

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 15 AUGUST 1950**

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**TUESDAY, 15 AUGUST, 1950.**

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

MEMBER SWORN.

MR. J. A. HEADING.

Mr. James Alfred Heading, having taken the oath of allegiance and subscribed the roll, took his seat as member for the electoral district of Marodian.

CIRCULATION AND COST OF  
"HANSARD."

Mr. SPEAKER laid on the table the report of the Chief Reporter, State Reporting Bureau, on the circulation and cost of "Hansard" for the session of 1948-49.

QUESTIONS.

LIDLAY RAILWAY STATION.

Mr. CHALK (Lockyer) asked the Minister for Transport—

"1. What was the date of erection of the galvanised-iron structure at Laidley known as the present railway station?"

"2. What was the date of selection of a new railway station site, and what work has been carried out thereon?"

"3. What maintenance work has been carried out and the cost of same in relation to the present railway station over the past twenty years?"

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

"1, 2, and 3. The records available do not disclose the information requested by the hon. member, except for the fact that a site for a new railway station was selected in 1911 and passenger platform accommodation subsequently provided 334 feet in length on the up line and 405 feet long on the down line, as well as certain concrete foundations. I am sorry that the information is not recorded in a form to satisfy the hon. member, and I am also sorry to have to say that, although the hon. member travelled through Laidley almost every week for more than three years, there is no record on our departmental file of any representations having been submitted by him in regard to the building of a station to supersede what he describes as 'a galvanised iron structure.' Therefore, I can only assume that parochialism rather than the qualities of statesmanship motivated the hon. member, as it will be seen that his new found interest in the Laidley station coincides with the fact that Laidley is now an important centre in his new electorate."

LAND TAX EXEMPTION.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Premier—

"In view of the present inflationary condition of values and prices, including land valuations, will he give favourable consideration to an increase in the exemptions under the Land Tax Acts corresponding to the increases in land values since such exemptions were last determined?"

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca) replied—

"Since 30 June, 1940, unimproved values of land for land tax purposes have been pegged at values existing on that date. Consequently any variation in value from any cause whatsoever does not affect the value of land for land tax purposes. A further benefit has been granted by the suspension of undeveloped land tax since 1943. However, in the event of values for land tax purposes being unpegged the matter of amending the present exemptions will be considered."

WAGE INCREASES TO GOVERNMENT  
EMPLOYEES.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Premier—

"1. With what unions did the government agree during the period of the State elections campaign to wage and/or salary increases to their members?"

"2. What was the total cost per annum, respectively, of such increases?"

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca) replied—

"1. The Teachers' Union claim for increased salaries and improved working conditions following a direction by the Industrial Court was dealt with in conference, and was in fact completed a month before the issue of the writs for the recent State election. The Queensland Police Union lodged a claim in the Industrial Court on 8 February, 1950, and immediately sought a conference with the representatives of the Government. Conferences commenced on 22 March and complete agreement was reached in respect of salaries and grading of the Police Force on 28 March, 1950. It is significant that the matters agreed to in conference on 28 March, 1950, were those advocated in the second portion of the Joint Country and Liberal Parties policy speech delivered by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on 3 April, 1950. The Queensland Government Professional Officers' Association and the Queensland State Service Unions lodged claims in the Industrial Court in June and July, 1949, respectively. The Industrial Court thereupon determined certain principles and in October 1949, directed the parties to confer on the remainder of the claims. Conferences commenced on 2 November, 1949, and were suspended by common consent during the Christmas-New Year period. After the resumption of the conferences the Queensland State Service Union, which

was supported by all other unions, lodged a further claim on 17 March, 1950, and again the State Industrial Court ordered the parties into conference. Progressive agreements were reached at various stages of the conferences which were finally completed during the currency of the elections campaign. The Queensland Government and the unions concerned have always firmly adhered to the principle of arbitration. Surely the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition does not suggest that the operations of the Industrial Court should be suspended whenever a Federal or State by-election takes place in Queensland. I can assure the hon. gentleman that the present Government will continue to maintain the freedom of the State Industrial Court and the right of unions to approach it at any time.

"2. Union affected: Queensland State Service Union, Queensland Government Professional Officers' Association, and Association of Architects, Engineers, Surveyors, and Draftsmen, including the 1949 claims lodged by such unions; cost per annum, £251,500. Union affected: Stipendiary Magistrates and Wardens' Association; cost per annum, £3,100. Union affected: Institute of Inspectors of Schools; cost per annum, £1,200."

#### FREIGHT ON INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY TO BOWEN.

**Mr. COBURN** (Burdekin) asked the Minister for Transport—

"1. Is it a fact that Mr. M. E. Mack, a prominent Melbourne industrialist who has commenced the erection of a factory in Bowen for the manufacture of basic materials from non-metallic substances, that are present in abundance in the Bowen district, was charged the amount of £703 as freight for the carriage by rail, from Brisbane to Bowen, of a rotary furnace weighing 22 tons?"

"2. If so, will he give consideration, with the object of encouraging desirable decentralisation and dispersal of population, especially in the vulnerable Northern portion of our State, to a reduction of such freight, charge from £703 to approximately £120?"

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

"1. and 2. Prior to the Honourable Member's submitting this question in the House, I despatched the following letter to Mr. M. E. Mack:—

'Reference is made to the statement attributed to you which appeared in "The Courier-Mail" a day or two ago relative to the freight charges imposed for the transport of a rotary furnace from Brisbane to Bowen. I wish to assure you that the Queensland Government is most anxious to assist in the establishment and development of industries in Queensland and is prepared at all times, through the various State instrumentalities, to co-operate in

every reasonable way to achieve this objective. In the circumstances, it is regrettable that before you engaged in criticism of the Railway Department you did not endeavour to have the position clarified by direct contact with a responsible officer of the Railway Department. The application of the freight rate to which you have taken such strong exception was due solely to the inadequate description given when the material was consigned. The consignment was not sufficiently described on the consignment note to indicate that the various packages were all parts of a machine, viz., a rotary furnace. I am attaching for your information a copy of the consignment note tendered. In the circumstances, there was no option but to charge the highest rate prescribed in the Goods By-law. However, an amplified description of the consignment since has been obtained and a certificate lodged to the effect that it consisted of machinery which had been in use not less than five years. Had these details been available at the time, the charges levied would have amounted to only £339 2s. 10d., and in the circumstances action will be taken to make an adjustment of the freight charges accordingly. I might mention that, of the amount of £703 16s. 9d. which you quoted in your remarks, it should have been pointed out that £59 2s. 11d. represented shipping agent's charges to be collected by this Department and £1 9s. 8d. commission for the collection of these charges. If in the future you have similar consignments to forward by rail it is suggested that you should first arrange for an ample description of the consignment to be given on the consignment note, and, if necessary, to contact a responsible officer of the Railway Department who will be only too happy to advise you regarding freight matters, and thus avoid the position which developed on this occasion.'

"I think the foregoing indicates that, without fuss or prompting, positive action was taken by me and officers of the Railway Department to give effect to the Government's policy of encouraging secondary industry and promoting greater decentralisation by immediately contacting the gentleman concerned and effecting a satisfactory adjustment. Such action is in marked contrast to that of the Honourable Member, who, like so many Opposition Members, seems to derive more satisfaction from attempts to embarrass the Government, although as in this case, the attempts are invariably abortive."

#### LAND TAX REVENUE.

**Mr. LOW** (Cooroora) asked the Treasurer—

"What was the amount of collections under the Land Tax Acts in 1949-1950?"

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

"£368,335 9s."

REPORT OF QUEENSLAND-BRITISH FOOD CORPORATION.

**Mr. HILEY** (Coorparoo) asked the Premier—

“When does he expect to be able to table the report of the Queensland-British Food Corporation for the year ended 31 March, 1950?”

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca) replied—  
“The report is now in the hands of the printer.”

LEVEL CROSSINGS, DAYBORO' RAILWAY.

**Mr. MORRIS** (Mt. Coot-tha) asked the Minister for Transport—

“With regard to level crossings on the Ferny Grove train line from Alderley outwards, most of which constitute a regular source of danger to road users—

“1. Will he investigate the possibility of installing large ‘danger’ warning lights which would automatically be illuminated when trains approach these crossings at night-time?

“2. If this is found to be impracticable, will he arrange to have some other device installed whereby these crossings may become less dangerous, particularly during the hours of darkness?”

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

“1 and 2. The provision of electric devices and signs operated by the passing of trains is not favoured if their use can be avoided for the reason that road users develop the habit of relying solely upon the operation of the devices and become less vigilant in the exercise of care. Should the devices fail to operate the danger is thus increased and any failure is not easily detected from the railway line because the devices face road traffic and not railway traffic. The protection of these level crossings is a matter which is receiving consideration in connection with the electrification of the Brisbane suburban railways.”

RESIGNATIONS AND INTAKE OF TEACHERS.

**Mr. MORRIS** (Mt. Coot-tha) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“Excluding in every case the emergency measure described as ‘student teachers’—

“1. How many teachers resigned from or left the teaching service (a) in 1949; (b) from 1 January to 1 August, 1950?

“2. What was the total intake of teachers from all sources, other than from emergency student teachers, (a) in 1949; (b) from 1 January to 1 August, 1950?”

**Hon. G. H. DEVRIES** (Gregory) replied—

“1. (a) 444; (b) 288.

“2. (a) 532; (b) 515.”

ELECTRIC LIGHTING OF SCHOOLS.

**Mr. MORRIS** (Mt. Coot-tha) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“Do the Government accept the full (or any) financial liability for installing electric light into schools when such schools are within electricity reticulation areas?”

**Hon. G. H. DEVRIES** (Gregory) replied—

“The Government accepts full financial responsibility for installing electric light into a school building where supply is available and when the installation of artificial lighting is essential to carry out any instructional purpose in connection with the school concerned.”

RAILWAY EXPENDITURE, 1949-50.

**Mr. KERR** (Sherwood) asked the Treasurer—

“What was the total amount of expenditure on Railway account for the year ended 30 June, 1950?”

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

“Consolidated Revenue Fund, #15,468,496 4s. 5d.; Trust and Special Funds: Post-war Reconstruction and Development Fund, £802,900; Loan Fund, £2,134,871 19s. 10d.”

APPEAL BOARDS, TEACHING SERVICE.

**Mr. LOW** (Coorooora), for **Mr. PIZZEY** (Isis), asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“1. When were appeal boards to consider appeals against promotions first instituted for the teaching services?”

“2. How many appeals by male teachers have been considered by such boards to date?”

“3. In how many cases, if any, have such appeals been upheld?”

“4. If any appeals were so upheld, in how many cases has the Governor in Council confirmed decisions of appeal boards?”

**Hon. G. H. DEVRIES** (Gregory) replied—

“1. The Public Service Acts Amendment Act of 1920 made provision for the constitution of appeal boards for the purpose of hearing appeals by officers of the Public Service (including the Teaching Service) who are aggrieved or regard themselves as detrimentally affected by any decisions made or action taken by the Commissioner.

“2. Fifty-five.

“3. Two.

“4. Two.”

OPENING OF LEYBURN AERODROME.

**Mr. SPARKES** (Aubigny), for **Mr. EWAN** (Roma), asked the Premier—

“As fodder for stock marooned by floods in Queensland is being flown from Tamworth in New South Wales, will he take steps to have the aerodrome at Leyburn open for such flights and thus for the use of fodder produced in this State for such purpose?”

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

“Inquiries I have made indicate that the site of the former Leyburn aerodrome is no longer under Commonwealth control but has been handed back by the Commonwealth Government to the owners. I am informed, however, that in a case of extreme emergency the airfield could be made available at short notice and put in serviceable condition. As local airline operators were able to successfully undertake fodder lifts from Brisbane during the recent floods in South-western Queensland it is doubtful whether they would be interested in setting up a separate ground

organisation at Leyburn which would, of course, be necessary, if a base were to be established in that locality as suggested by the hon. member.”

CULTIVATION CONDITIONS, PASTORAL HOLDINGS.

**Mr. SPARKES** (Aubigny), for **Mr. EWAN** (Roma), asked the Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation—

“1. In reference to the eighth paragraph on page 906 of the printed copies of His Excellency's Speech, what are the names of pastoral holdings in respect of which leases were renewed subject to cultivation conditions and what were the respective areas, periods of lease renewals, and areas to be cultivated, respectively?

“2. Generally, what conditions of cultivation were imposed in such cases?”

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

“1. Particulars of the pastoral holdings in respect of which fresh leases were granted subject to cultivation conditions are as follow:—

Name of Holding.	Area of Holding. Sq. miles.	Term of New Lease Granted.	Area to be Cultivated.	Other Developmental Conditions Imposed.
Augustus Downs	1,160	30 years from 1-7-50	100 acres during first year; if successful maximum of 500 acres to be cultivated in first 7 years	Lessee to expend a total of £20,400 on providing permanent water improvements; new dip and yard, and employees' cottages
Barkly Downs	3,440	30 years from 1-4-50	500 acres within first 5 years	Lessee to expend a total of £40,250 on providing permanent water improvements; equipping them with windmills, tanks, and troughing; constructing new boundary and subdivisional fences, and holding and broncho yards
Millungera	2,013	30 years from 1-10-50	500 acres within first 5 years—100 acres in first year; 250 acres in second year; and 500 acres during third, fourth, and fifth years. If successful, cultivated area to be extended to 1,000 acres	Lessee to expend a total of £22,410 on providing permanent water improvements; erecting windmills, tanks, and troughing; constructing subdivisional fences, dip, and yards
Starcke ..	854	30 years (term not yet commenced)	Within first 3 years expend £1,500 in equal proportions each year on planting and establishing artificial grasses	Lessee to expend a total of £7,700 on providing and equipping permanent water improvements; constructing new fencing, a drafting yard and dip; erection of buildings and ringbarking.”

