loan-subsidy system.

**Mr. Power:** We introduced the subsidy system in 1932.

**Mr. SMITH:** That is so. I have received a telegram from the secretary of the North Queensland Development League asking me

to state my opinion publicly on the statement made by the Premier during his recent visit to the North. At the time I was absent from Brisbane touring my electorate in the Gulf area and I gave them an appropriate answer by telegram. I am taking this opportunity to enlarge on that answer. The Leader of the Opposition and some other members of Parliament who visited North Queensland got paragraphs in the Press and sheafs and sheafs of publicity. I am now adopting the method of answering the telegram sent to me on the floor of this Chamber in order that my remarks will be published in full in "Hansard."

On 20 July I wrote a letter to the "Townsville Bulletin." It was my reply to this telegram as to what has been done by the Government for the North. I endeavoured to substantiate the Premier's statement that northern and north-western Queensland have been sympathetically treated by the Labour Government. This newspaper circulates not only in my electorate but in the other northern parts of the State. I will read the letter I sent this newspaper as it embodies a reply to the Government's critics of what has been done for the northern part of the State. The Government have afforded financial help not in thousands but in millions of pounds for the advantage of future generations in North Queensland. I feel that if hon. members listen attentively to the letter they will learn what the Government have done and attempted to do for the people of that part of Queensland through local authorities in order to help in making foundations for its future development.

The letter reads as follows:—

"Mount Isa,  
"20 July, 1949.

"The Editor,  
"Townsville Daily Bulletin,  
"Townsville.

"Dear Sir,

"I have been reading with interest the recent agitation for greater consideration to be given the North and North-western part of Queensland by the present State Labour Government, and such Government is being accused of alleged neglect of these parts of the State.

"I am setting out a case in connection with certain of these charges. I feel that in many ways the present Government is doing many things to assist in the development and settlement of the North and North-West, and by a long term plan of Governmental development we will, within a short period, see great activity in many spheres of industrial development. In the main direction for the foundation of this industrial development, I feel the present State Labour Government can be highly commended for its financial assistance to Local Authorities and by its generous subsidy schemes for works of many kinds carried out by such Local Authorities, and I feel that if every Northern member of the Queensland Parliament was to submit

through your paper such schemes and progress of works for the particular Local Authorities in his Electorate and the financial assistance given other industries, the people in the North would then realise what is being done and can be done for their benefit, and by the co-operation of all Local Authorities and other public bodies such as Harbour Boards, &c., and the people, we will, within the next few years, see the North taking its place in advancement and prosperity in the same comparison as that claimed in other States.

"I am not fully conversant with matters pertaining to other Electorates in the North, but to give the people some idea how the Government is prepared to financially assist the Local Authorities in my Electorate (Carpentaria) I will outline works which have been submitted by the Local Authorities and which have been or will be favourably considered, together with a generous subsidy grant, and, as stated, the Government is at all times ready and willing to assist all Local Authorities in its programme of works as submitted each financial year, and I would advise these Local Authorities to plan and submit such works programme as requested, because, as I have said, the Government is looking towards Local Authorities to assist in many ways for the development and settlement in the North and North-West.

"Commencing with the Wyangarie Shire in my Electorate, in the town of Richmond, plans are well in hand for a new shire hall, and offices, swimming-pool, bitumen streets, concrete channelling and kerbing, and the commencement by the Main Roads Commission for an all-weather road between Richmond and Winton and to Wolgar in the North, and when under way approximately between £25,000 and £30,000 of work will be in hand: also under consideration for Richmond is an electric light and sewerage scheme, and when plans, &c., are submitted to the Local Government and Treasury Departments it is felt sure that favourable consideration will be given to finance these schemes.

"The McKinlay Shire, in the town of Julia Creek, street improvements and road works in the Shire, purchase of road-making plant, recreation grounds improvements, housing for Council working staff, also improvements to the swimming-pool. Approximately £17,000 worth of works will be in hand here also an electric light scheme is being investigated, and as in Richmond, aerodrome construction has been carried out to handle the commercial aircraft now operated by the major air lines. Expenditure for such construction by the Local Authority carries a subsidy from the Government.

"The Cloncurry Shire Council plans and estimates for the following works in that Shire have been submitted, and approval has been given for practically all works, together with a generous subsidy, and, if manpower and materials were available, a

large portion of this programme would now be under way. The projects are as follows:—

	£
Cloncurry Swimming-pool ..	12,000
Purchase road-making plant ..	5,000
Erection ten houses at Cloncurry and Mount Isa .. ..	20,000
Cemetery road, Mount Isa ..	754
Sewerage Scheme, Cloncurry ..	100,000
Drawing of Plans, &c., Cloncurry Water Supply, Weir and Bridge on Cloncurry River ..	500
Kerbing and channelling in Cloncurry .. .. .	2,500
Improvements to Cloncurry Recreation Reserve .. ..	3,185
Street Improvements, Cloncurry	3,016
Street Beautification, Cloncurry	510
Cloncurry Park and Children's Playground .. .. .	1,500
Storm water drainage, Mount Isa, plans being drawn ..	12,150
Esplanade Improvements, Mount Isa .. .. .	3,480
Kerbing and channelling and footpaths, Mount Isa ..	2,494
Dajarra township improvements	1,500
Dajarra Aerodrome .. ..	925
Pokara Crossing .. .. .	2,030
Homes for invalid and old-age pensioners, Cloncurry and Mount Isa .. .. .	3,600
Water Supply improvements, Cloncurry .. .. .	6,400

"In all, approximately £57,000 have already been approved, which includes nearly £9,000 subsidy.

"The Barkly Tableland Shire is at present preparing plans for a works programme, which includes street and road improvements, and also the discussion of a septic system for the town of Camooweal, and such works will receive the fullest Government support.

"The Carpentaria Shire, with Normanston as its centre, plans are also being submitted for street and road works, and also for a swimming-pool in Normanston, and the Main Roads Commissioner is carrying out permanent works in this Shire, such as the new crossing at Walker's Bend to the extent of £10,000.

"The Burke Shire is also planning similar works for that Shire, and improvements to the town water supply. Here again the Main Roads Commission are prominent, having nearly completed the survey for the proposed construction of an all-weather road from Burketown to Cloncurry via Quamby.

"The Croydon Shire is also preparing for development in that Shire, and the Main Roads here are also spending approximately £30,000 on the construction of a concrete bridge over the Gilbert River on the Croydon-Forsyth Highway. Also, the Government, through the Mines Department, has reconditioned the Waratah Gold Battery to once again help in fostering the goldmining interests in the district.

“Further north we come to the Peninsula portion of the Carpentaria Electorate. Here again the Government is endeavouring to assist settlement. Construction of a new school, police station and residence for the police officer in Coen, main road permanent work from Laura to Coen, Wenlock, Iron Range, and Portland Roads area are now under way, also financial assistance to develop the goldmining industry, and to serve these people and those on Thursday Island and in the Gulf, the Government subsidises John Burke Steamship Company to the extent of £16,000 per year to operate a regular monthly shipping service to the ports in those areas.

“Thursday Island—assisting to re-establish the population on the Island; better harbour facilities and redredging the harbour to allow once again overseas shipping to call at the port; the establishment of pearl culture on the Island, better hospital and housing facilities on the Island by a loan to the Town Council for a housing programme.

“I feel also that by the granting of this assistance by the Government, all Local Authorities should take advantage of the loan and subsidy scheme operating. Here let me outline the general policy on the loan and subsidy work—

PERMANENT WORKS.		Period.	Maintenance Liability.
Type.	Liability.		
State Highways .. .. .	Nil .. .. .	.. .. .	Not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$
Main Roads .. .. .	20 per cent. .. .. .	30 years	ditto
Development roads .. .. .	20 per cent. of interest on cost of construction	20 years	ditto
Secondary roads .. .. .	50 per cent. .. .. .	30 years	ditto
Mining Access Roads .. .. .	Nil (a) .. .. .	.. .. .	Nil (a)
Tourist Roads .. .. .	(b) .. .. .	.. .. .	(b)
Tourist Tracks .. .. .	Nil .. .. .	.. .. .	Nil
Farmers' Roads .. .. .	Up to 50 per cent. .. .. .	30 years	Not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$

(a) Unless interests other than mining are served by the road in which case “Main Road” liability extends.

(b) The liability of Local Authorities is determined by agreement with the Commissioner before works commence.

“In these circumstances it is considered that generous assistance is available for all types of road construction consistent with a progressive road construction policy. Western Shires, in common with all other Local Authorities, are also eligible for subsidies on approved capital works at rates varying according to the economies of each scheme as follows:—

	Minimum Subsidy.	Maximum Subsidy.
Water supply works .. .. .	Per cent. 20	Per cent. 33 $\frac{1}{3}$
Sewerage works .. .. .	20	50
Street kerbing and channelling .. .. .	Flat rate of	25 per cent.
Recreational facilities accepted as physical fitness measures .. .. .	General works rate	
Swimming baths .. .. .	Flat rate of	25 per cent.
Erosion prevention works .. .. .	Flat rate of	33 $\frac{1}{3}$ per cent.
Community facilities .. .. .	General works rate	
Mosquito eradication works .. .. .	Flat rate of	50 per cent.
Cottages for old age and invalid pensioners .. .. .	Flat rate of	50 per cent.

“The water problems of Western Queensland are not being overlooked, and preliminary investigations of the rivers in Western Queensland have been made, and as staff becomes available, further investigations into water problems will be carried out with a view to formulating a plan for the development of the land and water resources of Western Queensland. Irrigation and water conservation projects undertaken under the provisions of the Land and Water Resources Development Act attract a subsidy varying from 25 per cent. to

50 per cent in the case of local weirs and reticulation. In addition to all these generous subsidies, if there are any special circumstances pertaining to any particular project, and a case in support thereof is advanced, the subsidy scheme provides for the rate of subsidy to be increased on the recommendation of the Co-ordinator General of Public Works, so with this information it will be seen that the subsidy scheme has been designed to give the greatest possible measure of assistance in the establishment or extension of essential public utilities, as part of the co-ordinated development of the State, and in particular the North and North-West. In addition, the State Labour Government desires this co-operation of all Local Authorities to carry out these developmental works and provide amenities in the sparsely settled areas of the State so as to make living conditions more attractive, and thereby retain the present population and attract further population.

“Hospital improvements for the health of the people is also being carried out such as the new base hospital in Cloncurry with nurses' quarters and the new hospital and nurses' quarters in Mount Isa with a total cost amounting to approximately £300,000. Also, further hospital improvements in other towns in the West and North-West; the Flying Dentist service in conjunction with the Flying Doctor who now operates on a pound for pound basis by subsidy from the Government. The establishment of Public Libraries and Country Women's Hostels for school children are also on the pound for pound subsidy; also, the

Government has granted through its Railway and Bureau of Industry Departments great financial benefits to assist and maintain such industries until they reach the stage of self supporting, as an instance in this direction, the Railway Department has granted in rebates on freight since 1932 an amount of nearly £1,000,000 to Mount Isa Mines for no other purpose than to assist this huge mining venture which makes work for many thousands of Queenslanders. Also, for the same period, a rebate in freights to the following industries were given. Wool, the accumulated reduction in rates for wool commencing from the peak period between 1926-1930 represents a monetary concession of £1,250,000. For Starving Stock and Fodder rebates £500,000. These are only a few of the major benefits, and it can be seen that with this financial assistance and backing, such as the establishment of the Cement Works near Townsville, the present State Labour Government is prepared to assist in all directions any venture that may be desired to be established in the North or North-West, whether it be in the primary or secondary industry section.

"Many other cases can be mentioned, but I feel in having detailed the major activities for Local Authority works, &c., residents of the North and North-West can gain some idea as to what extent the present State Labour Government is prepared to assist in the establishment of industries and the extension of public utilities for the development not only of the North and North-West but the whole of the State.

"(Sgd.) A. J. (NORMAN) SMITH, M.L.A.,  
Member for Carpentaria."

I sent that letter to the North to let those people know what the Government were doing. I found that the only way in which I could give an adequate answer to the telegram I received from the North Queensland Development League was to speak on the floor of this Chamber.

I suggest to these people that they make investigations to see what their local authorities can do. A local authorities' conference is being held in Brisbane at the moment and I feel that these bodies do not give the people of their areas full information about the benefits and subsidies the Government are prepared to give. Why, in the Carpentaria electorate alone many hundreds of thousands of pounds can be made available for use by the several local authorities there if they are prepared to undertake works for the development of their areas.

Reference has been made to our being a socialistic Government. If we were to set about establishing an iron and steel works or a cement works at or near Townsville, we should be accused of being Socialists and of seeking to kill private enterprise. In reply to that suggestion I quote the amount of money the Government have expended to help the Mount Isa mines to get where they are today. Since the return of Mr. Forgan Smith in 1932, after the defeat of the Moore Government, that company has received approximately

£1,000,000 in freight benefits alone. Similar benefits have been extended to the pastoral industry. Again, as far out as Burketown the Government, through the Department of Labour and Industry, are helping the Gulf Marine Products people by granting them a subsidy of 6d. a lb. on the air freight of fish from Burketown to towns in the North and North-West.

