

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 1950**

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## THURSDAY, 2 NOVEMBER, 1950.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. J. H. Mann, Brisbane) took the chair at 11 a.m.

### QUESTIONS.

#### CANE ASSIGNMENTS OF EX-SERVICE SETTLERS.

Mr. PIZZEY (Isis) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“As sugar growers in the Isis district who are not ex-servicemen have had increases to 50 acres in gross assignments, will he kindly give favourable consideration to increasing assignments of soldier settlers in that district from 44 to 50 acres?”

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

“It might be assumed from this question that ex-servicemen were given less favourable treatment than other sugar growers in the allotting of cane assignments. Such an assumption would be incorrect. Applications for assignments by ex-servicemen under the War Service (Sugar Industry) Land Settlement Act were submitted to the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board by the Land Administration Board. The Land Administration Board reported to the Central Board on the suitability and fertility of the lands proposed for assignment, and on this information the Central Board granted sufficient area to produce a farm peak as laid down for the particular mill area by the Royal Commission on Soldier Settlement of Sugar Lands. In the case of civilian applicants for increased and new assignments, the Central Board granted an acreage which it was estimated would give a farm peak equal to that granted to an ex-serviceman.”

Mr. PIZZEY (Isis) asked the Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation—

“1. What was the minimum number of ex-servicemen settlers recommended by the Royal Commission on Soldier Settlement on sugar lands?”

“2. How many have been allocated farms to date under the provisions of The War Service (Sugar Industry) Land Settlement Act of 1946?”

“3. When is it anticipated that the minimum number recommended by the Royal Commission in question will be allocated?”

“4. Of the 27 recommended for the Isis district, how many allocations have been made to date?”

“5. When will the next ballot for the North Isis cane lands be held?”

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Belyando) replied—

“1. 344.

“2. Blocks balloted among approved landless applicants and assignments granted,

103; new assignments granted to approved applicants who owned land, 105; increased assignments granted to approved applicants, 113; number of applicants who held assignments and farm peaks only increased, 16; total 337.

“3. By 12 December, 1950.

“4. Seventeen (9 blocks balloted amongst landless applicants, 6 new assignments granted to landholders, and 2 increased assignments granted.

“5. It is anticipated that a ballot for one block will be held during December. Eleven further blocks have been surveyed and are now being developed for settlement. They will be made available for ballot on completion of the clearing and ripping operations.”

#### EDUCATION—AUXILIARY COSTS AND DONATIONS.

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

“1. What are the details of auxiliary costs shown on page 16, Table 5.6 of the annual report—(a) Scholarships and bursaries to schools (secondary), £105,513 18s. 3d.; (b) Grants to kindergarten unions, £3,900?”

“2. What are the details of the receipts in Table 5.9 (Revenue), as shown under ‘Other Contributions, donations, &c., £3,309 7s. 2d.’?”

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory) replied—

“1. (a) The amount of £105,513 18s. 3d., under the heading ‘Scholarships and Bursaries to Schools (Secondary)’ is made up as follows:—(i.) Fees paid to non-State schools for tuition of pupils who have satisfied the requirements of the State Scholarship Examination, £79,181 16s. 6d.; (ii.) Allowances paid to Scholarship holders the income of whose parents does not exceed the basic wage or £60 per annum for each dependent child, £25,745 7s. 8d.; (iii.) Cost of supplying text-books to Scholarship holders in (ii.) above, £70 1s. 7d.; (iv.) Cost of paying examination fees for the Junior and Senior Examinations on account of students mentioned in (ii.) above, £516 12s. 6d.; total, £105,513 18s. 3d. (b) £3,900 was granted to the Creche and Kindergarten Association of Queensland during the financial year 1949-1950.

“2. The amount of £3,309 7s. 2d. is made up of various refunds of expenditure. These would consist mainly of refunds of salary, payments for services performed, and proceeds of sales of materials purchased, in respect of previous financial years. Also included are amounts received for advertising in ‘The Education Office Gazette.’ The amounts were paid to Consolidated Revenue in accordance with the usual practice as approved by the Auditor-General.”

## BUNYA MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah) asked the Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation—

"1. What is the total area of the national park at Bunya Mountains?"

"2. What is the total length of (a) roads and (b) paths constructed to date?"

"3. What was the total expenditure to 30 June, 1950, on development of the park as a tourist resort?"

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

"1. 22,706 acres.

"2. (a) No roads constructed, but about 9 miles of existing roads maintained and improved. (b) 12 miles 16 chains of graded track constructed and maintained.

"3. From 1937-1938 to 1949-1950, inclusive, the sum of £12,214 has been spent in location, survey, construction, maintenance, and improvement of tracks, maintenance of road, camp ground improvements, fencing, provision of direction signs, fire protection, erection of headquarters, and general expenses."

## PAINTING OF RAILWAY BUILDINGS.

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

"In view of the serious deterioration and shabby appearance of many railway buildings, including residences, will he kindly advise—

"1. The number of painters employed by the department at painting buildings at 30 June, 1949, and 30 June, 1950, respectively?"

"2. The cost of painting railway buildings for the year ended 30 June, 1950?"

"3. What is the cause of the present lag;

"4. What action, if any, is contemplated to step up this work and thus improve the general appearance of railway properties?"

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

"1. 30 June, 1949, 58; 30 June, 1950, 68.

"2. £43,300. This does not include cost of painting new buildings erected during year.

"3. Shortage of tradesmen and material during the war and subsequent years.

"4. Endeavours have been made to overtake the painting lag by increasing the painting staff. Although there has been a slight increase it has not been possible to obtain sufficient tradesmen. Inquiries are already in train with a view to letting contracts for the painting of buildings in order to relieve the position."

## PREFABRICATED HOMES; HOUSING OF FOREIGN TRADESMEN.

**Mr. PIE** (Kedron) asked the Secretary for Public Works, Housing and Local Government—

"Will he advise the House as to the number of tradesmen coming to Queensland from foreign countries to erect prefabricated homes, what are their particular trades, how many of them are accompanied by their families, and how it is proposed to house them?"

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

"The number of tradesmen to be brought from overseas to erect prefabricated houses is solely a matter for the contractors and the Commonwealth Department of Migration. Details are not available at present. Accommodation for the employees will, in the first instance, be provided in barracks supplied by the contractors, and thereafter one house in each four completed at the project will be allotted to married employees, as provided in the contract."

## ALTERATIONS IN 'HANSARD.'

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Before proceeding with questions I would draw the attention of hon. members to a Press statement in today's 'Courier-Mail' on a matter of questions, which was raised a day or two ago by the hon. member for Kedron. I personally believe that the recent visit of the hon. member for Kedron to Westminster was not long enough to enable him to obtain a complete knowledge of the rulings, if any, upon the subject of questions without notice. However, I wish to say that I quite agree with the hon. member for Kedron that no Speaker of a British democracy—in which I hope Queensland is included—would have the temerity to rule, or be foolish enough to say, that an answer given to any question asked in the House could be altered "to suit a Minister or to convey an entirely different meaning." I remind the hon. member of something about which he appears to be ignorant but should know—that an hon. member is not entitled to say outside this House something which if said within the House would be a reflection upon the Chair and an abuse of privilege. That should be apparent to the merest novice in politics.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

## QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE.

## SALE OF STATE HOUSES.

**Mr. MOORES** (Kurilpa), without notice, asked the Secretary for Public Works, Housing, and Local Government—

"Has the Minister observed a statement in today's 'Courier-Mail' made by Mr. McColm, Liberal member for Bowman in the Federal Parliament, which reads—

'Mr McColm (Lib., Qld.) said that in Queensland the policy of the State

Government was that in no circumstances would a house built by the Housing Commission be sold to the tenant.'

Will he advise the House if this information is correct?

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

"I have read with amazement the statement referred to. It is completely false and is typical of the untruths uttered against Queensland by members of the Liberal Party.

"Houses erected by the Queensland Housing Commission are available for sale under very liberal terms. During the past six months approximately 711 houses have been sold to tenants and other purchasers. Priority of purchase is given to the tenants of Commission houses.

"I can only form the opinion that Mr. McCole is very ill-informed on this important matter or that he has, for political reasons, misrepresented the position."

**Mr. PIE:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I should like to know whether, in your opinion, that was a legitimate question without notice, and whether the Minister answered it as though it were without notice.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. PIE:** Flesh of one and fowl of another!

**Mr. AIKENS:** I desire to give notice that—

**Mr. TURNER:** I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member for Kedron in order in saying, "If it is flesh for one, it is fish for another?"

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I did not hear the hon. member say that, but if he did—

**Mr. PIE:** I did not make that statement. I said, "Flesh of one and fowl of another." If it is a reflection on you, Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw it.

#### PAPERS.

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

Report of the Department of Agriculture and Stock for the year 1949-1950.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Order in Council under the Bureau of Industry Acts, 1932 to 1943, the Labour and Industry Act of 1946, and the State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1949 (19 October).