“2. The varieties of crops, the site of the proposed cultivation, and the feeding programme each year to be such as are approved by the Department of Agriculture and Stock.”

LOANS FOR REHABILITATION OF FLOODED FARMS.

**Mr. PLUNKETT** (Darlington) asked the Premier—

“In reference to the agreement reached between the Commonwealth and New South Wales Governments to provide for loans at specially low rates of interest for rehabilitation of farms damaged or destroyed by recent floods, has any approach been made by him respecting a similar agreement to

afford relief to primary producers in Queensland who have suffered corresponding losses?”

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

“I am advised by the Premier of New South Wales that no agreement has been entered into between his Government and the Commonwealth Government providing for loans at low interest rates for the rehabilitation of farms damaged or destroyed by the recent floods in that State. The Commonwealth and State Governments, however, agreed to implement a joint flood relief scheme providing for grants to relieve persons in distressed circumstances. I am informed by the Premier of New South Wales that the scheme does not provide for compensation for losses and grants are limited strictly to cases of distress.”

## SISAL HEMP, COOK PENINSULA.

**Mr. WORDSWORTH** (Cook) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"1. In reference to the third paragraph on page 905 of His Excellency's Speech relative to experiments in production of jute, has consideration been given to the cultivation of sisal hemp as a source of fibre?"

"2. If such experimental work is approved will he include the Cook Peninsula for consideration as a favourable locality for sisal hemp production?"

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

"1. and 2. Consideration has been given to the cultivation of sisal hemp as a source of fibre. Investigations have shown that the plant will grow well in parts of Queensland, but extraction of the fibre by known methods would be too expensive for successful exploitation of the plants after they were grown. The Government is continuing investigations in fibre plants, and plantings of jute will be made in several places in North Queensland this year."

## PROFITS ON EXPORT OF TALLOW.

**Mr. MULLER** (Fassifern) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"1. In reference to the recent distribution to butchers of profits on the sale of export tallow, is it a fact that the Queensland Meat Industry Board has retained the whole of the amount received on account of tallow obtained from cattle slaughtered at the Brisbane Abattoir?"

"2. If so, as such tallow was the property of the owners of the cattle from which it was obtained, will he kindly inquire into this matter and inform the House of the reasons given by the board for its retention of such amount?"

"3. What was the amount of such profit received by the Queensland Meat Industry Board?"

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

"1. Yes."

"2. The tallow was not the property of the owners of the cattle. Since the establishment of the Brisbane Abattoir in 1931 the Queensland Meat Industry Board has purchased from the owners the raw fat of all animals slaughtered at the Abattoir in conformity with Regulation 96 promulgated in 1931 under the Abattoirs Agreement Ratification and Meat Industry Act. The Board, as the owner by purchase of the fat, processes it into tallow which it sells on its own account. The tallow transactions are taken into account in fixing the fees for slaughtering and other services, and any resulting profits assist in maintaining charges at a relatively low level with consequent benefit to cattle owners operating through the Abattoir."

"3. The financial result of the Board's operations for 1949-1950 will be disclosed when its Annual Report is presented to Parliament."

## PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Regulations under the Public Service Acts, 1922 to 1948 (3 August).

Regulations under—

The Traffic Act of 1949 (3 August).

The Workers' Accommodation Acts, 1915 to 1946 (3 August).

Order in Council under the University of Queensland Acts, 1900 to 1941 (20 October, 1949).

Statutes under the University of Queensland Acts, 1909 to 1941 (3, 24 November, 1949).

Regulation under the University of Queensland Acts, 1909 to 1941 (10 November, 1949).

Order in Council under the Libraries Acts, 1943 to 1949 (1 December, 1949).

Regulations under the Apprentices and Minors Acts, 1929 to 1948 (19 January, 13 April, 18 May, 22 June).

Regulation under the Technical Instruction Acts, 1908 to 1918 (2 March).

Orders in Council under—

The Banana Industry Protection Acts, 1929 to 1937 (27 July).

The Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1946 (27 July (2)).

Regulation under the Abattoirs Acts, 1930 to 1949 (27 July).

Orders in Council under—

The Legislative Assembly Acts, 1867 to 1946, and the Elections Acts, 1915 to 1948 (10, 18 May, 27 July).

The Lessees' Relief Acts, 1931 to 1932 (15 December, 1949).

The Magistrates Courts Act of 1921 (8 December, 1949).

The Profiteering Prevention Act of 1948.

The Public Curator Acts, 1915 to 1947 (10 May, 27 July).

The Supreme Court Act of 1921.

Regulation under the Public Curator Acts, 1915 to 1947 (19 January).

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

**Mr. KERR** (Sherwood) (11.27 a.m.), by leave: I wish to make a personal explanation with regard to the question I asked this morning respecting the appointment of the presiding officer for Sherwood at the recent general elections.

**Hon. E. M. HANLON:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order, under the guise of a personal explanation, in explaining a question that he himself has raised in this House?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member for Sherwood is in order in proceeding to explain by way of personal explanation the reasons underlying the question he has asked this morning.

**Mr. KERR:** I thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reason that I rose to make a personal explanation is in case any wrong interpretation is put upon the question I asked this morning. I want to make it perfectly clear in relation to the presiding or returning officer for Sherwood that he should reside in the Sherwood electorate. After the date of his appointment for the recent election he moved from New Farm to Sherwood.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member cannot ask the indulgence of the House to make a personal explanation on a question of which he has given notice. He cannot exploit the privileges of the House.

**Mr. KERR:** It is not my intention to transgress the privileges of hon. members.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** It is out of place for an hon. member to proceed to make a personal explanation in regard to a question he has asked.

**Mr. KERR:** I simply want to make the position perfectly clear, in fairness to the returning officer concerned.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The hon. member can do so at the right time.

**Mr. Mann:** You can do it on the Address in Reply.

**Mr. KERR:** I want to do justice to the returning officer concerned.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member cannot reflect on my ruling. I want to make an appeal to hon. members at this stage of the session to obey my call to order. The hon. member for Sherwood will have ample opportunity on the Address in Reply to ventilate fully the matter he has raised by question. That applies to any matter an hon. member may desire to raise. I therefore ask hon. members to co-operate with me in protecting their privileges.

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY.

#### RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—FIRST ALLOTTED DAY.

Debate resumed from 2 August (see p. 23) on Mr. McCathie's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (11.31 a.m.): At the outset, I should like to associate the members of the Opposition and myself personally with that part of the motion which expresses our loyalty to His Majesty the King. May I say, too, that we hope the impression His Excellency the Governor gave in opening this Parliament that we shall have a visit by their Majesties in the near future will be realised. The people of this State are looking forward to the opportunity of personally expressing their appreciation of and loyalty to Their Majesties; and we all trust that opportunity will come about in the near future.

I should like to take this opportunity also of extending congratulations to His Excellency the Governor for the manner in which he is not only carrying out his duties but also endeavouring to make close personal contact with all parts of this State and its people. The remarks that he has made, after his extensive tours of this State, which have obviously emphasised to him the fact that we require population and development in the distant parts of this State, show that he does not go 'round with his eyes shut but that he is wide awake to its needs. The people in the far-flung parts of Queensland appreciate very much His Excellency's interest in their welfare and the great amount of energy that he expends in making these hard, long and arduous tours of the State.

In His Excellency's opening Speech to this Parliament I think the very first words of the second paragraph are the most important—"We meet at a time of crisis." The times through which we are passing and the events that are now taking place in other parts of the world will have a very vital effect on the future of this State. In fact, it can be truthfully said that what is happening in Korea at the moment overshadows everything and that the result of that conflict may mean either a victory for the democratic nations and the democratic way of life or, possibly, the introduction of the third World War; and that is something to which we must give serious consideration in our deliberations during the course of this Parliament. In view of the very serious world position and its effect on us, I believe it is only right that we should at the outset of this Parliament review our position not only as a State but as a nation. We find that it is not an enviable one.

We have a large area, a small population and inadequate defences. We live more or less in an isolated part of the world. Once upon a time that isolation was possibly a protection but now it is not; it is rather a danger. We must realise that in the world of today we cannot live an isolated existence. We cannot live as a nation apart. We have to take into account what is happening 'round about us and the effect it has on us. We have to face reality. We must realise how much our very existence and our way of life may depend upon having strong allies to help us should the need arise. The best protection and help we can have is to have associated with us strong allies in the Pacific area.

That brings me to another part of His Excellency's speech, in which he states—

"It is heartening to see the forces of law and order being led by our great ally, the United States of America—"

It is good to know that we have associated with us an ally that stands for the democratic way of life in the world. In view of these facts I think we need to review our position today, review events that led up to the last world war, review our actions during that war and how those actions may possibly affect the help that we can look to receive from worth-while allies in the Pacific area. When we cast our

minds back to the last war, when we realise that the rest of the Empire was very fully engaged elsewhere, we were indeed fortunate to receive at the time we did help from our present ally, the United States of America; but we cannot altogether be pleased, when we look back, and realise how the then Commonwealth Labour Government treated those allies that were of such assistance to us at that time. Although we were very pleased to get help from conscript soldiers sent from Britain, America and Holland, our Labour Government insisted that our forces were not to go beyond an imaginary line drawn across the map, the equator. And let us not forget, too, that in 1938, when this land was in considerable danger, the then Labour Opposition strenuously opposed any increase in defence expenditure. They were not prepared to do anything to defend this land. They even opposed compulsory service in this country after the war had started. When Japan came into the war and we were in very grave danger the Government panicked and squealed for help from everybody: they even asked poor unfortunate Britain, which was at that time in dire distress—carrying the burdens of the democratic world—for 25 divisions to come here to help us. They were not prepared to accept their own responsibilities in respect of the war service of the people. Even after all danger to this country had passed they still took tens of thousands of men from industry and simply wasted their time in camps in various parts of Australia, doing nothing whatsoever of any practical value. Because of their decision not to allow any of our men to serve north of the Equator, they uselessly engaged tens of thousands of our troops in expensive, from the human-life point of view, mopping-up operations in the Solomons, New Guinea and other places.

This was done notwithstanding the fact that the Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific area, General MacArthur, issued a very definite opinion that such operations were not only useless but should not be carried out. Early in December, 1944, General MacArthur made this statement—

“The enemy garrisons which have been by-passed in the Solomons and New Guinea represent no menace to current or future operations. Their capacity for offensive effort has passed . . . The actual time of their destruction is of little or no importance and their influence as a contributing factor to the war is already negligible. The actual process of their immediate destruction by assault methods would unquestionably involve heavy loss of life without adequate or compensating strategic advantages.”

Despite that statement and to save their face the Government committed hundreds of thousands of our young manhood who had been conscripted into the Army in these useless mopping-up operations that General MacArthur condemned and said were useless. This Commonwealth Labour Government to whom I am referring—and hon. members

opposite supported them—claimed to have won the war and carried on the affairs of this nation in such a way that Australia made its maximum contribution towards the war effort. It was a pretence that deceived no-one; it was a pretence that was very costly in men, materials, and money. It was a very fortunate occurrence for the people of Australia, and particularly for many Queensland parents, that there was no major disaster in the Solomons on account of this one-eyed policy of the then Federal Government. If the Armistice had not been signed at that time those men of ours, committed to these operations in the Solomons, would have suffered very heavy losses indeed, because the strength of the enemy was completely under-estimated. Fortunately we were saved that loss, but how different it would have been to the prestige of Australia and for the good will of our allies, who have done so much for us, if instead of committing our men to these useless operations we had permitted them to do their share in the operations conducted to the north of Australia? We should have won added prestige and given stature to Australia as a nation. The effect of our refusal to participate fully in the Pacific war with our ally, which left an unfortunate feeling in America against Australia, has been largely overcome by the prompt and direct action of the present Federal Government in going to the aid of America in Korea in the way they have done. It would not have been so if a Labour Government had been in control in the Federal sphere, because we find that the Labour Opposition in the Federal sphere today, although they gave their support to assistance in the air, were not so happy about committing any of our ground forces.

So much for our dealings with our ally across the Pacific. Let us now turn to our dealings with our ally in the North, the Dutch. Our dealings with our Dutch ally were even more shameful and not a credit to Australia as a nation. The Federal Labour Government over a period of three years from September, 1945, allowed the Communist-controlled Waterside Workers' Federation to impose a ban on Dutch shipping and prevented medical supplies from going from Australia to our ally in the North, an ally that had done so much for us particularly with its merchant navy. At this time we had Dr. Evatt at United Nations meetings voting in favour of Indonesian independence and the eviction of the Dutch from Java, New Guinea, and the rest of the East Indies controlled by that nation. As the result of that policy we are faced with the position that the Indonesian President, Dr. Soekarno, a couple of months ago said he would not be content till the whole of New Guinea, including that part of it under the control of Australia, was included in the Indonesian Republic, and it is reported now that Indonesians are infiltrating into our territory in New Guinea. Last week the Minister for the Army announced that we should have to place troops in New Guinea to stop infiltration by Dr. Evatt's allies into our own territory. We should have been in

a much better position today if the Labour Government of the day had supported our Dutch allies instead of allowing them to be stabbed in the back and, indeed, encouraging such an action.

Another major blunder of the Federal Labour Government was their refusal of the request by the United States of America to be allowed to lease Manus Island in order to establish to the north of our shores a naval base that would have been a great protection to Australia in the event of a conflict.

What a great contrast there is between the attitude of present-day Labour to defence matters generally and Labour of the old days as led by Andrew Fisher, when Labour did have some sense of national responsibilities and was prepared to accept them! Today, judging by the actions of Mr. Chifley, Labour adopts the attitude that we should do nothing to defend ourselves but that everybody else should help in defending us. If we are not willing to accept the responsibility of defending ourselves we do not deserve to hold this country, and we shall not hold it. It is time that the Labour Party accepted its responsibilities in this direction and shouldered its international obligations. They should do everything possible to see that Australia is prepared adequately to defend itself if the occasion arises.