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca—Premier) (7.15 p.m.): I want to take the opportunity of saying a few words about the Peak Downs food-production scheme because I cannot let the statements made by the hon. member for Dalby go without making some reply. I was unable, unfortunately, to be in the Chamber today for most of the speeches made by hon. members, but I heard that of the hon. member for Dalby and I heard the laudatory "Hear, hears!" by hon. members opposite when that hon. member was speaking. I think it would be a very good idea to review the situation and see how the Queensland-British Food Corporation came to be established and how it has progressed.

First of all I want to say that I met a delegation from England in Canberra early last year. The delegation was out here on a mission from Great Britain in order to make an endeavour to obtain additional permanent food supplies for that country. Not only were the people of Great Britain then, and are now for that matter, in urgent need of additional foodstuffs but the British Government desired if possible to obtain food supplies for Britain in future from within British Commonwealth sources. They had learnt the lesson, after two wars, of the foolishness of depending on foreign countries in times of war and they wanted not only to get an immediate increase of food for needy people but to establish for the future that Great Britain would be fed by British people.

The delegation quite frankly admitted that Britain could not adequately feed herself. That is one of the things that members of this Parliament have often advocated. We have frequently criticised the need for Great Britain to buy on the cheapest market, irrespective of where that market was, and we have pointed out the development that would take place in British countries if Britain bought her supplies of food from her own people.

When I met the members of the delegation in Canberra they were rather disheartened. They had been round the other States, listened to many glowing speeches, attended dinners and fetes of all kinds, and received wonderful assurances of our appreciation of our debt to Great Britain, but in no case had they anything offered to them but "Give us more money and we will send you more food." That cry was repeated by the Opposition in this State when I introduced the Queensland-British Food Production Bill; members on the front bench of the Opposition interjected "If Britain gives us more money we will give her more food." In a few days' time we shall celebrate the anniversary of that heroic episode in British

history that actually saved Christian civilisation—the Battle of Britain. I wonder how many of the Liberal-Country Party members of Parliament who said “While Britain is down now is our opportunity to peel every shilling off her,” will have the effrontery to lay a wreath on the shrine? The attitude they have adopted is that expected of her late enemies and not of members of a British Commonwealth country.

It has been most disheartening to the people in Great Britain to think that this attitude is taken up by some members of this House and some members of the Federal and other State Houses, but I am not going to accept the statement that has been made here by Country Party and Liberal Party members as reflecting the opinion of the people of this State. I fully believe that the people of Queensland as a whole appreciate what they owe to the Old Country and they fully appreciate the importance of being honest in their dealings with them. They are inclined, at some cost to themselves, to give to Great Britain rather than try to exploit her in her hour of need.

**Mr. Maher:** You could have got more food by an appeal to the individual farmers.

**Mr. HANLON:** I want the hon. member to listen to what I am saying. I say emphatically that from end to end in this country there are poor people as well as well-to-do people who are prepared to put their hands into their pockets weekly, fortnightly and monthly to send some of their own food to Great Britain. We have people cutting down their consumption of tea, which is rationed, and their consumption of butter, which also is rationed, so that they can buy tea and butter to send to the needy people in Great Britain.

**Mr. Maher:** Australian officers returning from Japan tell me that Australian meat and Australian butter are up in the markets of the East.

**Mr. HANLON:** I do not care what story the hon. member tells; that is no excuse. He must realise his attitude to our own people. Let him make what excuses he likes. He is now at the bar charged with endeavouring to exploit the very country that we should help. On other occasions he gets up and skites about our debt and obligation to Great Britain.

**Mr. Maher:** Ask the meatworkers at the abattoirs.

**Mr. HANLON:** The meatworkers at the abattoirs have not attempted to rob Great Britain to the extent that hon. members opposite have. I say that quite frankly and I expect the representatives of the people in this Chamber to show a better appreciation of the position than working people outside who have not the opportunity that hon. members have of studying the situation.

Apart from the sentimental appeal that this position makes to us there is the hard, common-sense side and the hard, economic soundness of the proposal that Great Britain

makes to us. As I said, first of all her desire was to feed herself from Empire sources for security reasons and there was also that far-seeing desire to cut down on the expenditure that she is compelled to make in hard currency areas. She would not be called upon to find the dollars that she is required to spend in the purchase of food if she could buy much of her requirements within the British Commonwealth. There were two purposes to be served: the first was to give security to Great Britain and so relieve her of the eternal fear of being starved in war-time and there was also the proposal to conserve her hard currency which she so sadly needs for capital goods to build up her manufactures.

I am glad to say that the Labour Party takes an entirely different view from the Opposition on this project and the Labour Party was not going to allow this appeal to go unheeded. The Labour Party, consisting of the ordinary working chaps, has a true appreciation of its obligation in this regard and its members are prepared to do all they possibly can to help Great Britain in the jam she is in. The first reaction to the appeal to hon. members opposite was to exploit Great Britain in her hour of trial—“Never mind about producing more meat but give higher prices to the meat producers. Never mind about producing more wheat but give higher prices to the wheat-growers. Never mind about more bacon but give higher prices to the pig-raisers.” That was the attitude of hon. members opposite. (Opposition dissent.)

But the Labour Party’s attitude was to get busy and see what land we could get for producing food.

I am putting this case honestly, fairly, and factually before the people of Queensland. There are no platitudes in what I am saying tonight. I am telling the cold, hard, shameful truth about hon. members and the proposal we interested ourselves in. I should not be a bit ashamed if the experiment failed. I believe that you cannot say you cannot do a thing until you have tried. When I introduced the Bill I said, “For all I know this scheme may be a failure and it may be impossible to prove that production can take place but at least this State will have done its best to meet the situation of the British people.”

We took up the task of endeavouring to meet Britain’s shortage. We brought these people up here, provided planes, sent them round the country with our own officers and finally selected what looked like the most suitable area for an experiment in large-scale food production. There are a great many other areas that can be similarly developed but they have to be cleared. We decided that the quickest way to get production was to tackle the country most easily cultivated and that was the black-soil plains of Central Queensland.

We had quite a few objectives in view. Firstly, we desired to honour our obligations to the Old Country and to show that the general run of people in Queensland were

prepared to do something really worth while to show their gratitude. We also had in view what hon. members opposite are always talking about, more wealth production. Obviously, if you take country running a few sheep and turn it into a grain-producing area and it is successful, you achieve what hon. members talk so much about—more production of wealth. We have the idea that we can grow sorghum and other coarse grains there, such as sunflowers, and also improve the production of pork. These things make for more population. I never cease telling people when they talk about building up population that the only way it can be done is by increasing wealth production. You cannot take a large number of people, put them in an area and merely leave them to live like poor relations. There must be more production of wealth before you put people in an area. I should be the last man to suggest that the present wealth production of this country could be achieved by merely gathering an aggregation of people together to live without producing on existing industry. I am rather surprised that hon. members opposite have not seen the fallacy of talking about population without increasing the production of wealth.

Just imagine what this scheme as it develops will mean to Central Queensland. The area we have taken over at one time ran 70,000 sheep. My colleague, the Secretary for Public Lands, has shorn or worked on that property when it was shearing 70,000 sheep. When we took it over, because of over-stocking and infestation of weeds, it was running only 20,000 sheep.

The hon. member for Dalby said we seized this land from the people. Nothing could be further from the truth. Every acre acquired for the corporation has been acquired by negotiation. The process has been for the vice-chairman of the Queensland-British Food Corporation to submit to me a memorandum setting out the area he proposed to buy for the corporation, the amount of arable land, and the estimated cost of acquirement.

He asks permission to negotiate with the holders for the acquiring at a price not exceeding such-and-such a sum. On not one occasion have we paid the people who sold us the property the maximum amount we fixed for value. On every occasion we got the property at a lower price than the vice-chairman of the corporation approved of as a maximum and that the Government approved of. Every vendor was a free and willing seller.

Just imagine what it means to Central Queensland. There will be the additional railway transport, the additional railway workshops, the building of more wagons and locomotives, and the duplicating of lines. Imagine what it will mean to the meatworks if we produce half a million bodies of pork for export. It will mean that the Central Queensland meatworks will have full-time work instead of being seasonal industries in which there is virtually no employment in the off-season and very little during drought periods. Just imagine what it will mean to have the shipping of half a million bodies of pork from Central Queensland every year.

One of the most important things is that it has taught a lesson to the graziers of Queensland—that they can make provision for the maintenance of their flocks. Individual graziers are planting sorghum themselves to make provision for their stock and they are getting machinery to do it, instead of everyone going to the Government and asking for free transport or loans to provide fodder. So it is having a remarkably good effect. The settlers see that they can themselves, by getting into grain production, make provision for feeding stock in bad periods.

**Mr. Nicklin:** They used to grow fodder there before the corporation started to operate.

**Mr. HANLON:** I am pleased to hear that the Leader of the Opposition has heard that. A few months ago he was saying it was not possible to do it. (Government laughter.) Let the hon. member turn up the arguments in the "Telegraph" and he will see that he said they might as well feed sawdust to the stock.

**Mr. Nicklin:** That is grazing stock on sorghum stubble.

**Mr. HANLON:** That is what the people were doing. The man the hon. member for Dalby mentioned wrote a letter to the Press stating how many thousands he fattened on the sorghum stubble. We are doing the same with cattle. It is going to lead to a great deal more permanent employment in the pastoral industry in that area as well as having large numbers of men in that area that was previously occupied by these few people. The hon. member for Dalby moaned about the number of people there. It is an affront to him as a grazier to see a lot of people in the western country. When the hon. member sees somebody in the western country he thinks that everywhere that fellow puts his foot down he is tramping on grass. He thinks the people should be treated like kangaroos and got rid of so that they won't interfere with the sheep.

That is the attitude the hon. member takes. This is what is going to happen: when people are employed there villages will spring up. Wherever the workers are housed, and when their families come, there will have to be a store and a post office, and there will have to be schools and churches and people to attend to the wants of that community, as well as the people on the farm. That is how rural development takes place. It is not by trying to make giant cities but by building up as many little centres of population as possible that the greatest good will result.

The hon. member for Dalby also complained about the machinery that the corporation had. Of course it must have machinery. You cannot produce grain without it. What does he expect it to do? He would be happy if it started off with a pick and shovel to produce 25,000 or 30,000 acres of sorghum.

The machinery purchased by the Queensland-British Food Corporation was not the machinery used for its first year's work. That

has been accumulated for the cultivation of 100,000 acres of country this year. Very little machinery was owned by the corporation in the first year. Most of the work such as ploughing was done by contract. The tractors and equipment we got were a special quota allocated by the Federal authorities to Queensland above the quota that had already been allotted for the use of the State. And I would say this about it: it has been established that each unit of machinery in that area has handled more country than it would have handled had it been in the hands of the small farmers.

In conclusion I would point out that the hon. member said in this Chamber this afternoon that priority in machinery should be given to the established settlers on the Darling Downs. He would not give it to the soldier settlers: they must not get it until the old-established settler who has made his money and who wants additional machinery gets it!

**Mr. RUSSELL:** I rise to a point of order. I did not say the soldier settlers. I said the people who were small units on the Darling Downs.

**Mr. HANLON:** I can only go by what the hon. member said, and he stated that priority in farming equipment should be given to the old-established farmers on the Darling Downs who have been waiting for years. I do not subscribe to that. I think the young soldier settler going on the land is every bit as much or more entitled to it.

**Mr. Maher:** He included them.

**Mr. HANLON:** He included them when I corrected him. I know how he feels about it. The hon. member said he does not believe in large aggregations of land. The hon. member does not believe in the cultivation of large areas of land. He is the gentleman who with his family has interests in 147,775 acres of leasehold in the South-West, 22,442 acres of freehold, and in the Clermont area four stations totalling 500 square miles. Notwithstanding this, he does not believe in large holdings. Did one ever hear such a statement made in this Chamber? He does not believe in large holdings.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** I rise to a point of order. What the Premier has said is untrue. It is not true that I own four stations aggregating 500 square miles.

**Mr. HANLON:** Of course, I accept denials and I accept the hon. member's. Logan Downs Pty. Ltd., held by C. W. Russell and family, consist of Wuthung, Logan Downs East, Wybera and Cherwell Downs, together with certain freeholds—apparently over 500 square miles.

**Mr. Russell:** That is a company.

**Mr. HANLON:** The stock carried—

411 horses,  
6,795 cattle,  
25,466 sheep.

These stations are in the Clermont area, according to the Department of Public Lands. The other aggregation is in the South-West,

147,775 acres of leasehold and 22,442 acres of freehold. This country will not be developed or populated until as much as possible of that land is put under cultivation and supports a population one thousand times greater than it supports today.

