

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 31 AUGUST 1950

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

QUESTIONS.

COMPENSATION FOR LAND FOR SOLDIER SETTLEMENT.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation—

“1. Since the decision of the High Court in the Magennis (New South Wales) case, have any discussions taken place between the State Government and the Federal Government as to the basis of compensation for land acquired for the purposes of the War Service Land Settlement Acts ?

"2. If so, have any decisions been reached, and will he inform the House as to the results of such discussions?"

"3. If any agreement has been reached with the Commonwealth that land should be acquired upon 'just terms' or upon a more generous basis than that for which Section 14 of the War Service Land Settlement Acquisition Act provides, from what date will the amendment have effect?"

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Belyando) replied—

"1, 2, and 3. Certain discussions have taken place between State and Federal representatives on the matter and certain tentative decisions have been arrived at. These will be embodied in amending legislation to be placed before the House in due course."

LOSS AND DAMAGE, RAILWAY GOODS
TRAFFIC.

Mr. LOW (Cooroora) asked the Minister for Transport—

"What were the total payments for 1949-1950 in respect of (a) losses of (i.) goods, (ii.) parcels, and (b) damage to (i.) goods, (ii.) parcels, accepted for rail transport?"

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

"Separate information in regard to payments for loss and damage to (a) goods and (b) parcels is not readily available, but the payments made for the year in question in respect of both goods and parcels under these headings were as under:—Payments on account of (a) Loss, £13,943; (b) Damage, £4,646."

INCREASED CANE ASSIGNMENTS, SMALL
FARMS.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) asked the Premier—

"1. Does his Government approve of the decision of the Central Cane Prices Board in refusing to grant increased assignments to those farmers at present holding less than 15 acres?"

"2. Is it a fact that all the sugar organisations, i.e., the U.C.G.A., the A.S.P.A., and various mill suppliers' committees vigorously protested against such decision?"

"3. Is it the intention of the Government to ultimately grant to every sugar farmer an assignment that will permit him to earn a reasonable living as such? If so, how does the Government propose to do this?"

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca) replied—

"1 to 3. The Central Board, under the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Acts, has the sole jurisdiction to decide all matters affecting cane assignments. Its decisions, like those of any other judicial tribunal, are not subject to the approval or otherwise of the Government. It is the intention of the Government to develop the sugar industry to the fullest possible

extent. As the hon. member is no doubt aware, the Government recently appointed a Royal Commission to investigate and to report to the Government as to how best this might be accomplished. The Royal Commission has not yet completed its inquiries."

DISBURSEMENTS, POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION
AND DEVELOPMENT TRUST FUND.

Mr. HILEY (Coorparoo) asked the Treasurer—

"What are the details of disbursements totalling £33,000 referred to in Order in Council of 8 June, 1950, made under The Post-War Reconstruction and Development Trust Fund Act of 1943?"

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

"The amount referred to was an additional authorisation by Order in Council which was necessary, in terms of the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Trust Funds Act of 1943, to cover the total expenditure for General Purposes from the inception of the Fund to 30 June, 1950. The allocation does not refer to specific items of expenditure. The term 'General Purposes' includes works and investigations other than those for Railways, Main Roads, and Harbours and Marine for which the expenditure has been separately provided in various Orders in Council."

FLOOD LOSSES BY TOMATO- AND POTATO-
GROWERS, BOWEN, HOME HILL AND AYR
DISTRICTS.

Mr. COBURN (Burdekin) asked the Premier—

"1. In regard to my question without notice, and his answer of 3 August, will he please advise what progress has been made with the investigation he declared was being made into the losses sustained by the tomato- and potato-growers of Bowen, Home Hill, and Ayr districts?"

"2. If the investigation is sufficiently advanced to reveal that widespread and severe loss has been suffered, will he please indicate what action the Government intends to take to relieve distress in necessary cases, if any?"

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca) replied—

"1. At the Government's request, an inspector of the Agricultural Bank carried out inquiries into flood damage suffered recently in the areas referred to by the hon. member. The inspector has advised that some of the growers who lost their crops have obtained employment at the Bowen Meatworks and that local authorities in the area are absorbing others seeking employment. He also pointed out that little can be done on the properties until next January, when a start can be made in preparation for the next tomato crop.

"2. The Government, through the Agricultural Bank, is prepared to assist necessitous cases by the granting of loans up to £200 with special conditions as to interest charges."

PRICE OF BUTTER.

Mr. PLUNKETT (Darlington) asked the Attorney-General—

"In reference to his recent statement that investigators of his department had reported that an increase in the price of butter was not justified—

"1. Is he aware that the Federal Government is subsidising the present price of butter to the extent of approximately 11d. per pound in order to give to the producer a return commensurate with present-day production costs?

"2. Is he aware that such production costs were determined after a complete investigation by a committee appointed for the purpose by the Federal Government?

"3. What are the names and official positions of the investigators to whom he referred?

"4. What reason did they give in support of their adverse report?"

Hon. J. LARCOMBE (Rockhampton) replied—

"1. Yes, but most of the butter subsidy was provided by the Chifley Government before the present Federal Administration came into office.

"2. Yes. I am also aware that after the present Federal Government recently granted an increase in subsidy to the producers, the same Government requested the various State Prices Ministers to increase the price of butter to the consumer. This would have allowed the Federal Government to shuffle out of much of its subsidy responsibility, and placed the extra cost upon the consumer. However, the States refused the request.

"3. The Commonwealth Minister for Commerce and Agriculture (Honourable J. McEwen) informed the States that the Commonwealth report made available to the Prices Commissioners was confidential. When the Minister makes that report public I shall consider the request of the hon. member for Darlington.

"4. That the existing price provided a reasonable return to producers."

AIR SERVICES, THURSDAY ISLAND.

Mr. WORDSWORTH (Cook) asked the Minister for Transport—

"As the airlines service is the only means of communication between Cairns and Thursday Island, except for the monthly subsidised boat service from Brisbane, and as the return fare between those places is approximately the same as that charged for air travel between Brisbane and Cairns, about twice the distance, will he have a review made of the fees payable under the State Transport Acts for the service in question or, alternatively, give

favourable consideration to payment of a subsidy in order to give more equitable treatment to Thursday Island and to assist the cause of decentralisation in respect of that remote, but important, outpost of the State of Queensland?"

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

"The fare between Cairns and Thursday Island is £13, and, with State Transport licence fee assessed at the rate of 2½ per cent. added, amounts to £13 6s. 6d. This, for a distance of 524 miles, represents approximately six pence (6d.) per mile. Between Brisbane and Cairns the fare is £13 5s. plus State Transport licence fee of 10 per cent., or a total of £14 11s. 6d. For the journey of 884 miles the charge is, accordingly, four pence (4d.) per mile. The difference in the fare is due to the higher route operating cost (including aviation spirit) on the first-mentioned service, and the smaller loading carried thereon. The fare to Thursday Island is an inclusive one and, as the hon. member is no doubt aware, the plane lands at Horn Island. Consequently, passengers have to be taken from the aerodrome to a launch, thence transported to Thursday Island. Fees payable by air services in Queensland received careful consideration and were determined having regard to all factors. Special consideration was extended to people living in isolated areas—for example, the licence fee on the coastal route, where there is a density of population is 10 per cent., whereas the fee applicable between Cairns and Horn Island is 2½ per cent. There is no provision contained in the State Transport Facilities Acts under which a subsidy could be granted as suggested."

DREDGING, PORT DOUGLAS.

Mr. WORDSWORTH (Cook) asked the Treasurer—

"1. When is it expected that the promised clam dredge for Port Douglas will be available?

"2. As crushing at the Mossman sugar mill is now in progress, will he kindly expedite as much as possible the dredging of the harbour in question?"

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

"1. The clam dredge with attendant tug is being despatched to-day.

"2. The dredging will be carried out as expeditiously as possible."

NEW POLICE STATION, LAIDLEY.

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

"1. Has he arrived at any decision yet as regards the site for the erection of the new police station at Laidley?

"2. When is it proposed to proceed with the erection of this urgently needed police station to replace the one which was demolished by fire about twelve months ago?"

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon) replied—

"1. Every possible site has been investigated, and due to difficulties associated with the railway crossing, the most recent site inspected on the northern side of the town is deemed unsuitable. It is now proposed to erect a new police station on the site of the building which was destroyed by fire.

"2. The Architectural Branch of the Department has been instructed to prepare plans, specification, and estimate of cost for new police buildings."

NEW STATE SCHOOL, HARLAXTON.

Mr. CHALK (Lockyer) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

"Has his department made any definite decision relative to additions to, or the building of a new school which is urgently required at Harlaxton?"

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory) replied—

"Following personal representations made to the Honourable the then Minister (Honourable T. L. Williams, M.L.A.) on 26 March, 1946, by the then hon. member for East Toowoomba (Mr. L. Wood, M.L.A.) for the construction of a new building for the Harlaxton State School, the Honourable the then Minister advised the then hon. member, by letter 9 April, 1946, that it was not then possible to provide a new building, but the project was noted for consideration when the Public Works (Loan) Programme for 1946-1947 was under review. It was not found possible for the Co-ordinator-General to include a new building under that programme, and following further representations from the then hon. member for East Toowoomba who arranged a special visit to the school by the then Minister in March, 1947, the Minister subsequently advised the hon. member, by letter dated 25 March, 1947, that, as a result of the inspection, endeavour would be made to include a new building on the Public Works (Loan) Programme for 1947-1948. As, owing to the necessity for the conservation of materials and manpower for projects of the highest priority, it was not possible for the Co-ordinator-General to include the proposed new school building at Harlaxton under the subsequent annual Works Programmes approved by the Australian Loan Council, the Department of Public Works was requested, in July, 1949, to give the earliest consideration to the practicability of remodelling the existing buildings to provide better lighting, ventilation, internal painting, and adequate classroom accommodation. This report is awaited. Upon its receipt the question of whether the remodelling of the existing buildings will be proceeded with or whether a new building is to be provided will be further considered and determined. Pending such decision, action has been taken to include in the draft Loan Works Programme for 1950-1951

some provision of funds towards either of these projects. This programme awaits the approval of the Australian Loan Council at its forthcoming meeting. Meanwhile, action has been taken by the Works Department to provide an additional temporary classroom to meet current requirements. The provision of further temporary classroom accommodation to meet the needs of the school in 1951 is also having the attention of my Department at present."

STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE BUILDING,
WARWICK.

Mr. MADSEN (Warwick) asked the Treasurer—

"In view of the large and growing volume of business of the Warwick branch of the State Government Insurance Office and the total inadequacy of the present offices, as well as the gross condition of overcrowding of the staff, will he give favourable consideration, as soon as conditions permit, to the construction of a new building of a standard at least equal to that of other buildings in the same location and containing, if considered desirable, office space for rental purposes?"

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

"Whilst the office accommodation at the Warwick branch of the State Government Insurance Office is not entirely satisfactory it is not totally inadequate and grossly overcrowded as stated by the Honourable Member. There is at the moment a greater priority for other classes of building such as homes and hospitals. When this position has been overcome consideration will be given to improved accommodation at Warwick and other Branches of the State Government Insurance Office."

PAPER.

The following paper was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed—

Report of the Director of Secondary Industries and Chairman of Industries Assistance Board for the year 1949-1950.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—FIFTH ALLOTTED DAY.

Debate resumed from 29 August (see p. 228) on Mr. McCallie's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Dr. DITTMER (Mount Gravatt) (11.16 a.m.), who was received with Government "Hear, hears," said: Mr. Acting Speaker, it is indeed a privilege that I should be able to speak in support of a motion so ably proposed by the hon. member for Houghton and so capably seconded by the hon. member for Windsor.

May I extend to you my personal congratulations on your re-election, and may I be permitted through you to extend my personal congratulations to the Speaker on his re-election to that august office? And,

further, I do trust that he will soon be restored to health. May I also be permitted through you to extend congratulations to the members of His Majesty's Government and to members of His Majesty's Opposition, whom competent critics regard as fortuitous children of political circumstance and who have been placed in opposition, shall we say, by the grace of God and the good sense of the Queensland people.

Through you, too, I should like to express my appreciation of and gratitude to the electors of Mount Gravatt, who have returned me to this Assembly, where I trust that wrongs will be righted and errors, if any, will be few. There is one thing I could do—I could perhaps extol the virtues of my electorate and in particular tell of the possibilities of Weller's Hill, the potentialities of White's Hill, and the settlement facilities of Carina and Salisbury. Perhaps if we had a more socially-conscious council that area would be in a condition reflecting more to the credit of the city.

I propose to deal with the socialisation challenge thrown down by the Leader of the Opposition. Never, I suppose, in the history of the social consciousness of man has a term been so grossly misunderstood and so malevolently misrepresented in a definite attempt to deprive the people of their true democratic rights. The Leader of the Opposition challenged the Government to say whether the money voted in the Appropriation Bill would be spent on socialisation and declared that if it was to be so spent they would withhold their support. The Labour Government, of course, accepted that challenge. Money is to be spent on socialisation, because Labour realises what socialisation really means. I will briefly traverse the history of socialisation and I hope to show that the people of Queensland—in fact, the people of the world—would not return any Government in any English-speaking country unless they were Socialist-minded or they were going to carry out in some measure a socialisation policy.

Firstly, I think it is essential that we define certain terms. Democracy, or true democracy, is government of the people, for the people, by their representatives freely elected on an adult franchise. On the other hand Communism is a form of State dictatorship that leads to the enslavement of the spirit of man; it is a State capitalism differing very little from Fascism and Nazi-ism. The only difference is that Communism is wrapped round State capitalism and does not countenance private enterprise. Fascism and Nazi-ism built their systems round private enterprise, as can be proved by reference to any history that deals with these movements. Economic liberalism, or as its champions are pleased to term it, free enterprise, is a system that recognises as the prime motives in life, money and its virtue-destitute mother—profit. They would regard labour merely as a commodity subject to the law of supply and demand, to be treated no differently from the materials of the labour of the people or the environment in which it lives.