Labour opposed compulsory military training in the early years of World War II. In addition, it opposed the proposals of the present Liberal-Country Party Government to bring in compulsory military training in order to build up our defences. The honourable the Treasurer joined in the chorus of opposition to compulsory training. In the "Brisbane Telegraph" of 23 November last, he said—

"This is a matter of vital importance to hundreds of thousands who will be conscripts. Employers suffering from scarcity of labour will be further harassed. Withdraw hundreds of thousands from productive employment and the already severe lag in production will be aggravated."

Although the hon. the Treasurer had that to say about an urgent and necessary measure to defend this land of ours, it is interesting to note that he had nothing whatever to say about the industrial sabotage that was, and is still, going on in this community and its effect upon production as the result of Communist disruption of industry.

A week later the hon. the Treasurer returned to the attack on this subject. He said—

"If the subject is distasteful to Mr. Hiley, perhaps his other half, Mr. Nicklin, will tell us how it will be possible to meet the demands of farmers for the materials they need for their farms if the producers of these materials are to be dragged away from industry to goose-step for Mr. Menzies."

**Mr. JESSON:** Very true!

**Mr. NICKLIN:** Very true, says the hon. member for Hinchinbrook. I thought that a member representing a northern

electorate of the State would at least have some idea of his responsibilities for the protection of the most vulnerable part of this continent. But not so, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He is prepared to allow the Communist section in our community to disrupt industry here and at the same time do nothing to protect this country of ours.

**Mr. JESSON:** I rise to a point of order. I take very strong exception to the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition that I would allow the Communists to disrupt the North. It is distasteful to me and I ask him to withdraw it.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Mann):** The hon. member for Hinchinbrook objects to the statement made by the Leader of the Opposition and I ask him to withdraw it.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** I am sorry that the hon. member objects to it, but after all it is true.

**Mr. JESSON:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The hon. member for Hinchinbrook denies the statement and I ask the Leader of the Opposition to accept his denial.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** I accept his denial but only a moment ago he said that it was quite true, as the Treasurer had said, that if the young men of ours were called up to defend this country they would be goose-stepping for Mr. Menzies.

As I said before, and as I now repeat, if we are not prepared to make some sacrifice to defend this country, as I believe 99 per cent. of our people are, we do not deserve to hold it. I want to know what is the official attitude of hon. members opposite and the party with which they are associated towards the defence of this country by compulsory training. At best, it seems to be one of silent acquiescence, so long as the non-Labour parties accept the whole of the responsibility.

Let me recall the statement made a few days ago by the Leader of the Federal Opposition, Mr. Chifley, when referring to volunteer forces for Korea. He made the outrageous assertion that ground aid for Korea was being used as a bargaining lever for dollars. Have you ever heard such a disgraceful and shameful statement by a man of responsibility in our community before—that the offer being made by Australia as a member of the United Nations to uphold our democratic way of life was being used as a bargaining lever to obtain dollars? It is an absolutely disgraceful statement for any public man to make but apparently hon. members opposite stand for all that Mr. Chifley had to say about the matter.

That is the position externally so far as Australia is concerned. Now let us turn to the internal position. The worst aspect of the present position in Australia internally is the existence in our midst of the Communist agents of Moscow and the opposition

of Labour to suppression of their treasonable activities. It would be interesting to know what is the attitude of hon. members opposite to the Federal Government's efforts to deal with Communist activities in our midst. Do they stand for the position evidenced by the Federal Labour Opposition to the onus-of-proof provision in the Communist Party Dissolution Bill? What is their stand in this matter? This antagonism of the Federal Labour Opposition to the onus-of-proof provision in the Communist Party Dissolution Bill is evidence of the dependence of Labour upon the support of the Communists and their fellow-travellers, many of whom exist in the ranks of political Labour.

It is interesting to note that when this Bill was announced the Premier made the following statement—this was prior to election day:—

“I am hoping that the Prime Minister (Mr. Menzies) will not do more harm than good with the Bill. You cannot allow hatreds to carry you away on such a matter.”

The Premier added—

“Everyone knows my attitude to the Communists.”

Lots of people do want to know the Premier's attitude to the Communists, and also the attitude of many hon. members opposite to the Communist Party. That statement was made by the Premier before election day, but two days later the Premier and Treasurer marched at the head of a procession in Brisbane composed largely of Communists, which flaunted such slogans as “No Arms for Malaya” and “No Australian Arms to Murder Malayan Workers.” Both the Premier and Treasurer then marched cheek by jowl with the Communist leaders of Queensland down the main street of the principal city of this State, and in step with the Communist leaders of this State. We do want to know exactly where the Premier stands, as well as the Treasurer and other hon. members opposite. They are very proud to march with the Communists after election day but I guarantee that if that procession had been held on the Monday prior to election day you would not have seen the Premier or the Treasurer at the head of that procession. They would have been well to the rear.

**Mr. Power:** Take your medicine and stop whingeing.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** I did not see the Secretary for Mines and Immigration at the head of that procession; he was farther to the rear.

**Mr. Power:** I marched with the Australian Workers' Union.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** It is very necessary for the public to know exactly what is the attitude of hon. members opposite to the Communist Party because the activities of the Malayan Communists are just as much a part of the imperialistic war being conducted by Russia as what is happening in Korea, and Malaya is a British possession. It is all part

of the one pattern—the activities of the Communists in Australia and the activities of the Communists in Malaya and Korea are all part of a world-wide plan—and is designed to destroy our democratic way of life and to destroy this country of ours.

It would be interesting to know how the Labour Party justifies its discrimination against a British possession in this war of Russian aggression against the democratic nations. It is time the Labour Party woke up to the fact that the main bulwark of the democracies against the evil designs of the Communists is not the United Nations but the English-speaking nations of the world. They are the spearhead of the fight against Communism and Communistic aggression today. It is time to realise too, that the British Empire, although it has been liquidated to a great extent by a socialistic Government, is still an outstanding champion of democracy, and that Australia is part of that Empire and should be an ardent supporter of its integrity. Do not let us ever forget that the best place to defend Australia is outside our own shores. If we can fight all the wars in which unfortunately we have to engage, outside our own shores, how much better than having a war here in our own country!

When we consider all these things, I repeat that the attitude of Labour has changed since the days of Andrew Fisher.

The existence of Communism in Australia is not only a potential danger to Australia in the event of invasion, but communistic activities for several years past have been disrupting and sabotaging our key industries and services and holding up development that is essential to provide for the increased population necessary for our national existence. If we do not populate and develop this country it will make it a nice ripe juicy plum for somebody else to pick. It is part of the Communistic plan to see that industry is disrupted and that we do not develop our country so as to make it easier for the Communists to grab it when they think the time is opportune. That is why I have taken up so much of my time on this occasion in dealing with the external position as it concerns Australia and the internal position as it concerns the disruption of industry here. If we cannot approach these two great questions from that broad national viewpoint we cannot develop this State and we cannot carry out the programme of work that the Government talk about, and which should be carried out because of those other two vital factors which have such a great effect on our economy and on our way of life.

Now I wish to deal with the development of this State—something about which we hear a great deal from hon. members opposite. But we hear more talk than we see of action in this important matter. Despite all the talk of progress and the pretentious and spectacular plans that the Government have been dangling before the eyes of the people during the past few years, the actual position is that we have not even

been maintaining our existing assets—that applies to both Government and private assets—let alone carrying out the grandiose programmes we hear so much about. The war ended five years ago, but our housing standards are deteriorating, our schools and hospitals were never less adequate or more overcrowded. Our roads, particularly in rural areas, are generally in a shocking condition. Our railways have improved little, if at all, in the past 30 years. We are importing prefabricated homes from war-devastated countries. We are importing steel goods, which a few years ago we were exporting, and we are paying about treble the Australian price. Our wages are rising but prices are more than keeping pace with them. Our power of competing with other countries is declining. Virtually every shire in Queensland is losing population. Yet hon. members opposite, led by the Premier, are saying that this State is being developed, that this will be done and that will be done. Ever since the Premier took office on 7 March, 1946, we have had a continuous build up of spectacular developmental projects. Most of them have been dangled before the eyes of the people for years but very little has been done, beyond investigating, exploring the possibilities, surveying, considering, appointing committees, and so on. We have dozens of committees appointed all over the State to carry out these projects, but what we want is not surveys and committees but action; we want to see these works put into operation and completed. The Government's developmental programme is like a recurring decimal; it goes on and on ad infinitum but never reaches a complete unit.

A future historian dealing with the record of the present Government will probably come to the conclusion that their leader must have had the combined characteristic of a Baron Munchausen and a Wilkins Micawber—the extraordinary imagination of a Munchausen and the incurable optimism of a Micawber that, despite his failures, something would turn up to carry his schemes into effect.

Let us look at some of the spectacular schemes that the Government have been dangled before the eyes of the people for some years. They include the Burdekin scheme (£50,000,000), the Mareeba-Dimbulah project (£70,000,000), the Tully Falls scheme (£8,000,000), the electrification of the Brisbane suburban railways (£10,000,000), the Border Rivers scheme and other irrigation schemes detailed by the Secretary for Public Lands on 17 August, 1949 (£14,000,000), electricity projects of regional boards (£16,000,000), Fitzroy River scheme including the Nogoia and extension of the Theodore irrigation scheme. Other major works still to be completed include the Stanley River Dam, the University, and the Fitzroy River and Burdekin River bridges. The total cost of these major projects exceeds £120,000,000. If one adds the other schemes talked about so much the real cost would be round about the £200,000,000 mark.

But when we look at the revenues of the State and the moneys available to carry out these schemes we find that they are not available: the Commonwealth Government will have to come into the picture to carry out many of these major works. We all appreciate that and all realise that the Commonwealth should carry their responsibility in regard to major projects in this State but the Premier puffs out his chest and says, "If the Commonwealth Government will not come to my assistance I will carry out these things myself. I will build the Burdekin Dam project." What a lot of rot! These major schemes depend on assistance from the Commonwealth Government. We are not satisfied with talking about these matters; we want action. It is time hon. members opposite got down to the real business of developing this State and, instead of for years and years talking of doing this and that, did something real to carry out some works for the development of Queensland and to carry out what the Premier said needed doing when he spoke at the Show luncheon a few days ago—

"We have got to develop the western parts of the State and put the population back into those parts."

But, Mr. Speaker, what Government have done more to retard the development of the western parts of this State and what Government have done more to take population from those parts than the present Labour Government? What is the good of talking about all these grandiose schemes when we have neglected the real vital things and as a result we find these important western areas losing population and going back to a position worse than they have ever been in? Let us face the realities in regard to international affairs and in dealing with the industrial disruption that is in our midst. If we do that Queensland is sure to develop as we want it to develop.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. FARRELL** (Maryborough) (12.12 p.m.): I desire to support the motion so ably moved and seconded by the hon. members for Haughton and Windsor. Both have come into this House with a splendid industrial, political and local-authority background, a background that adequately equips them to represent their electorates successfully. I am particularly pleased that a mate of mine, in the person of the hon. member for Windsor, has become a member of this Assembly. We belonged to the 42nd Battalion in the first World War, a battalion that gave a good deal of service towards the winning of that war. I do not for one moment say that we won the war, but we made a contribution towards the winning of the war, a contribution too that helped to distinguish that battalion. A man would be inhuman if he did not feel that his battalion was the best battalion and he would be inhuman if he did not feel that he belonged to the best brigade and the best division. In a similar way the hon. members who moved and seconded this motion feel that they represent the best electorates in the State, and I am

sure that they will make contributions towards the debates of this Assembly that will command the attention of this House.

It is regrettable that as we talk about battalions of the first World War we should find ourselves facing what might be another tumult. As the result of United Nations intervention we hope that the forces arrayed against us will learn the lesson that they should mind their own business and leave the democratic lands to manage their own affairs, but it is unfortunate that just as we are getting back on an even keel in this country we should find ourselves in the position of having to send our boys overseas again to help maintain our democratic way of life. I do not believe that there should be a lot of flag-waving in regard to our efforts; there should be action and I believe that when our boys go overseas they will have the backing of the Australian people and will be respected and admired for the services they render in support of democracy. As a result of the stand we are taking and as a result of the stand taken by other English-speaking nations, we will endeavour to put the ship on an even keel and sail forward in the development of our countries.

I was very surprised to hear the Leader of the Opposition talk of the backwardness of this State, because I am sure that when he visited the Royal National Show last week he must have had a sense of gratitude to the people who made such a success of it. He saw arrayed before him the magnificent products of this country; he should have been able to envisage the potentialities of this land. I learnt on speaking to a very well-known identity of the beef-cattle industry that there was never a greater array of that type of cattle in the history of this State. It is indeed regrettable that the Leader of the Opposition should run down a country that is doing so much in furthering its own development. With other hon. members, I feel that the efforts of the Royal National Association in presenting such a splendid exhibition of the quality of Queensland's products and the organising ability shown by it deserve our greatest tributes. It was well rewarded by the record number of people who attended.

I am very happy indeed that I have again been returned to this Parliament as the member for Maryborough, an area that possesses great industrial potentialities. It is a tribute to the early pioneers that the foundations they laid have been built on so well, and it is very good that we have so many big industries in Maryborough helping in the development of this great State.

I believe that the Labour Party won the recent election because it was better equipped than the Opposition to explain to the people the many projects for the development of the State that were in train. Another factor in our win was Labour's policy. We have laid down a simple policy for developing this State and we have been able thoroughly to explain to the people just what we intend to do. When we speak about the development of the North we must also speak about the development of the South. It is the State as a whole

that must be considered. You cannot develop this State by developing any one section of it; you must take into account the whole of the State.