**Mr. HEADING (Wide Bay) (7.39 p.m.):** The Premier attempts to mislead the people of this State. The hon. gentleman states that there has been misrepresentation from this side, but there is no hon. member on this side who has misrepresented the facts. We who represent the pig-raisers of this State and Australia failed to get a decent price for our pigs, otherwise we could have increased the numbers of pigs raised.

Under the control exercised by the Federal Government during the war years the number of pigs produced in this State dropped from over 700,000 in 1940-41 to 352,000 in 1947-48. Let me tell the Premier also that I was one of those representatives of the pig-raisers of Australia who met the British Food Mission in Melbourne and tried to tell them what the cost of production was in order to induce them to give us a price that was less than what Great Britain was paying to any other country in the world. I challenge the hon. member for Nundah to deny that.

**Mr. Roberts:** You were advocating a higher price.

**Mr. HEADING:** The Australian pig-breeders said they would guarantee to double the output of pigs in this country if they were given a price that would meet the cost of production. The price asked was 1s. 6d. a pound to the farmers in Australian currency. At that time Great Britain was paying every other country in the world from which she was buying pork a greater price than that, and she is still doing it. Because of the maladministration of the Labour Government and the fixation of a price at a figure below the cost of production this industry has fallen away. We are still labouring under that difficulty. Up till 31 December, 1948, the number of pigs killed in New South Wales had decreased still further.

**Mr. Roberts interjected.**

**Mr. HEADING:** The hon. member does not know anything about it. After hearing him discussing the Peak Downs scheme I am satisfied that he was in his wrong place up there. He may be a good solicitor but he is a very poor farmer.

We only asked for a price that was less than that which Great Britain was paying other countries in the world. We believed that with the price we asked we could increase the pig production for Great Britain. I was told by representatives of the industry that these men were quite satisfied that we were going to get what we asked. As a matter of fact, one member of the mission from England said to me at the conference in Melbourne, "What does it matter whether we pay you 1s. 6d. or 2s. a pound provided we get the pigs we require?" When I saw them again in Sydney they were still apparently prepared to pay this price, but my friends in the South who are engaged in this industry

told me that after the British Food Mission had been to Queensland and gone back South they went stone-cold on the whole project, with the result that we did not get a price that would enable us to increase the number of pigs raised in this country. The price we were offered was 1s. 0½d. We asked for 1s. 6d. and the result is that the industry has gone down steadily ever since.

I am going to be fair and say that recently the Federal authorities sent officers around inquiring into the cost of production. If this had been done years ago and we had received a reasonable price the industry would have picked up.

Look at what the Government have done. No doubt they suggested to these people that by supporting this Peak Downs scheme they were going to produce these pigs. Only today the Premier spoke about 500,000 carcasses of pork going to Britain. Nobody would be more pleased than I should be if that could be done. At the time when the scheme was suggested we said that it would take years, that even if the scheme was successful it would take at least 10 years to get up to 500,000 pigs a year, and we pointed out the difficulties that the scheme would encounter. We pointed out that these people were going up into new country without knowing much about it. They all thought they were going to produce all this grain. Not one hon. member on this side suggested that they would not grow grain on that country. Of course, you can grow some grain on it, but let me say again that it will be years before they can produce 500,000 pigs, even if they ever do in the history of that scheme.

What we said was that the way to get an increase in pig production was to give the people with the necessary buildings and plant the opportunity of doing the job. Hon. members will remember what I said. I said, "Why are you getting away from the small farmers? Has not the small farmer done his job?" I think hon. members will agree with me when I say that every time he has got a reasonable price he has delivered the goods. Hon. members will also remember that in 1947 farmers on the Darling Downs produced—and I think my figures are correct—3,000,000 bushels of grain sorghum. What did hon. members opposite do with it? They left it to deteriorate on the Downs because we could not get a licence to export.

**Mr. Collins:** Rubbish.

**Mr. HEADING:** The Minister comes in by saying, "Rubbish." He knows very well that we on this side moved the adjournment of the House to discuss the fact that these people could not get a licence to export and that there was grain waiting to be exported. The Minister himself agreed when we moved the adjournment of the House to impress upon the Federal Government that these people wanted a permit.

**Mr. Gair:** You could not make an impression on a cushion.

**Mr. HEADING:** I am not trying to impress the Deputy Premier because he knows nothing about this problem and it would not be worth while trying to convince

him. I am at least hoping to convince one or two hon. members on that side of the Chamber and I am saying to the Premier of this State that he absolutely misrepresented the position. Had we got a reasonable deal at a price less than what Great Britain was paying for the product in other parts of the world, we should have increased the number of pigs in the State. We should have developed production.

An hon. member opposite when speaking this afternoon quoted scripture and I shall quote it too. I said to Sir Henry Turner, "If you want food for Britain as badly as you say you do, 'what thou doest, do quickly.'" There were hundreds of sows going into bacon factories that could have been put into breeding pens and in 18 months we could have produced a lot more pigs. To show you how sincere I was, when I went back home I put in six more sows and I persuaded neighbours to do likewise. Mr. Watson, of the Kingston piggery, put in 40 new sows because he and I and others believed we should be doing something in the interests of the people of Britain. What was the result? The litters of those sows were marketed as bacon pigs three months ago. Hon. members can see how possible it was to increase production, because I was able to do so and so were many others and hundreds of others could have done the same thing.

When I came back to Queensland from the South after meeting these gentlemen I went to the president of the Q.D.O. and said, "You have 23,000 dairymen and if you persuade them to put in one extra sow each, working on an average of 10 pigs a year, we should be able to get 230,000 pigs." It would not have been difficult for each of those dairymen to do that and if this was done in every other State, instead of 500,000 carcasses we should have got 1,000,000. The stories coming from hon. members opposite are to the effect that we were opposed to doing anything for Great Britain and wanted to rob her while she was down. They have no foundation for that statement. All that sob-stuff put over by the Premier is not worth anything at all. I remember the Premier saying in this Chamber—and I have referred to this before and this was when the British Food Mission met the pig-raisers in the South—"We would increase the number of pigs if we got the price."

It has been said that we laid it down as a condition that we were to get barbed wire and other things. When these selfsame people went to New Zealand and entered into a contract with the New Zealand farmers it contained a condition that they would help the New Zealand farmers to get the necessary barbed wire and other things to enable them to expand their premises and increase the number of their pigs. Therefore, if we did say that we did not do anything more than they did in New Zealand where in fact such a condition was included in the contract.

I think I have pointed it out sufficiently on a number of occasions here that the pig-raisers in this country are willing to do this

job for Great Britain, that we have no desire to exploit the people, and that all we want is the cost of production. It is all very well for hon. members opposite to say that the farmer ought to do this, that and the other thing, but you have to remember that there is also the economic side to it. I want to tell you now that the price of pigs today is not commensurate with the price of grain. The only fair way is to have the price of pigs based on the price of grain and until that is done you cannot grow pigs and get a fair margin of profit. Some people have a vague idea about these things. They seem to think that you grow pigs on skimmed milk alone and that argument must be exploded. Every bushel of grain has a price on the market but today, instead of feeding it to the pigs the growers sell it on the open market because that gives a better return.

**Mr. Foley:** What do you estimate is the cost of production per lb. today?

**Mr. HEADING:** About 1s. 3d.

**Mr. Foley:** And you were asking for 1s. 6d.

**Mr. HEADING:** Yes.

**Mr. Collins:** Following the old practice that you can always come down.

**Mr. HEADING:** We were asking for 1s. 6d.

**Mr. Gair:** Pigs have been decontrolled.

**Mr. HEADING:** Yes. That was the only way to help the industry out of the doldrums and I am sure that the Deputy Premier realises that. It was the only way to give an impetus to the growing of pigs in Australia.

**Mr. Foley:** The corporation believed that you could produce pigs at 1s. 3d. a lb.

**Mr. HEADING:** Let me tell the Secretary for Public Lands that I went back home and put in six new sows and that their litters were sold as bacon pigs three months ago. The output of pigs at Peak Downs is not yet started. I do not know whether the Government have any litters but they certainly have got some sows. It will take them 12 months or more to build up the number of sows they require. We have been told that will be done gradually but the pig-breeders were under the impression that the carcasses were required immediately or at the earliest possible moment. The scheme at Peak Downs is one that will take years to build up.

I have heard a good number of interjections from hon. members opposite, particularly about over-stocking, but a good number of them do not know much about the subject. Peak Downs had been through a very long drought when it was taken over by the Queensland-British Food Corporation. That means that a large quantity of grass had died out. The trouble does not arise from over-stocking. If I carry a reasonable number of stock and a drought occurs, what am I to do if the drought goes on for a long time?

No relief country was to be had within hundreds of miles. If the sheep were kept on the holding many of them would die. A property cannot be stocked lightly enough to carry it through a drought, and if there is not sufficient stock on the property under ordinary conditions the holder could not make a living. That is the reason why Peak Downs was in the condition it was when it was taken over. The reason was not over-stocking but a prolonged drought.

We should look at this question reasonably. I admit that the Queensland-British Food Corporation, since taking over Peak Downs, has had a bad season. Even on my own property rain came late and frosts came early, with the result that I lost every grain of sorghum. I got no grain at all. I had never said grain cannot be grown on Peak Downs—I daresay it can—but seasons on Peak Downs are not so good as on the Darling Downs. I believe that the small farmer, if given a reasonable price, would be able to produce as much sorghum today as in the past.

**Mr. Hanlon:** There is nothing to prevent the small farmer from producing sorghum. He has the equipment.

**Mr. HEADING:** I am not saying he has not; I am saying there was no need to start out on this scheme. I would have cut Peak Downs up into agricultural areas and settled returned soldiers and other settlers on it. I am quite sure that would be more satisfactory than it will prove to be. I am afraid that grain sorghum will cost the corporation a lot more than it could be produced for by the small farmer. My recommendation to the Queensland-British Food Corporation is that it should, as conveniently as possible, cut up its areas for closer settlement, when it will be worked much better than it is today. One has only to look at the South African venture, which has been a failure. Perhaps drought and other factors had something to do with it, but my advice is that the quicker you cut up these areas into smaller holdings the better it will be for everybody.

**Mr. McINTYRE** (Cunningham) (7.57 p.m.): It was not my intention to take part in this debate but I feel I am justified in rising because of the unfair and unwarranted attack made on the Opposition by the Premier. He used the Peak Downs grain-sorghum scheme as a chopping block to attack the Opposition. In doing so he claimed for his party a monopoly of loyalty—there is no doubt about that. Personally I resent that, and on behalf of hon. members on this side of the Chamber I resent it very much. It was that which prompted me to rise in this debate. The Premier said that we on this side of the Chamber were disloyal and money-hungry and that our only desire to help Britain in her distress was the desire for more money and more profit. I emphatically deny that.

Pig-meat is the ultimate objective of the whole scheme. Too much has been said about growing more grain sorghum. That is only a means to an end. All that the pig-producers requested—and it was a reasonable, just, and fair request—was that they should be placed

on a cost-of-production basis. Surely the Premier has sufficient knowledge of the fact that the fundamental of economic production if an industry is to carry on continually and successfully is for it to have cost of production. Anyone who knows anything about the pig industry knows that it has declined because the price obtained for pig-meat has not been equal to cost of production. We did not cry for more money and more profits. The pig-producers' only claim was that the principle of cost of production should be established in the industry. As a representative of primary producers I have always contended, and will continue to do so, that our industry should be placed on a cost-of-production basis in relation to price.

I am going to suggest to the Premier and to the Committee generally that as far as this year's operations are concerned, the cost will be infinitely greater, and in the ultimate in regard to pig-meat they will be above the amount asked for by the pig-producers. I suggest that it will cost more than what we regard as the cost-of-production value. I think the Premier, in making the statements he did, showed a complete lack of knowledge of the basic fundamentals of that primary industry.

The hon. gentleman went on to say that the scheme may fail. All we tried to do was to show him the way in which he could get the same or better results much more surely.

It has been very distressing to listen to hon. members on the Government side making statements regarding Peak Downs. The hon. member for Fitzroy challenged our right to speak on this question or criticise it. Surely if this State is providing £500,000 to finance the scheme we are justified in discussing the matter and pointing out any weakness contained in it.

The hon. member for Nundah talked very foolishly about the scheme, particularly in relation to the type and volume of soil that is to be found there. The hon. member for Buranda, although he visited the area, showed a lack of knowledge of the whole scheme.

I should like to relate a few impressions received on my recent visit to Peak Downs. I am in favour of making the scheme a success, but I am apprehensive because of recent reports in relation to the volume of production for this year. I asked the Premier a question but he evaded it. I asked the amount of grain harvested and he said the job was not yet complete. I have information to the effect that it is about as complete as it is likely to be. I think this talk about 1 million to 1¼ million bushels was unjustified and foolish and misleading to the people. I suggest to the Premier that if the yields were exceeding expectations there would be no difficulty in getting the information we desire. The Premier must admit that they are meeting some of the difficulties we emphasised when the scheme was mooted.