Order in Council under the Labour and Industry Act of 1946 (26 October).

#### PORT DUES REVISION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

##### THIRD READING.

Bill, on motion of Mr. Gair, read a third time.

#### SUPPLY.

##### COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT— RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Farrell, Maryborough, in the chair.)

Debate resumed from 31 October (see p. 1009) on Mr. Gair's motion—

"That there be granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1950-51, a sum not exceeding £643 to defray the salary of the Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor."

**Mr. MOORES** (Kurilpa) (11.21 a.m.): The Budget is the measure of the Government's activities for the previous year, together with a pre-view of those of the next 12 months. The people of Queensland are indeed fortunate in having a Labour Government administering the affairs of this State, particularly when that good fortune is measured in terms of the Budget as presented by the Treasurer and when it is remembered that financial management is the basis of good government. Good government has been described theoretically as the degree to which a Government secure with the minimum sacrifice the maximum satisfaction of human wants and the quality with which they perform that function. In practice, I should say that this resolves itself into these three things:—

(1) The maintenance of the law and good order within the community under its control;

(2) the progressive development of the country; and

(3) the ultimate objective of the democratic concept—the greatest good for the greatest number. I submit, that on the basis outlined, the Budget demonstrates that a Labour Government are the best means of giving effect to the democratic desire of the community for a non-sectional all-embracing humanitarian policy. Unfortunately, Governments are being forced to restrict development and expansion by shortages of basic materials and technicians, together with rising costs.

Let us for a few moments examine the remedies suggested by experts for lowering costs and increase production. They say:—

(1) ban the Communists from key industries; (2) re-value the £, and (3) abolish the 40-hour week.

In relation to the first I would say that this is a classic example of the childish and impractical thought process of the Liberal-Country Party mind. Hitler selected for persecution Jew and Communist minorities as a distraction for the masses whilst he, financed by wealthy industrialists—the German equivalent of the Australian Liberals—successfully covered his political sins, and built the totalitarian state. And similarly in Australia the most sterile Government since the calamitous Bruce-Page Government seek to hide their political futilities behind such a shallow slogan as this. We had rising prices, rising wages, and shortages for years

after the 1914-18 war, and no Communists to blame for an alleged brake on production. A similar set of conditions and circumstances exists today as existed then, the aftermath of a tremendous dislocation due to war and the consequent near-chaotic period of adjustment. It is the natural sequence of events under our economic system:—war, prosperity, depression, recovery; war, prosperity, depression—on goes the cycle. It always will be thus while we perpetuate a system that permits the few to exploit the many with profits and wealth the goal of the few and economic insecurity the continual fear of the many.

**Mr. NICHOLSON:** Mr. Farrell, I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in reading his speech?

**A Government Member:** You didn't did you?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. Nicholson:** The Standing Orders do not permit an hon. member to read his speech.

**The CHAIRMAN:** There is no point of order.

**Mr. Nicholson:** But the hon. member is reading his speech.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member for Kurilpa is not reading his speech. I have paid particular attention to him, and I have formed that opinion. Probably he is using copious notes.

**Mr. MOORES:** With regard to the second ground I quoted, the re-valuation of the £, even experts disagree with this course, more than they usually do. It is a supposedly intricate and complicated problem of a type that any ordinary individual exercising common sense would reduce to a simple matter. In this instance it could be easily solved if the Country Party would place first things first, that is, the economic welfare of the country, and their own interests second.

As to (3) we had the same cry from the exploiting class when hours were reduced from 60 to 48 from 48 to 44 and from 44 to 40—that it would be the ruination of the country. The remedy obviously lies in the full implementation of the Labour Party's policy; presumably the people of the country will continue to suffer while the opponents of Labour try to patch up a crumbling economic system.

Let us examine the speeches of Opposition members. Most members must have been both pleased and relieved when it was learned that the hon. member for Coorparoo was to lead the debate for the Opposition. Stripped of its obvious padding and denuded of its pretty phrases, his speech appeared superficially to be a well-reasoned analysis of the Treasurer's Statement, a welcome change from the previous monotonous tirade of exaggeration and misrepresentation that we have heard from the leader of the Country Party. Unfortunately, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's remedy for inflation was this

statesmanlike suggestion—that we reduce the number of Government employees. He had this brainwave at a time when the present Federal Government, after criticising the previous Federal Government for increasing the number of public servants by 24,000 and promising to reduce it, increased it by 4,500 in the first seven months of this year.

It was a pity then, that after listening to this well-prepared speech, we were subjected to another of the Opposition leader's dismal Jeremiah classics. He described it as a banshee budget full of wails. Maybe he got his inspiration from the ex-leader of the Liberals in this State, the Lord Mayor, whose budget was full of wailing and metaphorically gnashing of teeth, or perhaps he got it from a closer source, his leader in the Federal sphere, who wailed continually about his inability to meet his election promise commitments. Having thus described the Budget, however, the Leader of the Opposition himself began wailing about everything connected with the Budget, reserving his crescendo for the alleged evil of the 40-hour week, which is his explanation of the cause of our economic evils.

The hon. member quoted figures in an attempt to prove his statement. He stated that in 1946-47 the expenditure was £15,140,000, and in 1948 it was £16,577,000, and he qualified that by stating that only the first effects of the 40-hour week would be taking effect then, because it did not come in until 1 January, 1948. The increase in expenditure was £1,436,000. He went on to give us the figures for 1948-49, when he said the full effect of the 40-hour week was apparent. The expenditure was £19,161,000, an increase of £2,584,000, and in 1949-50 it went to £21,623,000, an increase of £2,462,000. In 1950-51 it is expected the expenditure will be £23,995,560, an increase of £2,372,650, and he asked members to believe that the 40-hour week was the cause of the increased cost.

If so, how does the Leader of the Opposition explain the following figures, which show progressive increases in expenditure under Labour Governments irrespective of the 40-hour week, Communists, or other excuse. The expenditure was as follows:—

	£
1919-20 .. .. .	11,266,909
1929-31 .. .. .	12,591,201
Increase .. .. .	1,324,292
1924-25 .. .. .	14,880,288
1925-26 .. .. .	16,154,404
Increase .. .. .	1,274,116

The three consecutive years 1937-38, 1938-39, and 1939-40 show an increase in expenditure of £17,568,223 to £19,316,322, and from that figure to £20,739,749, an increase in one instance of £1,748,099, and in the other £1,423,427. I ask quite seriously: what do Opposition members want? They clamour for increased expenditure to satisfy the desires of their electorates, but when the Budget shows increased expenditure they growl and cry about the increased cost of the 40-hour week. With how many tongues do these people speak?

The Leader of the Opposition states—

“The root of the economic evils, the increasing costs, and under-production is the 40-hour week.”

Presumably he wants to return to the 44-hour or the 48-hour week. He says that this State is being ruined by socialistic schemes. His Deputy Leader stresses—and this I emphasise as a classic—that the solution is to retrench in the Public Service, despite his political colleagues’ failure in Canberra to do likewise. Mr. Menzies thinks he could raise production and decrease costs by banning the Communists. Mr. Fadden thinks this problem can be solved by his wool tax. There we have four different opinions from four alleged leaders of the latest political disunity, the Liberal-Country Party.

Of the smaller fry in Opposition we have from the hon. member for Chermiside a refreshing burst of political honesty. He went very close to making a liar or fool of the Leader of the Opposition. After his leader’s Queensland-ruin song, we find the hon. member for Chermiside stating—

“There has been terrific industrial development in this State. Between 1946 and 1949, factories increased by 1,138, the total expanding to 4,083 from 2,945.”

Remember, Mr. Farrell, that two years of that period were under the 40-hour week.

Of the other speeches, I have always felt that the department that could or should produce the best or most constructive discussion is that of Public Instruction, and because of that belief I regret that from the Opposition side, in one field where we could expect something worth while, we have been treated on two occasions to a viewpoint highly coloured by a restricted personal experience, criticism based on material that was not in accordance with facts, and presented with a display of near-hysterical dramatics hardly in keeping with the high opinion in which the hon. member, at least, holds himself as an expert in this sphere.

And now let me quote from the most recent speech of the hon. member for Isis. After referring to his Address in Reply speech he states—

“The only reply from the Government side was a bitter personal attack on me by the hon. member for Kurilpa, who has never been a teacher in the real sense.”

I should imagine that the hon. member for Isis will be able to interpret the phrase “a teacher in the real sense.” He proceeds—

“He was a manual training teacher at the South Brisbane School.”

He is referring to me, and the first mistake is that I was a manual training teacher at the West End School, and not the South Brisbane School.

Then there is some childish reference to letters received from school teachers expressing agreement with much of what he said on the Address in Reply and an extract from the department’s letter expressing regret at his resignation—a stereotyped letter that most teachers receive on leaving the department.