There is yet one other definition I should like to give—that is, that the Liberal of 1950 is the politician who unwillingly accepts the last-but-one social measure, but accepts it only in a spirit of expediency. He will not accept the last social measure, nor can he willingly adopt the next one that is due to the people of Queensland or of any other country. In brief, the opponents of Labour would have one believe that socialisation was something conceived and elaborated in the mind of one man, Ferdinand Lassalle, in 1863. Whereas the fact is that a social consciousness was engendered in man long before and it was spoken of before Christ. But the real recognition of the true place of man in his environment was taught by the God who came into this world. From that it developed through the years. Savagery was replaced by slavery, slavery by a system called feudalism, feudalism by malevolent capitalism and industrialism. Through the centuries men arose who were termed agitators, just as Labour leaders today are termed agitators. This force gathered momentum in the 19th century, sponsored by Church of England leaders in the persons of Frederick Maurice and Ludlow. It was sponsored by writers led by Charles Kingsley. It was sponsored by the Catholic Church under Pope Leo XII. It was sponsored by philanthropists of the type of Thomas Owen and others. But the greatest awakening and the greatest momentum were given with the coming of the political force that is known to us today as the Labour Party. What do we find happened as a result? It gathered to itself those people who were prepared to recognise man as greater than the environment in which he lived. It was prepared to regard man as an entity for which the Maker had made a definite place in life.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, I, in brief, will traverse what socialisation means in relation to Queensland in particular. Do not let the opponents of Labour try to frame this definition, because socialisation is the utilisation, ownership or control of the assets of a community in the interests of the citizens who dwell in that community. Can they quarrel with that definition? But when they go to the hustings, what do they try to tell the people? They are 30 per cent. Socialist and we are 100 per cent. Socialist. But they do not class themselves as Socialists, although as I traverse the speeches of the members of the Opposition I will show just what they would demand in the way of socialistic expenditure. Thus we had the hon. member for Cook in a fluent travelogue detail the possibilities of Laura, Coen, and other places in his area on which he would have expended £30,000,000.

I must apologise to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I should have mentioned him first. He would have socialised the harbours and rivers, in fact, anything on which a loss is expected, whilst anything with which profit is associated should be reserved for the privileged few. So we had the Deputy Leader of the Opposition suggesting that we should deepen rivers and open harbours

and install wet docks, and probably all his suggestions would have required the expenditure of another £30,000,000.

The hon. member for Roma, in his anguish for the West—his pretended agony—suggested roads, railways, amenities for nurses, hostels for children and so on. In other words, he was not modest in his demands but thought that we should spend at least £60,000,000. And so they went on. If one cared to add up the sums they were asking for in the way of social expenditure from a socially conscious Government, a Government which realises that social control must be exercised in the interests of the people, one would find that they have asked for the expenditure of nearly £700,000,000. And let us not forget what was asked for by the hon. member for Mirani—just £40,000,000 for one particular item, a sum to be provided by the Government, not by private enterprise.

Mr. Evans: It is a pity you do not understand it.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Dr. DITTMER: What did we find in 1891? The Labour Party in Queensland gathered force. Let us not forget that these men were Queenslanders and that they were interpreting the actions of Labour in Queensland, and they were real Queenslanders. After all, there is a trite but true saying, "By their actions ye shall know them." Labour is prepared to stand or fall on what it has done and I think Queensland has been fortunate in the fact that it has possessed successive Labour Governments. In the same year, 1891, what else do we find? What was the attitude of the political ancestors of hon. members opposite in relation to the righting of wrongs? They gave instructions, when there was industrial trouble in the pastoral industry to the military—"Don't dilly-dally; exercise vigour, even if it causes bloodshed." But the people of Queensland were not to be stampeded and ultimately more and more Labour men were returned to this Assembly.

It has been contended that it was anti-Labour Governments which introduced socially-conscious legislation, but in this connection what do we find? We find the introduction of the Shearers and Sugar Workers' Accommodation Act, the Act enfranchising women, and other measures, were introduced by the Morgan Administration as the price to be paid for Labour support in 1902. Any socially-conscious legislation brought into this Assembly was brought in as the price for Labour support or as the result of Labour agitation.

Let me refer now to the industrial troubles as they arose. First of all, there was the great strike in 1911, followed by the tramway strike in 1912, when the Government in charge of the State's affairs at that time were prepared to use firearms, and loaded ones too, but to the credit of the Federal Labour Government at the time they refused to provide the military to shoot down the strikers. And so we pass on to the days of 1915 when Labour obtained power and began to rectify

the wrongs under which the people had been suffering. Then what did we find? There was an elimination of political jobbery and the corruption associated with previous Administrations. And we must not let His Majesty's Opposition talk about the alleged scandals associated with Labour Governments. In 1892 the Mellwraith Government, when negotiating for a short railway line, demanded not the profits alone, but 200,000,000 acres of the best Queensland land, a demand that would have placed Queensland in the shackles of a land bondage for over two generations.

That was no small consideration. Do not let hon. members opposite talk about the rigging of rolls, the faking of ballots, and the gerrymandering of electorates.

An Opposition Member: What is in the bag?

Dr. DITTMER: They can check all these things up; I have in this bag proof of everything I say. In one election, on the night when counting took place, the opponent of Labour's representative was approximately 180 votes behind, but when counting was resumed the next morning he was 180 votes ahead. On another occasion, in the Mitchell area, when representations were made for a polling booth for 80 shearers, they were told they could vote at the nearest polling booth, which was 80 miles away. But this is the "daddy" of them all: on one occasion in the Cook electorate 14 people cast their votes, and when the votes were counted there were 381. The way in which the Moore regime handled the electorates has already been dealt with by others. Those examples could be multiplied tenfold but time does not permit it.

Now let me refer to the first reform that Labour tackled when it came into office. It was interested in decent hours and decent conditions, and brought into being the Industrial Arbitration and Conciliation Act, which has resulted in Queensland's enjoying probably more peace in industry than any other country in the world, other than those under dictatorships. In passing I would say I believe that in the future the Industrial Court, as is provided for in the Act, will have to consider granting special awards giving workers in particular enterprises special sets of conditions. I am not referring now to an award for a particular industry, but to an award for a particular enterprise whose prosperity can be established. By that means, such places as warehouses and emporiums would have to disgorge some of their excess profits and give them to their employees.

Opposition Members: What about gold-mines?

Dr. DITTMER: I was the first to institute a 40-hour week, and my people have benefited as the result. They receive the highest rates of pay of any gold-mine in Queensland, in addition to being the first to enjoy a 40-hour week.

Now let me traverse what this socially-conscious policy has meant in education. It has meant, among other things, the erection of modern schools and freedom of facilities for education. Hon. members opposite plead for more opportunities for children to-day. But what were the conditions 40 years ago? There were then no opportunities for the poor man's child. If I had been seeking advancement when the anti-Labour Governments were in power, I should not be in the position I am today; I should not have been able to follow a profession. Hon. members opposite will say that scholarships were introduced in a time of anti-Labour Government, but there again they attempt to mislead. They were introduced by the late Sir James Blair under pressure from Labour representatives.

Hon. members opposite seek the abolition of what is recognised as the only fair system we have today, the scholarship examination. I would not accept its elimination, because that would mean reverting to the days of class and privilege when the poor man's child was denied an opportunity. However, I suggest that another examination might be held at the same time as the scholarship whereby students could be accredited, not at the whim of a particular individual, but under a system that would be suitable to the talents of the particular child. Hon. members opposite would have us abolish these things, which would simply mean a return to the bad "good old days."

Hon. members opposite talk about putting value back into the pound, but none of them is so old that he cannot recall the days when children went to school with patches in their clothes and one could count with ease the number of kiddies who went to school with shoes on their feet. Go to any school throughout the length and breadth of the State and observe the result of the socially conscious Labour legislation—how many kiddies will you find without shoes, how many kiddies will you find without boots and in how many homes will you find dripping on the table?

I come now to the subject of apprentices. Labour has liberalised the conditions governing apprentices but I look forward to the day when these children of 15 and 16 years will receive their theoretical training in the day-time and not be subject to the hazards of the night. I know that time must come and it must come very soon.

There is a further advance to which I point. There is a possibility—nay, it is more than that, a probability—that if Labour continues to be returned to the Treasury benches there will be a free university. At least it should be free for the first year, with freedom from fees subsequently according to academic results.

There is another aspect of the Government's socialisation policy I should like to refer to, and that is housing. Of course, hon. members opposite will tell us that the Workers Dwelling Act was passed by an anti-Labour Government, but it remained for Labour Governments to make of it a living

entity so that people could acquire their own homes. I am not so old that I cannot recall the time when some of the stalwarts of the anti-Labour forces bought a house for £39 and rented it to a tenant for 12s. 6d. a week. These were the moneybags who bitterly fought Labour in the early days because something was being taken from them. I can recall from personal knowledge that these houses were not only without bathrooms but without showers, without guttering; and very often the roofs leaked. In other words, houses bought for £39 and rented for 12s. 6d. a week gave the tenants merely a roof over their heads. Labour has advanced over the years, and today it has the fine record in this State of having nearly 70 per cent. of the people either owning their own homes or in the process of acquiring them. Labour realises that this is worth while, that the family is the fundamental unit of democratic society and of the Christian way of life. They realise that men are entitled to become the owners of homes in which to shelter their loved ones, and Labour will not be satisfied until 100 per cent. of the people who desire to do so either own their own homes or are in the process of acquiring them.

Labour introduced the Fair Rents Act, and what a cry and what a squeal there was from the opponents of Labour. They said it would destroy the whole class of property-owner! Labour is not concerned about the disappearance of the property-owner—we seek to build up a race of home-owners, not home-renters. I believe that the Fair Rents Act points the way to legislation that must be introduced very soon and for the want of a better term I shall describe it as the Small Businessman's Protection Act. What do we see today? Big firms bulging with excessive profits, acquiring buildings and dispossessing tenants without compensation. In other words, they are acquiring prosperous units of business for nothing. If the Government did that, what a terrific squeal there would be from hon. members opposite! We find that this practice has extended to country towns and in the near future the Government will have to give attention to some legislation that will protect these business people. After all, Labour's objective is the greater distribution of wealth, distribution over the greatest number, and that means security. Unless we do that we shall deprive a number of people of a reasonable livelihood and it will tend to the building up of two forces—a group of slaves on the one hand and monopolistic masters of anti-Labour forces on the other. They are the desperadoes, we shall term them, of public life, the highwaymen of political thought. Those are the two forces; Labour has to face up to that.

We have heard a great deal of how Labour failed in State enterprises. The State Government Insurance Office is an example of State enterprise. It has not failed and do not forget that it serves a particularly useful purpose. It was responsible for a reduction in premiums, and every insurance house had to fall into line.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Dr. DITTMER: It has been calculated, and reliably so in case anyone interjects, that the premiums saved to the people of Queensland as a result of the institution known as the State Government Insurance Office has been over £10,000,000. We hear that State stations were a failure, but do not forget that they were bought in a time of high prices. Has private enterprise never failed when an undertaking has been bought at a high price? And do not forget this also, that a tremendous amount of dishonesty was exhibited by those who dealt with the Government in those days. A former leader of His Majesty's Opposition—Labour was not in opposition then—said that one of the causes of the failure of State stations was the fact that the graziers stole the cattle from the State stations. It is a striking fact today that if a grazier goes onto an adjoining property, he says, "I know it is good meat because I know it came from my own property" (laughter). We hear today, and have heard in the past—I am loath to bring it up—what about Mungana? They say how this wrong was perpetrated and that wrong was perpetrated, but we must remember that Mungana was bought at a cost of £40,000 that the valuation made by Julius, Poole & Gibson, a reputable firm of engineers in Sydney, who by and large were associated with anti-Labour politicians, evaluated the plant alone at £29,000! Further, do we know that subsequent to the purchase of these deposits by the State Government £400,000 worth of ore came out of that mine and kept the Chillagoe smelters going?

Mr. A. Jones: That is correct.

Dr. DITTMER: Another burning question is: what has Labour done for agriculture and associated industries? Labour brought in the Sugar Acquisition Act of 1915. Despite the tribute paid by the hon. member for Mulgrave to the pioneers in the sugar industry we appreciate the efforts of all pioneers, but it was this Act that gave stability to the sugar industry. Do not forget too that this Government may yet have to use the provisions of that very Act, which has not been vitiated in law. I have a competent legal opinion that we can apply the provisions of this Act to any commodity, including beef—

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Dr. DITTMER: And at our own price, to meet the social obligations of the masses.

Further in relation to sugar—I cannot spend too long on the subject—we can accept the congratulations extended to the Government by the hon. member for Mulgrave on their extension of the co-operative system to the industry. I believe that ultimately the co-operative system must be extended to all industries similarly, on the basis on which it has been established in the agricultural industries. Further, I feel that so long as Labour is in power—if there is to be an extension of sugar production—we can be certain that men at present engaged in the industry will receive a reasonable living tonnage. I suggest that if there is to be any extension

of the sugar industry the extra production shall be given to men who have not yet obtained a tonnage of cane of 600 or 700 tons, or 80 to 100 tons of sugar, and, further, if any new mills are to be established, that they shall be established on a co-operative basis, and that if any extension is given to existing mills by and large that extension should be given to co-operative mills. The hon. member for Mulgrave, with other sugar-growers, and with the hon. member for Mourilyan, knows that Labour made it easy for the growers to acquire the mills. It was Labour that stood by them in times of distress. Labour never neglected the sugar-grower or any other section of the useful people.

Hon. members opposite speak of the pastoral industry and of how it is neglected. They tell you what they have to pay in times of high prices, but they did not tell you of the consideration extended to them by Labour in times of distress and drought—when their capitalistic associates would not stand by them. What about those cheap freights given by the railways for the transport of fodder for starving stock? They are so little that the railways cannot make a profit out of that traffic. Of course, they would socialise the railways, because there is no profit in them; they will socialise anything in which there is no profit; they will work it at the expense of the community in order to provide profits for their money hungry masters.

In relation to the agricultural industry one finds a similarly socially conscious approach by Labour. That is why it has established pool systems in order to stabilise the various industries. Peanut and tobacco-growing have been stabilised. Hon. members opposite have no right to condemn what is done in relation to the associated industries of this State.

We have to realise what a weapon the opponents of Labour have through the favour of the Press. It is one of the instrumentalities that they use and which they have used through the centuries for the purpose of oppressing the people and enslaving their spirit. They have sought to identify Labour with Communism; these are totally different systems. They have been telling people what happened in Russia. They should know the difference between Queensland Labour, with its social controlled policy—and the Russian system. The people know what it is. It has been put before them and accepted by them repeatedly. On the other hand Communism is a State dictatorship; it is dictatorial in outlook and revolutionary in character; it stands for the enslavement of the spirit of man and recognises the omnipotence of the State. Labour is entirely different. Labour is evolutionary in outlook, seeking the betterment of the people. It is democratic in its approach—and much more democratic than those people would have us believe they would be if they were our masters. How can they reasonably compare the two systems? It is only because they think it gives them a possibility of victory that they have always sought to

confuse the public mind about socialisation. They must realise that Labour identifies it with a social control for the benefit of the people. We do not hesitate to stand by social control in the people's interests. I make bold to say that there is not one member on this side who would not be true to the trust of social control. Hon. members opposite can tell the people what they like. If in their ignorance they do not know the truth, it behoves them, in the discharge of their responsibility to the electors, to ascertain the truth and convey it to the people.

Next election hon. members opposite must find something different from this monster termed "socialisation" because it has been trotted across the path of the political world for so long now that it must be getting worn out. First it was a tiger. Recently in the cartoons in the Press it was a dragon. What is it to be next time? I do not know what term they will use next time but they will be hard put to find one. They used it to such an extent last year that it lost its real value on 29 April. Next time they will have to find something different. It would be much better for them—and here I have the temerity to advise them—to look for some constructive ideology in the peoples real interest and in the interests of the real people.