For many years members on both sides of this House have referred to the drift of the population from the West to the cities on the coast, and it was referred to again today by the Leader of the Opposition. As the result of that drift, the need for realigning the electoral boundaries was impressed on the Government and a Bill was introduced into the House with the object of giving greater representation to districts outside the metropolitan area. After the introduction of that Bill, the proposed quotas were laid down. A commission was then appointed, whose duty it was to fix the boundaries of the proposed electorates. In my opinion, Opposition members were insincere when they charged the members of that commission with gerrymandering the new boundaries. Their action threw discredit on the Supreme Court judge who presided over the commission and the two public servants who were members of it. If the boundaries had remained as they were, as the Opposition wished, the metropolitan area would have been able to determine everything that happened in this Parliament, because of its population.

A good deal of criticism has been expressed about the redistribution of our electoral boundaries but we should remind ourselves of what has happened in other States. We all know very well what happened in Victoria, but I have figures here relating to the South Australian election in 1947, which was won by the Liberal Party. It obtained an aggregate of 98,914 votes, giving it 23 seats in Parliament, while Labour got only 12 seats although it obtained an aggregate of 110,837 votes. In 1950 the Liberal Party in South Australia again won 23 seats with an aggregate of 97,184 votes, while Labour got only 12 seats with an aggregate of 105,642 votes. It is just as well that comparisons should be made in other States of the Commonwealth.

During the election campaign the Labour Party was termed the Socialist Party. I do not suppose any party is more prone to change its name than the anti-Labour Party. I have contested five elections and in four of them the name of the party opposed to me was changed although the party was in fact the same. On the first occasion I was opposed by the Nationalist Party, then by the National-Country Party, then the Queensland People's Party, and at the last elections by the Liberal Party—but always by the same political party, the party opposed to the Government. The fact that the party opposite is always ready to change the party name does not mean that it has a licence to say what shall be the name of the Australian Labour Party. We do not confer on it the high and distinguished honour of changing the name of political parties to the extent of determining under what name the Labour banner shall be carried.

While on the subject of the election campaign and the allegation against us of being a Socialist Party it is refreshing to recall

some of the statements made by the "Courier-Mail," the political mouthpiece of hon. members opposite. At one stage we were embroiled in a strike in which the Government stood up to their obligations in maintaining law and order in a democratic way and on that occasion the "Courier-Mail" paid a very high tribute to the leader of the Government, the Hon. E. M. Hanlon. In its issue of 2 April, 1948, this is what it said—

"Rarely has a leader of any Australian Government been subjected to such extreme pressure as Mr. Hanlon was from the Communist clique. Lessons for the nation and the world to see. Communists can be beaten."

Again, upholding the high traditions set by the Premier the "Courier-Mail" of 8 March, 1948, said—

"Never in the history of Queensland has a Premier captured the imagination or had the backing of the people as Mr. Hanlon has today. He has not swerved from the principle that the law as sanctioned by the people through their Parliament must prevail."

It is a base and deliberate lie for the opponents of the Labour Party to create the impression that we were making a headlong rush towards total socialisation and the elimination of private enterprise and private property. On the contrary, the Queensland Labour Government have given every assistance to private industry to establish factories and to enable landholders to increase their production. The Government's land-administration policy has always been conducted with the object of settling as many people as possible. Financial assistance has been provided on a liberal scale to establish private enterprise. Let me give some examples. For instance, 27 private companies have been financially assisted to the extent of £1,116,998 by the Industries Assistance Board established by this Government.

**Mr. Gair:** A guarantee of £100,000 was given to a private company the other day.

**Mr. FARRELL:** There is further information to support my statement that the Government have always given liberal help to private industry.

When I look round my electorate in particular I can see the wonderful effect the Government's help to industry has had on its development but we have many examples elsewhere in Queensland. We have the Tableland Tin Dredging Company, whose bank overdraft was guaranteed by the Government up to £160,000. This company is now well established and the whole of the guarantee has been repaid. I want to pay a tribute to this company. It was my privilege to visit the area where it was carrying on operations and I found that it has made the greatest contribution of any company towards amenities and decent living conditions for its employees. It is one of the finest examples that anyone could wish to see of what co-operation between a company and its employees could do in providing reasonable comfort for the

workers. This company has made a striking contribution to their welfare by providing housing accommodation, electric light and water. A comparison between the old Mt. Garnet township and the township that exists today as a result of the company's efforts, one must admit that it has done a pretty good job of caring for the happiness and contentment of its employees.

**Mr. Gair:** With the assistance of the Government.

**Mr. FARRELL:** That is so. Again, the Government helped the Queensland Textile Pty. Company Ltd. to the extent of £6,000. The hon. member for Kedron was actively associated with that company, and is still. He was very grateful for that assistance, as a result of which an industry has been established worthy of our industrial life.

**Mr. Gair:** He got that assistance, too, when private banks would not listen to him.

**Mr. FARRELL:** That is so.

Again, the Government gave a guarantee of £500,000 to enable the Mt. Isa Company to develop its leases, which assistance has enabled that great company to produce the basic metals this nation requires. The Government helped very materially also in establishing the Blair Athol open-cut coal mine by guaranteeing up to £30,000 for its development. No-one can say that that money has been wasted. When it was possible for some of us to visit that area we were astounded at what nature had planted in that field. I was very much impressed with its potentialities.

The Government did not stop there. They assisted the Morris Woollen Mills at Ipswich to the extent of £26,398, for their development, and the Hornibrook Highway to the extent of £100,000. The C.O.D. Cannery at Northgate was established as a result of assistance afforded by the Government, who guaranteed its account to the extent of £250,000. We know that cannery has enabled great development to take place in one of our primary industries. We were very happy to do so and anyone who cares to visit the cannery must realise its importance to the pineapple industry. Other primary industries also are involved in that cannery. All this assistance was granted by the Government to build up this great asset with the object not only of developing the industry or industries concerned but in developing Queensland as a whole.

The Government have not stopped at assisting primary production. They have helped very materially in developing our wheat, beef, wool, mutton, and lamb production. They made possible the establishment of the Hamilton Cold Stores for the Queensland Butter Board. They were responsible for establishing a marketing organisation for the citrus, pineapple, banana, and other fruitgrowers which has placed them in a better position than they have ever been before. Anyone knowing anything of the pineapple industry knows that its history is a sad one and that it was only when the war

came that the growers got a decent price for their products. After the Government had established their organisation the growers went one step further and induced the Government to guarantee an amount of money to enable that very efficient factory to be established at Northgate to process their fruit. As a result, no other branch of our primary industries is now on a better foundation. I have seen what happened to that industry in my own electorate. Before the factory was established the growers were virtually down and out. The initial legislation providing for the marketing organisations of our various primary industries and making advances to them was merely giving practical effect to Labour's policy.

Labour has been consistent in its policy in Queensland. Labour passed the first legislation to enable primary producers to organise with a view to owning and operating the factory to deal with their own products, and today we find that the dairyman who produces our milk and our butter is part-owner of the butter factory, the sugar producer who grows the sugar has an interest in the co-operative sugar mill, the peanut-growers own their own silos, the fruit-growers own their own canneries, and the tobacco-growers own their own factories. The establishment of the co-operative tobacco company at Mareeba for the purpose of processing the tobacco grown there is a very important step. It was my privilege to visit that area and see the factory and I realised the magnificent work that was done in establishing it. We hope that as the industry develops we shall have another factory in the South. During the time I was up there the irrigation engineer gave us first-hand information about what was going to be done in order to develop that area by making it possible to divert the waters of the Barron and carry them into the Mareeba and Dimbulah areas, which grow the finest of tobaccos. By giving this practical assistance to both primary and secondary industry, the Government have created employment under decent conditions for many people.

I wish to take up some of my time in showing how the Government have helped in the development of a great undertaking associated with my electorate. I refer to that magnificent undertaking in Maryborough, Walkers Ltd. It is interesting to have an outside opinion on this industry and I will quote from "The Official Journal of the State Government Insurance Office" in order to have it recorded in "Hansard":—

"A big event for the firm and an equally big event for City and the State was the completion of its 500th loco. by Walkers Ltd., Maryborough. Their first railway engine ran on steel rails in 1896. Between the date of the first casting by this foundry in 1868 and the completion of this 500th loco.—82 years—much history has been made. Walkers Ltd. have played a wonderful part in the development, in the earlier years, of the mining industry, and in later decades, of the sugar industry, of ship building, locomotive construction, and,

in general, of engineering with a wide range of products which have found a market in far distant places. Over 6,000 tonners have come from the slips of their shipyards as well as corvettes and frigates and small coastal steamers, dredges, and steel hopper barges. A vast amount of mining and sugar mill machinery has been fashioned in the firm's shops.

To celebrate the occasion the Directors and Staff of Walkers Ltd. with their families gathered informally in Queen's Park; between 600 and 700 adults and children were present."

That is an unsolicited statement.

In the early days this Government laid down a formula or principle that gave a 10 per cent. preference in Government contracts to Queensland firms over southern competitors. This enabled firms such as Walkers Ltd. to be firmly established, and as a result of the help given in those early days this company has been able to establish itself firmly and to compete successfully not only with southern firms but those overseas. In recent times Walkers Ltd. has received orders from the Government not only for locomotives and dredges but for other things. This firm produces not only the most outstanding machinery for sugar production in this State but in the Commonwealth and Walkers Ltd. will play a very important part in the expansion of industry that is now beginning. The Treasurer visited Maryborough some little time ago and I had the honour of taking him on a tour of Walkers Ltd. to see for himself exactly how this enterprise has expanded. I think it is wise to take Ministers of the Crown into local industries so they can see for themselves that they are capable of undertaking work for the Government. The hon. gentleman was able to see there the new machinery for the Proserpine sugar mill, a 7-ft. mill. I might mention that till now sugar mills have been usually 6-foot mills. As the result of the work being carried out at Walkers Ltd., this firm is making a marvellous contribution to the development of this State. When we speak of the Burdekin River project, for instance, we must consider not only the development that takes place in that particular area; the whole State will feel the repercussions of that development. Thus, Walkers Ltd., who have played a very prominent role in the construction of weirs by supplying many of the engineering units required, including the Stanley River dam, have played a part in the development of the State.

Another industry assisted very largely by the Government is the timber industry. Here I would draw attention to the paragraph of the Governor's Speech that reads—

"The year just passed has been marked by record activity in reforestation. The expenditure of over £875,000 is the highest yet, and for the first time the acreage of plantation established exceeded 5,000 acres for the year, bringing the total to about 47,000 acres."

The industry is important to many parts of the State but two of the largest timber

mills are in the Maryborough district and as the result of the very sympathetic treatment given by the department, they have been kept in full production throughout the year. I am hopeful that despite what has been said in the report of the Royal Commission on the Timber Industry wiser counsels will prevail. I do not agree with the commission's finding; a large mill like these cannot be picked up and transferred to another place. They have been established and logs are brought from the forest to their depots. This has enabled better conditions to prevail in the industry than were thought possible in this country and because of that fact I hope that wiser counsels will prevail in respect of the allocations to these depots. After the talks I have had with the Minister I am hopeful that he will take action to enable a continuous supply of logs to be made to these mills. Of course, I have never agreed with the principle that sawmills should be set up anywhere to cut private timbers to the detriment of the State. On the one hand we have the policy of reforestation for the growing of the logs, but on the other hand we are allowing our best logs to be slaughtered because they belong to private undertakings. We cannot acquire those logs as we seize areas of land. We can see some of our best-known hardwood timbers being slaughtered because we cannot lay down that not only shall cut timber without a license and under a certain girth.

The mills at Maryborough, which have been built up over the last 80 years, should have continuity of life and employment for the people who have established their homes in the district. Between the two mills the industry distributes in wages a sum of £250,000 a year, and it pays to the Sub-Department of Forestry—and it is only a small percentage—no less than £58,000 a year, and to the Railway Department over £80,000 in freights. It can be seen how important this industry is; it can be visualised how necessary it is for it to be continued under the best of conditions. The industry can be carried on only by the help of a sympathetic Government, and the fact is that this Government have been largely responsible for the development of the industry in that district. I know it is the policy of the Sub-department of Forestry to build up the industry in the area so that we can have 30,000,000 superficial feet of hardwood logs rolling into the mills. That figure gives one an idea of the quantity required to maintain the operations of those two mills. After we cut out our pine—and we have not got much of that left—we shall require a greater supply of other wood and we can do that only by means of a policy of maintaining a supply in perpetuity. We have recently witnessed the reforestation that is taking place at Tuen Creek. It is not a big undertaking at present but there will come the time when that important area will be able to supply a good deal of the softwoods required by these mills. The scheme is in its infancy but £150,000 in wages is being paid out annually. It has been difficult to

maintain a continuity of supply of timber throughout our district because of the unfavourable season—the haulers could not get into the forest and the logs could not be cut.

Sugar growing in the Maryborough district, as in all other sugar-growing areas, forms an important part of the economic life of our people, as can be gauged by the vast sums of money distributed. Even in our small area over £300,000 is represented by the sugar industry. Thus we can gauge the value to the whole State of the Premier's overseas visit. As a result of his efforts and the efforts of his Government, we have been able to lift the circulation of money in the Maryborough district alone by a huge sum. Let us hope that the efforts made on behalf of the sugar industry will be continued to such an extent that we shall have a still greater circulation of money within this State. A good deal has also been done by the Government in the rehabilitation of returned soldiers by making sugar lands available to them.