And finally—and I quote again—the hon. member said—

“I leave it to the Committee to judge whether I am an irresponsible and frustrated person.”

I referred previously to the hon. member’s statement in regard to scholarship children and his words—“driven hard,” “bellowed at,” “scolded,” “caned,” “detained,” “overloaded with homework,” and “cramped full with a host of useless facts,” and I said that that was most exaggerated and irresponsible. I referred, of course, to his statement and not to the hon. member personally.

In regard to frustration, I did say that the hon. member’s speech indicated that he was a frustrated teacher but I remind him of his introductory remarks in his Address in Reply speech, in which he said—

“Teachers. . . .”

and presumably he was including himself—

“are ill at ease, frustrated, despairing, and looking for some inspiration from above.”

If he wants me to join issue on the question of responsibility, let me prove how irresponsible some of his criticism was. The first thing any responsible member of this Chamber would expect would be that a man presenting a case on a subject like education would be sure of his facts. I ask members of this Committee to consider this as a test of responsibility in debate. Speaking of the conditions of training teachers he said—

“They had the old Trades Hall at Turbot Street until they were relegated to a war-time emergency building somewhere in Victoria Park.”

Then followed an interjection and dialogue between the Secretary for Mines and the hon. member. The Secretary for Mines said—

“That is not right. It is an excellent brick building.”

This is in reference to the alleged war-time emergency building supposed to be housing trainee teachers somewhere in Victoria Park, and it was the basis of the hon. member’s criticism of the Department of Public Instruction.

The Secretary for Mines again interjected, saying, in reply to a question by the hon. member for Isis as to whether the children were on their own or were there other children there—

“On their own.”

The hon. member for Isis then asked—

“They have it all to themselves?”

to which the Secretary for Mines said—

“Yes, it has been there for a considerable time.”

The hon. member said—

“I am pleased to hear that—it fills a long-felt want.”

He then asked—

“It is now their training college?”

to which the Minister replied—

“Yes.”

The facts are that teachers were removed from their Training College in Turbot street on 2 February, 1942, and eight years later the hon. member, who represents himself as an authority, did not know where they were. After Monday, 2 February, 1942, the building was jointly occupied by the Intermediate School pupils and the Teachers' Training College until 12 December, 1947, when the College became the sole occupant. That means that the hon. member was wrong in stating that the teachers were in an emergency building somewhere in Victoria Park. He did not know the type of building housing the trainee-teachers and he did not know exactly where it was until he was informed by the Minister.

Before I leave this subject, I want to make some reference to the hon. member's sarcasm in suggesting that manual-training teachers are not teachers in the real sense. The implication was that a manual-training teacher was not competent to offer criticism of the hon. member's strictures on the Department of Public Instruction. I say that there should be no necessity for a snob approach to manual-training instructors. After all, the greatest Teacher of all time was a carpenter, and from my experience of the manual-training instructors—and I know most of them personally—they would be as good as, or even better than the hon. member; at least they would not be driving or pushing children to gain the scholarship and promotion, as he admitted he did himself in his Address in Reply speech. The ability or capacity to criticise is not based on close contact or being an alleged expert, but on a common-sense assessment of information supplied from reliable sources.

Obviously, the hon. member is not obtaining his information from reliable sources. In short, Mr. Farrell, an allegedly responsible member of Parliament, professing to be an authority on these subjects, does not even first check his material. He criticises teachers' training facilities that do not exist, and suggests that anyone with eyes to observe and intelligence to dissect is not competent to criticise his speech or discuss education because such a man is not a teacher in the real sense. On that basis, I should say that the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha can forget all his ambitions to be Secretary for Public Instruction in the "April Fools' Day" Cabinet published in the "Courier-Mail" prior to the last elections. During the life of this Parliament he should remain silent or go out and get some teaching experience.

Most members of this Assembly, particularly those of us experienced in public life, whether in local authorities or in this Assembly, must view with regret the deterioration in standards, moral values, and ethics of debate that has been demonstrated by some hon. members opposite in their Budget speeches. In addition to the hon. member for Isis, I refer to the hon. members for Whitsunday and Southport, and particularly to one who should be above that sort of thing, the hon. member for Yeronga.

Dealing first with the hon. member for Whitsunday, we had the degrading spectacle of a member of Parliament attempting by innuendo to besmirch the reputation of highly respected citizens with, in my opinion, the long view of furthering his own private business interests.

Then we had a repetition of something on similar lines from the hon. member for Southport, who disregarded the rules of ethics and decency to such an extent that he quoted private letters, used misleading information and, in some cases, near lies, to bolster up a case for his friends.

But the most glaring case of distortion and misrepresentation came from the hon. member for Yeronga, who, without qualification or explanation, stated that the hon. member for Windsor advocated the control of man-power. In discussing our economic problems on a nation-wide basis, and after referring to the fact that luxury trades had an unrestricted run whilst we were under threat of war, the hon. member for Windsor said that the National Government should restrict the production of luxury goods by legislation, thereby making labour available for avenues of useful industrial employment and defence work for the development of this nation. Obviously, it would require a skilful operation, presumably in keeping with the hon. member's private professional level, to convert that statement into an advocacy of controls on man-power. With other hon. members, I deprecate unfair methods of gaining a political advantage by a distortion of statements, especially from hon. members who pose as paragons of political virtue.

In speeches that have been made in this Chamber in recent weeks, including some in this debate—and particularly on the catch-ery by the Leader of the Opposition—this Government have been accused of neglecting the country and giving preference to the city. It was said that the Labour Government, through their Premier and their Cabinet Ministers, dreamed of projects but did not bring them to fruition. It was the Leader of the Opposition who made that statement. But can it be said with any degree of truth that the present Premier, when he was Secretary for Health and Home Affairs, dreamed of the expansion of a Labour-initiated State-wide hospitalisation scheme, including baby clinics and maternity hospitals, but did nothing about it? If hon. members opposite persist in continuing to use such catch-cries, it is time they were debunked, and I propose to read the list of general hospitals and maternity hospitals that have been built or reconstructed in this State since 1923, and I ask country members particularly to take notice of the list, and to make due allowance for the depression period of three years, when nothing was done, and for the six-year period of World War II.

These are the general hospitals that were built or were reconstructed: St. George, Dirranbandi, Mungindi, Biloela, Baralaba, Brisbane, Nambour, Gordonvale, Charleville, Morven, Chinchilla, Jubilee, Jandowae, Forsayth, Georgetown, Innisfail, Boonah, Esk, Laidley,

Longreach, Mareeba, Chillagoe, Mt. Mulligan, Miles, Mossman, Mt. Isa, Cracow, Eidsvold, Monto, Ogmoo, Roma, Wallumbilla, Springsure, Stanthorpe, Oakey, Millmerran, Townsville, Ingham, Tully, Thursday Island.

Then there is a long list of maternity hospitals, from the top of Queensland to the bottom, and out to the Far West, numbering 87—40 general hospitals built or reconstructed and 87 maternity hospitals.

I come back to the subject of education and I refer to the speech delivered on Tuesday by the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt. Without any pre-discussion on the matter I discover that he has ideas similar to my own on the subject of technical education and the training of apprentices. Without in any way being boastful I should say that I could be considered an authority on this subject, because of my experience in serving for five years in the Department of Public Works as an apprentice plumber, followed by 15 years as a tradesman. During the two years I worked in England I made the important study of technical education a fetish and I have continued to make a close study of it since my return. I had three years' experience in the Army in supervising the whole of the trade training in the metropolitan area.

I want to tie up my remarks with vocational guidance. The State Government are to be congratulated on some of their innovations in education, but I do not think they go far enough. That is why I am a little concerned at the reference contained in the 74th annual report of the Secretary for Public Instruction on the subject of guidance services, which says—

“Viewed broadly, guidance is a process of helping the individual to discover and develop his best potentialities for personal happiness and social usefulness. Guidance is a talent search—a search for every child's special gifts. By means of observation, interviews, tests, and other techniques, every pupil is helped to discover his potentialities—his abilities, interests, and needs. It follows from this that guidance is a continuous process which must form an integral part of the education service. It should not be regarded as something apart from the school system, something to be considered only when the pupil is about to leave school.

“The aim has therefore been to establish a guidance service which operates as a school activity. The staff of guidance officers was not large enough to enable this service to be provided in all metropolitan State primary schools. It has been necessary to provide at the Research and Guidance Branch Office facilities for guidance for any juvenile who seeks help.”

The report then goes on to deal with staff and accommodation and makes reference to guidance in schools, particularly metropolitan primary schools and to the following procedure, which was adopted—

“1. A battery of psychological tests was administered to all seventh grade pupils.

“2. Every potential school-leaver from the sixth and seventh grades was interviewed.

“3. Information on occupations was provided through class talks, films, pamphlets, and during the interview.

“4. All relevant information concerning the pupil was entered upon a record card.

“5. Parents were interviewed by appointment.”