Mr Acting Speaker, in conclusion I would like to recapitulate the few ideas I have submitted. The first is that the members of His Majesty's Opposition acquaint themselves with the true purpose of socially-controlled Labour policy: that they do not try to identify this with the theoretical teaching of sociological philosophers of the Continent; that they do not confuse Communism with Labour.

I congratulate the people of Queensland on the Labour Governments they have had through their good sense, led by able leaders associated with capable Cabinets skilled in State-craft. I commend to this Government that there shall be a continuation of this socially conscious policy; the teaching of apprentices in day-time, extension of rural-school projects, and the examination that I mentioned previously, an examination similar to the scholarship in some respects, a free university, co-operative system in industry, and, if new sugar mills are to be established, that they be co-operative.

There are two further important things at the present time, one, that if this Government find it necessary they will not hesitate to invoke the Sugar Acquisition Act of 1915, which empowers the Government to take any commodity that is necessary for the people; and two, that the Government commend to the Federal Government that a further substantial compulsory levy be imposed on wool in order to bring cheap clothing to the people. These things are not unreasonable. These are the only two major industries in Australia that are contributing to the instability of inflation.

The prices in every other industry is virtually pegged. All the base metals are pegged in relation to Australian consumption. Sugar and butter are pegged: the only

two industries that are not pegged and are allowed to take everything from the community are the wool and meat industries. The Federal Government and this State Government must face up to that.

In conclusion I would say—and this it is not necessary to say for the benefit of my colleagues in the Government, because they know—that I trust the members of the Opposition will go home with this thought clearly impressed in their minds that if they feed the people and give the people decent conditions and remuneration they starve Communism, but if they starve the people they feed Communism.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah) (11.55 p.m.): Today I and my colleagues find ourselves on the same side of the House as we occupied previously. The people of the State have the same Government as they had last year and the same requirements of the State still call for attention and the consideration they deserve. There are matters in my electorate, and not only there but in electorates of other members, that need attention; in fact, there are matters needing attention in every electorate of this State.

What was the motive behind the Government for the introduction of the legislation to provide for 13 additional seats? It was said that the motive was to give the people greater representation, to get closer to the people and to find out what their requirements and needs were. It was not because members of Parliament were overworked, because increased salaries were given to cover that aspect of the present day parliamentarian's duties. The stated idea was to give the people greater representation. If the people are still met by a negative attitude to approaches made to important matters affecting the well-being of the people and the State generally, we have no alternative but to believe that accusations from this side of the House were true. Those accusations were to the effect that the only purpose for the 13 additional seats was to ensure the Government's success at the last election. Whilst there is no doubt in my mind on this issue, time will certainly prove the correctness of our accusations.

I trust that the uneasiness and uncertainty with which the Government faced the people and fought the elections, together with the fact that they have lost their prestige with a great number of electors, as clearly shown in the close contests that have occurred, should awaken in the Government a consciousness of the fact that all is not well with their administration. Why, the small majority of many of the Ministers of the Crown should cause the Government to sit up and take notice.

It took the elections, with the dark and threatening cloud which it then cast over this Labour Government, to elicit from the Premier the cry that he was going to encourage motor transport and bus services in the country. I ask: why have not the Government seen this need previously? Why have they so consistently held back in this matter in the past? From the Premier's declared policy in this

connection I trust that my electorate and indeed all other electorates will receive more beneficial consideration than has been my experience in the last three years. Already at this date we find representations from people in my area requesting additional bus services. These representations have been refused and so I say it is inhuman to expect people to sit up all night in little cold draughty carriages on branch lines in country areas where they are not allowed to run bus services. In view of the Premier's policy the Government should see that steps are taken to implement the policy he expounded during the election period.

I take it that when the Premier spoke of encouraging motor transport he meant the granting of some concession in relation to road-tax fees. As they exist they are an unfair tax on country people. You, Mr. Acting Speaker, no doubt realise the importance of motor transport to country people, together with the fact that nowadays a much greater effort is required in keeping up roads, a point stated by previous speakers. Another aspect in which the Government could greatly assist is in relation to the urgent need to speed up decisions on applications for loans, thereby giving greater monetary assistance to local authorities.

The Deputy Premier said one of the difficulties was to get the necessary dollars to acquire equipment. I have often said that the Government have fallen down on their job in relation to the opportunities they have had of acquiring island equipment. This equipment could have been acquired at little cost, other than that of having it shipped here. Private enterprise in this State and in other States has acquired much of this equipment, which was not available to local authorities because of their method of finance.

Whilst speaking of road transport, I wish to refer briefly to one or two aspects of our railways. I appreciate the courteous way in which the Minister for Transport attends to various matters brought before his attention. I appreciate, too, the difficulties with which he is faced and I know that he is endeavouring to overcome the lag that has occurred over the years in the construction of rolling-stock and locomotives. However, I sincerely regret that in his programme we hear no mention about the construction of missing railway links throughout the State. We still have short missing links near the coast, and the longer missing links in the Far West.

I appreciate the visits of the Commissioner for Railways to my electorate, as the result of which many minor difficulties have been overcome. However the thing that I deplore most is the recent increase in rail fares and freights. The primary function of our railways—and this does not seem to be realised by the Government—is to open up our great inland spaces and develop our agricultural and grazing resources many of which have been hardly touched simply because no new railway construction has been considered for many years. Or is it that the Government lack vision? The railways should be looked

upon more as a means of opening up and developing our State than as a direct business undertaking as they were originally.

With regard to uncontrollable costs to which the Minister referred when announcing the increases, I wish to remind the hon. gentleman—and I feel I should be failing in my duty if I did not—that as a member of the Government he was a party to many of the things that resulted in the increased costs, which brought about the necessity to increase freights and fares. What this Government have had to pay for the introduction of the 40-hour week is worse than a tragedy. It has resulted in untold hardship, shortages, high costs, and a general set-back to this State. What the people want is not so much shorter hours, as improved standards of living and more amenities. The attitude of the Labour Government in seeking to make the people believe that their standard of living automatically improves when their working hours are reduced is absolutely wrong, particularly at this stage of our development.

I do not propose to speak on all the Ministerial portfolios. However, I was pleased to learn that the Secretary for Public Instruction is visiting various parts of the State for the purpose of inspecting schools. I trust he will realise the importance of keeping them open even where the average attendance drops below 9. I should also like to impress upon him the importance of not selling or removing a school, as is often done when a school is closed, because invariably the time returns when these schools are again required by the next generation and the roads to the nearest school are not suitable for use by motor transport. I know that the Minister is aware of the importance of doing everything possible to hold the present strength of the teaching staff and to encourage others to join. In this connection, it is important to consider the matter of accommodation for teachers. I suggest that a special section of the Department of Public Works should be set up to deal exclusively with this matter, because I believe that such an action would expedite urgently needed work.

I wish to comment not only on the lack of action by the Government on the administrative side, but on the actions of individual members of the Government. I regard it as a very serious breach of faith by the Government when the Premier and the Acting Premier state openly that they have no time for the Communists. On the other hand they marched openly with the Communists on a great Labour day.

Mr. Gair: Do you know that supporters of your party walked in that procession?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I know that Communists do not belong to any organisation associated with this side of the House, but that they are associated entirely with the movement represented by hon. members opposite. We heard the statement of the hon. member for Balonne the other day that members of the Government had fought the Communists and had even wrestled with them

on the grass, but to march with them, right out in the open and in the lead, is no way of resisting them. Such a thing would not have been done just prior to an election and it is regrettable that the Premier and his deputy should have done such a thing.

Over the past few years we have seen the actions of the Government in favour of the Communists. For instance, the Government were compelled to repeal the Anti-Picketing Act and when we know that the Premier and his deputy marched with them it would appear that they had no alternative. If they had taken an cut-and-out stand against them they would not have had the support of the Communists and it would appear that these were the things that they had to do to pay for Communist support during the elections. It is a tragedy that that should be so at a time when all State leaders should be playing a prominent part in resisting this organisation.

Mr. Rasey: What have you done to resist them?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I speak against them whenever I have the opportunity. This is a time when the leaders of this Government and other Governments should be playing a prominent part in resisting them. Every State Government should now be co-operating with the Federal Government in the banning of Communism. But what do we have in Queensland when the Premier and his deputy openly march and associate with these people. What does this action imply? It is something that must be kept before the people until the day when this Government can suit its words to its actions.

It would be very appropriate, and I should say the occasion would warrant it, if a day was set aside to debate this Government's action and to support the Federal legislation concerning Communists. Then we should see Government members in their true light. Then the public would gain a clear picture of just how sincere Government members are when they sometimes denounce their friends. All hon. members have a good indication of what stand this Labour Government would take if confronted by such a situation when consideration is given to the twisting and hedging and indecisive front of the Labour Party in the Federal labour sphere. I raise this issue because Governments play an important part in many aspects of State and Commonwealth well-being, and not least in this all-important issue of Communism in our midst. And since it is such a burning question, the people should know and indeed have the right to know how far the Government are prepared to protect them and work in their interests, if indeed at all. What I ask is; what can the people hope for from Governments whose leaders, both in the past and today associate with these men, who are traitors and disrupters of our way of life? (Interjections.) No-one on this side of the House openly marched with leaders of Communism, as our Premier and Deputy Premier did in the Labour Day celebrations. (Interjections.) The State Government

should co-operate with the Federal Government to oppose the Communist element. But what do we find in Queensland? The Premier and Deputy Premier openly associate and march with them. This action, and what it implies, is something that must be kept alive and before the public, until this Government implement their words by actions. I for one, and I am sure many others who are of the same opinion, will not lose an opportunity to show this spineless Government's attitude on this very important issue.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rasey: The Labour Party set up an elected body to fight them. That is more than you have done.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: But there are broader issues that affect the well-being of the people of this State as a whole. We all have a fair knowledge of the trend of events that have been taking place over recent years, not only in Queensland but in Australia and the world generally. Fortunately, the alarming possibilities of the overthrow of democracy in various countries including Australia, has been halted by the recent defeat and near defeat of so-called Labour Governments. I refer to, the Labour Governments of Great Britain and New Zealand. Here in Australia we have had deep cause for gratitude that the forces in the Federal sphere that planned the complete destruction of our individual freedom have been defeated. (Interjections).

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Graham): Order! There is far too much interruption.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: It is the truth that hurts. I did not expect that hon. members opposite would subscribe to such a doctrine as I have indicated, for they have the same political leanings and tendencies as these Labour Governments I have referred to. The wisdom of the people of Australia in defeating the Chifley Labour Government at the recent Federal elections has been more than justified by recent events in Korea. I ask you to appreciate the position we should be faced with today had the Chifley Labour Government remained in power in Canberra. We should be faced with a very serious and tragic position, because we should have been overcome by strikes and hold-ups of every description. Here in this State we have a Government who are prepared to let the country be white-anted by those disrupters whose primary and positive action is to wreck our economy. Their leaders have openly associated with those men by marching with them. Therefore, their Government are not of the calibre or standing to direct the forces of this State. In spite of what the previous speaker said I do say that this close association is understandable, and is the reason why we find the Communist element entirely within the Labour Movement.

Both parties have a programme which, when fully implemented, arrives at the same destination, that is, the complete control of the individual by the powers of the State. That is the position of Communism and Socialism. While this Government may be

compelled by the change of circumstances in the Federal sphere to soft-pedal their policy of socialisation—they probably realise the public uneasiness—still there is not the slightest doubt as to where they stand, and what their purpose is when the opportunity presents itself. We have had it fully stated by the previous speaker, and I challenge any hon. member opposite to say that they are still not anxious to implement their policy of socialisation to the full.

Mr. Walsh: Why not? We never ran away from it.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: At the Labour Convention in Toowoomba, some of them wanted to run away from it, but the Premier said, "Do not run round corners."

A Government Member: That is not true.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: We know, apart from the utterance of the Premier, that he is still very ardent in the cause of Communism. Before he left for England he made a record that was put on during the election and in that speech he said, "There will be no true freedom in Australia until the will of the people is paramount politically as well as economically." Such a statement, coming from the Premier, borders on sheer hypocrisy.

An Opposition Member: He wanted to give New Guinea away to Germany.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I should not doubt it.

The Government, by their hour-cutting legislation, have destroyed the economic security of the people. Their action has sent costs sky-high, so that they are at a record high level. They have destroyed the will of the people everywhere. We have the Premier saying that the will of the people must be paramount politically as well as economically, but who has destroyed the will of the people politically more than the Labour Government by their redistribution of electorates by a supposed independent commission?

Mr. GAIR: I rise to a point of order. As I understand the hon. member he referred to "A supposed independent commission." In my opinion that is a reflection on the commission that was appointed to carry out the redistribution of electoral boundaries, one member of which was a member of the judiciary, the other two members being highly respected public officers. I think the hon. member should withdraw that statement and apologise to those who sat on the commission.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Graham): I ask the hon. member to withdraw that statement.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Yes, I will withdraw it. What I sought to imply was that owing to the zoning system the commission had no alternative. The electorates have been redistributed in such a way that

I could quote electorates where the community of interest has not been taken into account. I would say that on this redistribution it appears to me there can be no true political freedom. The Premier said the will of the people must be paramount politically and I ask any hon. member on the Government benches whether he can by any stretch of imagination say that the redistribution that was carried out had in mind the need of the will of the people must be paramount politically. Nobody can stand up and show that the electors would be able so to vote that no dice would be loaded against them, that the will of the people would be given full expression politically. I say with all sincerity that taking all the aspects of the matter into account no-one could stand up and say or show that the present electorates are designed to give the will of the people full expression; rather do they make the will and purpose of this Government as of paramount importance.

Mr. Sparkes: Like sending a dog out after a kangaroo with its hands tied.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: That is just what it was. I raise these general issues, because such high-sounding expressions of the Premier are hollow, without substance, and without reality. Why, he further spoke of freedom, saying that real freedom exists only where no oppression of some people by others exists. He sought to convey the idea of some oppressing others, to suggest that those on this side of the House were the oppressors and that he was the champion of those who were being oppressed. But let me ask this question: what section of the community oppresses another section more than do this Government by their one-sided treatment of all inland people? They oppress them by unfair taxation. They oppress them in the form of increased rail freights and fares they do not impose on the city-dweller. They make the country-dweller pay road, bus or plane taxes. Every time a person travels from my electorate to Brisbane he has to pay 14s. 2d. tax and if he travels the other way he has to pay the same tax. Notwithstanding this, they talk about not oppressing another section of the community.

This Government oppress the dairymen of the State. For example, the Attorney-General said that they were not entitled to a further increase in the price of butter. This Government oppress the primary producers by holding back on fair and just claims. They refuse to recognise the over-time due to such producers for work on Saturday and Sunday. Talk about oppression of one class by another! No, the Premier and his Government are the oppressors. What follows is interesting in relation to the remarks about Socialism by the hon. member who has just resumed his seat.