I should like to refer now to the development that has taken place in connection with regional electricity boards. The Government will be spending something like £1,590,000 in the work of development to be undertaken by the regional electricity board that serves my district at Howard. Unfortunately, seasonal conditions have delayed the completion of the installation of the plant, but I should like to have recorded the contribution that this Government have made towards this work. The Government are providing a subsidy of 33½ per cent., which will make possible the establishment of large undertakings on an economic scale. In addition, the Government are providing a 75 per cent. subsidy on losses sustained in the rural districts. The gentlemen in the Federal Government would be doing a far better job if they engaged in less flag-waving and granted more assistance to such undertakings, and thus aided people in the outback areas. It is a very good thing for Ministers of the Federal Government to come up here and get a first-hand knowledge of this State, but it is not so good when all they do is merely make statements to the effect that they will do all they can to help the development of this State by providing amenities for people in the outback areas. Instead of doing that, they should be prepared to make some material contributions towards such things as the stabilisation of electricity tariffs throughout the State. As I have said, this Government have granted a 33½ per cent. subsidy to these electricity undertakings and a further subsidy to offset losses that may be sustained in rural areas. If the Commonwealth Government would grant still another subsidy, a stable flat-rate tariff could operate throughout the State, which is a very desirable aim.

As I may not get a chance to mention this matter later on, I should like to say at this stage how pleased I was to get a copy of the Jubilee issue of the "Mining Journal." I should also like to pay a tribute to the Minister and his departmental officers on their excellent publication, which will be of immense value to

everyone associated with the industry. It is a very good thing to have officers who are capable of compiling such a manual as the Jubilee issue, which I regard as one of the finest contributions that have been made towards further improving the standard of the "Mining Journal."

**Mr. MORRIS** (Mt. Coot-tha) (12.50 p.m.): I am very proud to be again associated in an expression of loyalty towards the King and to pay another tribute to His Excellency the Governor, Sir John Lavarack. We in Queensland are particularly fortunate to have such a distinguished soldier as our Governor. His contribution towards winning the war, so recently concluded, was indeed a very great one and we should realise that to have such a distinguished soldier as our Governor is something of which we have just cause to be proud.

**Mr. Walsh:** Your party wanted to import a Governor.

**Mr. MORRIS:** We have always been very proud of our Governor, Sir John Lavarack, and the interjector might take a lesson from that remark.

I desire to congratulate you too, Mr. Speaker, on your re-election to the high office that you hold and I express the sincere wish that you may be restored to health and strength in the very near future. I know that your duties are onerous and it requires the very best of health to carry them out to the full.

We all listened to the Speech delivered by the Governor at the opening of Parliament with a great deal of interest, although perhaps each of us was concerned more with matters of intimate interest to him than with some of the other things he said. I have to confess to a degree of disappointment with the Speech, particularly because matters of educational value to the State did not get greater mention than they did. I agree with the saying that the training of the future citizens of the State is the business of the State. I firmly believe that that is true and for that reason I propose to discuss several important aspects of the educational service of this State and first of all to direct attention to the vexed subject of the scholarship examination. I propose to preface my remarks by quoting from a speech that I made on the subject back in 1946. I have always believed in the abolition of the scholarship examination and the more I see of the effect of it, the bad effect of it, the more I believe that it is a tragedy that we should lag behind the other States so much in this and many other aspects of education and I want to make it quite clear that ever since I have been in this House I have always advocated the abolition of the scholarship examination. I quote now from my speech in 1946, which is to be found in Hansard No. CLXXXVIII at page 103, where I said—

"The scholarship examinations should be abolished, and the sooner the better. We must all know of young girls and boys who because of the emotional and

physical changes taking place at that time of their lives have been unable to qualify at that examination although probably they have been the most brilliant in the school."

"Their whole future has been ruined by that very temporary indisposition which prevented their passing that particular examination. I believe that public opinion will abolish it very soon.

Mr. Wood: I have never known one.

**Mr. MORRIS:** The hon. member for East Toowoomba states that he has never known a brilliant child to fail in the scholarship examination. Only a few months ago two cases were brought to my notice. Two children who were as brilliant probably as any in the school that they attended, because of physical disabilities peculiar to that age, were unable to pass their examination.

Mr. Wood interjected.

**Mr. MORRIS:** There is a danger and I urgently desire to have that danger removed.

Mr. Moore: Would you substitute something for the scholarship examination?

**Mr. MORRIS:** Yes, certainly. If the hon. member had listened to me very carefully he would have heard me suggest the abolition of the scholarship examination and the substitution of an internal examination and proficiency certificates by the teachers of the particular school. That is the only satisfactory answer.

Mr. Wood: Open the door.

**Mr. MORRIS:** The hon. member wants to keep the door shut. Does he not want to have education for the children? That is the whole trouble. I want to open the door. I do not want to see this door remain shut as it has been for so long and I am pleading that the door shall be opened. The sooner the better."

I said that back in 1946 and I say it again with greater emphasis to-day. I feel that that door should be opened to all those children of that age who desire to proceed to a course of secondary education.

I would remind the House that probably the most famous surgeon that Australia has ever produced, the late Sir Alexander MacCormick—he proved his great ability in many years of practice—failed in the final-year medical examination at the University. If the people who believe in examinations are right, it could be said that Sir Alexander MacCormick should never have persevered with his medical studies. However, and fortunately, he did. He was one of those fortunate people who were able to stay at the University notwithstanding that failure. He sat for his final examination again the following year and he failed again. In fact, on no fewer than five occasions he failed to pass his final examination, yet subsequently he gained his degree, practised as a doctor and later as a surgeon and, as I said, proved himself over the

years that followed to be one of the outstanding surgeons in the history of Australia. That in itself, without any other argument, proves that the exclusion of students from proceeding to a higher education just because of their failure to pass an examination is unsound and that an examination is not necessarily a good test of their ability.

The scholarship examination as it exists in Queensland is peculiar to Queensland, inasmuch as this is the only State that excludes children from secondary education by this means. I disagree with the system, firstly, because it prevents many thousands of young children who are desirous of doing so from continuing their education. Approximately 15,000 children in Queensland attain the age of 14 during the school year and of those approximately 8,000—I am speaking in round figures only—sit for the scholarship examination, of whom approximately only 6,000 gain the number of marks necessary to give them the much-coveted scholarship.

The Scholarship system in operation here is, I believe, an iniquitous one because it not only excludes thousands of children who desire a secondary education, because they have not passed the examination, but it also excludes those who are temporarily indisposed and are therefore unable to qualify on the particular days of the test. It also imposes the vicious system of cramming within the school and that is very detrimental because the teachers, instead of training the children in citizenship, are merely concentrating on cramming them with knowledge they will require for the scholarship examination but which many of them promptly forget as soon as the examination is over. Any system of cramming, when applied to children, is a bad one.

There is also another very major reason why the system should be altered. If a child nominates for the scholarship and sits for it and unfortunately fails to pass that examination, the child is debarred from the benefits of apprenticeship in many of the trades today. Surely any reasonable man must realise that the fact that a child has failed in a scholarship examination is no indication whatever that he is not suited for a particular trade? There is a further objection—and I believe it is the greatest of all—that if a child of wealthy parents sits for the examination and fails and cannot sit again, he is in the fortunate position of being able to continue his education. There have been many cases in which such a child has done so and become qualified, passed the Junior public examination and the Senior, and then attended the University. He has been able to do that by virtue of the fact that his parents had the money to enable him to continue his studies. Take on the other hand the unfortunate youngster who is not in that happy position. Take as a realistic example, a war pensioner who is unable to earn a large amount of money, or even up to the basic wage. His youngster fails in the scholarship examination and the parent is not in the financial position to pay the fees to enable

the child to continue his studies. If the child is not able to be apprenticed in a trade he may choose, his future is bleak. He starts off handicapped in his fight by virtue of a system that is obsolete and completely unfair—and it is more unfair to the people with less money than to those who have more. Such a system is a disgrace to any Government and I am amazed that this Government have continued year after year without the courage to face up to this problem of having this disadvantage removed.

Realising, as I believe all hon. members do, the disadvantages of the archaic system operating in Queensland, let us try to discover whether there are ways by which the system can be improved. I remember when I first became a member of this House, over six years ago, hearing that the Government had promised to raise the school-leaving age of Queensland children to 15. I heard of the glorious plans they had for improving this part of the educational system. The plans are still in the pigeon-hole and I am quite certain they will remain there and we shall not get a more up to date educational system. I believe that if the Government would face up to their responsibility and give the children their birthright we should have a higher school-leaving age and we could put into operation the plan about which we have heard for years—a plan that will allow a child up to the age of 12 years to attend a primary school, from 12 years to 15 years a post-primary school, and from there go to a higher secondary education. At least that would be one step forward toward removing the disability under which children are now labouring. But the Government must admit quite frankly and openly that the reason why they cannot proceed with the plans for increasing the school-leaving age is that they cannot get sufficient teachers. We know that is the reason, and in this the Government have been an abject failure. I intend to refer to the loss of teachers later this afternoon, but at the moment am endeavouring to show that the loss of teachers is a glaring example of the failure of this Government. By that test alone they stand condemned. If the school-leaving age were increased to 15 years Queensland would be a little closer to the better education that is in operation in the southern States and generally in Great Britain. There the school-leaving age has been raised, but in the State of Queensland, barely touched by the ravages of war in comparison with Great Britain, they cannot put into operation this very desirable scheme.

However, if the Government fail to put this into operation, I ask: are there any other means whereby we can approach this problem of the children and the scholarship examination? I believe there is at least one major step that can be taken and taken immediately—within a week—so that at the end of this present year much of the disability would be removed. Hon. members opposite no doubt will remember very vividly that aspect of the policy speech of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I know hon. members would be interested in it. It was

there suggested that the removal of the compulsory subjects in the scholarship examination should be implemented straightaway, and any child obtaining a pass of 60 per cent., irrespective of whether in that 60 per cent. he got a pass in arithmetic or English, could qualify for the scholarship. At least that would be a step in the right direction. I very strongly advocate its implementation at the end of this year.

Then, I say, in conjunction with that there should be a 3-year plan so that an accrediting system could be put into operation within our State schools. This, coupled with internal examinations, would provide the means of entry into secondary education for pupils qualified or in the opinion of the teachers in the schools qualified to proceed to a secondary education.

I realise that this plan finds no favour in the minds of the Premier and his deputy because they have gone to a great deal of trouble to underline their belief that the teachers in our schools cannot be trusted to put such a scheme into operation satisfactorily. No doubt all hon. members will remember that it was suggested by the Premier and the Deputy Premier prior to the last election that they would not like to see this power in the hands of teachers, yet these are the teachers to whom we are entrusting the teaching of our future citizens. It is an absolute insult to the teachers of our children and I myself have more faith in them than to believe they would stoop to an action whereby favouritism could be shown and children could have the opportunity of secondary education who did not deserve it.

I do not subscribe to the opinion that it is dangerous for children to proceed to higher education. The danger lies in the removal from even one child of the opportunity for higher education. If that is the possibility in our present system the system should be remedied and I should prefer to see ten or twenty children proceed to higher education without the full qualifications than one child with them excluded from it.

I believe that that should be our approach to this problem. I say that the scholarship system as it exists in Queensland today is merely a means by which this Government reveal their parsimonious attitude towards education in general. I do not believe that the 6,000 who can pass of the 8,000 are all who are actually qualified for entry to higher education. I further believe that the scholarship is used to restrict entry into secondary education of a certain number of children so that the Government by a pre-determined approximate number of entries into secondary education can keep down their budget for education. This miserable, parsimonious, cheese-paring attitude towards education is the main reason in the minds of the Government for the scholarship system today.

The question of raising the school-leaving age is wrapped up indirectly with the tragic loss of teachers from our teaching services over the past number of years. That there has been a great loss of teachers cannot be denied and I refer hon. members to any of

the reports furnished by the Director-General of Education, copies of which are available in the library. A study of those reports over the past six or seven years will reveal that the Director-General himself has been very much aware of the urgency of this problem. He has been very much aware of the increase in the number of children year by year and the estimated increases in the numbers of pupils in the years to come. He has underlined year after year to this Government the urgent necessity for the taking of steps to overcome this tragic lag in the number of teachers. But nothing of any real moment has been done and that is what I am complaining of. No contribution of any real consequence has been made by this Government to the problem of increasing the number of teachers.

Let us look at the figures relating to the losses of teachers over the past ten or eleven years. In 1939 there were 4,384 teachers in the service, whilst in 1943 there were only 3,607, a loss of 777 teachers over that period. I know the reason will be advanced that there was a war on, but I am probably as aware of that fact as any other hon. member in this Chamber. I am merely giving these figures for comparative purposes.

Let us now look at detailed figures of the number of teachers who left the service in the years 1940 to 1947. They are—

1940 .. .. .	175
1941 .. .. .	198
1942 .. .. .	226
1943 .. .. .	227
1944 .. .. .	314
1945 .. .. .	370
1946 .. .. .	471
1947 .. .. .	423

Those figures speak for themselves. If there was in a private industry such a huge loss of trained personnel, as these teachers are, the persons responsible for that industry would very quickly investigate the cause and eradicate it. The Government, however, are doing nothing at all in that direction, as is borne out by continued huge losses of personnel year after year. For instance, the loss in 1949 was 444. Roughly 10 per cent. of our teachers are leaving the service every year.

**Mr. Devries:** They are nursing babies instead of teaching babies.

**Mr. MORRIS:** That is a specious argument. But many teachers are leaving the service and going into other avenues of employment because of the conditions at present attaching to the teaching service. In no other section of the Public Service does such grave dissatisfaction exist as in the Education service. I am not reflecting on the present Minister when I say these things, because he has not occupied the position long enough to show us whether he will put any major reforms into operation. I sincerely hope he will, and I shall give him the benefit of the doubt till I see if he intends to.