Then there is this most important extract—

“The purpose of the interview was largely to gather information about the pupil concerning his physical condition, his hobbies and special interests, and his educational and vocational plans. When required, information on careers most suited to the pupil's interests and abilities was given. In cases where the pupil had very vague plans for his future career a re-interview was arranged. The commonest problems met with seventh grade pupils were:—

- (i) a lack of knowledge of occupations,
- (ii) a lack of knowledge of secondary courses, and
- (iii) wrong ideas about apprenticeship.

That is very important. The disclosure there shows that the youngsters disclosed during the interview a lack of idea about an occupation and wrong ideas about apprenticeship.

That brings me back to my point. The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt made reference to two examinations. One was to be along different lines to the academic scholarship. He suggested it perhaps be not quite as severe in certain subjects, although rated on the same level, so that the boy studies for a particular scholarship and does not feel any loss of prestige. In 1917 two types of scholarship were granted, one being a trade scholarship and the other a State scholarship. The boy could sit for both examinations or one and if he passed both he had a choice of going to a grammar school or a technical college, where he studied for two years for a trade and then sat for a trade junior examination. For some reason that scheme developed into the State Industrial High School, and it is my opinion that the Government might consider a reversion to that method.

In my first speech in this Parliament I argued that there should be an extension of manual training schools and industrial science. I hardly think the scheme goes far enough. I remember that in the days I speak of approximately 800 pupils sat for the scholarship examination on a competitive basis and only 50 scholarships were granted. The students studied for four hours each morning on Trade Practical work. The first day they studied plumbing, the second carpentering, the third engineering, the fourth electrical work, and the fifth trade theoretical subjects. My idea is to tie all this up with vocational guidance. I think that scheme is worked too much on a theoretical basis and not enough on a practical basis. As boys at schools have disclosed a lack of knowledge of occupations we might, if

costs are too great, to put the scheme on a full-time basis, co-opt officers in the Department of Public Works, where we have experienced men, to go to the schools and "sell" trades to the boys prior to their vocational-guidance interview. It appears to me that the vocational teachers are wasting their time if they discover that the boys do not have a preliminary knowledge of a trade, and they proceed to test them. Therefore, an academic qualification for a guidance officer does not appear essential for preliminary testing.

I have made reference to my Army experiences. We had there representatives of all trades, who were grouped in Trade groups 1, 2 or 3 and we managed to train thousands of soldiers in the Central Technical College in the particular trades they desired. Prior to their period at the college these soldiers had to undergo a particular test, which was a more practical test than a psychological test to prove whether they were suited for a particular calling. We discovered—and I imagine we should discover it in the schools if we could only get to the boys between the ages of 10 and 12—that some farmers become better fitters and turners, and also mechanics, than those who were trained as apprentices in those trades. We discovered also that public servants without any training were natural tradesmen. The degree of efficiency these people attained after three months' training subsequent to the trade test was amazing. I suggest that if it is too expensive to employ people on a full-time basis we have men in the Department of Public Works who could be co-opted for an hour or two each day to go out to the metropolitan schools and explain this scheme. The same thing could be done in other centres. At the same time they would "sell" trades to the boys, not only carpentering and sheet-metal working but other trades as well, and those men at the same time could subject the boys to a minor trade test to ascertain more specifically than the vocational-guidance teachers whether the boys were suitable for the particular trade in which they took an interest.

I would ask the Government to investigate the possibility of introducing two examinations, which would mean an alteration in the syllabus. One lot of boys would be sitting for a different examination to the academic scholarship: it could be called a trade scholarship. I would suggest that the subjects be expanded from the existing subjects in manual training, that is, carpentering and sheet-metal work.

In vocational guidance, I cannot understand why the scheme at the present time should be restricted to 15 metropolitan schools any more than I can understand why manual training and domestic science should be restricted to particular schools. I think the hon. member for Yeronga complained that a domestic-science school was to be incorporated in the East Brisbane school and he was dissatisfied that 10,000 pupils on the South Side would have to go to the East Brisbane school for part-time instruction in those subjects,

or be denied that instruction. I suggested some months ago that if shortage of materials was the reason for not building domestic science and manual-training blocks attached to schools, it would not cost much to convert the underneath part of the existing schools, where playground facilities are sufficient.

I have been through the mill and I know how much it means to the boy who is backward academically to discover in a manual training school that he is more adept at practical work than the more advanced academic boy. I know how much satisfaction he gains when he realises that he is as good as, if not better, than the boy who is ahead of him in ordinary school work; therefore I cannot advocate too strongly the expansion of those schools.

**Mr. MORRIS** (Mt. Coot-tha) (11.58 a.m.): One of the highlights in our parliamentary session is the introduction of the Budget, because it gives hon. members an opportunity of looking at the expenditure in the various departments and comparing it with that of previous years and pointing out to the Government what they believe to be their sins of omission and commission in those departments.

I have gone through the Budget and on page 29 I find that the Department of Public Works requirements for the coming year are £639,086, as against an actual expenditure last year of £559,565. When I refer to the estimates of expenditure from Trust and Special Funds, on page 97, I notice something that is of great interest, I am sure, to many members of this Committee. From these funds last year we expended £1,478,062 and this year we are budgeting for the sum of £6,750,000, which is a very great increase. Much of that extra expenditure, of course, is to pay for prefabricated houses and so forth. Personally, I am very keen to see us get more houses in Queensland for our people, but in view of that very much greater expenditure, which highlights the work of the Department of Public Works and Housing and the Housing Commission, we should give much thought to the administration of those departments to be very sure that the public moneys are being spent to the best possible advantage.

Before continuing with my comments in that regard, I wish to say one or two things about the speech just made by the hon. member for Kurilpa. It is interesting to note that he, quite evidently, judging from his comments, has followed some of my speeches in this Chamber. Although there are many things on which we disagree, I should like to say here that I wholeheartedly agree with his advocacy of vocational guidance. Before I rose to speak I was sitting at the table looking up the speech I made on that subject some years ago and I should like to quote it. I am not sure how many years ago it was but it would be three or four and I remember pointing out that it was a grave disadvantage to the young people of Queensland that there were so few vocational-guidance experts in Queensland, although the system had been operating successfully, as the hon. member

said, in the Army and other places, particularly in America. It seemed to me a great pity that such a scheme could not be enlarged very considerably in Queensland. I do not propose to discuss education this morning and I make that comment only to show the hon. member that in that instance I agree with him to a very great extent.

But there is one thing on which I completely disagree with the hon. member. He definitely misquoted the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for Coorparoo, who, he said, had advocated retrenchment in the Public Service. That is not true. The hon. member for Coorparoo has never advocated retrenchment in the Public Service. He has advocated greater economy in the Public Service, but when that statement was made he most particularly said he did not advocate retrenchment within the Public Service. He went even further and gave the definite assurance that he would oppose retrenchment in the Public Service. He said that he believed in efficiency within it and that over a period of time in certain branches of the Public Service—and mark this well—he did not advocate additional recruitment but in other branches he advocated considerably greater recruitment. Of course, quite obviously one of these branches was that which deals with the education of the people, in other words, the teachers of our schools.

No person in this Chamber has been more outspoken than I about the urgent need for getting more teachers. I do not believe that we should merely spend our time criticising a lack within a Government department unless we can show some means of improving that state of affairs. A reference to "Hansard" will show that on many occasions I have made constructive suggestions that, had they been put into effect, would have increased the number of teachers. For instance, I remember on one occasion suggesting that we should go in more for recruiting of teachers from overseas. I know for a positive fact that very little has been done in that regard.

The hon. member for Isis is a real authority on education. Incidentally, if the hon. member for Kurilpa seeks to worry me about his views on the Ministry of Education and that sort of thing, I should like him to realise that his comments pass over my head. I have not the slightest interest in them. The hon. member for Isis made use of a Press cutting yesterday that said British teachers would go into bush schools in Victoria. It reported that more than 100 young British ex-servicemen are being trained for one-teacher schools in Victoria's rural districts. That State is putting into operation a scheme I suggested some time ago.

A question was asked by the hon. member for Kedron as to the trades and callings of those people who have come into Australia under the migration scheme in the past three years. The answer reveals that in the last three years we in Queensland have received the grand total of 42 teachers from overseas. Compare that number with the number of those who have come to Victoria in one batch. I stand to be corrected on that—I am

not suggesting that they all came out on one boat; what I mean is that they are all ready to go to these small schools. In view of that number, we can say that Queensland's quota has been tragic indeed. Had we pursued a policy similar to that of Victoria we should not have schools with 60, 70 and 80 pupils in one class. It does not need any member of this Assembly to elaborate on the grave disadvantages that accrue to the children in such large classes.

I would further remind hon. members that it is in the junior grades that this is more noticeable than in any other and I realise that it is probably for this reason that when children get to the senior classes, Grades VI and VII, they have, under present circumstances, to be crammed for scholarships. Moreover, it does not remove this thought: by so doing, these children are missing, to a great extent, the real foundation of their education. It is a self-evident fact that unless children get a good grounding, their later education will be nullified to a great extent.