**Mr. Hanlon:** Difficulties are something to endeavour to overcome, not to run away from.

**Mr. McIntyre:** Difficulties, I know, are only met to be overcome, but it is no good living in a fool's paradise. We must face up to the problems that are associated with this scheme in Central Queensland.

I should like to pay a compliment for those responsible for the scheme for the courtesy they showed to us when we visited that area. The quality of the soil was very good, but I am of the opinion that while the quality may be comparable with the quality of the soil to be found on the Darling Downs, conditions generally obtaining there will not permit the same production results. Regarding the crop itself, it is, to say the least, a partial failure.

It was very evident to me as one who had grown sorghum through the years that these people would be disappointed with this year's results. I know they had many disabilities to overcome. The early rains were not sufficient for a maximum germination. They had early frosts.

They made one major mistake and that was that the percentage of kalo sown was far too large. Any person who knows anything about sorghum-growing knows that this variety of grain sorghum must be harvested immediately it ripens. Had they got all the grain that was grown there they would have had a better story to tell today but because of the high percentage of kalo and the adverse conditions associated with the harvesting they lost a very large part of it. I saw some patches where, in my opinion, there was anything up to 20 bushels of grain on the ground. I understand they are trying to get that but I know they will not succeed. I also visited other growers in the area and I know that the capacity to produce sorghum and grain had been amply demonstrated before this scheme was started. The Premier and other members have told us that it was an experiment to demonstrate what that country was capable of producing but producers have been operating there for years and the capacity of the country to produce grain sorghum had been amply demonstrated before the Peak Downs project was started. Growers there have been planting up to 700 and 800 acres and have been doing so for years so it was no experiment on the part of the corporation and was no justification for using all that machinery. And the quantity is enormous, when machinery is so much required in other producing areas.

The production in this area by the use of that machinery is tying up the machinery at a time when there is an urgent demand for it by many other producers and this cannot be justified. In reply to the Premier in his criticism of hon. members on this side I would inform him that many of the producers on the Darling Downs who are short of machinery and are unable to keep their farms operating are returned soldiers who have taken up land. Because of the shortage of machinery they are not able to operate successfully. It is not the old producer that I am concerned for. I am not so much concerned about him because I believe he is able

to carry on but I am concerned with those men, many of them returned soldiers, who are endeavouring to rehabilitate themselves. They are urgently in need of machinery that is tied up at Peak Downs. I am not begrudging Peak Downs the machinery but it is constantly stated, I think by the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock and others, that this has had no effect on the supply of machinery to producers who are trying to establish themselves on the land. Irrespective of who was responsible for this statement I regard it as a very foolish one. If there is any general shortage of any article or commodity, any drain on the available supplies must be reflected on the general shortage. That is exactly what has happened there. I believe that if such machinery had been available to our present and potential producers greater results would have been achieved.

The limiting factor of Peak Downs is the want of sufficient rain at the right time. It has been said by various people that the rainfall there is comparable with that experienced on the Darling Downs. The Darling Downs has been growing grain crops for many years but although the rainfall is comparable that does not mean the scheme will be an unqualified success. As regards summer crops, on the Darling Downs we are on a very narrow margin. It is not an easy job to grow sorghum there. It is very difficult. It has been found by the farmer that he must depend on the conserved moisture in the sub-soil. If we start with dry ground and dry sub-soil and depend on the rain that falls during the growing period we court inevitable failure.

I found, too, that the Peak Downs area does not get the same results as the Darling Downs from a given quantity of rain, because of high temperatures, humidity and added evaporation. That has been definitely established and is accepted by anyone who has a practical knowledge of grain production.

Sorghum is only a means to an end. Much was said about grain sorghum and what can and cannot be done. We have grown it on the Downs. One year we grew 4,500,000 bushels but no-one said anything about that, yet here, where they attempt but fail to grow 1,000,000 bushels at Peak Downs a great shout goes up about the wonderful achievement. Let me remind hon. members that although we grew this 4,500,000 bushels at a time when Great Britain was harder pressed for food than she is today the powers that be prevented us from sending it over to our hungry brothers. Not only did they prohibit us from sending it but delayed the prevention so long that we lost much of the best of our grain.

I repeat that sorghum is only a means to an end. Too much emphasis is placed on the sorghum side of the venture. The objective was pig-meat for Britain. We all appreciate Britain's need and we should also appreciate the fact that this need has been great for over four years now. When the British people are setting standards of loyalty I do not think their assessment of the loyalty of

these people will be very great when, after having suffered four years of starvation the British people will be required to wait at least another three or four years before pig-meats are made available in any great quantity.

If the fundamental principle had been established earlier pig-meats would have been available in greater quantities to Britain now. The primary producers asked for only two things. One was a price based on cost of production and the other was a guarantee of that price for a period that would justify their building up the industry. If that had been agreed to, not only would the present producers have increased their production of pigs but many others would have come into the industry and Britain today would have been enjoying thousands of tons of pig-meat.

The true story is pig-meat for Britain. This scheme can never hope to supply Britain's needs for a long time. The breakfast tables of Britain will continue to be empty for many years to come. When we who have practical knowledge of the production of pig meats endeavoured to point out the better way in which to spend public money we were charged with being disloyal to the British Empire and British people. The price that we asked was not as great as the figure it will cost to produce pigs for Britain under this scheme. At the time when the scheme was mooted the price for pigs here was only 9d. a lb. Later, after much agitation, it was stepped up to 10d. Now we are getting 1s. 0½d.

I have discussed this matter with pig-producers everywhere and I might say I do not think it will be a breach of confidence to say that I discussed it with the man in charge of the piggery up there. He had a piggery of his own and he told me that he could not balance his budget under the price that obtained during the time he was operating if the price was less than 1s. 3d. I am willing to admit that this scheme is an attempt to present the product of Peak Downs in the form of pig meat. The pig scheme is based on units of production. It is suggested that each unit will have 200 brood sows, and before there will be sufficient pigs to consume the total Peak Downs production it will be necessary to have 200 units each containing 200 sows. I suggest that pigs do not lend themselves to that type of mass production because one of the greatest difficulties associated with production is the health of the pig. That health can be maintained only by building up the resistance of the pig and can be achieved only by giving the pig a balanced ration, and that cannot be done with grain sorghum alone. You must have protein meal. It has been suggested that proteins will be used in connection with the scheme and it is suggested also that they will be found perhaps from lucerne and other crops. They can be provided also in the form of meat, blood and bone meal. I suggest that there will be difficulty in that regard because today there is not a sufficiency of those by-products to meet our present require-

ments and any drain on the supply caused by this scheme will have a detrimental effect on our existing pig-producers. We are already short of those essential requirements.

World grain values are high at present and the grain being produced is not of good keeping quality. Grain sorghum must be well grown before it can be kept even for a limited time. When the quality is low the keeping qualities are poor and it must be disposed of. It is comparatively easy with high world values to send the grain to the coast and truck it away, but we shall come to the time when that will not be so. We know that wheat is our basic grain and the price we get for wheat controls the price of all other grains. So the time is coming when the pig will be the only medium through which this grain can be economically marketed.

The suggestion today is to grow 100,000 acres of grain sorghum. That represents an enormous amount of grain, and it is an enormous undertaking to market all that grain on a sound economical basis in the form of pig-meat. That is what the scheme is up against. Even though it does meet with success it will be years before any major relief will be available to Britain. I suggest that the correct approach—and I mentioned this in the Chamber before and I say it again not by way of criticism but by way of helpful suggestion—is for the present producers to be encouraged by the establishment of these basic principles in the industry to produce to the maximum of their capacity.

This scheme could have been carried out as an experiment and if it proved a success it could have been continued. As I moved around in this area I found that there was a great desire on the part of individual producers to acquire that type of land. We have been told that this is an isolated area but Emerald is only 171 miles from Rockhampton, where the Lake's Creek meatworks is situated and there are buyers combing this Central District buying everything for meat. The people in the Central District are no further from the market than we are in the Western Downs. I am satisfied that if land was thrown open for selection by individual producers the ballot would be as heavy as in more favoured areas.

**Mr. Foley:** In what sized farms?

**Mr. McINTYRE:** I was told by the men up there that that could not be determined by departmental officers, as a living area in that locality would vary according to certain circumstances and that the matter would have to be determined by men with practical knowledge there. The area would vary according to the type of soil and the locality from, say, 1,000 acres in some instances up to 10,000 acres. We are told that we are aiming at a population of 20,000,000 in this country, but where are we going to put them? In the cities and towns, or are we going to encourage the individual producers to work harmoniously and happily out in the country? I believe that can be done and that it will result in a greater volume of production than we can hope to get under the present scheme.

I trust that the scheme will meet with a degree of success but as a practical farmer who has been associated with primary production on the Darling Downs and making a comparison between the Darling Downs and the Central District, I suggest that the Central District scheme will be if not wholly a failure then partially a failure. I believe there are many barriers to be overcome. I think the wrong approach has been made. I do not think that the best medium has been adopted in paying our contribution of thanks to Great Britain and in meeting our obligations to her, which we are anxious to do, and I make that statement despite any remarks by the Premier regarding the alleged disloyalty to Great Britain by hon. members on this side of the Chamber.

**Hon. H. H. COLLINS** (Cook—Secretary for Agriculture and Stock) (8.23 p.m.): I could not allow the statement by the hon. member for Wide Bay to pass that the Federal Government had reduced the number of pigs in this country because they had not offered the producers a price commensurate with the cost of production. The fact is that the present Federal Government are the first Government in the Commonwealth ever to offer the primary producer the cost of production plus a reasonable amount of profit for butter, wheat and meat. No other Government have ever attempted to introduce that principle in the interests of the primary producers. The sugar-growers have had it for a long time and that is the reason why there has been a great measure of prosperity over a long period in that industry and why the conditions in it are so good. Because the Federal Government happen to be a Labor Government, led by a Labor Prime Minister, their efforts in giving absolutely the best service possible to the primary producer in the matter of price are condemned by hon. members opposite although they know full well that the primary producers were never better off and never more prosperous than they are at the present time.

**Mr. Heading:** That is not true.

**Mr. COLLINS:** The hon. member's statement was very far from what is true, as I shall show. We do know that there has been a decline in pig production but it is entirely wrong to lay the blame at the door of the Federal Government, as the figures I am about to quote will show.

The price has not been entirely responsible for the decline in pig-raising. The hon. member for Wide Bay did a great disservice to the pig-producers of Queensland, of which he is one of the leaders, when he demanded 1s. 6d. per lb. for pig-meats from Sir Henry Turner, the leader of the British Food Mission that came to Australia to discuss meat prices with the Commonwealth Government.

**Mr. Nicklin:** You suggest then that the price of Australian pig-meats should be less than that of Denmark and Argentina?

**Mr. COLLINS:** The Leader of the Opposition suggests that we should take the same role as Argentina and squeeze the last

brass farthing from Britain, irrespective of the purchasing value of money in this country.

**Mr. Maher:** We do not get any discount on British merchandise and importations.

**Mr. COLLINS:** We get long-term contracts. The hon. member says we should get the same price for our pig-meats as Argentina.

**Mr. Heading:** We do not say anything of the kind.

**Mr. COLLINS:** That is what the hon. member's leader said.

**Mr. Nicklin:** I did not say anything of the kind. (Opposition interjections.)

**Mr. COLLINS:** Some hon. members opposite cannot take it very well.

**Mr. Heading:** Why misrepresent the position?

**Mr. COLLINS:** Who is making this speech? I cannot make myself heard.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dunstan):** Order!

**Mr. COLLINS:** The hon. member for Wide Bay says that if the price of pig-meats is increased primary producers would double their output.

**Mr. Heading:** We offered that.

**Mr. COLLINS:** This is what happened: in 1941, when the price of pig-meats was 5.9d. per lb., we had 707,600 pigs in Queensland. In 1947-48, when the price was 10d. per lb., or nearly double, we had 352,000 pigs. Therefore, when the price was low the number of pigs was nearly double. We cannot get away from cold hard facts. In 1942, when the price of pig-meats went up to 6.34d., the number of pigs dropped to 638,909. In 1943, when the price was increased 2d. per lb., or to 8.34d., the number came back to 576,000. Then in 1944, when the price was increased to 9d. per lb., the number came back to 510,000. In 1946, when the price remained at 9d., the numbers dropped to 432,000. Then pig-meats were increased 1d. per lb., and the number of pigs dropped still further to 352,000. Therefore, who would take notice of the statement so loosely made by the hon. member for Wide Bay that if pig-producers got a decent price for pig-meats the numbers would soon be doubled? It is contrary to facts.