Let us look at some of the reasons why teachers are leaving the service in such great numbers. Firstly, widespread and grave dissatisfaction exists within the department with the present inspection system. We have heard

about it before, and I suppose every hon. member knows that it is a cause of grave dissatisfaction among the teachers in our schools. Very considerable dissatisfaction exists also with the transfer system, with the method of cramming under which the teachers have to operate, and with the living standards imposed on many teachers outside the metropolitan area.

To make matters worse, the department decided to reduce the August holidays from two weeks to one, thus preventing many teachers serving the State admirably in country districts from having a reasonable opportunity to get a holiday in the middle of the year. I cannot understand why the department could not have decided to allow one week's holiday in the first half of the year, leaving the August holidays as they were before. That would have put a little bit of heart into the administration of the department.

**Mr. Aikens:** Typical discrimination against the country.

**Mr. MORRIS:** Throughout the educational service we have Labour discrimination not only against the country but also against the people on the lower wage standards. I object to that most strenuously and I have voiced my objections in this House time after time for the past six years, but unfortunately with no avail.

I have referred to the loss of teachers in the service and I should have liked\* to refer further to the matter but my time is restricted. However, I make the point that I do not believe in criticising the department unless I have some suggestions to make to overcome the problems to which I refer. There is a remedy in the hands of the Government today. First of all the teachers are dissatisfied with the transfer and inspecting system. Much of the dissatisfaction could be removed by the adoption of the suggestions made by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Nicklin, and the hon. member for Coorparoo, as contained in their policy speech of only a few months ago, and that is to exclude the teaching service from the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commissioner and place it under a board so that it would be administered with more soul than has been displayed in the past. That alone would be a grand contribution towards making the service satisfactory and happy; and once the service is happy the loss in teaching personnel would fall considerably.

On a previous occasion I referred to the system whereby young people entered the training centres and were paid £60 a year upon their parents entering into a bond that the trainees would serve the department for a certain time. I am not now discussing the wisdom of that arrangement but it is absolutely ridiculous for the Government to stipulate that student teachers shall receive about £100 more than the trainees who enter the Training College under a bond to serve the department for a period. There is nothing that will make the young students entering the Training College more dissatisfied than

this stupid idea of having such a big disparity in payment between one section and the other in the teaching service. The Government would be well advised to remove the discord that exists in the teaching service. If better conditions are provided more teachers will be retained and the department will be considerably improved.

On previous occasions I have referred to the lack of amenities provided by the department. I do not think that even members of this Parliament realise that school committees are required to provide many things at the schools if they want them. For instance, they are required to provide the cost of a telephone, paper for scholarship tests and other classroom purposes, typewriting and duplicating material. They are also responsible for maintaining the typewriter, duplicator, and other equipment they need for school purposes.

In addition, school committees are also required to subsidise the department for the following requirements:—pianos, wireless, visual projectors, library books, sewing machines, similar types of plant, and sporting materials. Half the cost of these must come out of the pockets of parents of children attending the school. Then the department requires school committees to provide seating accommodation in school grounds, part-cost of tennis courts and basket-ball courts, to maintain school grounds, to be completely responsible for cutting grass in school grounds, and any mural decorations—and I could continue with the list.

The Minister, in answer to a question of mine this morning, failed to admit that the department requires school committees in many cases to provide the whole cost of installing electric light within schools. I received a very carefully worded answer, which will be found in "Hansard," but I want to tell this House that notwithstanding that answer only a few days ago I saw a letter from his department to a school committee in answer to a request for the installation of electricity stating it was not the policy of the department to install electric light within schools, and that it was to be done at the committee's own cost. That is the gist of the letter, which I saw myself. But for the distance to be travelled I would have obtained the letter today and read it to the House. The Minister's answer to my question is a deliberate attempt to stall a query I raised; or does it mean that the Minister sees the falsity of the previous administration and is determined to remove that disadvantage from schools? I sincerely hope the latter is the answer to that question. I shall know what his real purpose is before very long, because the schools that previously applied for the installation of electricity will, in the light of the Minister's answer, reapply. We shall then know the true position. The committees I have in mind desire to install visual education in their schools but they cannot do so unless they provide the cost of installing electricity first. They have asked the Government to do that work but the Government have refused. I challenge the Government to refute my statement. One of the

schools I have referred to is Lower Brookfield and another is Pullen Vale, both of which are now in my electorate.

**Mr. Devries:** Are they close to the electricity supply lines?

**Mr. MORRIS:** They are so close to the electricity supply that the school-house, which is in the grounds of the school itself, has the electricity installed. I do hope, and I do believe, that the Minister will not countenance such things if the answer to the question states his policy accurately. I say that quite sincerely and believe that now I have pointed this out to him he will see that the matter is rectified.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. WOOD** (North Toowoomba) (2.45 p.m.): His Excellency's Speech contained a resume of the progress of Queensland over the last three years, and gave some insight into what we may expect to be achieved in the next three years. I hope that times and world conditions will be such that this Government will be able to proceed without interruption with their plans for the further development of this great State of ours.

I should like to congratulate both the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply on the excellent contributions they have made to the debate. Both of these hon. members, the hon. member for Haughton and the hon. member for Windsor, are decided acquisitions to the Parliament of Queensland, they both have long and honourable records in the Labour Party of this State, and I know that all hon. members join with me in wishing them well in their parliamentary careers.

From my personal point of view, I have been honoured again by being entrusted to represent the people of North Toowoomba in this Parliament, and it is my hope that my work in this Assembly and in public life generally will be such that I shall be able to show that I have merited the confidence that has been placed in me.

In His Excellency's Speech mention was made of the times of crisis through which we are now passing. Reference to them was made by the Leader of the Opposition also. We can approach these times of crisis from different viewpoints, but I think this should be primarily a time for sober reflection. After all, we have to remember that only five years have elapsed since the war ended. It is dismal to think that less than five years after the war has ended and before we have signed the peace treaties, we are already in the shadows of a third World War. Under the risk of being misunderstood, I must say that I think all of us should hold war in abhorrence and that every decent person should do all he can to avoid seeing the world plunged into a third World War. War creates nothing; it is a great destroyer. No assets are produced. Valuable lives are lost that could be used in the development of the land in which we live. It prevents the further expansion of our civilisation and culture for which we should all strive. Many millions of money are expended that could otherwise be directed to normal peace-time activities.

I do not want anyone to think that I believe no nation should be prepared for any conflict that may be impending, but I do most vehemently protest against any who would do anything they could by word or deed to fan the flames of approaching war. I feel that we should soberly reflect in times of crisis and ask ourselves whether there is anything we as legislators or as private citizens can do to prevent the threatened conflict.

I am led to these thoughts because I feel there are some who welcome this spread of war. I am prompted to this by having read a few weeks ago in the columns of our newspapers, particularly the financial columns, what appeared to me to be a subdued air of jubilation. We read that if a world war develops, prices for lead and tin and our primary products may be expected to soar rapidly. I do not assume for one minute that the people producing these goods have these thoughts but there has been such an air of expectancy in some of the columns of our newspapers that one could not read them without getting the idea that those who had written them were hoping that some material gain would come to them from the spread of war.

We listened this morning to what I may be pardoned for saying was a lamentably weak speech by the Leader of the Opposition. It was built upon clichés and hackneyed phrases typical of the catch-cries used throughout the election. I quoted some of these in the last speech I made in this Chamber. The whole speech from beginning to end was built up from these clichés, one of which was "our democratic way of life." I believe everybody in this Chamber aims at maintaining democracy, because democracy appeals to him, but we can get into very dangerous ways by using such hackneyed phrases and building our arguments on them. We Australians do not know any democratic way of life. There is no Australian way of life. There are eight million Australians and there are eight million Australian ways of life. We cannot take mass-produced life and say we have a democratic way of life. That is just loose thinking and leads to loose arguments. I repeat that there is no such thing as a democratic way of life in Australia or in any country in the world. Eight million Australians each lead their individual lives and no two lives are the same; no two ideas of democracy are exactly the same. The democratic way of life of the beef baron is an entirely different democratic way of life from that of the boundary rider. The democratic way of life of a man who has inherited wealth and who has never had to work is a very different way of life from that of a man who has toiled in an underpaid position ever since he has started work. The way in which a healthy man full of vim and vitality lives is entirely different from that of a man suffering in hospital. I say that we are basing the whole of our arguments on entirely false foundations when we use hackneyed phrases such as "the democratic way of life."

The whole of the arguments of the Opposition are built up from these hackneyed phrases, which in themselves mean exactly nothing. In logic there is a form of reasoning in which a false assumption is taken, accepted as correct, and then by very brilliant reasoning a case is built up. The conclusions in themselves may seem very convincing if we first accept the false assumption on which these conclusions are built. Those conclusions in logic are called hypothetically necessary and that has been the form of argument used by the Leader of the Opposition.

It was said by Huxley that becoming familiar, a dogma automatically becomes right. Notions which for one generation are dubious novelties become for the next absolute truths, which it is criminal to deny and a duty to uphold. My point is this: The Leader of the Opposition has laid down a false assumption that the Labour Party is a twin of Communism. He and his supporters have laid it down as a dogma and accepted it as being automatically right and are building on the false assumption conclusions that, as I said before, in logic would be labelled hypothetically necessary.

We heard the Leader of the Opposition say this morning that the Premier and Treasurer of this State both assist Communism and that they march side by side with Communists. The intention of that hon. gentleman was obviously to put into the minds of the people of Queensland the fact that there is a close bond of kinship between the Australian Labour Party and the Communist Party. It was only last Wednesday week or last Thursday week that I heard that same hon. gentleman say from his position in this House that the same two hon. gentlemen were the arch-Tories of the State. All hon. members heard that statement. In view of that, where are we? One week the Premier and the Treasurer are arch-Tories and the next week they are Communists; how can we place any reliance at all on his argument when we find the line of reasoning followed by the Leader of the Opposition is so basically unsound?

Labour has never at any stage done anything other than wage a bitter and relentless fight against Communism. We have in this House members of the Australian Labour Party who have gained personal unpopularity by going from place to place fighting Communism wherever they can find it. They have not waited for Communism to come to them but have gone to Communism and fought it, and fought it relentlessly. There is no need for me to name those hon. members. The whole ideal of the Australian Labour Party is contrary to the ideals of the Communist Party and the Opposition know very well that there is not the slightest affinity between the Australian Labour Party and the Communist Party. We do not deny for one moment that Communism is a very grave problem in Australia today; no man in his senses would deny that but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, do not let us fall into the mistake of thinking that it is our only problem—and that is exactly what the Opposition are trying to have us do. They are trying to take the minds of the people

from the shortcomings of their colleagues in the Federal sphere and they are trying to whip up a feeling of mass-hysteria by saying that the whole of our trouble is Communism. It is certainly one of our troubles, and it will be overcome not by the words of the Opposition but by the deeds of the Australian Labour Party within its own organisation.

It is there that we have the force that will deal with Communism. It has shown in the past that it can do so and it is still working to the same end.

But do not let us think that is our only problem. Let us suppose for a minute that it was possible to eliminate Communism entirely from Australia today. It is the hope of many that it can be done, so let us assume we have reached the stage where we have no more Communists in Australia. Then our minds will come to our other major problems, which are being cloaked by the Opposition in their one-track approach to them. I shall refer later on to such things as prices, free medicine and other matters of grave national importance—matters to which the minds of the ordinary people are being constantly directed in spite of all attempts by the Opposition to take their thoughts away and to keep them in the one direction only. It is right that we should fight Communism, but it is also right that we should fight all injustices—all wrongs—in our community and that we should not have merely a one-track mind.

The Leader of the Opposition had a good deal to say today about Labour's stand on the onus-of-proof clause in the Communist Party Dissolution Bill. After all, no matter what party we belong to, the principle is the thing, and there are very real reasons why any person, no matter who he may be, should be proved guilty and that the onus should not be placed on him to prove his innocence. Somebody far more eloquent than I has had something to say on this subject. I refer to a very well-known Australian writer, Professor Walter Murdoch, of the Western Australian University. He is a well-known essayist and newspaper contributor and a political and social thinker, and I hope I may be permitted to read what he had to say in the Melbourne "Herald" of Saturday, 24 June, 1950.

Professor Walter Murdoch is a man whose political beliefs I do not know, nor do I care, but I have always read his contributions on social, economic and political questions with considerable interest, as also his essays. He was asked what he would do with the Communists, and this was his answer—

"You seem to assume that I am not myself a Communist. . . .

"Well, as it happens, your assumption is correct. Not even Mr. Menzies, with all his eloquence, has succeeded or will succeed in converting me to the Communist faith.

"I have no doubt whatever that he has already converted some; and I feel certain that his little Bill will help the Communist cause enormously.

"But it will not convert me, because I have an unwavering faith in democracy, with all its weaknesses, and an unwavering detestation of all totalitarian forms of government.

"You may have noticed that this column seldom or never touches party politics and hardly ever says a word about prominent public men, whether by way of praise or of blame. One is so terribly apt to be unjust to persons who are sincerely doing their best when one happens to disagree with them.

"But I can't forbear to strike one personal note. I believe Mr. Menzies to be far too intelligent not to feel very uneasy about the course on which he has embarked, at the instigation of colleagues much less intelligent than himself.

"He knows that the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church, now as in the days of the early Christians.

"He knows that in the putting of this law into force one stupid man has only to make one stupid mistake to make a martyr of one innocent person and public opinion will swing violently against the Government.

"He must be uncomfortably aware that the small percentage of electors who decide the issues of an election will forget or forgive the faults of the previous Government—even its disastrous administration of the immigration laws—and reverse their votes.

"The Japanese, we know, had their way of dealing with political heretics, accusing them of 'dangerous thinking.' Under the present proposals anyone can be accused of dangerous thinking and called upon to prove that he doesn't think dangerous thoughts.