I propose to speak in some detail of the Queensland Housing Commission and the Department of Public Works. I should first of all like to discuss the method adopted in Queensland for repairing and building schools. If the Department of Public Instruction requires any new school building, or requires maintenance given to a school building, or attention to a school, it is not allowed of its own right to get the job done but has to appeal to the Department of Public Works, no matter how large or how small the job may be. In other words, the Department of Public Works has the primary interest of looking after matters within its own jurisdiction and has only spare time, spare men, and spare money available for anything required by the Department of Public Instruction. I say that that policy is fundamentally wrong. The Department of Public Instruction is placed in the position of a mendicant, having to go cap-in-hand to the Department of Public Works, which, as I said, is more interested in its own business than the Department of Public Instruction.

I suggest that the method that is adopted within the Army would be the only really satisfactory method for adoption within the Department of Public Instruction. Within the 9th Division of the Army—and I know something of that division—there were divisional headquarters and, subject to the command of divisional headquarters, there were three brigades. In addition to those three brigades there were other ancillary troops of a general nature, and one of the formations attached to the 9th Division—and it was part of it—was the 9th Division cavalry regiment. In these days of modern warfare, a cavalry regiment consists not of troops mounted on horses, but of troops equipped with tanks. Within that cavalry regiment were cavalry squadrons, and wherever a brigade was operating it could get one or more squadrons from the cavalry regiment to assist it. A squadron could be detached from its own headquarters and attached to whatever brigade required it for a period of one, three, six, or 12 months, as required.

If such a scheme as that worked successfully under the very severe conditions under which an army operates, why cannot the Department of Public Works have within it certain sections that can be attached to the Department of Public Instruction to carry out that department's requirements in the building, maintenance, and repair of schools, or whatever work might be necessary? In the event of heavy demands by the Department of Public Instruction for new buildings and for repairs and painting, and so on, which no doubt there are today, two sections could be detached from the Department of Public Works and sent to the Department of Public Instruction for as long as they were needed. I believe that is a sound plan and one that could, with great advantage, be put into operation in Queensland.

I know that the Executive Council is meeting today and that the Cabinet Ministers are probably attending that meeting, but I hope that the Secretary for Public Instruction and the Secretary for Public Works, Housing, and Local Government, and the Premier, will give careful consideration to my suggestion. I feel that no Secretary for Public Instruction and no Director-General of Education, whoever he may be, or whatever his political colour may be, could object to the adoption of such a method, because it would make their work much more efficient. Although I may frequently differ from the Secretary for Public Instruction, I still believe that the Ministers concerned are trying their limited best to do as much as possible for their respective departments, and the adoption of my suggestion would, I believe, help their departments to operate more satisfactorily.

I think we should consider the methods in operation in New South Wales and Victoria. I have made certain inquiries and have learned that the Department of Public Instruction in New South Wales has within itself a number of sub-departments, one of which is a board of architects, and another a building-maintenance section. Those sections are entirely responsible for the work in their own department, such as repairs and maintenance, and have no responsibility to the Department of Public Works. Any large construction work, of course, is carried out by the latter. Thus, you will see, Mr. Farrell, that the method I have suggested is, to a very great measure at any rate, actually in operation in New South Wales, and I have been told on very good authority that it is operating very successfully.

Let us now consider the position in Victoria. The Department of Public Works in that State handles all money for building purposes. However, when the Department of Public Instruction requires a new school it calls for tenders for the erection of the building and authorises the Department of Public Works to do any work that is required. Instead of being a mendicant, and going cap-in-hand to the Department of Public Works, it authorises that department to do the work. More important still, the Department of Public Instruction has the final say as to what is to be done. The Depart-

ment of Public Works must carry out its instructions. There is a suggestion, not a contentious one, but one that would make for considerable improvement in the operations of the Department of Public Works in Queensland.

Certain areas were added to my electorate consequent upon the redistribution of electoral seats and a number of schools were included. I refer first of all to the Lower Brookfield school, one of the oldest in the State, but also one that is a real disgrace to the department. I do not blame the present Minister for that because I do not think he would say that it should not receive any attention. Then I refer to the Kenmore State school, only a small one I know, but another that is in a bad condition. I have made reference to it before in this Chamber. If a child wants to use a water tap it must walk several yards from the school, usually through long grass—unless the school committee cuts it, because the department does not help the committee to cut it—and perhaps get soaking wet. It is not fair to ask a child to do that. How would any hon. member like to think that a child of his attending the school had to get soaking wet before it could reach a tap it wanted to use? I see the hon. member for Buranda laughing, but this is no laughing matter.

**Mr. BROWN:** I rise to a point of order. I was not laughing at what the hon. member was saying; I was laughing at something that I was reading in the newspaper.

**Mr. MORRIS:** I accept the hon. member's explanation. I saw the smile come over his face and I had no idea that he was being amused by something he was reading in the comic strip in "The Telegraph."

Let me proceed. I was referring to the Kenmore State school. I have appealed to the department to make some improvements there and, goodness knows, my requests have not been very heavy. I have asked the department to raise the school a little so that the floor underneath may be cemented and conveniences provided there. Nothing whatever has been done.

Then there is the Fig Tree Pocket school which is in a similar condition. That, too, is in my area. Then there is the Enoggera school, which I have mentioned on numerous occasions in this Chamber. I am sure that hon. members here have heard me urging the department to carry out necessary improvements there. At this school is a bank a few feet high and a guard fence was built round it to protect the children, but that fence has fallen down and although repeated requests have been made to the department to have it repaired nothing has been done. No one can convince me that the Secretary for Public Instruction would not give authority for this work to be done, because I know that he would be sorry indeed to think that any child fell over the bank and was injured because of the laxity of one department or the other.

Then there is the Mitchelton school, and I am sure hon. members have heard me make

repeated requests for improvements there. I have asked for them time out of number. I have drawn the attention of the Secretary for Public Works to the need for improvements at this school for a considerable time, because of the anticipated growth in the area, yet the school has been allowed to remain in its present condition for a considerable time.

Let me allude to another matter, which is perhaps of more intimate interest to the Department of Public Works, Housing and Local Government. It is the duty of this department and the Queensland Housing Commission to do what they can to help to get buildings erected, but it should not be the function of the department or commission to become builders of houses. We have heard much in this debate of the contribution the Government are alleged to have made to home-building. I say quite frankly that that claim is a lot of nonsense. It is all very well for the Government, through their Ministers and supporters in this Chamber, to point to the number of houses built under Government supervision, but have the Government done anything to produce one more builder? Have the Government done anything to provide one more stick of material? No special magic attaches to a Government builder; he is a builder whether he is working for the Government or for a private contractor. He will build as many houses, perhaps a lot more, when working for a private contractor than when working for the Government. I go further and say that not only will he build a lot more houses but he will build the houses a lot better if he is working for a private contractor and not the Government. I say that quite definitely and I propose to prove quite definitely how houses that are being built for the Government in dozens and dozens of cases are a shocking indictment of the Government.

I have in the past six weeks inspected houses that have been built by this Government, or under the State Advances Corporation system. If they were built by private builders under the supervision of private architects they would be condemned by hon. members opposite. I can almost imagine what they would say. They would accuse the architects and builders of these houses of being racketeers. They would accuse them of building jerrybuilt houses, of robbing the workers, and taking the money out of the pockets of those who could afford it least. The Government in building houses have done more to take money out of the pockets of the workers and done more to contribute to jerrybuilt houses, and done more to contribute to future slums than any private architects or builders working on their own account. I go further and say had this been done by private builders the Government would have proceeded against them for fraud or for all sorts of offences. I will go on and prove that.

Buildings are being erected today that will not stand up to the work required of them and will not stand up for the years that they should. We know that private contractors are faced with the problem of finding

materials today and consequently much of their building work is ineffective. That is a direction in which the Government could automatically release a large number of builders to build homes instead of going round looking for material. It is the Government's responsibility to find materials and it is the Government's responsibility to find workmen and builders.

Let me digress for a moment. If the hon. member for Kedron, if the firm of Courtalds, or if the Nuffield organisation wanted to expand considerably in Queensland and no employees were available in Queensland, would they start crying about not being able to get enough employees? They would not, but they would send experts to the places where the tradesmen could be recruited. This Government could make a greater contribution towards the building of houses in Queensland if they would send their specialists over to England and other parts of the world where they could recruit first-class builders, bricklayers and other tradesmen who would contribute towards the erection of the houses we need.