I note also the Premier's reference to his Government's firm belief in the socialistic objective of his party of a fair chance for everyone to give of his best in the common service, and after giving of his best in the common service to receive as far as the

common resources will allow. Of course, the only ones who would not be in the common service and receiving what the common resources allowed would be hon. members opposite. The majority of the people know the methods and intentions of their party and what was implied at the Toowoomba convention of the Labour Party, where the party reaffirmed its intention to force all into the common service and they largely voted against this Government, who now hold office on a minority vote. Is that democratic or honest? Socialism gets the individual, as well as the nation, nowhere, except fully under the control of the powers that be. How any individual can really imagine that under such a regime things will become idyllic, I cannot understand for a moment, though I do believe some are sincere in desiring to improve conditions for the benefit of at least one section of the community.

But why do men work for such measures when they must know the ultimate results and losses the people will have to carry? That is how Socialism ends. People are encouraged and led along this pathway by glowing promises of any easy and carefree life, but when things become difficult and there are shortages, the Premier comes out with the cry that one section of the community is oppressing the other. Indeed, Mr. Acting Speaker, it is one of the greatest discourtesies which this and other Labour Governments have extended to the people, supposedly leading them along a road that leads to new and previously unheard of ease and comfort. They are told that we have reached a standard and peak of progress and production, which precipitated the opportunity to work less hours. By such propaganda the people are encouraged to believe that there is still something better round the corner. And yet the Premier believes that the will of the people must be paramount politically and economically. And so other sections of the community are beginning to agitate for a 5-day week. It is said, "Cut out Saturday morning shopping." As one who has had experience in New Zealand of having towns and places of business closed for two full days of the week, I say, "May we in Australia be saved from such a tragedy!" The people have been encouraged in these things by Labour agitation and by this Government. This drift into a false sense of security and prosperity is a tragedy of the first magnitude for this State and country. It is not in the best interests of the individual or the people collectively. You simply cannot go on working less and receiving more of the amenities of life, for they are not there to be had or, if they are to be had, they are at a prohibitive price. And so I say, Mr. Acting Speaker, the attitude of believing that a shorter working week is giving or bestowing benefits on the community is all wrong, and no doubt time and history will show the disservice this Government have done to the people whom they have had the responsibility of leading for so many years.

I conclude with the remark that the socialistic policy this Government pursue is not one on which the State can build rapid

development with a sound economic background. Apart from this, no Government can be great or inspire leadership who legislate for and encourage gambling, which helps to destroy the finer traits of human nature. I refer to that monster in our midst, the Golden Casket, which is based on the thought of getting something for nothing. This State needs to be led by a Government who can be looked up to and who can give a true lead—a Government of men who are honest and can be trusted to guard the people's rights and liberties, and to legislate for the good of all the people. Under our present administration the Premier, who should give such a lead, walks and talks with the Communists. On the other hand, this same hon. gentleman talks about the fact that there will be no true political freedom till the will of the people is paramount, both politically and economically. The actions of his Government tend to destroy the political and economic security of the people; they are a Government I deplore and condemn.

Mr. MOORES (Kurilpa) (12.29 p.m.): I join with my colleagues in congratulating the mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. It was with a great deal of pleasure that I heard those hon. members speak. I know them both personally, and have known them for many years. Whilst expressing pleasure and satisfaction at their contributions to the debate, however, I must express disappointment and amazement at the petty, spiteful, and destructive contributions from hon. members opposite, particularly the new members. The mover and the seconder of the Address in Reply set a very high standard, but a new low in political bias and bitterness was set by our opponents.

Let us examine first the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, a contribution to the debate that shocked me, as a comparative newcomer to this House, because it was so out of character, coming from an hon. member with such a high personal reputation for fair play, decency, and integrity. Half his speech was a vicious and an unjustifiable attack on the Federal Labour Party, and the other half was a repetition of the "neglect" record, which has been played so often that it must be virtually worn out.

The Leader of the Opposition prefaced his remarks by saying that we meet "at a time of crisis," which was an extract from the Governor's Speech. Then he said that the fighting in Korea overshadowed everything else and paid a tribute to the American troops in World War II. He then descended to the low political level of attacking previous Federal Labour Governments for their alleged shabby treatment of our Allies. The Leader of the Opposition knows that during World War II. General MacArthur was extremely grateful for the war effort of the Labour Government, that an ex-Labour Premier, in the person of the late E. G. Theodore, was the organising brains behind the tremendously successful undertaking known as the Allied Works Council, and that the late John Curtin

sacrificed his life, despite warnings, because of his unstinted devotion to the nation in the time of its crisis.

Let us go a little further afield. In England, while the war-time Prime Minister bolstered the country with his morale-building speeches, it was Labour again who did the solid work. What did the people of England do after the war? They recognised the work of the Labour members of Parliament in England's crisis by returning them to govern the country.

The speech of the Leader of the Opposition goes on to slander the A.L.P., and we find this shocking and amazing statement—

“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.”

Yet the Federal Labour Party gave its fullest support to the United Nations' action in resisting aggression in Korea. It also gave full support to the Menzies-Fadden Government's decision to commit Australian armed forces to action there. On that statement alone, the attack on the Queensland Labour Party by the Leader of the Opposition is suspect. It appears to me as being the work of the professional propagandist—the Hitler-Goebbels style of inventing a lie, the bigger the better, and repeating it till the people believe it to be true.

Mr. Sparkes: Who wrote that for you?

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member for Aubigny not to make repeated interjections. I regard them as disorderly. I warn him now that if he continues to interject I will deal with him further.

Mr. MOORES: The tactics employed by the Opposition during past Federal and State elections are still being used in preparing material for hon. members opposite.

Mr. SPARKES: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member is reading his speech. I should like you, Mr. Acting Speaker, to give a ruling on that.

The ACTING SPEAKER: This matter was raised quite recently and Mr. Speaker ruled that although it was not permissible for an hon. member to read the whole of his speech, he could use copious notes. I am watching the hon. member and I assume that he is using copious notes.

Mr. MOORES: I digress for a moment to point out that the bulk of my speech is in reply to speeches by hon. members opposite, which I have to quote, and quote accurately. I should also like to draw hon. members' attention to the fact that the Leader of the Opposition invariably reads his speeches, and I have never known the

hon. member for Windsor in the last Parliament, now the hon. member for Kedron, to do anything but read his speeches.

Mr. MULLER: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Kurilpa said that the Leader of the Opposition invariably reads his speeches. I resent that going into ‘Hansard’ and I ask that it be withdrawn.

The ACTING SPEAKER: The hon. member for Kurilpa, Mr. Moores!

Mr. MOORES: At a later stage the Leader of the Opposition made a disparaging comparison between the old days of Labour led by Andrew Fisher and the present days of the Labour Party. These people opposite are the modern prototypes of the people who boycotted Andrew Fisher when he was in Gympie to the extent of denying him a job. They would starve a Labour man and stifle him. Is it any wonder that Labour went from strength to strength in this New World? Is it any wonder that Communism gained a foothold and gathered impetus in the class-ridden countries of the Old World where suppression of elementary human rights and exploitation to degradation level of human beings was the rule rather than the exception? At the last Liberal Party Convention they hoped to be able to persuade the workers of this State that they could represent them too. They subscribe to the materialistic worship of money and profits and the perpetuation of conditions that breed Communism. It is idle for these people to rave about the atheism and materialism of Marxian Communism while they themselves act as practical atheists in life and work. Such men as the hon. members opposite are virtually Fifth Columnists in a society where there are citizens of good will seeking to build a better world.

Continuing to criticise the Federal Labour Party the Leader of the Opposition said—

“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.”

Were the depths of political deceit and hypocrisy ever plumbed to a greater degree? Everyone interested in the present internal position in Australia knows that the Communist Party Dissolution Bill was a hastily drafted measure which was introduced hurriedly and primarily to give the Queensland Liberal Party ammunition just before the last Queensland State elections. The Bill was introduced into the Commonwealth Parliament on 27 April, just two days before the Queensland State elections. There were so many Government amendments, amendments moved by Mr. Menzies himself together with Opposition amendments accepted by the Government, that after the Bill was passed it was hardly recognizable. The Prime Minister, this Heaven-sent genius, who was to control the crisis of the present day, presented a list of names to the Federal Parliament of persons who would

be declared Communists when the Bill became law, and a few days later he apologised to the House because there were five mistakes in the list. Throughout the debate on the Bill the Federal Labour Party supported the measure, with the exception of those clauses that aimed at jeopardising elementary British justice. Throughout the Commonwealth of Nations and the English-speaking world there has been support for the Labour Party's attitude on this contentious clause. It has come from all sections of the community, from conservatives in politics and the Press, which includes the "London Times," the church and the legal profession, down to the minor units in society.

Like a parrot the Leader of the Opposition, while admitting that "We meet in a time of crisis," apes the Communist tactics and blindly follows the party line.

Let us examine for a few moments the accusation that the opposition of the Labour Party to the onus-of-proof provision in the Bill is evidence of the dependence of Labour upon the support of the Communists, and fellow travellers, many of whom exist in the ranks of political Labour. Who took the initiative in Queensland in the fight against the Communists? Was it the Liberal Party or the Country Party? No. It was the Australian Labour Party that instituted that fight and in this House we have two men who were the leaders of that fight, in the persons of the hon. members for Bundaberg and Windsor. No more hatred and no more vicious propaganda could be engaged in against those two hon. members than has been hurled at them by the Communist Party. They have even been threatened with violence. Have we witnessed any action by the members of the Liberal Party or the Country Party against the Communists? They merely give lip-service to the idea and attack this party as being the Communists' fellow travellers.

Mr. Muller: You had Communists on your platform with you at the last election and I will prove it when I speak.

Mr. BURROWS: Mr. Mann, I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Fassifern said that we had Communists with us on our platform at the last election, and as a Labour member I challenge him to prove his assertion. I ask that he withdraw it.

Mr. Muller: I will prove it.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member for Kurilpa!

Mr. WALSH: Mr. Mann, I rise to a point of order. The statement of the hon. member for Fassifern that the Labour Party had Communists on its platform at the last election is offensive to me and I ask that it be withdrawn.

The ACTING SPEAKER: The hon. member for Kurilpa!

Mr. WALSH: I have drawn attention to the fact that the remark of the hon. member for Fassifern is offensive to me, and under the Standing Orders the hon. member is required to withdraw it.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Did I understand the hon. member for Fassifern to say that the Labour Party had Communists on its platform at the last election?

Mr. MULLER: I did say at election time.

The ACTING SPEAKER: The hon. members for Port Curtis and Bundaberg state that the statement is untrue and offensive to them. I therefore ask that the hon. member withdraw it.

Mr. MULLER: All I can say—

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MULLER: I cannot withdraw the statement because I know it to be true.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to obey the Chair and withdraw the statement.

Mr. MULLER: Out of respect for you, Mr. Mann, I will withdraw it but when I make my speech, I will explain what I have said.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to withdraw the statement, which has been described as untrue by two Labour members.

Mr. MULLER: I will withdraw it.

Mr. SPARKES: Mr. Acting Speaker, the statement of the hon. member for Kurilpa that the Leader of the Opposition is reading his speeches is offensive to me and I ask that he withdraw it.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Kurilpa!

Mr. MOORES: So far from the Labour Party's being fellow travellers with the Communists, the accusation can be made and proved in some instances that the Country Party and Liberal Party are more closely associated with the Communists than the Labour Party. I am informed on reliable authority that at the State elections the Country Party in the Mirani electorate entered into a conspiracy with the Communist Party for the express purpose of defeating Labour.

Mr. EWAN: Mr. Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. That remark is offensive to me and I ask that it be withdrawn.

The ACTING SPEAKER: What remark?

Mr. EWAN: That the Communist Party entered into a conspiracy with the Country Party in Mirani in the recent State election.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I ask the hon. member for Kurilpa to accept the denial of the hon. member.

Mr. Muller: Withdraw it, as you made me do.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MOORES: I accept the hon. member's denial, but I would point out that I was referring to the 1947 election. In this House during the last session I noticed particularly that the Communist member for Bowen, Mr. Paterson, spent a great deal of his time—and you cannot ask for a withdrawal of this because you all were witnesses of it—on the Opposition benches consulting the Leader of the Country Party and the Leader of the Liberals.

Mr. Muller: He spoke on the platform with Graham at Mackay.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is a deliberate lie, and I ask that the hon. member withdraw it.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I ask the hon. member for Mackay to withdraw the words, "deliberate lie."

Mr. GRAHAM: I withdraw those words. I ask that the hon. member withdraw that statement, which is untrue.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I ask the hon. member for Fassifern to accept the denial of the hon. member for Mackay.

Mr. MULLER: I accept the denial. I shall have my opportunity of putting the other side. (Government and Opposition interjections.)

The ACTING SPEAKER: There is too much interruption and cross-firing and too many points of order. I ask that the hon. member for Kurilpa be allowed to make his speech without interruption.

Mr. MOORES: It is apparent that what I am saying is true, otherwise the Opposition would not be so stung by it. I mentioned the attitude of the Opposition leaders in connection with their association with the ex-Communist member for Bowen. I have figures here to show that where Communist preference votes have been distributed in my own electorate the Liberal candidate had received the majority. In 1941 Mr. Brandon received 95 Communist preference votes against 73 received by the late P. K. Copley. We had by way of interjection the evidence before the Royal Commission of a conspiracy between the present leaders of the Federal Government and the Communist-controlled Miners' Federation years ago, when the Federal Government funds were used, not to fight the Communists, but to bribe them into submission.

I want briefly to traverse the speeches of the new members. We have a number of new members who were trained in the Charles Porter school of elocution who presumably came into this House, not with the intention of offering any constructive suggestions for the government of the country, but to play for effect with dramatic elocution. Of the new speakers from the Opposition the speeches of three could be dismissed with contempt: the hon. members of Roma, Chermside, and Whitsunday, whose speeches reeked of class-hatred and bore the unmistakable imprimatur of the Charles Porter type of incipient Fascism.

1950—K

Mr. EWAN: I rise to a point of order. I ask for the withdrawal of the remark by the hon. member that my speech bore the unmistakable stamp of Fascism. It is offensive to me.

The ACTING SPEAKER: The hon. member for Kurilpa is expressing his own opinion. (Government and Opposition interjections.)

Order! I say to hon. members that it would be better if they allowed the hon. member to make his speech and if he says anything that they think justifies the taking of a point of order, to allow the Chair to deal with it.

Mr. MOORES: I sympathise with the hon. member for Toowong, whose speech was a quaint mixture of "The Innocents Abroad" with the "Alice in Wonderland" type of idealism. He contended that he had just joined the Liberal Party and was not sure why he joined. If he retains his sincerity and ideals during the next three years, whilst being closely associated with the Liberal Parliamentary Party, I am sure he will be content to imitate his predecessor—to fold his political tent and silently steal away to his business.