"How anyone can prove any such thing passes my comprehension. As I have said, I am not a Communist; but how can I prove it? I may be telling a lie—the sort of lie which is going to become exceedingly common if the proposed method of dealing with Communism is put into practice.

"The idea of making the accused person prove his innocence instead of making the accuser prove the truth of the accusation is quite clearly repugnant to the British idea—which also happens to be the Australian idea—of justice, the idea which is the safeguard of freedom and the basis of democracy.

"We talk of subversive doctrines; surely, if ever there was a subversive doctrine this is one. If ever there was dangerous thinking this is dangerous thinking, dangerous to the democracy for which we are striving. Speaking as a believer in democracy I declare Mr. Menzies.

"You ask how I—supposing (a wild supposition) that I had the power—would deal with the Communists. I would arrest them if they committed a crime. I would arrest them if they incited to violence. I would arrest them if they interfered with the defence of the country or betrayed State secrets to a foreign power.

"For the rest I would let them alone. Damning and banning will only strengthen them in the long run.

"Most important of all, I would try to remove social injustice and economic injustice and all the conditions that make up the soil in which Communism germinates and thrives.

"I would make democracy attractive. I would do everything to prove to all men that democracy can provide a better habitation for the human spirit than any other form of government.

"This is the positive way; the negative way, the way of repression and spying and a secret police, may be the way for Russians, but not for us, with the love of freedom in our hearts and brains."

There is a man, whom I believe to be an independent observer of a political problem, who joined with the Labour Party in saying that the principle was bigger than the matter involved.

After all, we could easily sell our birthright if we gave way to panic and fell in quickly with all these suggestions that are being raised. I do not believe that through this we shall see the elimination of communism and all its dangers from our land. I said before that Communism is a grave menace, a very serious problem as all of us know, but it is not the only trouble confronting us. If we remove that trouble soon and when we remove it, sooner or later the attention of the people will increasingly be brought to bear on inflation. It is ever-growing. It benefits nobody, or should I say that a few benefit from inflation and would not like to see anything come about that would stop the increasing of money in their banking accounts. But fortunately I believe those people are few in number. Most of us dislike the growth of inflation, but it is with us now.

It is my belief that to get back to the genesis of inflation we must hark back to the day when the Liberal and Country parties on a political issue put aside the welfare of their country and advocated the abolition of Federal price-control. I am not suggesting for a minute that price-control alone will combat inflation but I do believe from reading Federal "Hansard" at the time that the Liberal and Country Parties were undecided as to the course they intended to follow when the referendum was being considered but after mature consideration decided to oppose the proposals the Federal Labour Government made and stage a full-dress election rehearsal. It is my considered opinion also that in doing so they did a very grave disservice to the economy of this country because ever since, no matter how valiantly the States may have attempted to control prices, the rate of the rise has accelerated. I ask any hon. member to take a walk down Queen Street, Brisbane, Ruthven Street, Toowoomba, or any street in his city or town and he will discern the same thing happening. He will discover a rapid acceleration of prices, which is proving a hardship to the working men and women of

this country and to the men and women on middle incomes. Those people the feeling the pinch of the spiral rising of articles and they do not know where it will stop. They see no sign of interest on the part of the Liberal-Country Party Government nor any attempt to arrest it. In spite of the solemn pledge they gave to the the people of Australia prior to 10 December, not one practical attempt has been made by the Menzies-Fadden Government to formulate any plan to put back value into the £1.

**An Opposition Member:** What about the Communist Party Dissolution Bill?

**Mr. WOOD:** That is an interjection from a one-track mind. The public of Australia will be asking soon—nay, it will be demanding in no uncertain terms that the Commonwealth Government honour their pledge. I will tell the hon. member who has just interjected that if by some means every Communist in Australia was deported we should still be faced with that problem of inflation. I am not disputing that Communism may have some effect—it may have a minor effect or a relatively major effect—but you cannot arrest inflation by that means alone. Anyone who says you can has a very perfunctory knowledge of our economic problems.

It is not so long ago that we saw a sharp rise in wool prices. Immediately there was a terrific jump in the price of our suits. We can understand that if the price of wool goes up, suitings and frocks and that other material that incorporates wool must show a rise too, but I remain unconvinced that there is not some racketeering at some stage along the line. Assuming that the average price for wool is 6s. a lb.—the price fluctuates according to the place and time of the sale—manufacturers tell me that approximately 5 lb. of wool, which is a liberal estimate, is used in the making of a suit; and assuming again that it is to be of average quality, the average cost of the raw wool in the suit is about 30s. Let us assume it is £2.

Even then, I cannot see, nor can I be convinced, that a rise in price of 10s. in the cost of raw wool should result in an increase of £10 in the finished suit—without exploitation. I can understand that there will be a rise, but I cannot reconcile a 10s. rise in the value of the wool with a £10 rise in the price of the completed product. That is what we are getting all along the line since the Liberal-Country Party opposed the referendum seeking the retention of price-control in the Federal power.

We can go to the householder buying his beef. Good luck to the man who wants a high price for his beef, but do not let the profit we receive be our only need of patriotism. Let us have some way by which the householder can buy beef at a price he can afford. The little butcher who supplies me bought three beasts, for which he paid approximately £101.

What chance has he of selling that to the public at a price that would afford a reasonable margin for him and a reasonable price to the public? Nobody complains about the producer's getting a return that would be considered fair, equitable and reasonable, but let us be reasonable and be willing to put the welfare of the country, sometimes, before that of our own personal advantage. It is not always the primary producer who has reaped the benefit. I read last week that in the retail shops in Sydney oranges were selling at 6d. each while the Gosford growers received a net return of 8d. a case. Those things cannot happen without that exploitation to which I so strenuously object.

We had a dissertation from the Courier-Mail-appointed Secretary for Public Instruction. In the April 1 Cabinet we had the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha as our Secretary for Public Instruction.

**Mr. Morris:** A good one anyway if you had.

**Mr. WOOD:** There, I am afraid, after a few years of teaching and some limited experience, I must disagree most violently. Although the elections let the April 1 Cabinet down very badly the hon. member still makes himself a self-appointed authority. We had the spectacle this morning of the hon. member quoting from "Hansard"—remarks made by himself three years ago—quoting himself as an authority. I was interested to hear the quotation because I made an interjection. The interjection he read out was different from the one mentioned by him the last time he read it. My interjection was simply three words, "Open the door." I believe that we should give secondary-school facilities to as many children as possible; but by the inflection of his voice when he quoted the words "Open the door" the hon. member tried to cast doubt on the intention behind my interjection. I would advise him, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to read that interjection, not as he read it out today but as he stated I gave it last time, and he will find that when he is unreliable in the statements he brings before this House.

My time is very limited but I would tell the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha that although the party to which he belongs has a habit of farming out subjects—this hon. member to deal with railways and to become an authority on that subject and become the next Minister for Transport and another hon. member to deal with schools and become the next Secretary for Public Instruction—in spite of that and in spite of the paroxysms of frenzy into which they try to work themselves I have never seen in history any desire or move on the part of the political parties they represent to do anything to alleviate the educational problem of the underprivileged child. I cannot believe for one minute that this new-found enthusiasm of the hon. member for Mount Coot-tha rings true and is anything more than an energetic

attempt to carry out the responsibilities of the portfolio that has been allotted to him by the party to which he belongs.

The hon. member had a deal to say about the scholarship examination. Not for one minute do I admit that that is a perfect system. It has its grave weaknesses. I have taught scholarship classes and I have three children who passed their scholarship examination. I have seen many hundreds of children prepared for this examination and in spite of what the hon. member tells us—that all of us know of brilliant children who have failed—I have never yet seen one brilliant child who failed in the scholarship examination. I repeat that emphatically. I have seen a brilliant child who passed but did not pass to the standard expected of him. I have seen children above average who have failed but I tell the hon. member for Mount Coot-tha most emphatically that I have never seen a brilliant child fail in a scholarship examination. On the other hand I have seen many children about whose chances the teachers were very doubtful pass, and pass well.

**Mr. Morris:** It is a pity you have not had more experience.

**Mr. WOOD:** If the hon. member has had 20 odd years' teaching experience I will bow with some respect to his observations. However, I would tell him that I believe that he culls the greater part of his arguments from the columns of the "Courier-Mail" and "Telegraph" and the editorials of the journal of the union to which I belong, the Queensland Teachers' Union. The opinion I have expressed as to the Scholarship examination has been confirmed by responsible officers of the department, and responsible teachers.

During the election campaign the Liberal Party called a meeting of teachers. They did not go first to the teachers and say, "What grievances have you? We will include those in our policy speech." No. They first made their policy speeches, launching the most trenchant attack on our educational system. They then called some teachers together. They then sought suggestions from these teachers, but that was after they had delivered their attack and not before. After the Leader of the Liberal Party had addressed this meeting of teachers he was asked for his short-range policy for overcoming the problem of the recruitment of teachers and he admitted quite frankly he had none. But these people have the temerity to come into this Chamber and offer criticism and say the Government are doing nothing. I know that there is a teaching shortage and also that the teachers have done a mighty job in coping with it.

(Time expired).

**Mr. WORDSWORTH (Cook)** (3.25 p.m.): I am proud today to introduce myself as the representative of the electorate of Cook, which is the most far-northern electorate in this great State, and I hope in the time at my disposal that I shall be able to convince the hon. members of this House, without

exaggeration and without prejudice, of the urgent need for giving much greater attention to that part of the State.

The electorate of Cook is unique in many ways. Firstly, it is the only part of Queensland with an eastern and western coast; secondly, it is the nearest part of Queensland to the great nations of Asia; thirdly, it contains the only island municipality in the State. Within that electorate there are several councils, beginning with the Thursday Island Town Council, one with insufficient income to maintain essential services. The next is the great Cook local authority which has jurisdiction over 49,000 square miles of Queensland with a population at the outside of 1,200 people. Next we have the Douglas Shire Council, a council entirely contained within the Cook electorate, and we have portion of Mulgrave Shire Council, and almost half of the Cairns City Council. I wish to deal with the problems of the Cook electorate, commencing at the North and proceeding southwards. Not many Queenslanders are aware of the fact that Thursday Island is one of the best dollar-earning areas in Australia. Almost its entire output of pearl and trochus shell goes into dollar areas. I mention this particularly because the residents of Thursday Island were evacuated during the war. They had to move for war reasons, and much damage was done to property on the Island. At present there is a very great need for building materials and the relaxation of Governmental controls. I say this at the same time as I mention that Thursday Island is a great dollar-earning area. One of the reasons given for allowing building permits and the issue of licenses to the £250,000 Hayman Island Hotel was dollar earnings but Thursday Island earns in a year many more dollars than the Hayman Island Hotel is likely to earn in 10 years. I make that point in the hope that those in authority will give consideration to a relaxation of building controls, thus helping the people of that Island to obtain their requirements in building materials. They are the farthest away from the capital city and the last people served with these materials. Thursday Island has 6½ miles of roadway and approximately only three-quarters of a mile is bitumenised. I say that the whole of the 6½ miles should be bitumenised as soon as possible.

During the wet season and for a few months afterwards there is a good supply of water at Thursday Island, but each month of each year, because of the increasing number of natives on the Island and the increasing number of administrative buildings, such as hospitals, for use of the natives, the demand for water is becoming greater and greater. Some assistance will be required in this regard in the near future.

Travelling south from Thursday Island, the next port of call is Iron Range, which has an excellent air-strip. It also has some good roads that were built during the war and on which the Main Roads Commission is at present doing some work. An enormous quantity of iron-ore exists at Iron Range. Some time ago, after the publication of a

letter in a Brisbane newspaper recommending that some use should be made of the iron-ore in this area, a Government spokesman said that it was not suitable for the manufacture of steel. Since then, however, I have seen an assay of the steel that was given to a private citizen who was a prospector up there many years ago, and the information conveyed to me was that that ore is eminently suitable for the manufacture of steel. I suggest that the Government should investigate this matter thoroughly and ascertain whether this ore is suitable for the manufacture of steel. Mention has been made of the fact that it is hoped to open up the steel industry in Queensland and Bowen has often been mentioned as the most logical place for the establishment of steel works, because of its port facilities and its proximity to supplies of good coking coal. If Bowen is a suitable place for the establishment of steel works and the iron-ore in the Iron Range area is suitable for the manufacture of steel, I put it to the hon. members that Iron Range is more than 1,000 miles closer to Bowen than Iron Knob in South Australia is to Newcastle, and Iron Knob at present supplies Newcastle with its iron-ore.

We next come to Coen of which we often hear in the news. For instance, we might hear that the people there have not received food supplies for two or three months, or we might hear that someone has caught a taipan, or something of that kind. Every year during the wet season the people of Coen are cut off from the rest of civilisation, sometime for as long as four months. A regular air service operates from Cairns on Wednesdays and Saturdays, but during the wet season the air-strip, which is almost as big as that at Iron Range, cannot be used, simply because it has not been bituminised. Furthermore, I believe that if Port Stewart was used as a port for Coen instead of Annie River, ships would be able to make more frequent visits during the wet season. The Coen district produces a lot of cattle for this State, and some very rich goldfields exist at Wenlock.

We now move down to Cooktown, in which place we all should have a historical pride. Many years ago Cooktown's population was 25,000, who were engaged mainly in winning gold from the rich Palmer and other areas. However, as soon as all the easy gold went Cooktown started to go down. Cooktown is not some unpleasant place where no-one would like to live. Not many Queenslanders, apart from a few in the Far North, have actually seen Cooktown. Climatically it is much better than many other coastal towns in Queensland, because for nine months of the year it is kept cool by the trade winds and the other three months are the winter months.