**Mr. Rasey:** Mr. Goffin, the Brisbane City Council engineer, returned recently and said he had no success.

**Mr. MORRIS:** The Brisbane City Council has brought out many first-class tradesmen and engineers from England. Only a couple of days ago I had the experience of listening to the hon. member for Buranda bewailing and bemoaning the fact that the Brisbane City Council had somebody in England recruiting experts and that it looked after its experts by providing flats for them. Why do not members opposite learn to speak with one voice? I know the hon. member for Windsor is a newcomer, and I respect many of his views—I cannot say that for many of his colleagues—and I feel that when he is here a little longer he will realise that his views, unfortunately, are only supported by a minority among his own people.

This Government could make an infinitely greater contribution towards getting houses built if they recruited expert tradesmen from overseas. They could put up a much better effort in the Department of Public Instruction if they did the same in regard to teachers. The other day I heard a member opposite complaining because the hon. member for Roma suggested that the Government should open up the Carnarvon Ranges for the purpose of bringing out the timber that is there. The Government should get on with the job and make material available. The Government could do a great deal in making building material available. The Government are doing more to build jerry-built houses and "put over" inferior dwellings on the people than any private contractor.

I will not just leave that statement without supporting it with facts. Let me prove it to the Committee. I have some very good proof here. Only a little while ago—late in 1948—a man who has given me the right to use his name, McPhie, asked the Housing Commission to build him a home. It was

under the old State Advances Corporation principle. On 24 November a contract and general conditions of contract were signed by the builder and Mr. and Mrs. McPhie, and one of the conditions was that the building had to be erected to the full satisfaction of the Queensland Housing Commission. I make that statement because it will be of importance later.

I have here a copy of a letter of 20 October, 1948, where tentative assessment fees was made by the Queensland Housing Commission: valuation and supervision fee, £28; first plan £5 5s. 6d., second plan £28—a total of £61 5s. 6d. That is the origin of this building. On 11 May, 1950, the Housing Commission told Mr. McPhie it had paid £449 for the first payment on the building, and on 19 June another letter from the Housing Commission showed that a further £277 had been paid.

This is where I come to something rather interesting, and I hope it will be noted by the Minister in charge of housing. Subsequent to the receipt of the letter of 19 June, Mr. McPhie decided to install a certain drain under his house. He dug this drain and in the course of this work had occasion to dig round some of the concrete stumps under the dwelling. When he did so he felt very dissatisfied with some of the stumps that were revealed, and so he wrote the following letter to the Commissioner for Housing—

“Dear Sir,

“I have good reason to believe that the specified footings have not been provided under concrete stumps and desire that the final payment due to the contractor be withheld until this matter has been satisfactorily settled.”

**Mr. Turner:** A contractor built that house for the Housing Commission?

**Mr. MORRIS:** Yes, and the Queensland Housing Commission charged the person for whom it was being built £61 5s. 6d. for building plans, supervision, and valuation fees, most of which comes under the heading of supervision fee. It will thus be seen that it was being built by the Housing Commission and it was in the position of architect for the erection of the building.

In his letter Mr. McPhie further states—

“Also I would like to state that the floor joists are not as specified. Out of 25 joists specified 5 inches by 2 inches there are nine that come up to those measurements.”

**Mr. Turner:** Nine of the 25?

**Mr. MORRIS:** Leaving 16 that did not come up to measurements. The letter proceeds—

“—the balance are made up of 4½ inches by 2 inches and 4¾ inches by 2 inches.”

Let me digress for a moment, Mr. Farrell. I believe that the reason why these timbers for floor joists and so forth do not come up to specification was that timber such as scribbly gum was used, and that is a type of timber that should never be put into any house at all. After what I have seen out

there, and I will have some examples shortly, I am satisfied that it should never be used in any building.

The letter continues—

“That the guttering is not riveted at all angles and joints and this job collectively is not finished in a tradesmanlike manner, as short pieces of guttering have been put in between angles and next length in quite a lot of places.”

“That the sill in the lounge room of the dwelling is out of line and far from being finished off in a tradesmanlike manner as stated in specifications.”

**Mr. Burrows:** Do you say they were scribbly-gum joists?

**Mr. MORRIS:** Yes.

**Mr. Burrows:** I will go out with you at the luncheon adjournment and see them.

**Mr. MORRIS:** I am sure that Mr. Galvin, of the Queensland Housing Commission would be glad to take the hon. member out. He has every right to be utterly and completely ashamed of this iniquity he put over this man.

**Mr. Hilton:** Who put it over?

**Mr. MORRIS:** Mr. Galvin and his officers.

**Mr. Hilton:** You know it is not true. It is deliberately untrue.

**Mr. MORRIS:** I will prove the case. I am not holding the Minister responsible, because I know he has looked into the matter and did all he could. I believe that Mr. Galvin is pulling the wool over the eyes of the Minister as much as he did over the eyes of his predecessor.

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

**Mr. MORRIS:** I will prove it later on and the Minister might change his tune. I might say I am not blaming either of the Ministers, as Mr. Galvin has been pulling the wool over their eyes all along the line, and no department was so miserably or badly conducted as this department, and I put the blame on Mr. Galvin. I am not beating about the bush; I am saying what I think.

There was no reply to that letter from Mr. McPhie, and the next step is that Mr. McPhie wrote again to the Commission in these terms—

“It is now almost two weeks since yourself, Mr. Marsden, Mr. Burgess, and myself met at my dwelling at Mitchelton to discuss faults in the construction of the dwelling.

“I would like to draw to your notice that I have received no explanation to my claim of fifty pounds (£50) compensation for work not carried out according to specifications. I have written to the Commissioner asking that final payment to Mr. Burgess be withheld until these matters have been satisfactorily settled, but so far have received no acknowledgment to that letter. Letter written 17 July.

"I would also like to state that I have already paid the interest owing by me on the payments you people have made to Mr. Burgess, and I am being pressed by the owner of the premises I now occupy to vacate them as soon as possible, and that I am also paying a high rental here."

The man was asking for finality. That letter was sent by registered post.

Here in my hand, for all hon. members to see, are photographs of two of the things being complained of by Mr. McPhie. The first photograph depicts the alleged concrete stumps under the dwelling. I should say that when this dwelling was being erected there was no fence, and a cow got in and leaned up against one of the cement posts and broke the cement post off a foot or two from the base. It had to be dug out. The base of the stump is lying on the ground and is seen in the photograph. Hon. members will see from these photographs that the base is not according to what is required in the specifications. Hon. members will also see that there are no reinforcing rods in the posts and Mr. McPhie alleges that there are not the specified four rods of reinforcing in many of the posts and that the reinforcing did not go down into the base of the posts.

**Mr. Power:** What is the name of the builder?

**Mr. MORRIS:** Burgess. The Minister should know him. He used to be a building inspector in the department.

**Mr. Power:** I do not know him.

**Mr. MORRIS:** The department should know him. Does the Minister want to know the name of the inspector who gave the O.K. on these stumps?

**Mr. Power:** I do not care. Tell me.

**Mr. MORRIS:** An inspector called Power. He gave the O.K. I had no intention of revealing his name till the Secretary for Mines and Immigration asked me. However, I will now go further and say that the owner of this building is prepared to challenge the Minister concerned or the inspector or anybody else to dig out these posts, and see for himself that they are not reinforced as they should be. If he is proved to be wrong, he will bear the whole cost.

That is one example of the faulty workmanship that is being permitted by the Queensland Housing Commission. I have here a photo. of one of the beams in this house; it is cracked and twisted. I invite hon. members to examine this photograph and have a look at the nailing. That is the type of work that is being done out there. The hon. member for Port Curtis might be interested to see this place, because he will see the scribbly gum that has been used in it. He will see, too, that of 25 joists, only nine are of the correct size. In addition, they are built up underneath the flooring with wedges to make them fit. I can show the hon. member for Port Curtis, or the Minister or anybody else, that there is as much as  $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of an inch between the floor

boards. In one length of 9 feet of the flooring of this building, there is a difference of  $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of an inch in the flooring itself, it is so uneven. The Minister knows these things because I am sure he has read the report, and I wish I had more time in which to deal with them.

The builder claims to have conformed with the specifications in the building of the stumps, and to have a letter from the inspector certifying that the stumps are all right. The specification requires the inspector to see the reinforcing rods before the concrete is poured. I do not know whether they were seen by the inspector and subsequently taken out by the builder; all I know is that the rods are not there now.

A conference was held about this matter in the Commissioner's office and, according to a letter written by Mr. McPhie, this is what happened: He says—

"As far as I can remember, this is an outline of the conversation that took place between the Housing Commissioner, Mr. Calvin, Superintendent of Works, Mr. King, the builder of the dwelling, Mr. Burgess, and myself at the Commissioner's office, 5th floor, State Insurance Building, on Tuesday, 15 August, 1950. The discussion commenced at 10.30 a.m. and lasted until 12.20 p.m.

"The impression I got from the first few minutes was that Galvin, King and Burgess were friendly and far from being strangers. I understand Burgess is an ex-inspector of the department. Galvin gave me a reasonable hearing all through, but tried to ridicule some of my statements.

"My first statement: 'Mr. Galvin, I claim that the foundations on the stumps are not as specified.'