I know the reason for it. In 1948 pig-producers got double the price for pig-meats they got in 1940. Then the hon. member, who is supposed to be a leader of the pig-producers, asked for the ridiculous price of 1s. 6d. for pig-meats! Also, as chairman of directors of a bacon factory, he increased their price for bacon as soon as the decontrols came along. People just didn't buy it—they bought other meats—and they had to bring their prices back. Now the hon. member states that if we can get 1s. 3d. it is pretty good. Is it not very much like a hucksterer selling a horse—'We will try a high price first and if that does not work we will lower the price?'

**Mr. HEADING:** I rise to a point of order. I did not say 1s. 3d. I said that the cost of production was 1s. 3d. and we wanted 1s. 6d. to create an incentive to get people back in the industry.

**Mr. COLLINS:** At that time he said that you could not produce them under 18 pence.

**Mr. Heading:** I did not say that either. I did not say you could not produce under 18 pence. Hon. members will remember I said after the Secretary for Public Lands interjected that 1s. 3d. was the cost of production and we wanted 1s. 6d. in order to have an incentive. I did not say that we required 1s. 6d. as the cost of production.

**Mr. COLLINS:** I remember the hon. member stating in my presence to Sir Henry Turner that we could not produce them under 18 pence and if they did not get that price they would not go on. That was at the reception at Lennon's Hotel. Now the hon. member says he can produce them for 1s. 3d. What does the hon. member mean? It is impossible for the hon. member to refute that. I can understand the hon. member's discomfort in sitting there and hearing his figures pulled to pieces. He has tried to get a price and he knew the commodity was not worth it and he knew you could not sell it for that in this country. The price has come up to over 1s. and there is a growing increase in pig-meats.

What happened over the period? It was not the price that led to the decline; it was several factors. No. 1 was the change in the system of dairying. To a very great extent it was the change from butter-making to cheese-making, as a result of which the farmer lost a lot of valuable food that he ordinarily fed to pigs. There has also been a tremendous development in the consumption of fresh milk throughout Queensland and that has lessened the quantity of skimmed milk available. So far no great attempt has been made to feed pigs on grain and other foods. Pig-raising up to date has been almost wholly an adjunct to dairying in order to use up the by-products, such as the butter milk and skim milk. That will gradually change. It must change if we are to become a pig-producing State, which I definitely say we shall. As time goes on we must use pigs and to a lesser extent cattle as a means of using the grain for which we cannot find an export market. If the price of meat goes up then the price of grain must be related to meat prices. That is so in the United States where 45 per cent. of the huge grain yield is fed directly to pigs on the farm and the balance is fed to cattle and sheep and poultry. Those cattle and pigs are fed on that ration balanced with certain proteins that blend with the grain, making it possible to feed the pigs without any milk at all.

The hon. member also said that you could not feed pigs with raw grain. Any person who knows the slightest thing about farming knows that. Any man who has the slightest knowledge of animal husbandry knows that.

Experiments have been carried out at the Yeerongpilly Animal Health Station to determine the quantity of vegetable and animal proteins that pigs will make progress on. Three proteins were tried, meat-meal, yeast and the third is a mixture of dried yeast and meat-meal. The pigs received different quantities according to age and the finding was that an average overall of about 7 per cent. protein to 93 per cent. grain was necessary. Meat-meal had a better result than dried yeast and the mixture of dried yeast and meat-meal gave a better result than either yeast or meat-meal. The pigs gained over a pound per day on that ration and remained entirely healthy.

The experiment will be carried out in a big way in the Queensland-British Food Corporation project at Peak Downs and will be one of the best object lessons that the pig-producers in Australia can have. It will be carried out on a sound basis with men who have the technical knowledge and who will not be hampered so far as money is concerned in doing the thing in the proper way. I believe that experiment in pig-raising will be very valuable for the people of this State, as the experiment that has been carried out with sorghum grain has been.

It is all very well for the hon. member for Cunningham to say that sorghum had been grown there long before the corporation took over. It was grown at the Warren State Farm but the fact remains that only one or two farmers, who were growing it in the Emerald district in a small way and none of the station-owners with the vast properties there, although the carrying capacity of their properties had become less and less—they were very glad to sell their properties at a very reasonable price—had put that project into actual practice. It was left to the Queensland Government and the Queensland-British Food Corporation and the officers incorporated with them to set up one of the boldest experiments tried in Central Queensland. The idea has so taken on as the result of what has been done that many of the farmers are going to go in for it in an equally big way. That will be all to the good; that is what we want; but to say, "Yes, we hope it is going to be a success, but this is wrong and that is wrong," as many members of the Opposition have been doing is an endeavour to damn the thing in the eyes of the people. They have done that ever since the project was mooted.

Now hon. members say no notice was taken of the four million bushels of sorghum grown on the Darling Downs. We know sorghum has been grown on the Darling Downs more or less for years, but we also know that the sorghum crop was put in because the wheat crop was a failure. The sorghum crop helped the growers out very materially. We know also that 14,000,000 bushels of wheat was grown on the Darling Downs last year. Hon. members opposite did not say very much about this because wheat has been grown there for a great number of years.

**Mr. McIntyre:** We are growing 1,000,000 bushels of sorghum this year.

**Mr. COLLINS:** That is all to the good, but to say it would have been better if the Queensland-British Food Corporation had not touched that land and private enterprise had been allowed to do it is only begging the question. For the last 50 years private enterprise has had all the opportunity it needed to do exactly what has been done, but it did not take advantage of it. The landholders held the land, it was declining in fertility, and in many cases they were running to the Government for help. The sorghum that has been grown there is still the best object lesson on farming in a big way ever attempted in the Central District.

Now we hear it said that if the farmers had had the same machinery as the Peak Downs people had they would have done more with it. I know there is a shortage of machinery but I deny emphatically the statement by the hon. member for Cunningham that I said the use of that harvesting machinery on the Peak Downs had no effect whatever on the grain-growers. I did not say that but I do say that despite the shortage of machinery in Queensland and in Australia generally, despite the shortage of hundreds of other things, we did grow and harvest the biggest crop of wheat ever grown in this State and, given suitable weather conditions, we shall plant and harvest a still greater area this coming season. It is being planted now. Furthermore, any farmer could have employed the same contractors to plough his land if he had made the same business arrangement with them. The Queensland-British Food Corporation did not own one tractor or plough when that 30,000 acres of land was ploughed. It hired plant that was available to anybody in Queensland to hire. At the same time as all this was being achieved the sugar-growers have grown and harvested the greatest crop of sugar ever produced in Queensland.

It is fortunate that the harvesting of grain sorghum, which is a summer crop, works in ideally with the harvesting of the wheat crop because they come in at almost opposite times of the year. The harvesting of sorghum on Peak Downs started in June while the harvesting of wheat probably will not start until some time late in October or early in November. There is nothing to prevent the machinery used for harvesting the sorghum from being transferred to the harvesting of the wheat crop and the production of grain will be all the greater for that. I have discussed the matter personally with Mr. Kemp and he tells me there is no reason why a reciprocal arrangement cannot be made between the corporation and the wheat-growers on the Downs for the use of the same machinery for harvesting wheat. Some co-operation has been achieved between the two sections and there is nothing to prevent the machinery from being used to harvest both crops.

Then the hon. member for Cunningham says we shall not have pigs for the next ten years. At least pigs multiply very quickly. I know it will be a fair while before the

whole scheme will be working—nobody would be foolish enough to deny that—but until we have sufficient pigs to consume the crops we are growing there is nothing whatever to prevent our sending the grain sorghum over to England to be fed to pigs and other livestock there. It will all serve the same end.

It is going to increase our food supply for our people over there, the great desire of the honest-to-God people in Australia.

It does not help one bit to hear the derogatory remarks that continually come from the benches of the Opposition to the effect that it would be better if this thing was done some other way, that it is a partial failure and so on. Instead of being a partial failure it is a huge success and it will continue to greater and greater success. That is what we hope and there is every reason to believe it will be realised. While we in this country are endeavouring to do everything to increase our meat supply, our butter supply, our pig-meat and our poultry supplies, in order that our exports can be increased, is it fair and reasonable for those people who say they are representing the producers to have one of their members speaking in damning terms of the scheme through the British Press? That is definitely a disloyal thing to Queensland and the Empire. It is well known that the hon. member for Dalby went overseas recently and broadcast statements through England that found their way out here. I have read the statements in the English Press that it is almost impossible for Australia to greatly increase her meat supply by this means and damning in the eyes of the British people what is endeavoured to be done out here. That is an attempt to discourage Australian people in the development of this country. But we will develop this country in spite of the Jeremiahs—you cannot call them anything else—that damn anything worth while because a Government other than their own party have suggested it and are giving active effect to it. I do not know what the reason is, but I suspect, after the figures read out tonight by the Premier showing that the hon. member has very large estates in Queensland, that all he wants to do is to be left alone in isolation. He does not want anything to change his occupation of that land. I think he could do a very much better service in keeping with the oath of office in which he swears allegiance to His Majesty the King and this State of Queensland.

**Mr. MACDONALD** (Stanley) (8.48 p.m.): I rise to pass a few remarks on the food-production scheme, but I have no intention of entering into the merits or demerits of the case. When the Bill was before the House, I stressed that the success or failure of the scheme rested in the womb of time.

I want to express my feelings on the statements made by two members of the Government Party who spoke tonight. It is said in legal circles with much truth that truth sometimes appears in affidavits. I do not think it appears in the affidavits of the two hon. members who spoke.

**Mr. Hanlon:** Every word I said was true.

**Mr. MACDONALD:** The Premier was running true to form when he indulged in a tirade of abuse on false premises against the Opposition. The most regrettable feature is that he used his position to bring into this Chamber and publicise the private business of an hon. member of this Committee. I did not think any man could stoop to greater depths of degradation than that. The Minister who interjects runs, as I expected him to run, true to form.

He said today that the Opposition were guilty of trying to exploit the British people, and that we were baby-starvers. That is wrong. The Premier, and the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock especially, have been the greatest baby-starvers Great Britain has ever had to contend with. They denied sorghum to Great Britain for pig-meats. They know that their political brethren in the Federal sphere sold Australian butter to Great Britain at a price that would enable them to give cheap butter to the consumers in Australia. Not only that, but there is no truth in the statement made by the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock that the price of butter to the producer is based on the cost of production plus a margin of profit. If there was ever any confession of woeful ignorance, that is one. I have here an official letter relative to the price of butter and how it is made up. This is what it says—

“I wish to confirm the information given to you that the butter price structure is based upon costs of production only and also that no provision is included therein for a profit margin.

“Misunderstanding on the latter point sometimes arises from the fact that the price structure includes a special item termed ‘managerial allowance.’ An allowance for management was included at £1 5s. per week per farm.”

We in the dairying industry have asked for the cost of production plus a margin of profit and we have been discouraged by the present Secretary for Agriculture and Stock by his very utterances.

**A Government Member:** Who wrote that letter?

**Mr. MACDONALD:** It is written by the general secretary of the Queensland Dairymen's State Organisation.

This is quoted from the No. 1 report of the Joint Dairying Industry Advisory Committee—

“An allowance for management was included at £1 5s. per week per farm in conformity with the basis upon which returns to the industry in recent years have been determined. This allowance represents the marginal rate prescribed in the Dairy Industry Award for a leading hand charged with the responsibility for supervision and direction of labour.”

We did criticise the Central Queensland sorghum scheme when the Bill was before the Chamber in March of last year, because we argued that we could cope with the British food front by encouraging individual growers to produce the grain. We said that it was a red-letter day in the history of Queensland

in the way of an experiment, because the contribution by the Government of £500,000 was a mere detail, but it is a lie for the Premier to say that we held Great Britain up to ransom.

**Mr. HANLON:** I rise to a point of order. I object to an hon. member who endeavoured to read a dairyman's letter as an official document referring to anything I said as a lie.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Dunstan): I ask the hon. member to withdraw the word "lie."

**Mr. MACDONALD:** I do, but I never said that. I said it was a lie to say that we held Great Britain up to ransom.

**Mr. HANLON:** I rise to a point of order. I object to the hon. member's saying that any statement I made was a lie, and it comes with particularly ill grace from an hon. member who has just read a letter from a dairyman's organisation after saying it was an official document.

**Mr. MACDONALD:** It is an official document.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** I ask the hon. member to withdraw the remark.

**Mr. MACDONALD:** The Premier did not understand what I said. I said it was No. 1 report of the Joint Dairying Industry Advisory Committee.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Did the hon. member make the statement that what the Premier said was a lie?

**Mr. MACDONALD:** Yes, I said it.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Well, I ask him to withdraw it.

**Mr. MACDONALD:** I say it is not in accordance with fact.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** I ask the hon. member to withdraw it.

**Mr. MACDONALD:** I have done so. It is not in accordance with fact.

That is the whole position. We believe that the people of the Motherland should be fed—it should be first charge on our revenues—but we also believe that the best way of helping them is to give encouragement to the private grower to grow grain and pig-meats. The Government were neglecting him altogether.