Cooktown, historically, reminds one of Captain Cook—he landed there in 1770. Cooktown is now getting to the stage, either through neglect or for other reasons, at which about the only two things that will be left in a few years' time will be the monument to Captain Cook and the monument to Mrs. Watson, the heroine of Lizard Island. Why is this so? Is the place worthless or untenable? Let me give a few

logical reasons why the people have left Cooktown and why they do not go back now. The evidence of progressive development in any area is that married people will go there and settle down to rear their children. I put it to you, Mr. Speaker, that no married man with any pride in his family today, in these days when work can be got anywhere will take his family to places like Cooktown or Laura and endeavour to rear them there. If he needs medical attention he must send a wireless call to the Cairns aerial ambulance and if it is a midwifery case, that of his wife, he cannot get a doctor for the purpose. When a child of the family reaches 14 years of age and the parents have any ambition for it, it must be sent away to a secondary school. There are two reasons why people will not go to Cooktown. I have referred to the lack of adequate hospitalisation, to the fact that women are expected to bear children without medical assistance, and I have referred to the lack of educational facilities. Then there are the lack of water supply and the lack of electricity, all things that we feel we are entitled to have today.

The Cooktown hospital has been without a doctor for many months but recently the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs directed the Cairns base hospital to make a doctor available to the Cooktown hospital for one day a fortnight. Although that is much better than no doctor at all, it is still far from satisfactory. No doubt the people of Cooktown realise that the Cairns base hospital cannot spare a doctor for more than one day a fortnight but if we cannot get a doctor to live permanently in Cooktown, why not increase the medical personnel at the Cairns base hospital and so make a doctor permanently available for the Cooktown hospital for a week, a fortnight or a month in rotation? That would not only enable the people to get medical assistance on the spot—and that often saves lives—but it would ensure a medical service to people outside Cooktown as well.

Take the case of people living at Laura, which is on the only bit of railway line in that part of the State. It is a rail-motor service these days, one service a week. No doubt it costs the people a lot of money, it does not pay, it does not make a profit, but there are many people producing many hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of beef cattle for this State in that area each year and they would not live there without this service. They must get their supplies there and so the service must not be regarded as something to be cut to a minimum because it does not make a profit. When a motor launch arrives from Cairns at Cooktown with supplies the rail-motor leaves next day for Laura. It stops an hour and returns to Cooktown. That is the weekly service to Laura. If anyone from Laura wished to see the doctor at the Cooktown hospital or to see the dentist—one is now available in the Cooktown area—he would have to go to Cooktown on the rail-motor on Wednesday and remain in Cooktown until the following Wednesday.

That is not an exaggeration. I have seen it worked myself. During the election campaign I hired a section car from the Railway Department to go to Laura. That was two days after the weekly mail service had gone to Laura. When I arrived at Laura I found a beef-buyer from the Ayr district who had arrived there by the rail-motor a couple of days before to make a purchase of cattle. He had completed his business in half a day and was compelled to wait at Laura until the rail-motor arrived at Laura again the following week. He asked me whether he could travel back to Cooktown on my section car and I consented. That is the position in regard to that service. I cannot stress too strongly the necessity for rectifying that condition as soon as possible, for the several reasons I have given. At present it is merely a weekly service to take mails and goods between Cooktown and Laura. If the service was made a bi-weekly one it would enable the residents of the hinterland to travel to Cooktown and possibly proceed to Cairns for professional attention and to transact business. Imagine the distance of the railway being 67 miles and your being compelled to spend a week, which in most cases is impracticable, before being able to return to your point of embarkation!

**Mr. Foley:** There would not be many passengers availing themselves of that service.

**Mr. WORDSWORTH:** If a bi-weekly service was established, I think there would be. Sometimes an additional service is run when necessary, such as a ballast train or to pay the lengthsmen. The officer in charge of the rail-motor is more or less a jack-of-all trades. He is the station master, the mechanic, the lad porter, rail-motor driver, and the general pay clerk. He has his hands full. I am not criticising what he does because he gives good service and what he does is done to the best of his ability. The whole service requires going into thoroughly. I admit that the service does not pay but a public transport facility does not need to pay when it will give a service to the community.

**Mr. Gair:** A lot of country lines do not pay.

**Mr. WORDSWORTH:** There is a great possibility of future development along the Cooktown-Laura railway; therefore there is a possibility of its paying. That is a matter that deserves serious consideration. That area is within the Cook shire, which contains 49,000 square miles, bounded by the east and west coasts of Queensland, yet it has a population of only 1,200 people.

We Australians have thrown in our lot with the United Nations. At the present time Australian service men are serving in the United Nations forces against aggression. We are either a member of the United Nations or we are not. We cannot have it both ways. I believe that after the United Nations forces have shown the forces of aggression that they will not be tolerated, the power of this great world organisation will increase tremendously. I put it to hon. members that if we are not prepared to do what we can with the country we hold, any

member of the United Nations will be entitled to ask the organisation to allot portion of our country to that member if it is proved that the member country making such a request is over-populated or underfed. The hon. member for North Toowoomba quoted Professor Murdoch. He reminded me of another statement by that learned professor which appeared in one of the principal Brisbane newspapers. The question asked him was—"what is it that the people of Asia want"?

His brief answer was this: "One square meal a day." If that is all they want, if that is all the people of Asia need to ensure us and our children a peaceful future, we can do much to help to solve this world problem of food shortage.

In the Laura area there are men growing tobacco, which has been proved to be at least as good as tobacco produced in any other part of Australia. I believe that with the aid of irrigation—and there are limited facilities for irrigation in that area—perhaps 200 settlers could be put in that area growing tobacco. I know that responsible officers of the Government have examined those areas and I believe we should try to get at least a couple of dozen experimental farms going there immediately as has been done elsewhere in the State. We are all inclined to spend too much time talking about an idea. We must realise that the sands of time are running out and we must do something. No better peanuts or citrus fruit can be grown than are grown in the Endeavour area and much of it is said to be good sugar land as well.

I have referred to the dwindling population of Cooktown and to the reasons for it. The provision of amenities for people, such as up-to-date hospitalisation, would do much to induce people to remain there. I visited the Cooktown hospital during the wet weather last April. The nursing staff was doing a mighty job, but there were tubs and kerosene tins all over the hospital, in amongst the patients' beds, in order to catch the water that was dripping through the roof. The roof is still in the same condition; it will not rain for another six months so nobody is worrying.

The Cooktown people have an excellent local authority in the Cook Shire Council. I think all those men—and some of them are politically opposed to me—are trying to do the best they can in that area; but they are running up against a brick wall of accountancy. They made representations to the Government to get a water supply, and the department have gone into the matter of subsidy and they have worked out that if the Government do subsidise the supply it will cost about £16 per capita. You have to get the water to get the people and you cannot get the water because the people have not enough money to pay for it. That is a case where a subsidy is more necessary than in any other area of the State.

In regard to electric light, I know negotiations have been going on between the Federal Department of Civil Aviation, the Cook Shire Council, and the Secretary for Mines with a

view to enabling the Cook Shire Council to purchase from the Department of Civil Aviation, which has a small plant, enough power to give a limited supply there.

From Cooktown we get to the Daintree, Bailey's Creek and Cape Tribulation. In that area the Department of Public Lands estimates there is 250,000,000 superficial feet of marketable timber and in the past estimates of timber country have been very conservative. It is very difficult to estimate the quantity of timber on a piece of land. Experience has proved that sometimes there has been almost twice as much as was thought. Probably there is 500,000,000 superficial feet of marketable timber in that area, and timber is something we need very greatly. There are two sawmills, one at Bloomfield River and one at Cooktown, just erected and about to start production. If there was access to Cooktown it would not only be possible to get that timber out but it would strike the first blow towards making people really interested in that part of the country.

The Cook Highway from Cairns to Cooktown was planned many years ago. It was constructed as far as Mossman but then it went to Daintree and has stopped there ever since. The chairman of the shire council, Councillor Rex, told me the other day that when Mr. Kemp was in charge of the Main Roads Commission he made an oral promise to the chairman of the council that the commission would put an access road into the Bailey's Creek area. This is a very rich district with many thousands of pounds worth of marketable timber and a very rich soil. However, Mr. Kemp went from the Main Roads Commission and there is as yet no road there. The Cook Highway would have gone across the Daintree River and then to Cooktown.

The Mulligan Highway was gazetted recently and no doubt will be a great asset. It will probably cost much less and be easier to construct than the Cook Highway. There is another highway under consideration but the point I want to make is that we want something there quickly. I have here details of the Daintree area. Loggers at the Bloomfield River sawmill, which is between Cooktown and Daintree, have made certain roads—certainly not up to Main Roads standard but a lorry or motor-car can travel over them—so that at the present time it is possible to get a road from Bloomfield River to Cooktown, approximately 40-odd miles, by the formation and clearing of an area of approximately 8 miles. The road could be put from Bloomfield through Rossville and Helenvale to Cooktown. At the other end these loggers, or bush roads, call them as you will, come almost back to China Camp, which is approximately 25 miles from the Daintree River. I am informed that the Douglas Shire Council would undertake to put that road in from Daintree to China Camp if encouraged by the Main Roads Commission so to do, which means that all the road that is needed at the present time is 33 miles to get access to Cooktown from Cairns. It would not be a first-class road but it would be a road, and once there is a road it can always be

improved. Until there is a road there is nothing. That road would have much value; roads such as the Rex and Mulligan Highways will do much in assisting in developing that part of Queensland.

Mossman is one of the most prosperous sugar towns of the North and is the northernmost sugar area in Queensland. It has never been more prosperous than it is today, but statistics show that it is losing its population, and the reason is the lack of educational facilities. Once a child becomes of scholarship age its parents have either to be willing to let it leave school and get a job in the district—and this applies more particularly to those who are not educated for Junior or higher standard—or for the parents to get out of the district and live elsewhere. The nearest town providing secondary schooling is Cairns, 50 miles away. The typical family cannot afford the expense of boarding children away from home, and I propose to give an instance to prove this. A gentleman of Mossman approached me the other day to know whether I knew if there was a certain type of job available in Cairns. This man is an excellent citizen, and has a wife and five children, one of the children going to a boarding school in Brisbane. It is the limit of his ability to send one child to a boarding school. He has another child requiring secondary education but he cannot afford to send this child away from home, and he wishes to move to some place where there is a secondary school. If he and his family move they will probably be replaced by a single man or a married man without children or a married man with small children, and thus Mossman will have lost in one family a population of five. That is how it happens. The Mossman Chamber of Commerce has advocated for many years the establishment of a high school top at this town. There are high school tops at smaller towns than Mossman and I hope I have said sufficient to establish the need for a high school at Mossman.

Port Douglas is the port for sugar from the Mossman mill. It is a trans-shipment port and has wonderful potentialities, the tourist business being not the least of them. It is close to the Barrier Reef and has a beach on which one can motor at 100 miles an hour if he cares to. It is close to many excellent resources. The people of Port Douglas are progressively inclined and believe that if these access roads of which I have spoken are put into the scrub near to Mossman at Bailey's Creek and Cape Tribulation and similar places that Port Douglas will become a timber port. There is a possibility also of the establishment of one or more sawmills, and also a factory to prefabricate houses of which this country will require hundreds of thousands in the future.

Getting back to Bailey's Creek and Cape Tribulation we have to keep in mind the starving people of the world. If we supply them with food they will give us something in return. That is the way of trade. Rice has recently been grown at Bailey's Creek without irrigation and without aid from anybody. They have not been experimenting with the growing of rice because they know that

rice can be grown there. Rice can be grown almost anywhere in that area, and it was grown in that part of North Queensland long before I was born and only ceased to be grown when it became possible 40 or 50 years ago to import Chinese rice for a fraction of a penny a lb. The reason for the cessation of the growing of rice then became obvious. If this district will grow rice without irrigation, as it is doing at present, it is our duty to open up as much of it as possible.

I have refrained from mentioning sugar-growing, but we believe that if the Royal Commission on the Sugar Industry decides in its wisdom to recommend the erection of more sugar mills in Queensland and takes the view that it is necessary to populate the undeveloped parts of North Queensland, the area selected for the erection of a mill will be somewhere between Mossman and Cooktown. That is all I have to say about that. The matter is in the hands of much more capable men than I, and that is why I have not stressed sugar-growing.

I have not very much time left to deal with my home town of Cairns. The Cook electorate embraces part of the city of Cairns and included in that area is the Cairns base hospital. Although that hospital renders a wonderful service to the community, it is a monument to the lack of foresight of many people who have been connected with it over the last 20 or 30 years. I am referring now to the building programme. In the past someone has said, "We will have a ward here," and it has been put there. Someone else has said, "We will have new nurses' quarters here," and in a few years' time they have been too small. The Department of Health and Home Affairs is at present endeavouring to do something about this big hospital, which is of such vital importance not only to Cairns, but to the whole of the Cape York peninsula. I understand that the present plans envisage the resumption of part of a street and two properties and the demolition of a large brick cottage that was erected for the medical officer more than two years ago but has been occupied for only twelve months. That will mean a colossal waste in these days of building shortages, and I suggest that the time has arrived when consideration should be given to finding a new site altogether and putting in foundations for a building that can subsequently be enlarged. The old hospital building could then be used for another purpose. What could it be used for? I have one suggestion to offer. We have been crying out for some years for a university college in the Far North, and Cairns would be an admirable place for a university college. Within a radius of 50 miles from Cairns there is a population of 57,000 people. It is only 8 hours from Townsville by rail, 6 hours by road, and 1½ hours by air. I suggest that if it was decided to build a new hospital in Cairns, the present hospital building would be eminently suitable for a far-northern university college and perhaps a students' hostel.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

Debate, on motion of Mr. Larcombe, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 4.5 p.m.