"Galvin: 'I have Mr. King's report here and he says you have no argument there as the extra cement around the stumps, starting at ground level, is quite sufficient in that type of ground.'

They disregard the specifications altogether and say, 'It is dry ground. You do not need to have a footing round the concrete stumps.' That is the way the Housing Commission builds its places!

Mr. McPhie continues—

"Myself: 'How would Mr. King know? Is he an authority?' Galvin: 'Yes, Mr. McPhie, he is.'

"Galvin: 'What do you think of that type of ground yourself? Is it solid?'

"Answer: 'I would not know. All I want is the specified footings on the stumps, as that is what I am paying for. If they are not there, I want £50 compensation for the stumps alone.'

"Galvin: 'What alternative have you to offer?'

"Myself: 'Jack the house up and take out all the stumps and put in new ones with the correct specified footings on them.'

"Galvin: 'And what other complaints have you, Mr. McPhie?'

"Myself: 'They are there in front of you, Mr. Galvin, on the file on your desk.'

"Galvin: 'I know they are, but I would like to hear them again from you.'

"Here Galvin called for a Miss Love, who came into the office with a notebook and pencil. I asked what she was there for. Galvin said, to jot down my complaints. I then said I would not speak in front of her.

"Galvin: 'Mr. McPhie, we are not trying to catch you, and we will not ask you to sign anything.'"

And so it goes on, all the way through.

That is a record of what happened at the conference and it is proof that McPhie complained, but got nowhere with the builder in having his complaints rectified.

This matter was taken up with the Minister and the Housing Commission wrote to the builder. Presumably the Minister has tried to have the matter rectified. I have here a copy of a letter written by the Housing Commission to Burgess, dated 18 August, which says—

"With reference to your recent discussion with the Commissioner, Borrower and Superintendent of Works and later with the Superintendent of Works on the site, regarding the above-mentioned job, I would advise that you are hereby instructed to carry out corrective work as follows:—

"1. Remove bulge in floor of dining-room and hallway; recamp floor where necessary; make good where daylight is showing through same."

Daylight showing through the floor: Has the builder done anything? No.

The letter proceeds—

"2. Remove angle-stop under sill on left-hand front corner of house and replace same with new, in correct manner."

Nothing has been done.

It goes on—

"3. Remove and make good faulty sill to group of sashes over front steps and also make good any disturbed work."

Nothing done!

It continues—

"4. Remove short piece of spouting to raking fascia over stove recess; make good in one piece between angles; check all angles to spouting for required lapse and have same riveted; make good all disturbed work."

Nothing done.

Further—

"Check and ease all joinery and leave same working freely."

The only attempt to make the house livable was to provide one-inch quadrants under window-sills but they have not been painted. And so it goes on, but not one of these things has been done. I have a whole sheaf of letters here on the matter but time will not permit of my reading them. They carry the same story. However, on 3 September, the builder, in accordance with the instructions from the Housing Commission, went

along to see the owner to try to come to some compromise and have something done. Still nothing has been done to rectify the defects in the building.

The latest I have here is a copy of a record of a conversation between Mr. Galvin, Mr. Wiseman, Mr. Burgess and Mr. McPhie. I propose to read it because it is very important. It is as follows—

"I drew Mr. Galvin's and Mr. Wiseman's attention to one joist in particular which I now know to be scribbly gum, and stated that this timber should not have been put in the dwelling.

"Mr. Wiseman: According to the classification of timber today the using of scribbly gum is permissible.

"Myself: You may be right and you may not, but if Mr. Burgess goes ahead and does this corrective work, I will still fight you on the faulty foundations."

On 23 October the Housing Commission wrote out a list of the things that had to be done to repair the building, but up to last Saturday these matters had not been corrected.

I now come to the final point in this case. Here we have a man being robbed right along the line.

**Mr. Dewar:** A working man.

**Mr. MORRIS:** Yes, a working man.

**Mr. Burrows:** Whom by?

**Mr. MORRIS:** The Queensland Housing Commission. The Queensland Housing Commission is receiving a fee of nearly £60 to supervise the building, to see that it is erected properly. They are the people who are robbing him. I have been to the Minister about it.

**Mr. Hilton:** Has the contractor been paid for the building?

**Mr. MORRIS:** No, not to my knowledge. I have been to the Minister about it and only last week I said to him, "Whose responsibility is it finally if the builder will not do the work, to see that he does?" and the Minister said in reply, "The contract is one between the builder and the owner and the owner will have to proceed against the builder in law to see that he does."

**Mr. Hilton:** I did not say that.

**Mr. MORRIS:** The Queensland Housing Commission is getting about £60 in fees to supervise the building. Now, who is robbing this man? The department is charging a supervising fee.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. MORRIS:** If any hon. member opposite would like to give me an extension of time I could give them a lot more instances. I want to mention another case, that of Mr. Peel. The Minister knows all about this case too. On 1 October, 1948, Mr. Peel made an application to buy a house from the Queensland Housing Commission.

**Mr. Power:** You want to be sure of your facts.

**Mr. MORRIS:** One fact that I am sure about is that Mr. Peel is a minute secretary of an A.L.P. branch, that he has appealed to the hon. gentleman and to other Ministers, yet nothing has been done in his case.

**Mr. Power:** That is not true. The contractor was brought back when I was the Minister and made to repair that house.

**Mr. MORRIS:** The Minister is only interrupting me so that I shall have less time to talk on this matter. As I said, on 1 October, 1948, Mr. Peel made application to buy his home and on 1 October he received the following letter—

“With reference to your application to purchase the dwelling known as Brisbane 1244, situated at Edith street, Enoggera, I wish to advise that it has been approved to sell the property to you.

“The Commissioner is not yet in a position to advise you the purchase price thereof, but will do so at the earliest opportunity.”

That was on 1 October and on 13 October the Commission wrote—

“Further to the Commission’s letter of the 1st instant, I wish to advise that if you make an offer of £1,625 for the dwelling known as Brisbane 1244 on a deposit of £375, such offer will be submitted to the Minister for his consideration.”

The next letter was from Mr. Peel to the Commission on 14 October to the effect that the price was a bit high and asking if it was possible to have a revaluation. On 12 November the Commission wrote—

“With reference to your application to purchase property Brisbane 1244, Edith street, Enoggera, I have to advise that price of this house, which is now under consideration, may be around the £1,625 mark.

“However, the Commission cannot sell the house to you except on completion, but in the circumstances it is approved to set the house aside for sale to you. As evidence of your good faith you may lodge the amount £325 suggested by you. Such sum will be placed in your name to the Commission’s Savings Bank Trust Account, where it will earn the interest allowed by the bank.

“By this action you do not in any way commit yourself.....”

The next letter is dated 16 December, 1948—the house was still under consideration—and this is what it says—

“With reference to your application to purchase the dwelling known as Brisbane 1244, I wish to advise that the Minister has approved of the sale to you for approximately £1,575 with land on freehold tenure on deposit of £325.”

**Mr. Power:** That was the figure in mind.

**Mr. MORRIS:** Time will not permit me to read all the letters, but I come to a letter

from the Commission dated 10 March, 1949, roughly 18 months afterwards, to Mr. Peel, and it says—

“Referring to your letter of the 25th January, I have to advise that the Commission made application for a fire policy for £1420 cover, which is the full amount of the contract price of your dwelling.” Bear in mind “which is the full amount of the contract price of your dwelling.”

**Mr. Power:** You cannot insure the land.

**Mr. MORRIS:** This house was built by the Housing Commission by day labour, therefore the word “contractor” could only apply to the contractor between the builder and the Commission.

**Mr. Hilton:** That is wrong.

**Mr. MORRIS:** I should like the Crown Law Office to look into that aspect of the matter. The letter continues—

“This includes the building with extras such as bath, stove, sink and wash tubs, the E.C. and fences.”

In the £1,420 figure, the only thing not insured is the land. This man is a good strong supporter of the Labour Party. Good luck to him if that is what he believes! Notwithstanding that, you caught him all along the line and he said so in his letter. Here you tell him in March, 1949, that the cost of the building, excluding the land is £1,420, yet in August this year, nearly two years after he ordered a house, he received a letter from the commission asking him to come into the office, and after he does so, what is said to him? Mr. Galvin said to him, “I am very sorry, I have some bad news for you; your house is not going to cost £1,575 as I told you; it is going to cost £1,875.”

**Mr. Power:** Do you know the reason?

**Mr. MORRIS:** Yes, because you jacked the price up.

**Mr. Power:** Because the development cost of the land could not be ascertained till the date of sale.

**Mr. MORRIS:** This man has been occupying this house for over two years and they wrote and told him he could buy it for £1,575 and then they jacked it up £300. Do you know why they jacked it up? I will tell you. Because when he occupied it he found after two or three weeks that it was falling to bits and he appealed to the then Minister and his reply is on the file here, and he told him it was falling to bits. There was a conference in the Commissioner’s office, and the Minister said, “This man has to get a fair deal; he has to get the house repaired for him,” and Galvin said, “No.”