I was particularly interested in the speech of the hon. member for Yeronga who, like the Leader of the Opposition, has a brilliant record outside this House in his personal capacity, but I was very depressed on listening to his anaemic speech, which contained one diagnostic success—that the Queensland Health Scheme was the best as a basis of the National Health Scheme. We then had the surprising paradox of a member of the Conservative B.M.A. advocating the expansion by this Labour Government of their socialist hospital services for the express purpose of permitting private doctors to exploit them. The hon. member suggested that hospitals have public, private, and intermediate wards, so that the doctors could follow their patients into those hospitals. He then quoted some sincere and intelligent Englishman as saying Australians have not been led by the best men, "Dirty game politics," they say, and "Leave politics alone." Then the hon. member's speech died on this vicious party note, "The Labour Party of this country, by its propaganda of class hatred, has tended to bring about a sagging in the moral fibre of the people and a falling off in respect for authority."

An Opposition Member: What book are you reading?

Mr. MOORES: I am quoting from the speech of the hon. member for Yeronga. Then we have this highly exaggerated opinion of Mr. Menzies and here I repeat I am quoting for the benefit of all the dull people in the Opposition, "Mr. Menzies is perhaps the greatest Australian living today or even the greatest Australian of all time."

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MOORES: I say quite definitely that after such an oracular expression of opinion we can put the hon. member for

Yeronga in the same class as his colleague in the Federal House. Exit the hon. member for Yeronga as a force in this House. I resent, as do other hon. members on this side, the accusation that the Labour Party is responsible for the sagging in the moral fibre of the community.

What is there left to blame this party for? We started off this session with the hon. member for Mount Coot-tha blaming the Government for the over-flowing night-soil receptacles at the Enoggera State school. The Leader of the Opposition finishes up blaming us for the Korean war and ill-feeling amongst the Americans. Is there anything else we can be blamed for? And as to the present Prime Minister, I would remind hon. members that only two days ago the rot set in so far as leadership of the Federal Parliament is concerned. Both the Brisbane "Telegraph" and "Courier Mail" expressed disappointment at his talk on his return from his overseas tour and, on the basis that the leopard cannot change its spots, I will quote, admittedly for the benefit of the hon. member for Yeronga, the opinions expressed by the colleagues of this allegedly great Australian. Mr. Wentworth, the present Federal member for MacKellar, stated in the Sydney "Morning Herald" of 13 April, 1943—

"Mr. Menzies can neither call nor command as a leader. Under his leadership the party broke up and yet he refuses to co-operate under the leadership of anybody else.

"In these circumstances the greatest national service he can render the party and Australia would be to quit politics.

"Those of us who stand for a more vigorous policy are anxious that Mr. Menzies' inevitable failures should not block the path of future progress."

The leader of the Federal Parliamentary Country Party, Sir Earle Page, addressing the Cowper Electoral Council said this—

"The national leader must have courage, judgment and loyalty. Mr. Menzies does not possess those qualities which are needed to fit him to be the leader of the country in these times of international crisis.

"I was compelled to consider the qualifications of the new leader of the U.A.P. (Mr. Menzies) and to ask myself whether his public record was such as to inspire the people of Australia to the maximum unstinted effort in a time of national emergency

"I am afraid that Mr. Menzies will not be able to get that maximum effort from the people."

I fear, like everybody else, for the future of Australia if a major crisis occurs and Menzies is Prime Minister.

One of the most important, but I should say irresponsible, contributions to the debate so far comes from an hon. member who, previously to coming into this Parliament, was a member of the honourable profession of teaching.

It was the speech made by the hon. member for Isis. He started off by saying that he knew there were many excellent aspects of the department of Public Instruction, but he did not give us one of them. Instead we received a tirade of abuse, a build-up on personal lines from a frustrated teacher. He accidentally showed that he was not temperamentally suited for the job on the basis of how he behaved at the Central Practising School. Let me dissect the speech that hon. member made and make a few observations.

The hon. member for Isis said that at the present time they, the teachers, are ill at ease, frustrated, despairing, and looking for some inspiration from above. I say that the hon. member would come within that category, and although it must be admitted that teachers, like doctors and members of other professions, are a race apart and there are those who are discontented and temperamentally unsuited, why wreck something worth while because of the minority?

The hon. member said that he would give three reasons why the scholarship examination is maintained. His first reason was "that it is a means of restricting the number of children entering secondary schools and this restriction is another means of saving expense in education." A responsible member of this Assembly comes into this House and in his maiden speech attacks the integrity of officers of the department. Does he suggest that a Minister of the Crown has issued instructions that scholarship results be based on a certain figure or that departmental officers would arrange to pass a certain percentage of children each year. Let me inform the hon. member of some figures that I took the trouble to get. He stated that the policy of the Government was to restrict the number of scholarships, but what was the position when the party he represents was in control? In 1910, 514 children sat for the scholarship examination and of this number 113 were awarded scholarships. That was a percentage of 21.9. In the following year 535 sat, and 113 were awarded scholarships, or 21.1 per cent. It looks as if things might be arranged in those days—it is pretty suspicious—because the same number were awarded a scholarship in 1911 as were awarded one in 1910. In 1912, of the 533 children who sat for the examination, 112 or 21 per cent. were awarded scholarships. In those days the examination was conducted on a competitive basis. In 1930 and 1931, the depression years, and under an anti-Labour Government the examination was still conducted on a competitive basis, but of the 5,962 who sat in 1930, 2,868 were granted scholarships, and 2,691 out of the 5,012 who sat in 1931. Here is the catch, however. Only 1,000 full scholarship-holders were awarded the assistance of going to secondary schools and 1,681 were granted certificates and regarded as having qualified for entrance to a State high or technical high school. In December, 1930, when the Treasury

benches of this State were occupied by members of the hon. gentleman's party, the examination system was changed back from a qualifying to a competitive one, the award of scholarships being as follows:—

“(1) Full scholarships to the first 890 candidates in order of merit;

“(2) Full scholarships to 30 candidates who live in or within daily travelling distance of Maryborough;

“(3) Full scholarships to 30 candidates who live in or within daily travelling distance of Ipswich;

“(4) Full scholarships to 50 candidates who do not live within daily travelling distance of a secondary school.”

That is how the 1,000 full scholarships were granted.

The following set of figures shows the advantages under a Labour Government, and let us not forget that we have been accused of restricting the number of scholarships for a variety of reasons:—

Year.	Number who Sat.	Number who Passed.	Percentage of Passes.
1945	7,845	5,305	67.08
1946	7,628	4,964	65.00
1947	7,858	5,746	73.01
1948	8,366	5,897	70.48
1949	8,808	6,417	72.85

I think you will agree with me, Sir, that that destroys the contention that the Government and the departmental officers are deliberately restricting scholarships.

The hon. member for Isis went on to quote the amount spent in 1946/47 on education per child. Using those figures as a medium of comparison, he quoted every State. The first two States were Queensland and Victoria, whose figures were £2 9s. 4d. and £2 10s. 2d. respectively. The figure for Tasmania was 62s. and some pence, and the hon. member made a comparison between Queensland and Tasmania. The comparison might well have been made between Queensland and Victoria. I have been unable to ascertain just how the figures were arrived at, but anyone who would deliberately select a set of figures relating to 1946/47 to bolster up a weak case, and not the current figures, must have something to hide.

Mr. Pizzey: You produce the current figures.

Mr. MOORES: The figure for Queensland at the present time is £3 12s. as against the figure of £2 9s. 4d. quoted as for 1946/47, which has nothing at all to do with the present day.

Then we come to a vile suggestion, which in my opinion reduces the hon. member to the Morris level. He said—

“Perhaps the Government are afraid of the children being educated because there is less likelihood of their being deceived by socialistic fallacies if they have a high-level education.”

That statement reeks of political hatred and would force any unbiased observer to condemn generally the views put forward by the hon. member. What are the facts regarding a high-level of education? The most dangerous communistic cells and the cleverest Communists are found in the universities of the world. How, then, could it be deduced that Labour is opposed to educating children to a high level of education, if it can be said by an ex-teacher that we are afraid to put them through because they might see through our socialistic policy? It is a wonder to me, on the basis of this debate, that we are not accused of broadening the educational system to encourage Communists to take a higher education. What actually happens is that the more education given to the individual, the greater his eventual disillusionment with the decadent system advocated, and perpetuated by hon. members opposite. Then we have these contradictory statements:

“The scholarship is an easy way of determining a teacher's fitness for promotion.”

“The royal road to success lies in the number and quality of scholarships.”

“The children are driven hard, bellowed at, scolded, caned, detained, overloaded with homework and crammed full with useless facts, forgotten as soon as they are learned.”

In addition to being extremely exaggerated the hon. member's statements are irresponsible and not in accordance with the present-day system.

To follow that, we have this expression of opinion on the present method of inspection, completely contradictory of the previous quotation the first sentence referring to members of Parliament. It says—

“How would you like your promotion and rate of pay to be determined according to the marks on the little yellow card? These marks are added up at the end of five years, the average is taken and your promotion depends on the average you gain over the five years.”

Here is a teacher with 20 years' experience in teaching who comes into this Chamber with a chip on his shoulder and either tries deliberately to mislead us or does not know what he is talking about.

The hon. member confuses his terms. For instance, promotion is not gained by the averaging of the yellow cards over a five-year period, it is gained by a teacher's obtaining his classification through examinations plus his cards showing a degree of teaching ability above “Fair.” The average of the five-year cards is taken only when applicants for advancement to a higher classified school are equal in other respects. He confuses his terms—between normal promotion on the basis of classification gained by examination and advancement to a higher classified school, when all things are equal. So here we have a professed authority saying on the one hand,

“The scholarship is an easy way of determining a teacher's fitness for promotion.”

and in direct contradiction,

"These marks are added up at the end of five years, the average is taken and your promotion depends on the average gained over five years."

In effect you cannot believe too much from that side of the Chamber at any time, especially when produced by an alleged expert.

In support of his sweeping condemnation of the scholarship system we had a quotation from a statement by Mr. Justice Mansfield in addressing a teacher's conference, where he said—

"Much of the scholarship matter consists of dogma which is forgotten shortly afterwards and which in any event is of little or no practical use in later life."

Is that a condemnation of the scholarship system? I say it is not, that it is only a criticism of the syllabus and has nothing whatever to do with the scholarship system.

Finally we have this condemning indictment from the hon. member himself. He admits that he participated in an evil of his own making. From a check I have made I can say that most scholarship teachers are not so concerned about the scholarship, their big worry today is staff shortage. But more of that later. The hon. member also said—

"I was at the Central Practising School. I was young and ambitious and I pushed and drove to get scholarships."

Was he instructed by the department or his senior officers to drive and push for scholarships? He was not. He was promotion-hungry. He said that the teachers rode on the backs of the children. Who is responsible for that? It stems from abuse of a system where a minority of promotion-hungry teachers sought to achieve advancement in this way.

He went on to say that they were not allowed to take certain arts, that they were not allowed to go swimming. He says, "We were not allowed to take certain arts." Who are the "they" and the "we" and under whose instructions were they not allowed to take certain arts? Under whose instructions were they not allowed to go swimming—under the scholarship teacher's instructions? The department had issued a memo that every subject on the syllabus was to be taught but an unscrupulous minority used the scholarship examination for a certain type of inspector and did not do so because of any instructions from the department at all. They were promotion-hungry. An unscrupulous minority of teachers exploited the children and aggravated the weaknesses in the system by seeking to bring about their own promotion.

If this minority of teachers were prepared to carry out the instructions of the department and the wishes of the union these abuses would not creep in. The bulk of the teachers in the service are more concerned over the staff shortage because they cannot do justice to the children, with the consequent larger classes involved. They are

contented and with the few chronic exceptions and temperamental misfits are happy teaching the children for the children's advancement in preference to their own.

Mr. ALLPASS (Condamine) (2.25 p.m.), who was received with Opposition "Hear, hears!" said: I regret very much the circumstances that have caused us to have an Acting Speaker. I sincerely hope that Mr. Speaker will soon be restored to health, and will soon be able to return to his duties in presiding over this Parliament. I admire very much the way you, Mr. Mann, are conducting the duties of that high office. It is very much to your credit and the credit of the House.

While listening to the opening speech of the Governor, the thought struck me very forcibly how fortunate we are in Queensland to have such a distinguished gentleman as Sir John as our Governor. Sir John has had a brilliant military career and is now adding lustre to that career by the dignified way in which he is carrying out his duties as the King's representative in this State.

At the outset of my remarks I want to thank the electors of Condamine for the confidence they have shown in me by sending me here as their representative. It gives me very great satisfaction to know that over 62 per cent. of the electorate's electors voted for me. I am very proud of the confidence placed in me but at the same time I am conscious of my great responsibility, namely, of representing every person in that electorate. While I am here I intend to do that to the best of my ability.

I wish to thank the returning officer for the very efficient and impartial way in which he conducted the elections. The Condamine electorate does not need much introduction to this Assembly. It is the old Dalby electorate which was so well represented in the last Parliament by Mr. Charles Russell. It is hardly necessary for me to tell this Assembly about my electorate but I feel that some electorates represented by hon. members on this side have not been represented in the past to the extent they will be from now on.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. ALLPASS: The Condamine electorate is one of the richest electorates from a national point of view in the State. The majority of our primary exporting industries are the main industries. Another industry, namely, linseed-growing, has been started recently, and in conjunction with adjacent electorates we hope that in the near future the linseed-oil requirements of the State will be supplied. This will bring in its train the establishment of more secondary industries. I hope that the Government will do all they possibly can to foster secondary industries that are associated with our primary industries. Secondary industries processing the products of primary industries are not likely to become uneconomic. The reverse is the fact with many of our secondary industries today, many of which are not economic. Secondary industries that require a high tariff protection cannot be justified. Praise for self-sufficiency is, if overdone, dangerous.

It is better for us to buy products from those countries that can produce them cheaper and better and those countries will then give us a market for our goods.

Many hon. members who have taken part in this debate have referred to matters associated with our hospitals. The hospitals in the Condamine electorate are very good, in part. We have a fine central hospital and nurses' quarters at Chinchilla and in Miles we have a hospital that for its size is one of the best in the State. At this hospital a very unfortunate position has arisen. Up to a few months ago it was a full-time training school for nurses, but because the number of beds has fallen below the 10 required under the Nurses and Masseurs Registration Acts, it is no longer classed as such. I might mention that it has fallen by less than 1 bed—it has an average of 9.3 beds—but it is now classed only as a sectional training hospital. I hope the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs will look into this matter again, because if only one nurse is trained each year it is worth the extra expense and trouble. If it is not a full-time training hospital, this effect is likely: local girls, if they cannot complete their full-time training in the hospital, will be less likely to go in for the profession because they will have to go elsewhere to complete their training. One argument put forward very often against training at such hospitals is that there are so few trained there, but in reply to that I point out that if they trained only one a year it would be worth while. We know the difficulties in connection with the staffing of hospitals and that our chief difficulty is the lack of nurses. I hope that further consideration will be given to allowing the Miles Hospital to be a full-time training hospital.