**Mr. Hanlon:** We did not stop the private grower.

**Mr. MACDONALD:** They did by the lack of machinery and an insufficiency of price for pig-meats. I said then, as I say now—

"However, I do think the Government should back up the primary-producer organisations in their representations to the Federal Government to receive the cost of production plus a reasonable margin of profit for their products."

**Mr. Hanlon:** I am not objecting to your saying that.

**Mr. MACDONALD:** No, but the Premier accused me of trying to exploit the people of Britain.

**Mr. Hanlon:** No, I said the Leader of the Opposition. As far as I know, you gave the scheme your blessing.

**Mr. MACDONALD:** I did. I also said that the Government should back up representations by primary-producer organisations to the Federal Government to receive the cost of production plus a reasonable margin of profit for their products. That is all I wanted.

**Mr. Hanlon:** I am not objecting to your putting the case that way.

**Mr. MACDONALD:** But the Premier would not accept it.

**Mr. Hanlon:** I never stopped anyone from growing sorghum. The hon. member for Cunningham said the reason why we were doing all right was because of the high price of sorghum.

**Mr. MACDONALD:** I did not know that but I do know that the Premier accused the Opposition of holding up the people of Britain to ransom. That is not right. I say that the hon. gentleman does not put one-hundredth of the cost to me into food parcels for the people of Britain.

**Mr. Hanlon:** I only send a few. I know from "Hansard" that members of your party said, "Give us more money and we will give you more food."

**Mr. MACDONALD:** Only one member said that and there are 14 members in this party. The hon. gentleman cannot make a general charge against the whole party on the statement of one man. What right has he to use his official position to charge us with being disloyal?

**Mr. Hanlon:** The people of Britain did not ask for more money before they fought.

**Mr. MACDONALD:** No. Primary producers only said, "Let us have the cost of production and a reasonable margin and we will produce foodstuffs quickly." As a result of that debate I went home and launched out in breeding pigs, with disaster to myself. I sacrificed my Hereford stud to produce pig-meat for Britain.

**Mr. Hanlon:** I am sorry about that.

**Mr. MACDONALD:** I want to rebut the statements made by two hon. members opposite. The Secretary for Agriculture and Stock was not telling the truth when he said we were getting cost of production plus a high price for our butter. We are not getting that. He is wrong, too, when he says we were exploiting the people of Britain, and when he says that we did our best to damn this food-production scheme. What we said was that pig-meats could be supplied more quickly by private enterprise.

**Mr. MORRIS** (Enoggera) (8.59 p.m.): Life has taught me that where men gather together there must be a great difference in thoughts and views, but experience has taught me too that when they differ and they get together and discuss the position from their different viewpoints inevitably there emerges a better understanding. That is what I visualised Parliament would be, a place where men would get together and discuss their differences of views on all matters. Unfortunately we have heard a statement from the Premier that is an absolute disgrace and one for which he should hang his head in shame.

It is an absolute disgrace.

**Mr. Hanlon:** I said it here last year.

**Mr. MORRIS:** The Premier made a sweeping statement. He said that Liberal and Country members of the Opposition took the view "While Britain is down let us exploit the country and get all we can from her." That is not true.

**Mr. Hanlon:** That was the attitude.

**Mr. MORRIS:** It is not the attitude of the Opposition.

**Mr. Power:** "Give us more money and we will give you the goods" was what they said.

**Mr. Maher:** Business is business. (Government laughter.)

**Mr. MORRIS:** Now I say that the Premier of this State opened his address with abuse, with misrepresentation, and he completely prostituted the high office he occupies. We expect this abuse perhaps by some of the back-benchers—those who do not matter—(Government laughter)—but not from Ministers of the Crown and particularly we do not look for it from the leader of the party, the Premier of this State.

**Mr. Hanlon:** What do you say about "Business is business"?

**Mr. MORRIS:** I am speaking of what the hon. gentleman said and he should be ashamed of it.

**Mr. Hanlon:** Are you supporting "Business is business"?

**Mr. MORRIS:** I have in the past said that this Government party is not a Labour Party at all; it is a Socialist Party. I am going to show that the hon. the Premier—and I use the term because it is a parliamentary necessity—is a true disciple of Karl Marx.

**Mr. Hanlon:** You did not use it on your whispering campaign when you had a chance.

**Mr. MORRIS:** I do not need to whisper about the Premier because his faults and weaknesses shout aloud.

**Mr. Hanlon:** They are quite open.

**Mr. MORRIS:** There are so many of them. This is the book from which I wish to quote. It is entitled "The Red Prussian" and deals with the life of Karl Marx. This

is a statement made by Carl Schurz, who is a follower of Karl Marx and who migrated to America. He said:—

"Never have I met a man of such offensive, insupportable arrogance. No opinion which differed essentially from his own was accorded the honour of even a halfway respectful consideration. Everyone who disagreed with him was treated with scarcely veiled contempt. He answered all arguments which displeased him with a biting scorn for the pitiable ignorance of those who advanced them, or with a libellous questioning of their motives."

That could truly be said of the Premier of this State. Here is a man who has the arrogance—the sheer effrontery to come into this Chamber with a prepared dossier of the private life of a member. (Government laughter). Hon. members can laugh, but the whole thing is an absolute disgrace; and I think this Parliament has never seen such a low, unworthy exhibition from any member who has ever been in the House. I think the hon. member ought to be ashamed to admit that he is the Premier.

**Mr. MADSEN** (Warwick) (9.5 p.m.): It was not my intention to speak during this discussion but after hearing the statements that have been made from the Government benches, and being a reasonable-minded person and one associated with the primary industries of Queensland, I could not let the occasion pass without correcting some of the mistakes hon. members opposite have made. We have heard much in the review of the Food for Britain scheme in Central Queensland. I think when the Premier stands up in this Chamber and endeavours to convince us that a very real attempt has been made by the Labour Government to provide food for Britain it is the very height of hypocrisy. We need only throw our minds back to the period shortly after the beginning of the war and the position that operated in regard to the production of wheat in Australia under what was known as the Scully plan. We know that production of wheat in Australia gradually decreased, to the extent that there was a period when not only had we not sufficient for our food requirements and the requirements of our stock industries but when it was absolutely essential that wheat should be imported. The reason for that was not the restriction of acreage, which was one of the elements of the Scully plan, but that economic factors drove producers out of production. A similar story could be told of most of our food-producing industries from that time but it is necessary only to mention what happened to sorghum in Queensland a couple of years ago when it was shown very conclusively that although it was a relatively new crop in the State we were capable of producing a large quantity. It was the maladministration of the Commonwealth Government, supported by the State Government, that was responsible for the reduced production of sorghum in this State to a very small fraction of what might have been achieved with a certain amount of co-operation from the Government. Control in war-time was necessary to make the best

use of all food grown, but with the continuation of war-time controls I am certain it was lack of co-operation between the Government and organisations representing various industries that brought about the very great decline in production. Whatever Government members may say about an increase in price from Britain, the economic aspect must be taken into consideration. As in Government departments—and today the Treasurer spoke of a deficiency of a million pounds or so in the Railway Department—the same thing applies to production of food on farms. Unless producers can receive compensation that will allow them to grow their crops soundly and economically it is absolutely impossible for the primary industries to make the necessary contribution.

Much has been said of the pig-meat industry this evening, and of course that is discussed in conjunction with the central Queensland food scheme. When we find that pig-producers of Queensland were able to buy their feed requirements, oil and wheat, at 3s. 6½d. at the time when pig-meats brought about 9d. per lb. it is readily understandable that when the feed grain costs in the vicinity of 8s. 8d. at railway sidings it is impossible for the pig-raisers to produce bacon at 1s. 0½d. per lb.

That is the economic aspect. The Secretary for Agriculture and Stock made special mention of this matter and that is the answer to the whole question of pig-meat production. The price paid for pig-meat is not related to the increased price of grain, with the result that pig-producers will not put into the pigs the amount of grain they would with ordinary sound, economic practice.

The Minister referred to what the hon. member for Wide Bay said. The hon. member for Wide Bay has such a vast knowledge of the industry that I feel sure he could give very valuable advice to any Government.

I well remember the Minister's saying that the grain grown on the farm counted for nothing in the cost of feeding pigs. Such a statement from any responsible person is ridiculous. We on the Downs are in a rather favoured area for the production of grains and stock, yet many of our greatest producers are questioning whether it pays to feed grain to pigs. The greatest cause of damage in an industry is that corrections are made often too late. The policy of too little too late has done untold damage in many of our primary industries.

The Secretary for Agriculture and Stock spoke of service to the producers. The industry in general appreciates the cost-of-production principle as a sound basis for fixing the prices of primary products, but that is easy when we find that the export prices are almost double our home-consumption prices.

**Mr. Collins:** In what way?

**Mr. MADSEN:** Take wheat. The export values are almost double our home-consumption price.

**Mr. Collins:** You have a guarantee for a period of years, irrespective of what the export market is.

**Mr. MADSEN:** I appreciate that but time alone will show whether the Government are prepared to honour that guarantee when the position is reversed. At least I hope their guarantee for the wheat industry will stand the test of time better than our recent experience in the dairying industry. If it were not for the pressure exerted by Mr. Chifley at the moment I think the States would be prepared to let us down on the butter question. After listening to Mr. Pollard in Melbourne the other day, and knowing what happened at that meeting of State Ministers, I think the dairying industry has reason for complaint at the moment.

**Mr. Devries:** Not State Ministers.

**Mr. MADSEN:** State Prices Ministers.

**Mr. Devries:** No.

**Mr. MADSEN:** We can only go on the reports that come to hand. We know that the Federal Minister for Commerce and Agriculture, Mr. Pollard, accepted the recommendations of the Dairy Cost Advisory Committee and recommended that the Commonwealth Government accept that committee's recommendation and it was suggested to the State Prices Ministers that they accept it, but they were somewhat hesitant about doing so.

I feel that this grave injustice cannot be overstated; most of us were under the impression that this matter of accepting the recommendations of the Commonwealth Government might have been hurried on by the Ministers. From information available we have it that it was brought before the notice of the Ministers in June, 1948. They had more than 12 months to make up their minds whether they would accept the recommendations of the advisory committee or not. It is of no use the State Ministers' suggesting that it has not been a reasonable survey of costs, because after all some of the experts of the Commonwealth Government have been working on that committee with representatives of the industry and I believe that the decision to step up the price of butter was a unanimous decision of the committee.

**Mr. Collins:** You will admit that the States might have been taken into their confidence.

**Mr. MADSEN:** In reply to the Minister I say that in future cost investigations, whilst the States have an interest from the price side, I believe they could be represented on the committee. I believe that the industry would be quite willing to do that, but in all fairness, when you look at the dairying industry during the war years and since, I do not think there has been any industry in this State that has made a greater contribution to the economy of this Commonwealth or assisted with the economy in the United Kingdom more than the dairying industry. Right through we have accepted bare costs of production and I believe that in return for the valuable contribution to the economy

of this country and that of Great Britain it was fair and reasonable that we should have a guaranteed term of stability. I am happy to say that it was granted for five years.

These cost investigations are held yearly and any increase or decrease, according to the finding of the investigation committee, was to take effect from 1 July. That period has already passed and I hope that the State Prices Ministers will at an early date confer with the Prime Minister or his department and make an early decision. I say that the dairying industry is entitled to that consideration. After all, we who are associated with the industry know the difficulties of retaining labour on our farms with a 56-hour week operating against a 40-hour week in other industries. It is even difficult to hold farmers' sons and their families on farms and I say it is a matter of urgency that an early decision be made or untold harm will be done in the industry, an industry in which there is an urgent need for stepping up production.

We know that production in the industry has declined considerably. It is difficult to make a comparison in figures, because during the war years we had extra quantities of milk being used as whole milk, extra quantities used for cheese manufacture, quantities for butter, and other quantities going into processing. The overall production has decreased considerably and, furthermore, the number of dairy stock that could be brought into production in the next few years have declined very seriously.

**Mr. Collins:** It has increased by 50,000 this year.

**Mr. MADSEN:** That is a very hopeful sign but at the same time let us not allow these delays to injure an industry that is entitled to this consideration promised by the Commonwealth Government. I have endeavoured to calm the people in the industry because I think that the State Ministers will support the promise made by the Commonwealth Government in 1947 that the dairymen should get a price based on the cost of production for five years.

**Mr. Devries:** You will get a decision shortly.

**Mr. MADSEN:** I am pleased to know that.

**Mr. Power:** It may not suit you.

**Mr. MADSEN:** We are happy to receive that which we are justly entitled to. It is a very gross untruth indeed for the Premier to stand up and say that the primary producers have fallen down on their job and that we have been asking too much from Great Britain. I believe that the primary producers of Australia have made a very valuable contribution to Britain. I do not think for one moment that we expect Great Britain to pay to the last penny.