I do not intend to say much about the hospital position at Dalby. The buildings there are obsolete. The Minister has promised to come up and see the position for himself. The Child Welfare Centre also is obsolete. I am not going to enlarge on that. Knowing the Minister's attitude to hospitals and child welfare in this State, I feel sure that when he sees the lack of amenities and the whole situation in Dalby it will not be long before it is corrected.

During the election members on this side of the House concentrated much on decentralisation. When I say "decentralisation," I use the word in its fullest sense. Decentralisation can be carried out in a way that will put value into country life and all that that means. I believe also that decentralisation is the policy of the Labour Party; that being so, surely in the life of this Parliament we can do something really worth while not only in the decentralisation of industry, but also in putting value into country life by giving all the amenities possible to the people there, thus inducing more to go there and stay there and produce and develop this State.

We have had lip-service for so long to decentralisation that the people want evidence that the Government are sincere when they talk of it. We in the country are becoming very restless at the fact that in spite of the

tremendous amount of revenue that is being taken from the country today—primary industries have been prosperous, as well as the exporting industries, and the revenue coming from the country is colossal as compared with 10 years ago—very little is being spent in the country. Therefore, one cannot wonder that the country people are restless when they are not getting the benefits of the high taxation that is taken from them. We want more money spent where it is collected.

Speaking of decentralisation recalls to my mind that local government is the very basis of decentralisation. In dictatorship countries local government is abolished; all government is centralised in the one authority. This democracy must guard against too much supervision and interference with local government. I am very disturbed by some of the utterances of the Minister in the last few weeks. We heard caustic remarks about the way some local authorities are carrying out their work. It was only the other day that the hon. member for Carpentaria hurled a tirade of abuse against local authorities. His was a deliberate attack on local government. He accused local authorities of playing politics rather than doing their job. I have never been a member of a local governing body but from the ratepayers' point of view—and it is said that the looker-on sees most of the game—I have yet to find a council elected on any political platform or in a political atmosphere. What the hon. member for Carpentaria thinks does not matter a flick of the fingers, but the point is: is that Government member stating Government policy? That is the disturbing element of his speech. Is he preparing us for the curtailment of civic liberties? Suspicion is growing that the Government want to wipe out local government, and statements such as the hon. member's add fuel to the fire.

Here I would draw the attention of hon. members to a few words of the speech the Right Hon. P. C. Gordon-Walker made at the Parliamentary luncheon a little over a week ago—

"Local government play a vastly more important part than central government in a democratic Empire."

The first action of the rulers of a totalitarian or dictatorship country is to abolish all local government and to centralise all government in their own hands. The hon. member for Carpentaria would have local authorities wiped out and replaced by the administration of the central government. Knowing that the object of Socialism is centralisation of control, is it any wonder that we become disturbed and worried as to the ultimate objective of the Government in relation to local authorities? If they are sincere in talking of decentralisation there is one way to do this, as I see it, and that is to have it through local government. Local governments are of the people. They are in touch with the people. They are very close to the people. The ratepayers can tell them what to do or throw them out if they do not do it. This State Government have only remote control in comparison with

local government. The very basis of decentralisation and the carrying on of the democracy of this country is to spread governmental control by use of local authorities. And here I pay tribute to those men who are members of local authorities. This State owes much to these men who expend their energies, physical and mental, on a task for which the reward is more kicks than bouquets. The people of Queensland should doff their hats to these men.

I support the suggestion that an inquiry on the highest level should be held into the financing of local government. Finance is the first necessity to the successful functioning of their administration. In England local authorities receive large grants from Consolidated Revenue. In the United States of America other means of taxation are open to them.

Of course it would be impossible in Queensland under the present set-up because of uniform taxation, and even this State has to carry on by means of grants from the Federal Government. It has established a system of grants. We have to put up a case for the money we require, and then a grant is made to the State Government to supposedly meet its needs. I suggest that we carry the principle a little further, and have the State Government make grants to the shire councils, according to the rates collected. I do not think it is too much to ask, in view of the urgent necessity to build up the country, that the State Government should subsidise the rates collected on a pound for pound basis. If this was done, it would induce greater responsibility amongst shire councillors themselves. I am sure it would involve the payment of higher rates, but I am also sure that the ratepayers would not object, because they would know they would get a grant as of right. This so-called Government aid is merely a handing back of some of the money taken away. Governments do not create money; the people create it. We have heard derogatory remarks about bodies asking for so many millions for this and that, but what they are asking for is their own money and I say that they have a right to have grants made to them. If it was on a collection basis, according to the rates paid by ratepayers, it would be of great benefit to the shires concerned.

Much has been said in this House about roads, but this extraordinary feature strikes me: that the complaint of bad roads has come from hon. members on this side of the Chamber. I think only one or two on the Government side made passing references to bad roads. Are we to deduce, therefore, that the roads in the electorates represented by Government members are in good order, or is there another reason? Is that reason that the shortcomings of the Government are not brought to light? I shall not talk about roads from the point of view of the present abnormal wet season; I speak of the ordinary state of the roads in the average season. I say that some of the roads, or the places where roads should be, are worse than they were 20 years ago, because of wear, tear and erosion.

Let me refer first of all to the main arterial road known as the Condamine Highway, a highway largely used during the last war, and considered a very valuable defence road. The bridges across this road are a disgrace to any civilised community. Much is said nowadays to the effect that we cannot get men, money and materials, but this is only an excuse to hide the sins of the past. Low-level bridges across this highway have been under water for ten days at a time when the road adjacent has been trafficable. What a deplorable state of affairs on one of the most important roads in the State, particularly in times of war. I shudder to think what would happen to that road in the event of another war, with the bridges in their present state of repair. A flood is likely at any time in the Condamine. One bridge was heavily covered with debris as a result of the last flooding, and was bent out of position, but it fortunately came back into position when the debris was removed, but the next flood may take it. I am pleased to know that steelwork has been ordered to replace this bridge, but goodness knows when it will be replaced.

Another bridge that frequently causes hold-ups is Ranger's Bridge, which is closer to Dalby. I would not call it a bridge. It is merely a contraption that enables one to get across the river if one is lucky. It is so narrow that it is almost impossible for two vehicles to pass on it. A collision occurred on it only a few weeks ago and, as the result, one of the cars was tipped into the river and a child was drowned. The only protection on each side of the bridge is a parapet 9 inches high. There is no rail at all. What a state of affairs! One life, worth more than 50 bridges, was lost because of the absence of some protection. I ask the powers-that-be to have a guard rail erected there or removable stanchions and cables placed on both sides in order to prevent a recurrence of such a tragic happening.

I should like to point out the existence of another road that would be an alternate route to the West in flood times. It leaves the Condamine Highway and travels through Meandarra and Glenmorgan. It is about 70 miles in length, and although some work has been done on it, it has only a black-soil surface and an inch of rain can put it out of action for two days. It has been declared a main road, but that is not very much satisfaction to a man when he is stuck in a bog. I suggest that this road should be metalled immediately and made an all-weather road. Then, if the Condamine Bridge was under water, traffic could use this alternative route. When the Condamine Bridge is under water traffic is held up for 10 days at a time.

A further point is that this alternative road traverses some of the richest grazing land in the State, and land that is very closely settled. I am particularly interested in this road because if I want to go home from this House at the week-end I have to travel by car because the trains on the branch line could not get me back in time for

the resumption of Parliament on the Tuesday. That fact may not be of very much moment to hon. members but it is to me and, I hope, to my electors.

Another thing I should like to stress is that if a person is taken ill during wet weather—and unfortunately, we have had several cases of dangerously-ill people—he has to stay where he is because the road cannot be traversed. I have had the experience of having to take the wheels off my car and clean the mud away so that they could turn round again. The same conditions apply out there today as applied when I went there over 20 years ago. From the point of view of defence, also, this road would be very valuable if it was made trafficable in all weathers. Further, it would provide a means of connecting some very prosperous towns that are frequently disconnected by rail because of flood.

These roads should not be looked upon merely as a minor matter. They are helping to produce the real and primary wealth of the State. That being so, it is necessary that highways and main roads should be built and wholly maintained by the State. They carry mainly State traffic, and not local traffic to any extent.

In my opinion, if local authorities were given greater autonomy and power, demands for new States would be fewer. I do not think that the Government are favourable to the movement for new States. Personally, I think it would probably be better to raise the status of local government, give them more power and more finance than establish new States. That is just my personal view.

I come now to the subject of transport and communication, and this has a great bearing on the success of any country, both in war and in peace. In 1946 the State Transport Facilities Act came into being with a great flourish of trumpets and it was described as an Act of national importance, one that would expand the transport system of the State. But that has not been so; there has not been any improvement in transport but added protection has been given to transport by rail. The Act is far too restrictive and I ask the Government: how far can the economy of the State be allowed to suffer for the protection of the railways? Two conditions must be observed by a State-owned undertaking, the first that it should serve the people and the second that it should meet all competition on level terms. That is not so under the State Transport Facilities Act. By the tax that is levied and the conditions imposed great care is taken to see that other forms of transport do not compete with the railways. Frequently, road transport has come to the rescue of the Government at times when the railways have been unable to function and in time of war they will be called upon to the fullest extent. The railways are a public utility and I am not attacking them on that account, but I am attacking the incidence of the State Transport Facilities Act. After the railways have given the fullest efficiency—and I stress the term “fullest efficiency”—all losses incurred

by them should be met from Consolidated Revenue as far as possible and there should not be this continual raising of freights and fares, which only lift the cost of production and eventually the cost of living, which hits the country people every time. The further one goes out in the State the more one has to pay for that privilege.

I referred to efficiency in the railway service and I now want to give one or two instances of what I regard as inefficiency in the administration of the railways. It may be said these are small matters but small matters eventually add up to big matters. For upwards of 10 years I have been endeavouring to have a crane established at the terminal station of Glenmorgan, on one of the best-paying lines in the State. The only method of transferring heavy articles from the railway is a method that I presume was used to build the Pyramids of Egypt, that is, levers and rollers. The other day I was having a heavy article sent to me and my trader rang me to say that he was sending it by road transport because it was more likely that I should then be able to get it in good order than by the railway.

This is not an attack on railway employees. In my opinion railway employees are doing a good job with the tools they are provided with. Private enterprise would not conduct a business like that. I have seen a station-master and porter searching the town to get help to unload freight off the trucks to enable the trucks to be returned promptly to their destination. With a crane such as we are asking for, that work could be done in a few minutes. No consideration is given to those employees when they are compelled to use this method of unloading freight, much less consideration for the railways' customers.

I have another instance. I have been endeavouring to get a telephone installed in a country railway station. If no telephone communication is established in a country railway station you can imagine what happens. Some settlers are compelled to travel 20 miles and further to inquire when some loading is expected. Frequently their inquiry is futile. What a waste of time! After months of endeavour a stage has been arrived at where the Post and Telegraphs Department is willing to install a telephone without cost to anyone, but the Railway Department now says it will only agree to its installation on railway premises provided the settlers will pay the rent. There is another instance of inefficiency that I complain of. The people have to pay rent on a phone installed in Railway Department's premises! Who will be responsible for the collection of that rent? That is one instance to show that the Railway Department can do such things because competition with it is stifled.

I am not attacking the railways: I am attacking the administration. If we were running this country economically, primary producers and others would be allowed to use the cheapest and most efficient form of transport. Why, primary producers cannot even cart their own goods in their own vehicles!

What an unwarranted restriction on the rights of the individual! It savours of totalitarianism.

Again, take the cartage of livestock. As enunciated in our policy speech, we said that if we were returned to power there would be no restriction on the carriage of livestock on the roads. This is necessary from both a humanitarian and economic point of view. I will quote my own station as an instance. If we are sending stock to Cannon Hill we have to yard them on Monday night for trucking early on Tuesday morning. They are untrucked in Brisbane some time on Wednesday and sold on Thursday, or three days after they leave the station. If we could send those stock by road transport, the most economical way, we could load them on Wednesday evening for sale on Thursday morning. They would be travelling one day only, as against three on the railway. I suggest to the Minister for Transport that all restrictions on the cartage of livestock should be lifted.

The railways are not being used to bring about decentralisation—the very purpose for which they were established—or to develop the country. The railway classification is overwhelmingly restrictive and favours metropolitan manufacturers and retailers. I do not wish to go into that aspect of the matter, but it has been mentioned here many times.

Now we come to the electrification of the suburban railways. In my opinion to proceed with this project at present is quite unwarranted. In fact, no big undertaking should be proceeded with in Queensland today unless it has an immediate defence value.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. ALLPASS: The electrification of the suburban railways cannot stand up to that classification. That work is estimated to cost £9,000,000 and we know from experience that that estimate would be nearly doubled by the time the project was finished. Imagine what an advantage it would be if this £9,000,000 were spent in immediate reconditioning of the lines of this State; and that is something that would be of great defence value.

The value of the railways to the country cannot be assessed from a profit and loss account only; many of their earnings are credited to other departments. In relation to the reconditioning of the line hon. members probably noticed in the "Courier-Mail" a few days ago a letter from Major-General J. H. Cannan, Quarter-Master-General, Australian Land Forces, in which he stated—

"Queensland needs better tracks, more crossings, signals, engines, trucks, workshops."

He also emphasised the necessity of rail links in the interior.

During his speech the hon. member for Roma mentioned small graziers, and a sneering remark came from the Government

side, "Are there any small graziers?" I resent the implications of that remark because I am a small grazier and I have been sent here by private enterprise and small graziers, among other primary producers, to look after their interests.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. ALLPASS: These men went out to develop the State, very often with nothing more than their own hands. They mortgaged their very lives to develop the State, and with great benefit to the State. Let me quote the words of Colin Clark during a lecture he delivered a couple of weeks ago—

"The pursuit of private gain and of public welfare are entirely consistent with each other."

As soon as anybody gets anywhere—it does not matter if he started from scratch—he is looked upon with suspicion by some members opposite. And I resent that; it shows a paltry and mean spirit; and it could only come from a person with a warped mind.

I have endeavoured to offer constructive criticism. Statesmen will welcome all criticism—they will use the constructive and ignore the other—but the professional politician objects to all criticism because he knows it is a commentary on his own incompetence.

I was disappointed in the standard of debate. Some members on the Government side just descended to a hymn of hate and endeavoured to stir up class-consciousness—descending to the worst form of soap-box oratory. I was greatly surprised also at the irresponsible interjections made by some Ministers. I think it would greatly add to the dignity of Ministers if they refrained from irresponsible interjections.

The Governor said, "We meet in a time of crisis." I am afraid that the onlookers who came here or the people who read the accounts of Parliamentary debates in the Press may be excused for their poor opinion of us. Surely they are entitled to expect from us some sign of awareness of the times of crisis. Surely they are entitled to expect from this Assembly the collective wisdom of the people.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. H. H. COLLINS (Tablelands—Secretary for Agriculture and Stock) (3.5 p.m.): I support the motion before the House and I take the opportunity of very sincerely complimenting the mover and seconder of the motion. I know there is a very great strain on a member making his first speech in this Chamber, and this is greater when that speech is made at the very beginning of the session before he has had time to find his feet in Parliament, so to speak. These two hon. members acquitted themselves with greater credit than any other two opening speakers new to Parliament, whom I have heard moving and seconding a similar motion. Their speeches were constructive and well prepared. They made their points very clearly and

showed they had a grasp of broad national problems in addition to an appreciation of the requirements of their own electorates.

Generally speaking, I disagree with the hon. member for Condamine, who said that the standard of debate in this House was particularly low. I have listened to debates in other Houses of Parliament, such as the Federal and New South Wales Parliaments, and would say that generally the standard of debate in this Chamber is superior. Again, speaking generally—and this applies to newcomers on both sides of the House, speaking for the first time—I have never heard members in similar circumstances speak more fluently and with more assurance. At times I was inclined to think they had more assurance than the material warranted, but it was a credit to them.

At this stage I express my very great appreciation to His Excellency the Governor of Queensland for the manner in which he has acquainted himself with the primary industries of the State and made contact with the peoples of the far-distant places. Sir John has travelled far and wide. Certainly, he has made himself aware of the problems of the State. And it is very gratifying to know that he is pleased to do such work; that is very good from the point of view of the State.

I regret very much indeed that Mr. Speaker is at present sick in hospital. Mr. Brassington has been a member of this House for a very long time and has been always kindly and courteous to all, either when occupying the Speaker's Chair or in private. I am sure each and every one of us wishes him a speedy return to health and looks forward to once again seeing him occupying his high office in this Parliament.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. COLLINS: I take this opportunity of congratulating the hon. member for Carnarvon on his elevation to Cabinet rank. Mr. Hilton has had considerable experience in representing a country electorate, and brings great wisdom to the portfolio he now holds. His standard in debate and his courtesy in this House have been always very high.

I thank the people of my electorate for honouring me with the support they gave me at the last election. I appreciate that help very much, particularly of those people who worked very industriously in helping to secure for Queensland a good Government. I thank also the returning officer, who carried out his duties very ably indeed.

Very considerable development has been going on throughout the northern parts of the State and this is to the good. The elections were fought very largely on the neglect of the North or the neglect of the South—it depended upon the area of Queensland in which the opposing candidates were speaking. I noticed—and I think this is a very worth-while incident to evidence their great insincerity—that when the Leader of the Country Party was speaking at Monto after he had just toured the North he was naturally deploring what he considered the terrible

neglect that exists up there, according to his ideas; at the same time or perhaps it was the following night or the night before, the leader of the Liberal Party was complaining bitterly in Bundaberg that State funds were being spent in the North and that the South was being shamefully neglected. No-one could come to any other conclusion but that they were both wrong.

North Queensland has had a good share of the money required for its development spent in it; it is entitled to have that money so spent. From the figures I have, the North has had considerably more spent in it on a per-head-of-population basis than any other part of Queensland. On the other hand it is a very vast and rich territory and unless considerable money is spent continually for a long time in the North it will never take its right place in the work this State has to do, in the development of the State. The northern part of Queensland is capable of carrying a much greater population than it is carrying and it is capable of carrying this population with greater ease than any other part of the State. The more money that is spent in the development of that part of the State the more we shall do to help North Queensland and the defence of Australia generally.

Much has to be done in the continuation of the policy of developing roads in outback areas and I am pleased to know that the Commonwealth Governments at long last have at least recognised that they have some share of responsibility for the defence and development of North Australia and that the money they are spending at present to help the Main Roads Commission is doing something worth while. I trust that there will be no diminution in the money spent in the last 12 months or so but that more money will be allocated to that sort of work than in the past. I feel sure they will continue to build roads connecting the outback towns, particularly isolated towns like Georgetown, Normanton and Cooktown and other towns in the Gulf and Cape York Peninsula, because that part of the country, despite what the hon. member for Condamine has said, is the worst served in Queensland in the matter of roads. Until people can get about in that area more readily the possibilities of the area will remain partly undeveloped. I do not place all the responsibility on the State and Federal Governments because I am one of those who have great faith in local-authority work.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. COLLINS: Local authorities in Queensland have done a mighty job in the past and are capable of doing a much greater job in the future. There is no State in the Commonwealth, I do not think there is any country in the world that has a Local Government Act as broad in aspect as the local authorities have in Queensland.

Our Local Government Act, which was compiled mainly by the late and very much respected Mr. Charlie Chuter, is looked upon throughout Australia as one of the standard Acts relating to local authorities. I challenge

any local authority to say that the Government are interfering with it too much or that it is not receiving enough help from the Government. In point of fact, local authorities have taxing powers that are almost as broad as those of the State Parliament.

In the first place, we have no control over income tax today and, while the local authorities look to the State Government for loan moneys and grants, the State Government in turn have to look for those things to the Federal Government. We cannot give local authorities what we do not ourselves receive, but undoubtedly we give them a very fair share of the moneys we get from the Commonwealth Government for the development of this State. I shall not go into the question whether we get enough from such taxes as the petrol tax, because I know that the Commonwealth Government's responsibilities are great indeed. They have the responsibility of finding ways and means of collecting sufficient revenue to carry on. However, I should like to see a greater share of the petrol tax spent in developing our State.

Local authorities were never as well off as they are today. There was never a time in the history of this State when the people in the country areas received a better price for butter, sugar, wheat, meat, or wool than they are receiving at present. Some representatives of local authorities have complained very bitterly—and I believe they are sincere, although misguided, in their complaints—that they have no powers of control and insufficient funds to carry out their work. On the other hand, many local authorities are doing a very fine job at present and, although their powers to collect funds are as broad as those of the State, the State is handing out thousands of pounds to subsidise local authorities on particular undertakings.

To say that the roads in Queensland are worse today than they have been in the last 20 years is simply to shut one's eyes completely to the real facts. I have travelled perhaps as extensively as any other hon. member over the roads of this State during the last two or three years. I have used the car that I use in the city and have gone as far as the Northern Territory and to Windorah and similar outback places, and have returned to Brisbane without having one puncture. Could that have been done 20 years ago?

Again, what main roads work was done by our predecessors when they were in office? They were in office for somewhere about 59 years, but not one mile of main road was built during the whole of that time. This Government have built, and will continue to build, hundreds of miles of main roads every year. At present we are spending more than ever before in building main roads, at very little cost or no cost at all, to the local authorities through which they pass.

We give help to local authorities in building secondary roads—feeder roads to main roads. That was never done until a few years ago. If the local authorities will not take advantage of the money offered to them for this work, at least they cannot blame the State Government. They have a great sphere of usefulness, and many of them are doing excellent work. But to say that we criticise some of the local authorities and suggest they should be wiped out is entirely burking the question. I would not accuse the men associated with local government when they criticise the Government, as they do on many occasions—and have the right to do—of wanting to do away with State Governments. If they have the right to criticise the Government and we have not got the right to criticise them as local authorities in reply, then the game is just not fair. There is no intention on the part of any hon. member on this side of the Chamber of doing anything but trying to help local authorities to continue to do much of the great work that they have started and to help them to do the work of the future. However, if they will not tax their own people to get the money for the roads that they want—other than main roads and national highways—and will not get assistance from the State Government to build feeder roads or endeavour to use Federal aid for road construction, they cannot claim to be sincere and blame the State Government for their not having the roads.

I am pleased at the expansion in railway work that has taken place in my electorate at Mt. Surprise. It was a link that was badly needed for a long time. Because of heavy flooding the line was not in a condition to carry heavy trains. It has now been reconditioned as far as Mt. Surprise, and I thank the Minister for Transport for the interest he has taken in this work. I hope the reconditioning will not stop at Mt. Surprise. I should like to see the whole of the Etheridge line reconditioned right to Forsyth and the missing link between Forsyth and Croydon constructed and the line reconditioned then to Normanton. It would serve a tremendous number of cattle-raisers in the Gulf country and would save them roughly 200 miles of railage in getting their cattle to the coast. It is not an expensive line to build and it is within the economic possibilities of the State. I strongly advocate that this work be done. I ask the Minister for Transport to recondition the whole of the Etheridge line and when that is done, and if I am still blessed by being here, I shall advocate the continuance of the line to Croydon and thence to Normanton. It would be good national work and is work that should be done.

I was indeed shocked with some of the telephonic facilities that exist in the outback and they have been, ever since I have been out there, most deplorable. It is not a matter that comes under the control of the State Government, it is one of the responsibilities of the Federal Government. I sincerely ask the Postmaster-General to see

that something better is done about telephonic communication. I had the experience, and many others have had a similar experience, of trying to ring the telephone exchange some 62 miles from Chillagoe. I could only just hear the post-master speaking at the other end, and it took me about three hours to get in contact with him. That was very unfortunate. I then wanted to get relayed to one of the stations only a few miles away from the telephone exchange. I could not even hear the owner of the station speaking and I had to have the message that I wanted delivered to him repeated from the exchange.

That is not an isolated case. It applies in the main to the telephones all through that country. It is a shocking shame and should be rectified. Attention has been promised by the present Federal Government but we want more than attention; we want a little bit of action. I would ask hon. members opposite to spur their Government on as much as possible. I am not critical of any Governments in that respect because Governments for many years have had much work on their hands, but common sympathy with the people in those remote parts should accelerate action to bring them relief.

Then there is the matter of marketing primary products. Since we have had a change in the Federal Government many people who gave their whole-hearted support at the last election to the present Federal Government are becoming very restless because of the many reasons for putting into operation the promises made them if they would transfer their votes from the Labour Party to the Liberal and Country Parties. One of the very big attractions held out was that value would be put back into the Australian pound.

Mr. Muller: Who took it out?

Mr. COLLINS: I am sure I did not take it out (laughter). I do not know whether the hon. member did or not. I have been endeavouring to give what service I can to the community and I cannot personally be accused of doing it.

But it does not matter who took the value out of the Australian £. What matters is: what action is being taken to put it back? Notwithstanding the screaming indulged in—that is not an extravagant expression—by the Federal Country Party about this vicious vile inflation which it was alleged was encouraged by the Labour Government right up to the time that Mr. Fadden became Treasurer, it is now about ten times worse than when his party complained about it. We have only to look in today's paper to see a cartoon with Mr. Fadden and his chief, Mr. Menzies, looking down an elephant's mouth and observing the elephantine proportions inflation has now assumed. It is getting worse daily, and under the present lack of control the value of our £ will lose its value greatly. The point is that the £ was looked upon when they took office as still being the soundest currency in the world. If the present inflationary tendency is allowed to continue it will be a shocking shame to the country. It is but

another evidence of the confidence trick put over the people. A similar confidence trick was put over the people in 1929 by the Opposition in this Parliament when they were going to give £2,000,000 to the unemployed and find the boy a job. That was a confidence trick that has stuck in the minds of the people ever since. Apparently exactly the same confidence trick is being perpetrated by their co-partners in the Federal sphere. I ask them to do something to redeem that promise.

At the same time they said that taxation was extortionate, and by every word they could use and every means available to them, contended that the Government of the day were ruining the country, that they were the saviours if only the people would return them. On the eve of and before the Korean war—even now they are trying to get ready for war—they contended (it is in cold print) that taxation could not be reduced because of the state they found the Treasury in on assuming office. Why did they not say that at election time instead of deluding the people? They cannot face up to it. They gained office by dishonest promises. It is a shocking thing to work on the credulity of the people.

Promises were held out to the primary producers in connection with price-fixation. Again, the dairymen were sadly deluded by the speeches made by the Leader of the Country Party, who claims to represent the dairymen, and who was supported by his colleagues. They said the basis of price-fixing in the dairying industry was entirely wrong. They said "Why should the farmer's wages be fixed at lower levels than those of the man on the wharf, who gets 4s. 6d. an hour for ordinary time and 12s. 6d. and 15s. and 10s. an hour on week-ends, holidays and Sundays?" What do we find? We find that the first time the price is to be reviewed, the industry has to ascertain what was Government policy on this matter. After giving consideration to it they said, "Go on on the basis you have been working on all along" There you are—straight-out repudiation.

Mr. Muller: They increased the price.

Mr. COLLINS: On the same basis as it was fixed by the previous Government, and as was asked for by the dairying industry. They did that to get away from any of the obligations to which they committed themselves at the election, and to perhaps carry out what is part of their own policy.

They say they are going to get a fact-finding committee to go into the cost of producing the various primary commodities. Let us examine the fact-finding committee. They said they were going to do it, but they have not done it up to date.

Mr. Muller: They have.

Mr. COLLINS: It was not done in connection with butter.

Mr. Plunkett: What was not?

Mr. COLLINS: The fact-finding committee did not fix the price of butter. It was the same committee that was set up—a

joint committee composed of Federal Treasury officers and representatives of the dairy industry in the chief butter-producing States of the Commonwealth. There is nothing wrong with that committee, because on that committee you have men who have been associated with the industry and who have given their lives to it. They have sat round the table alongside Treasury officials of the Commonwealth Government, and between them they have come to a reasonable and satisfactory method of approach to the cost of producing primary commodities; and this is very difficult to arrive at and cannot be arrived at unless the people constituting the tribunal have a close working knowledge of the industry with which they are dealing. Now it is proposed to hand it over to a committee of officials from Canberra on similar lines to the Tariff Board in order to remove it from being a political football. That is a very convenient way, from their point of view, of sliding out of it. They say to save it from becoming a political football after they have raked the football into their own territory and find it is too heavy to handle politically.

Mr. Muller: They were the first Government who adopted the recommendations of the committee, anyhow.

Mr. COLLINS: No. The Chifley Government were the first Federal Government who ever gave any decent help to the primary producers; they were absolutely the first Government to give any decent worth-while help; and the present Government are handing it over to what they call a fact-finding committee on the lines of the Tariff Board.

Recently at Canberra it was said, "If you are going to do that for the primary industries, why did you have to take the cotton industry from the Tariff Board and ignore that board's recommendations?" Notwithstanding this they are proposing to set up a committee similar to the Tariff Board, to go into not only the cotton industry but other primary industries in this State. It will be a mighty bad thing for Queensland if we are to submit our primary industries to a few officials in Canberra without any direct representation of the growers of this State. As far as I am able, I will oppose this with every means at my disposal. It is directly opposed to the dairying industry. The people in that industry are satisfied with the progress they are making and they do not wish to be put into the hands of a few officials, no matter how honest or well-guided those officials may be, in Canberra. They want a say in their own industry so far as price-finding is concerned.

If this principle is to apply to all primary industries, what about the wheat-grower? Does he want somebody sitting in an office chair at Canberra and who has never grown a bag of wheat in his life to tell him what it costs him to grow his wheat? What about the growers in the sugar industry, one of the principal primary industries in this State? Are we to submit to a few officials at Canberra going into the cost of producing sugar and determining the price of the sugar

grown in Queensland? Definitely not. It would be disastrous to our primary industries if a commission of that kind was ever allowed to determine the rights of our primary producers, who are so far removed from Canberra. But whether remote from Canberra or not does not matter, the principle is wrong.