**Mr. Power:** That business is business?

**Mr. MADSEN:** Yes. After all it is only an adjustment of trade balances; our exports help to cover the cost of our imports. The

primary producers of this country are justly entitled to the cost of production plus a small incentive and I say that with all sincerity.

Speaking of the dairying industry in particular, I hope that the State Minister, when he makes his trip to Melbourne shortly to confer with other State Ministers, will accept the recommendation of the Commonwealth Government and give the dairying industry of Australia its just dues.

**Mr. DAVIS (Barcoo) (9.23 p.m.):** I fully understand that there can be honest differences of opinion in connection with all our problems but whether we have different political or other opinions we as political parties must come to some conclusion on what is the best in the interests of the State and the nation. In these differences of opinion one salient point has apparently been forgotten today. I give the Treasurer, his Cabinet, and the party a measure of appreciation in that they have attempted to bring about a charter of full employment for the people of the State and the Commonwealth.

I am unable to understand how every hon. member who has spoken today has side-stepped that charter. It is the bounden duty of the State to give full employment to every citizen of the State. Every one of us should consider that as being not of some but of great importance.

It has been contended that there has been some discrimination regarding certain activities of the Government in co-ordination with overseas interests, which are our interests also. Those interests are the interests of the British people as a whole. The Queensland-British Food Corporation's project is in my electorate. There have been some criticisms against the project and the question has been raised whether it has been to the harm of the State. There is the possibility, it was not stated by the Opposition—I want to be quite fair—that the same object could have been reached by the individual farmer, that had Britain's requirements been allocated to individual farmers a greater return of food products might have been obtained than under the corporation's scheme in Central Queensland. This scheme is an experiment. The Opposition must realise that fact—that it was an experiment and a combined effort by the Queensland-British Food Corporation and the State Parliament to alleviate the distress in Britain that exists today. To some extent it will be successful in alleviating that distress. Why should there be criticism from the Opposition of that attempt? Surely we all have a human outlook and should endeavour to do something for our blood-brothers. I believe the criticism from the Opposition was engendered by the fact that the Government of Britain are a Labour Government. Surely to God that should have no bearing on an attempt to alleviate the distress existing in Britain today! I am a simple human being. I have a simple outlook. I do not believe in the walk of life I am occupying that I could engender an outlook on this question that some members of the Opposition apparently have.

I believe that generally speaking the Opposition are of the same opinion as I but there are a few amongst them who would probably have the outlook of the whipping post of the colonies when they were first occupied. They are in the position of defeating the civilisation of this world, which the British Empire so clearly represents. Britons were forced into the position they occupy today by the dollar position in America. I have no wish to discredit America, but I have a British pride that says to me that never in the history of Britain or the British dominions shall we bow our heads to anyone. There is a dictatorship today that is endeavouring to make us bow our heads, irrespective of the political colour of our Government. There has been a general evolution from serfdom to feudalism and capitalism and Socialism. It is the general evolution of the British people, who are progressive.

**Mr. Russell:** What do you mean by the dollar dictatorship? I do not quite follow it.

**Mr. DAVIS:** Then you are very dull.

**Mr. Maher:** America is helping Britain with dollars.

**Mr. DAVIS:** They are endeavouring to make her bow her head to a dictatorship that may prove to us to be more detrimental than the Iron Curtain. It is something we cannot accept. It is extreme capitalism and we do not believe in that. None of the Opposition members believe in extreme Socialism; and none of us believe in extreme Socialism, which is Communism. I do not wish to criticise the Opposition because generally speaking I think they have a rather generous outlook, especially the Country Party, whose policy is not so much different from the policy of the Labour Party.

I have always said that. They are not representative of city electorates nor are they representatives of city vested interests but are representatives of the wide open spaces that I also represent. After all, I have always and always will have some admiration for the politics of the Country Party because they are not far removed from the politics of the Labour Party.

But, Mr. Hilton, I rose tonight to speak on the salient points mentioned at the beginning of my speech. Every hon. member appeared to miss the fact that this Appropriation Bill is brought before us for the decision of this Parliament as to whether certain funds shall be appropriated by the Government for certain purposes. I accord the Treasurer the highest admiration and appreciation for bringing this measure before the House because he has decided that if Parliament agrees with the appropriation and expenditure of this money within this State every man in the State will be employed and, Mr. Hilton, that is a principle that was set forth in the Atlantic Charter of 1942 by all the nations who agreed to it. This Government have decided on the grand principle that no man shall be unemployed because of lack of finances on the part of the State. I accord the Treasurer my appreciation for this measure.

**Hon. J. LARCOMBE** (Rockhampton—Treasurer) (9.38 p.m.): Until the hon. member for Barcoo spoke I had strained my ears for nine hours endeavouring to catch some word to indicate that some hon. members were speaking on the Appropriation Bill. It has been almost lost sight of. In this debate neither financial administration nor financial policy has been discussed, but I can understand that because, as I said in my remarks when opening this morning, a full-dress debate on financial policy and administration could take place appropriately on the Estimates, the Financial Statement and on the final Appropriation Bill.

General policy has been discussed fully. Hon. members have allowed their views to range extensively from China to Peru. The discussion has been fruitful and useful and now I would wind up the debate on the question of the Peak Downs scheme by stating that it appeared to me that some attempt had been made by the Opposition to pit the farmer against the Queensland-British Food Corporation. That should not be so because there are room and opportunity for both. The world is hungry for food and good markets and good prices are assured to the Queensland producers for many years to come. No attempt should be made to pit the individual farmer against the Queensland-British Food Corporation. There should be the fullest co-operation and no antagonism.

The hon. member for Wide Bay let the cat out of the bag this evening when he revealed information that indicates one reason why the Peak Downs scheme came into operation. He stated that he had an interview with Sir Henry Turner on the question of an agreement for the price of pig-meats, and he asked for 1s. 6d. a lb.

**Mr. Heading:** The whole of Australia did.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** Exactly. He wanted that 1s. 6d. on a long-range contract basis. At that time the price of pig-meats in Queensland was about 9d., yet the hon. member's organisation asked for a price on a long-range contract that was 100 per cent. greater than the existing price. Is it any wonder that Sir Henry Turner and his colleagues then came to Queensland and endeavoured to launch a scheme that would give them pig-meats at a lower price?

**Mr. Nicklin:** Are they going to get it at a lower price?

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** In time they will get it all right. Surely the hon. member must admit that his organisation made a grievous blunder when it asked for an increase of 100 per cent. over the existing prices, and that based on a long-range contract.

**Mr. Heading:** Will you admit we asked for the lowest price in the world?

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** That is not the point at issue. We do not want to ask Britain for the price she pays Argentina or the price she pays other monopolists and exploitists. The people of Britain gave their blood for Australia.

**Mr. Heading:** So did we. I lost some of mine.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** I am not saying the hon. member did not, but why ask for an increase of 100 per cent. on the then existing price, and that on a long-contract basis? It is obvious that if the hon. member's organisation had asked for only a reasonable price the individual farmer would have been recognised by Sir Henry Turner and his organisation.

**Mr. Heading:** We asked for a price at which we thought we could give them what they wanted.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** The hon. member's organisation asked for an increase of 100 per cent. on the price then existing in Queensland. They opened their mouths too wide and were therefore responsible for the failure of those negotiations.

Again, hon. members talked about a fair price and the cost of production. Now they have switched, and so they want a price approximating what other parts of the world are getting from Britain. Britain is being forced at the point of starvation to pay exorbitant prices to Argentina and other parts of the world. That should not be the basis upon which we should negotiate. What has become of the virtues of competition that hon. members have been talking about for so long? Why do they want a guarantee of 100 per cent. on the Queensland price in order to enter upon the British market? Today in Britain and other parts of the world there are splendid markets at reasonable prices, the cost of production plus profit, for the producers of Queensland, yet the leaders of this organisation in Queensland opened their mouths too wide and asked for an increase of 100 per cent. on a long contract. It was bad business, and in my opinion also bad sentiment.

It is remarkable that every scheme that is introduced by the Government to increase production, encourage settlement, promote decentralisation, and increase our population is denounced by hon. members opposite.

**Mr. Heading:** Did you say "decentralisation?"

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** Yes, because the Peak Downs scheme is building up the outlying parts of the State.

**Mr. Maher:** Until the capital runs out.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** I stood in this Chamber many years ago and piloted through this Parliament the Duchess to Mount Isa Railway Bill and the same attitude was adopted by the Opposition then as is adopted by them now. They said that the whole scheme was a dangerous experiment and that the Government were entering into a plan of semi-socialisation. They said that it would be a failure. Let me show you how that was a failure. Over £6,000,000 is invested in the scheme, 1,200 men are engaged annually, and there is a population up there of 3,000. What wonderful success sprang from the scheme, a scheme that was denounced by the Opposition! And the same thing happened in regard to the building of the

outer harbour for Mackay. The Opposition opposed the scheme and opposed the Government assistance. It has meant progress for Mackay and district, yet it was denounced by the Opposition just as the food-production scheme was denounced.

**Mr. Nicklin:** The scheme was supported very ably by Mr. Fadden.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** I have the information here to show that Mr. Moore, the Leader of the Opposition, and other members of the Opposition attacked the scheme and attacked Mr. Fadden for supporting it.

**Mr. Maher:** That is not right.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** It is no good hon. members opposite trying to run away from their responsibilities because the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Moore, opposed the scheme and said that he objected to the principles of the Bill and asked why the people of the State should be called upon to pay one-third of the costs for providing an outer harbour at Mackay. Other members of his party spoke in a similar strain, denouncing the scheme.

**Mr. Maher:** I supported it.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** The cane-prices legislation protecting the farmer was denounced. Hon. members opposite "toyed" with the North Coast railway, a railway of great importance to North Queensland. All these schemes for building up the State, increasing production, increasing settlement, and promoting decentralisation have all been denounced by members of the Opposition. They, too, when in power in 1914, refused the offer by the Commonwealth Government of the day to link up the Northern Territory with Queensland. They were promised that if they would build a railway to Camooweal the Federal Government would link up with the Northern Territory. Anti-Labour Governments turned the scheme down; every scheme of magnitude and value to the outlying portions of the State was attacked and ridiculed by members of the Opposition. I must say that every scheme in which they forecast a failure has been a success, and this food-production scheme in Central Queensland will be a magnificent success in the future.

There are a few remarks I want to make so that they will be in "Hansard." Speaking with regard to the strike question, the Opposition seem disappointed that we are getting more coal in Queensland and that more men are going back to work and things are becoming normal. They are disappointed because they realise they are not getting the political capital out of the issue they thought they would. Their only contribution to the settlement of the strike or the solution of the coal problem was that we should send our coal to Victoria and leave Queensland industries unprovided for. What a tragedy? What a tragic position Queensland would be in if we exported our coal to Victoria and left Queensland unprovided! By that attitude the opposition showed their unfitness to ever again come back to the Treasury benches of

this State. We are getting coal today because our policy is sound. We have handled the problem soundly and satisfactorily and today the watersiders have denounced the strike and are going back to work.

Queensland is in the best position of any State in the Commonwealth in the present industrial upheaval. Hon. members opposite have denounced socialisation, but today they are pleading throughout Australia for a little socialistic coal. Where is the coal coming from today in the various States if it is not from the various State coal-mines? Hon. members opposite have admitted that private enterprise has to some extent broken down, and they are pleading for State intervention, for socialisation. In the one breath they denounce socialisation and in the other they are demanding that the Government obtain machinery for the purpose of producing coal. Hon. members opposite have not co-operated in the solution of this great national crisis as they should have done. As a matter of fact, they have resorted to very sordid political tactics. Instead of fostering unity and co-operation as they should have done they have stooped to the lowest political depths.

I have here an advertisement authorised by the Liberal Party that appeared in the "Telegraph." It says, "If you get coal shortly you can thank the Opposition." Could anything be more sordid or more ridiculous? While hundreds of thousands of people are suffering throughout Australia the Liberal Party did not think of the women and children but only of their own greedy, grasping, and vote-catching tactics. In the midst of a great national crisis they come out and say, "If you get coal, remember we gave it to you, and do not forget us on election day." Could anything be more sordid? Has any party ever stooped so low in Australian politics? While the people are suffering bitterly the members of the Liberal Party in their selfish way say, "If you get a bit of coal, remember we gave it to you. Give us a vote on polling day." Nothing could be more degrading.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke about the 40-hour week, a subject that he introduces on every possible occasion. He denounced the 40-hour week, and I suppose that if by any miracle the Opposition should get back into power they would repeal the legislation providing for the 40-hour week. He denounced the Labour Party for passing section of the Bill and described it as vote-catching. Hon. members opposite voted for the 40-hour week. Every word of condemnation of the Government uttered by the Leader of the Opposition reacted on the members of the Queensland People's Party, because they voted for the 40-hour week. They were squirming and twisting while the Leader of the Opposition was delivering his castigation.

I come to the subject of increased production and the right of the worker to have some share in the benefit arising from the increased volume and value of production. All these things surely justify a shorter working week. Of course, there will be a little adjusting period, with some dis-

location and some degree of irritation, but things will settle down and the 40-hour week will work very satisfactorily. Several industries actually enjoyed the 40-hour week before the legislation was introduced. I hope the Leader of the Opposition will bear in mind when castigating the Government on the 40-hour week that the members of the Queensland People's Party supported it. He described it as a vote-catching measure. We know the promises that were made by the Moore Government in 1929—no interference with arbitration, a better basic wage, greater production, and better opportunities for the young in the community. Within three years all those promises were repudiated callously.

We know quite well that the basic wage, instead of being increased, was decreased. We know that arbitration was mutilated. We know that the Opposition actually deprived thousands of public servants of their right of going to the Industrial Court, not by an Act of Parliament but by an order in council. That is to say, they outlawed public servants by an order in council. We know too that production dropped enormously and that the State was in chaos and nearing disaster when Labour was returned to power in 1932.

The Leader of the Opposition endeavoured to show that the 40-hour week has had an unsatisfactory effect on production. He is usually very careful and truthful in his statements but he was not as careful as usual in his speech today in relation to production. He said that production in Queensland is decreasing. That is not so. Sugar production is an all-time record. Our wheat production last year was 14,000,000 bushels, another all-time record. Never previously in the history of the State has anything like 14,000,000 bushels been produced. As the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock said, there will be still a greater production next year.

**Mr. Nicklin:** How many hours a week do the wheat farmers work to achieve that?

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** The hon. gentleman is now shifting his ground. He may have sidestepped very well when he was a footballer but he is not going to do so on this question. I am going to pin him down to his statement that production is decreasing, which is incorrect. Production of butter has increased in the last 12 months. The quantity, quality and variety of butter has increased in the past two years, notwithstanding the effect of two world wars and shortages of various requirements. Members of the Opposition know too what magnificent successes our country shows have been. They reflect greater production in the country and greater prosperity as well.

**Mr. Maher:** Why do we have to import cement and corrugated iron?

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** As a rule the hon. member is logical but he knows quite well that the tremendous effect of war has interfered with some lines of production. The hon. member knows too that our demand is increasing day after day, week after week and month after month. Why? Because of the vigorous policy of encouragement given

to production by this administration. Today we cannot keep up with the demand for cement and other things, notwithstanding the increase in production because of the disturbing factors of war. As the hon. member said on one occasion last year, the war is over but I then replied that although the war is over its tremendous repercussions are not over.

The Leader of the Opposition talked about unnecessary controls and bureaucrats. Surely he has not read the speech of Mr. C. H. Jamieson, the president of the Queensland Dairymen's Organisation. He is in favour of continuance of control. He says he is going to oppose decontrol of butter. The Leader of the Opposition is out of step with the leader of the Queensland Dairymen's Organisation, who believes in control of butter. If the Opposition would only get into a huddle and tell us what they are supporting we could then reply to them in a satisfactory way. While we have the leader of the Queensland Dairymen's Organisation advocating the continuance of controls and the Leader of the Opposition opposing them, the Government will not know what the dairy farmers want.

The hon. member for Logan spoke on the question of inflation. Well, inflation is the price paid by every country after every war. The Australian economy, compared with other parts of the world, is very sound. We are not suffering as much from inflation as other countries. We are paying our way in Australia. We have better control of the cost of living than in other countries.

**Mr. Nicklin:** Statistics do not show that.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** They do.

**Mr. Nicklin:** Australian prices are still going up.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** I am talking of the control of the cost of living. We know it has gone up everywhere but the control in Australia has been very fine compared with control in the United States and other parts of the world. Further, we have full employment. We read this morning of the disturbed economy in the United States, where there is an anti-Labor Government. They have 4,000,000 unemployed.

Some members of the Opposition would blame the Labor Government of England for the dollar problem, but I point out that they have it in Canada where there is no Labour Government. There it is as distressing and here is no Labour Government to blame. The economic cause of the intensification of the dollar problem has been the increase in unemployment in the United States and the fact that they are not able to import from England and other countries as much as they were importing previously. Many economic and financial writers have emphasised that. In the "Sunday Mail" there have been articles on the dollar problem, and that is a non-Labor paper. The writers in that paper pointed out that the influence of the dollar problem goes back to the pre-war period and the war period; it goes back to the time

when England had to sell her foreign investments when she was embarrassed financially, and that difficulty has been intensified as a result of the second war.

The immediate cause is the rising unemployment in the United States. It is said that British exports have not been sufficient. But her exports to the U.S.A. have been at record level, in the last few months particularly. The cause is the increasing unemployment in the United States. The U.S.A. market is becoming limited and therefore many of the factories are closing down and there is not the demand there was formerly.

It may be interesting to hear what an anti-Labor authority, a little booklet issued by the National Bank of Australia Ltd., called "The Monthly Summary," of May, 1949, had to say about the Australian economy. It said—

"In view of the continued strength of domestic trade activity, it is hardly surprising that the national finances remain firm."

That was the opinion of a strongly anti-Labor journal. I commend it to the Leader of the Opposition.

Then, again, if we look at another article from the same paper, published by the National Bank of Australia Ltd., this is what we read—

"The events of this decade arose primarily from a war in which the destruction of resources and the dislocation of normal activity were on an unparalleled scale. The results of such a conflict cannot disappear overnight, and many temporary expedients remain incorporated in the fabric of society."

There are the views of this non-Labor journal that is impartially reviewing the Australian domestic economy and the effect of the world war on the finances of Australia and the tremendous and shattering effect on world economy.

In regard to inflation and the talk of hon. members opposite I would say this:

Although there has been some reduction in the purchasing power of the worker as the result of inflation it is not comparable with the reduction that took place in the worker's purchasing power between 1929 and 1932, when inflation could be said to have reached 100 per cent., because thousands of workers were thrown out of employment. Thousands of workers in Queensland had no income at all. Deflation was the order of the day at that time and that is the way the workers suffered in the years I have mentioned. There was nothing comparable to the period between 1929-32.

**Mr. Maher:** I have been told that under the relief scheme in 1932 they were better off than now.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** To use an old colloquialism, they were pulling the hon. member's leg. I am not speaking particularly of the man in employment but of the thousands out of work, those who had lost their jobs and those who were retrenched. There were young fellows in the Rockhampton railway

yards who were unemployed with no income at all. That was the result of the anti-Labour policy.

**Mr. Maher:** That will come again in a year's time.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** It will come again if Labour is defeated.

**Mr. Nicklin:** How many people were unemployed before the Moore Government came into power?

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** How many were unemployed between 1929 and 1932? The hon. member should get the statistics and he will find that the number is gradually reduced until in 1939 it was down to a minimum. I know that the year Labour came into power in 1915 there were 17.7 per cent. of unionists unemployed and when we were defeated in 1929 the percentage was only 7.6. The numbers increased under the Tory Government until they were up to 200 per cent.

**Mr. Maher:** You know wool was then 8½d. per lb.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** I know that conditions were bad, but I also know that Labour Government had accumulated £4,700,000 in cash reserves in Queensland and the anti-Labour Government squandered it.

**A Government Member:** Gave it to Victoria.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** That money was squandered. Public works were closed.

**Mr. Hanlon:** You lent it to a Tory Government.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** Hon. members opposite closed the door after the horse had gone.

Hon. members opposite, particularly the Leader of the Opposition, spoke about the question of population and particularly of populating the North. He was responsible for inaccuracies, because he has taken his figures for a very limited period and not spread them over the whole period of Labour administration.

**Mr. Nicklin:** The last census period.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** I will give the hon. gentleman the last census period plus the period when Labour was in power. I will go back some little time to show that. First of all, I will take the increase in population in the sugar-growing districts in North Queensland. The increase in eleven sugar-growing shires in North Queensland emphasises the growth of population under Labour Government. The shires I have in mind are Douglas, Mulgrave, Johnston, Cardwell, Hinchinbrook, Thuringowa, Ayr, Pioneer, Mirani, Sarina and Proserpine. In 1911 the aggregate population of those shires—and this is the time closest to that in which Labour Government came into power and the closest census period—was 31,989 and by 1947 it had increased to 76,648, an increase of approximately 140 per cent. These are facts and figures. Hon. members opposite cannot dispute them. They were supplied by the Government Statistician.

Let me proceed further and go from the sugar-growing shires to the cities. The increase in population in 1947 over 1911 in the various cities was—

	Per cent.
Brisbane .. .. .	188.2
Mackay .. .. .	162.6
Townsville .. .. .	221.9
Cairns .. .. .	222.2

There was a greater increase in Townsville and Cairns than in the city of Brisbane, yet hon. members opposite have the audacity and effrontery to indulge in inaccuracy and talk about the depopulation of the country under Labour Government. Their statements are at variance with the facts.

**Mr. Nicklin:** I did not take the census.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** Then the hon. gentleman should have done so. If he did not take the census he faked his figures. Now I can understand how he got astray in his arguments. He has not been taking the census, he has been faking the figures and palming them off here as being official.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** I rise to a point of order. I certainly deny that I faked the figures and I ask for a withdrawal of the statement that I faked the figures. I presented to this Assembly figures that were official census figures collected by the Commonwealth Government.

**The ACTING CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the Treasurer to accept the denial of the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** I certainly withdraw, but the Leader of the Opposition said himself that he did not take the census figures.

**Mr. Nicklin:** I said I did not take the census, meaning that I was not responsible for the collection of the census figures.

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** And the hon. gentleman should not suggest that I took the census. These figures were collected by the statistician and they show that between 1911 and 1947 the increases in population in Cairns and Townsville were greater than in Brisbane.

Hon. members opposite talk about the neglect of the North. There was recently a municipal election in Cairns, 1,000 miles by rail from Brisbane, and the people of Cairns returned a full Labour council with a Labour mayor. That is what they think of the Labour Government.

**Mr. Nicklin:** What happened in Townsville?

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** We know there was a split in the workers' ranks and that Labour suffered accordingly. Hon. members of the Country Party and the Liberal Party have only one member from the farthest point north right down to Mackay. Then you have to come from Mackay right down to Isis before you find another member of either the Country Party or Liberal Party. They have no members from the far West or the far North. The people will not trust them. We defeated the Opposition in 1932 on their own redistribution, on their own Elections Act and on their own gerrymandering.

I think those points are convincing but in addition to what the census figures tell us let us look at what the Federal rolls show and for this purpose I take the figures for 1914 and compare them with the 1947 rolls.

**Mr. Nicklin:** The electoral rolls?

**Mr. LARCOMBE:** The Federal electoral rolls. I am reinforcing my arguments from another angle. Let hon. members opposite look at the figures in the Commonwealth Statistician's report and they will find that from an actual population point of view over the last 10 years the percentage increase has been greater in Queensland than in any other State. That indicates that a sound policy has been pursued by this Government, that this Government have given greater opportunities for increased production and that the population has been attracted by the law of advantage. The figures taken from the Federal rolls will show the wonderful results that have followed Labour's administration. The increases have been:—

Brisbane .. ..	32,286
Capricornia .. ..	33,761
Darling Downs .. ..	25,377
Griffith (Oxley) .. ..	37,943
Herbert .. ..	34,686
Kennedy .. ..	25,343
Lilley .. ..	44,739
Maranoa .. ..	30,228
Moreton .. ..	43,892
Wide Bay .. ..	33,094

Not only has the total population increased but there has been a great increase in the country population. This is in marked contrast with what took place when an anti-Labour Government were in office in 1914. When the Denham Government were in power people were not remaining in the State because there were not opportunities for them. Queensland was the slave state of the Commonwealth. Wages were low, hours of employment long, and generally Queensland at that time was like Dante's Inferno—nothing but misery, and suffering. A Labour Government have made Queensland the Queen State of the Commonwealth.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

Motion (Mr. Larcombe) agreed to.

Resolution reported, received and agreed to.

## WAYS AND MEANS.

### COMMITTEE.

VOTE ON ACCOUNT, £15,500,000.

(Mr. Hilton, Carnarvon, in the chair.)

**Hon. J. LARCOMBE** (Rockhampton—Treasurer) I move—

“(a) That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1949-1950, a further sum not exceeding £7,000,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.

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“(b) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account for the service of the year 1949-1950, a further sum not exceeding £5,500,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

“(c) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1949-1950, a further sum not exceeding £3,000,000 be granted from the money standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.”

Motion agreed to.

Resolutions reported, received and agreed to.

## APPROPRIATION BILL No. 1.

### ALL STAGES.

A Bill founded on the resolutions was introduced and passed through all its stages without amendment or debate.

## SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

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

“That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Tuesday, 16 August, 1949.”

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.27 p.m.