Hitherto we have had the direct approach by the dairying industry. They go into it and have the fullest access to Treasury officials and the Treasurer himself. They have got on reasonably well. Ever since 1921 we have been handling the sugar industry in much the same way and find that by our method of direct approach to the cost of producing sugar, the sugar-grower has had, in the main, a reasonably satisfactory price. It has got the sugar industry into the soundest possible position of any of the primary industries of Queensland. The sugar-growers go into the cost, officials check those costs, and if a sound and reasonable case for an increase in the price of sugar can be made out they come to the Premier and get support for their case. Between them they approach the Federal Government and in most instances, if not all, the Federal Government have been very reasonable and sympathetic. Are we to be at the whim of some political party? Are we to throw the sugar industry to the wolves? Are we to give away the rights we have won? Are we to forfeit the principles we have worked on merely to satisfy a political party that does not want to be burdened with the responsibilities it undertook at the last Federal election? It would be a crying shame if the industries of this State had to submit to a board similar to the Tariff Board.

The Minister for Agriculture and Commerce at Canberra, Mr. McEwen, had to take the matter of the cotton industry out of the hands of the Tariff Board and help it. We are very grateful for what has been done for the cotton industry. Here I might say we support it. We are very grateful for the help we have received and we do not want to go back to the dark ages in connection with price-fixing now that we are getting well onto the road of getting something with which we are satisfied. I agree entirely with the Federal Minister for Agriculture and Commerce so far as long-term contracts to our primary products are concerned. For meat and butter I should like to see 10-year agreements and I sincerely hope and trust he will carry out that part of the promise he made to the primary industries.

I should like to see it go very much further than it has gone. I should like to see other commodities brought under the same range, for example, meat and possibly wool, and then there would be a stabilised price over a long period of years. If it is good enough for such important items of food as sugar, butter, and wheat, and if it is possible to stabilise those commodities and guarantee the primary producers the cost of production, plus profit, and give them stability over a long period of years, it is equally possible to do the same thing with meat and to a degree with wool. I am not so impressed by the need for doing so

with wool, but I am impressed with the ease for meat and I say it would give a greater measure of stability to the beef-producers and enable them to enter into long-range plans for the improvement of their areas. Prices are high at present; we have seen prices high before, but they have fallen almost overnight. I hope this does not happen again, but there is no reason to suppose that it will not. Leaders in the banking world have been telling primary producers that they have to tighten up on expenditure, and only the other day I saw a letter from a banker to a bacon company asking the company to reduce its overdraft by 33 per cent. although the security available is worth £2 for every £1 owing. Is it an augury for the future, a sign that these times the primary producer is going through are going to pass?

I do not blame the cattle man for getting something out of present prices as he has suffered severely during long periods because of the low price of meat since 1922. I know cattle-raisers in my area who were living under terribly hard conditions themselves and who were getting £2 10s. and £3 for store bullocks, cattle that are today worth £14 and £15 a head. We should aim at stability, and I contend that there is no reason why the price of meat should not be fixed according to the cost of production and the owners of the meat guaranteed a living price, so that thereby greater stability will be guaranteed to the producers and a reasonable cost of living to the consumer. Why should we, by pushing meat into the United States at 5s. or 6s. a lb. and because we are pushing a few carcasses into the United States and Singapore and putting a bit of tinned meat on the best markets of the world, be charged an unreasonable price for meat, particularly when we are living in the country where it is produced, and where the production cost is the lowest of any country in the world? The consumer is worthy of the greatest consideration, and we should try to protect the cattleman's best customer, because nearly 80 per cent. of the meat of Australia is consumed in Australia. Why should the small quantity of meat that goes overseas boost the price of meat to the Australian consumer? I say that it is entirely wrong and the grazier, in his own interests, should try to get into a scheme that has to have both State and Federal support to bring it about. If it was done, it would be one of the best things that could possibly happen to the industry and one of the best things that could happen to the grazier, as well as the consumer.

(Time expired.)

Mr. V. E. JONES (Callide) (3.45 p.m.): Firstly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I desire to associate myself with the congratulations and good wishes extended to the hon. member for Fortitude Valley on his appointment as Speaker of this House. It was with regret that I learned of his illness, and I wish him a speedy recovery and an early return to this Chamber.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. V. E. JONES: Secondly, I wish to congratulate both you, Mr. Graham, and the hon. member for Brisbane on your appointments to your respective positions. I can assure you that I have formed the opinion that you both have the ability and the sincerity that are needed to carry out your duties faithfully and fearlessly.

It is indeed a momentous occasion for a new man to enter this Legislative Assembly and, as I utter my first words within this Chamber, I am very mindful and conscious of the people I represent, and I desire to take this opportunity of thanking the electors of Callide for the confidence they have placed in me by returning me as their member.

Callide is one of the most or perhaps the most productive electorate in this State. Of the 54 butter factories in the State, five are in the Callide electorate; of course, I am including the Rockhampton factory, which obtains about 90 or 92 per cent of its supplies from the Callide electorate. Those figures will give hon. members an idea of the butter fat produced in my electorate. In addition, we have the Selene and the Callide coal-mines; we have many sawmills; we have brickworks, and we have several forestry reserves. Grazing also plays a big part in my electorate and there are many stud breeders of beef cattle. Pig-raising, too, is carried on on a big scale, and many farmers engage in stud breeding. They find an outlet for their products in Central Queensland and in the northern parts of the State. In addition, a large area of my electorate is under agriculture, and it has been proved that it is very suitable for cotton-growing. Market-gardening and poultry-raising are carried on in the northern part of the electorate, and much of the produce of those industries is railed to the southern markets. In the southern part of the electorate fruit-growing is carried on on a large scale, and it is universally recognised that the largest one-man citrus orchard in the State is in that area.

I hope that during the life of this Parliament we shall have the privilege of seeing much legislation passed for the benefit of all. I trust, too, that this Government will recognise the decision of the taxpayers, irrespective of their political creed. Whilst dealing with this matter, I have already been stirred by an incident that recently occurred at Rockhampton, when the Treasurer was opening the Rockhampton Show. Incidentally, I am a member of the Rockhampton Show Society and of the committee, and I was standing at the Treasurer's side when he was performing the opening ceremony. Whilst referring to the potentialities of Central Queensland, he said that Central Queensland would be ably represented in this Parliament by Mr. Larcombe, Mr. Clark and Mr. Ingram.

Speaking in reply to a toast at the dinner he said that the people of Central Queensland could feel safe while their destinies were in the hands of the political representatives of the Labour Party, Mr. Ingram, Mr. Clark and Mr. Larcombe. I was hoping that he was merely expressing his own opinions but

evidently he was not. I hope that the remark was not deliberate and that it was uttered in ignorance.

Mr. Riordan: He did not mention Jim Burrows.

Mr. V. E. JONES: For the benefit of hon. members let me say that Jim Burrows does not come from Rockhampton, that he represents Port Curtis. The Callide electorate takes in part of the city of Rockhampton and I should like to inform hon. members that I represent more electors than any of the other hon. members mentioned. I represent 9,446 and I got 6,038 votes, or 64 per cent. The hon. member for Fitzroy has 8,774 electors and he got 5,377 votes, or 61 per cent. Not a bad effort but not as good as mine! In the Keppel electorate there are 9,433 electors and the hon. member got 5,251, or 55 per cent. Rockhampton has 9,263 electors. Incidentally, the Rockhampton electorate is only part of the city of Rockhampton and does not take in any rural areas. As I said, it has 9,263 electors but Mr. Larcombe got only 4,709 votes, or 51 per cent. I do not know whether the Honourable the Treasurer made the statement as a deliberate slur on over 6,000 people but I hope that it is not identical with the policy of the Government. I hope that the Government will give a fair and just deal to all the taxpayers of the State.

I should like to mention briefly what is required in the Callide electorate to prevent the drift of the people to the cities. First of all, we need good roads and educational facilities, electricity, and other amenities for the workers. I have heard hon. members from both sides of the Chamber say that they have bad roads in their electorates but I can assure you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that if they came to the Callide electorate I could say, "You ain't seen nothin' yet." We have the bad roads, there is no doubt about that, and you must have good roads in order to give effect to improved educational facilities. There is no use in organising the transport of school children if the roads will not carry the traffic. I was pleased to hear the Honourable the Secretary for Labour and Industry say that he realised that educational facilities in the country were not good and that he hoped to improve them in the very near future. I was also very pleased that the Secretary for Public Instruction made a tour of inspection through part of the State in order to get first-hand knowledge of the educational needs of the people. I hope that in the near future we shall be honoured by a visit from him to the Callide electorate.

Educational facilities are a very important subject in my electorate. I am referring to this amenity, mainly from the viewpoint of the worker. Take, for instance, a man who has been brought up in the country and who on getting married settles down in an isolated place. We must have these men, not only to produce our primary requirements, but to increase production. This man goes out into an isolated district, ringbarks and fells scrub, builds fences, yards, dips, and provides water facilities for himself. This is the type of man who is important to the community. Eventually he gets

married, and when a family comes along the first worry is: how can educational facilities be provided for his children? If educational facilities are not at hand in a new settlement families drift immediately to the city. You cannot blame these people, as they must get their children educated.

Unfortunately, too, once the children are brought up in a city they cannot be persuaded to return to the country. That is because of the amenities existing in the city, and I am not blaming them for it. Electricity, for example, plays an important part in our country life. It is one of the amenities that should be provided for every worker there. When I travel through my electorate and get off the train at a railway station I have seen a station-master having his meal off a dirty, filthy table that has had ink and every putrid thing in the world on it. No facilities are provided for such men in isolated areas to even have their meals. Railwaymen are busy men and often have no facilities provided for them. They have to snatch their meals whenever the opportunity offers. I have seen a man eat a bit of bread and then rush out and pull a signal, and immediately afterwards hand out parcels. In my electorate power passes through most of these stations, and electricity is connected with the station-office, but no such amenity is provided for the railway employees as power plugs for their convenience. I hope that during the life of this Parliament some step will be taken to provide amenities for these workers.

During the short time I have been in this Chamber and I listened to the speeches made by hon. members, it has been pointed out that hon. members on this side have been able to cover a wide variety of subjects. Every hon. member on this side has talked on subjects that he knows. As I have spent most of my life in riding a horse, milking a cow, and tilling the soil I want to keep to that subject, but before doing so I wish to refer to the hon. member for Mount Gravatt, who spoke of something he knows nothing about. He spoke about socialisation. The majority of hon. members realise how much his remarks were beside the point. I can tell him the meaning of socialisation. It means shortages, poverty, and starvation. It is no good the hon. member's talking, as I heard another hon. member put it, a lot of blah, blah. And that is what hon. members opposite do when they talk on a subject they know nothing about.

I say that socialisation means loss of production, which leads to starvation. I shall support that statement by quoting a few figures, and I will not get away from industry in my own electorate. I give the production of four butter factories in 1939 and in 1950:—

	1939.		1950.	
	Tons of Butter.	Suppliers.	Tons of Butter.	Suppliers.
Wowan	1,412	430	1,036	337

The loss in production was 376 tons and the loss of suppliers 93.

	1939.		1950.	
	Tons of Butter.	Suppliers.	Tons of Butter.	Suppliers.
Biloela	1,485	440	1,679	438
Monto	2,144	527	1,664	444
Mundubbera ..	1,894	486	1,230	358

In the last named factory the loss in production was 664 tons and the loss in suppliers was 124. I will not quote the Rockhampton factory, because in this period it diverted to milk. Its loss of suppliers was 171. It will be seen that these four factories produced 1,326 tons less this year than they did in 1939 and there were 477 suppliers less than in 1939.

This is typical of what is happening all over the State. The other day I had the opportunity of perusing the figures in connection with the Roma butter factory. I found that in 1925 Roma produced 1,000 tons of butter and had 280 suppliers, and this year produced 490 tons, less than half. Those are facts taken from the balance sheets. In 1950 that factory had only 106 suppliers, and the production was 510 tons less than in 1925.

That is only one section of production from our electorate. I will still quote my electorate and take the production of eggs. We all like eggs, so that this is important. (Laughter.) In 1945 the eggs delivered to the C.Q.M.E. Company in Rockhampton—and these are not all the eggs produced in Central Queensland; there was no control of eggs then and you could sell eggs to any shopkeeper—was 1,021,664 dozen.

In July, 1947, this Government established the Central Queensland Egg Board, which began operations in that month. For the first month of its operations, according to the report on production issued by the Department of Agriculture and Stock, the supply to the board was 50 per cent. above local consumption. In 1949-50 the board, which has control of all the eggs, handled only 481,787 dozen or less than half the production of 5 years previously—a difference of 539,877 dozen.

The following figures will show conclusively how egg-production in Central Queensland is falling: the Central Queensland Egg Board received for—

January 1949	Dozen	42,905
January 1950	Dozen	20,633

A fall in production for one month of 13,272 dozen.

July, 1949	Dozen	28,827
July, 1950	Dozen	16,568

A loss in production of 12,259 dozen.

The July report of the South Queensland Egg Marketing Board revealed that local consumption of eggs in shell increased by 14.7 per cent. and there are 800 fewer growers than in the same month last year. I submit that the only way to stimulate this industry and to get back the supply of the eggs necessary for this State is to decontrol eggs. It cannot be done both ways, and that is how it is today—the price of the product is controlled but production costs are not. I hate to think of the shortage of and starvation for eggs the people of Queensland will have to face in the very near future.

I am very pleased the present Federal Government have seen their way clear to assure a guaranteed price of cotton. I am happy to have been one of a deputation to the Federal Minister to put the case before him. We are very pleased with the result, which is entirely contrary to the attitude last year of the Labour Federal Government, who absolutely refused any guaranteed price. That was in October last and on 4 November the Leader of the Opposition of this House moved the adjournment of the House to debate the need for a payable price for cotton. The Premier on that occasion definitely said no. It will now be pleasing to see the increase in production that this guaranteed price has assured.

Much time has been devoted to debating the question of socialising the sick, but this is a matter that deserves more thought than has been given to it, before it is carried further. It is a question with which I have had quite a deal of experience, and I quote this instance of the routine under the present system: a married woman goes along to a doctor at the outpatients' department, who diagnoses her case and tells her to see him at the outpatients' department every month. She does so. Immediately she goes into a ward to be confined she is cut off completely from her doctor. Every decent-living man who is not hypocritical and who has a little bit of love for his wife and family realises that it is at that moment that his wife should receive all the care possible. Instead, she becomes just a number. She is taken from the doctor in whom she put her faith and confidence and is placed under the care of another doctor. I cannot see that the socialising of the sick can be carried on in any other way, and I hope that some consideration will be given to the point.

As I said earlier, I hope that during the life of this Parliament we shall consider much legislation for the benefit of all. I again take the opportunity of thanking those electors of Callide who returned me to this Assembly.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Gair, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 4.13 p.m.