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

**Mr. MORRIS:** Galvin said, “No.”

**Mr. Power:** That is not true. The man who was supposed to plaster it was recalled to plaster.

**Mr. MORRIS:** He was told it was £1,575 and he was prepared to pay £1,625 and you jacked it up £300 because it was falling

to pieces and you had to spend a couple of hundred to repair it, and you charged this man for it. That is how the Housing Commission is treating these people; it does nothing but rob them right and left. As long as the Housing Commission operates you will continue to rob the people.

There was a house not far away owned by Mrs. Brady, with five children—now that I mentioned her name I hope you do not tip her out—and the ceiling was in a shocking condition. You only need to go to Seven Hills Estate, where they are building houses and I will guarantee 50 per cent. of them will tell you that they have been robbed by the Commission. The Minister says that they only now discovered the price of the property. It was built two years ago.

**Mr. POWER:** I rise to a point of order. The hon. member is misquoting me when he says that I made a statement that we just discovered the price of the house. What I said to the hon. member was that the exact price of the house and the land could not be ascertained till the full cost of the development of the land had been ascertained. That is why the price had not been arrived at.

**Mr. MORRIS:** I am telling the Committee—

(Time expired.)

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca—Premier) (2.15 p.m.): Mr. Farrell—

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. HANLON:** I have not had much opportunity of being present in the Chamber during the currency of this debate, having had to spend a great deal of my time on other matters, but I have been occasionally able to listen to hon. members speaking to this question. I have also had the opportunity of looking through the speeches made by hon. members—very hurriedly, I admit—in my absence. Summing up my impressions of the speeches made by hon. members of the Opposition I can say they remind me of a remark made by an old negress in Virginia at one time, "This country is full of folks dat knows everythin and understands nothin." That very aptly describes the majority of the speeches given by hon. members opposite. They pretend to know everything, but on reading their speeches one realises that they "understand nothing."

My first comment is on the number and variety of misstatements—real political falsehoods told in an attempt to belittle Labour Governments in Australia. I am one of those people who welcome constructive criticism of a Government at any time. I welcome any endeavour any hon. member, no matter on which side of the House he may be, makes to help the Government in looking after the welfare of the people of Queensland, but I do not think hon. members of the Opposition of this Parliament are living up to their obligations to the electors of Queensland when they make use of their seats in this Chamber to endeavour to create false

impressions in the public mind, to mislead the public as to the realities of the problems facing the country today. And today this country is facing big problems.

I have also gained the impression that quite a number of the speeches that have been made by hon. members of the Opposition have been prepared outside this Chamber and in the office of some political organisation.

**An Opposition Member:** That applies to your side, too.

**Mr. HANLON:** I am speaking of my impression of the speeches made by hon. members of the Opposition. There have been speeches made even by members of the Country Party that bear the hallmark of a political organisation with a highly paid and very efficient staff of organisers. For instance, I quote the speech made by the hon. member for Nanango; I think his speech on the Address in Reply was prepared and prompted by somebody else.

**Mr. Macdonald:** I am the member for Nanango and I have not spoken yet.

**Mr. HANLON:** At times I am completely confused with the names of some of the electorates and the members who represent them. I absolve the hon. member of all blame in this connection. The hon. member for Barambah, speaking on the debate on the Address in Reply, made an attack on me based on a broadcast that I delivered from Station 4KQ. I did not think the hon. member spent his Sunday evening listening to ministerial broadcasts. Fortunately I keep a copy of my broadcasts, because I am used to misquotation and misrepresentation. The hon. member reversed the statement I made in that broadcast in order to launch an attack on the Labour Party; he completely reversed the quotation that he alleged was made by me on that occasion.

I do not think he heard the broadcast; he certainly did not get the script of it. If he had asked for it I am sure I should have heard of the request. He would have been welcome to a copy. I kept my own copy.

**Mr. Bjelke-Petersen:** I got the paper report of it.

**Mr. HANLON:** The hon. member has been long enough in this Chamber to know that he should treat newspaper reports with a good deal of suspicion.

**Mr. Nicklin:** He was quite justified in quoting it.

**Mr. HANLON:** He said it was a statement made by me in my broadcast. The famous broadcast about the upper classes, as quoted in the newspaper, should be enough. The statement of that broadcast should have been enough to warn hon. members how little trust they can place in reports by anti-Labour newspapers of speeches made by Labour Ministers. I am quite sure that the hon. member for Barambah's statement bore the brand of a gentleman called Porter or a gentleman called Mitchell. I can almost hear them saying what the hon. member said.

The Leader of the Opposition contributed an article to the "Telegraph"—and we might expect a greater sense of responsibility for his statements from him than the rank and file members opposite—in the "As I see it" column. In it he stated that I had made an agreement with the Government of Victoria for Callide coal. This was in 1948 when Mr. Kent-Hughes was allegedly buying Callide coal. The Leader of the Opposition made the statement that the Queensland Government had made an agreement with Victoria and had broken that agreement. There was not the slightest foundation for such a statement, because no such agreement was ever made, and I think the Leader of the Opposition knows it too. I do not think he is as ignorant as all that of what took place at that period. The fact that Mr. Kent-Hughes came up and flapped his wings and crowed a lot about what he was going to do is no evidence of an agreement between the two Governments. He spoke loudly about what he was going to do. He was reported in the Press—and if he is not correctly reported I deny it for him—as saying that the Queensland Government would not let them have the coal from the Queensland mine that they, the Victorian Government, had developed. What a fantastic thing to say? The proprietors of the mines laughingly stated that all Mr. Kent-Hughes had done was to send them an illustrated catalogue of heavy earth-moving equipment suitable for mines but which could not be obtained. That is the part he played. This sort of thing goes on.

The Leader of the Opposition broke new ground in speaking of defence. Defence is the prerogative or the responsibility of the Federal Government. That hon. gentleman accused the Labour Party of the responsibility for the position of the defence forces in this country and went on to say—

"There is no doubt that the grave position in which we find the defence of the Commonwealth at the present time is due to the lack of responsibility shown by the Labour Party in the Commonwealth sphere in this very important aspect of Commonwealth administration. During the last eight years it has allowed the defences of the Commonwealth to be practically destroyed."

Eight years ago there were virtually no defences in this Commonwealth. The Labour Party had just taken over from a coalition, a Country Party-Labour Government, that folded up like a jack-knife before the approach of the Japanese aggression and left the country quite open to attack without any form of defence whatever.

Those statements do not bring credit upon members of Parliament. Then, listen to the hon. gentleman's quotation about the decline of population in Queensland. He referred to the decline of population in the North and he blames the Labour Party for it.

He says—

"We find that the final figures of the Commonwealth Statistician, based on the censuses of 1933 and of 1947, show that there has been an increase of population

in Brisbane of 102,424 and other cities showed an increase of 41,245, and the rest of the State outside the cities and towns showed a decrease of 3,695."

That period, of course, included the war years, when the majority of the young men of this country either offered themselves or were called up for service, and many others had been called into all kinds of defence work, such as work in munition factories and the Civil Constructional Corps and so on, and were only then beginning to return to their homes. However, in referring to the population of the northern part of the State, he made no reference to the cities, which he included with other cities, such as Brisbane. That sort of thing is an indication of the completely irresponsible statements of hon. members opposite, statements that are calculated to mislead the people.

The hon. member then goes on to say that we have been neglecting this State's assets, that they have deteriorated and the evidence of the deterioration of the State assets that he produces is that the Railway Department is not able to cope with the business offering. Is that not an indication, Mr. Farrell, that the business offering now is greater than it has ever been and that the State is developing and its production is growing to such an extent that we have had to let road transport have what is almost an "open go?" It is not that the State's assets are deteriorating. I suppose, Mr. Farrell, that if we were to check the assets of the State today we should find that they had doubled in value in Australian pounds over the last few years, in the same way as those of any other holder of real estate.

Then we had a broadcast by Mr. T. C. Kerr, M.L.A., over 4KQ, in which he attacked the attitude of the Queensland Government and said that the development of Callide had been hampered. And now listen to this beautiful statement—

"Since July, 1948, Mr. Gardiner of Gardiner & Warner Pty. Ltd. offered the Queensland Government 140 coal trucks free of charge, and further said that the Victorian Government would assist to build a branch line from the field to Calliope, on the main Brisbane to Rockhampton line, a distance of 70 miles, his company being prepared to develop the field to take up to 10,000 tons a week, and have colliers calling at Gladstone. Victoria also offered to supply the rails."

That is nothing but a fantastic falsehood, and is climbing higher in the realms of imagination than any other man in this Chamber has ever climbed, with the possible exception of the hon. member for Kedron. I have never heard such a fantastic statement as that, and there is no truth in it. The hon. member has not the slightest evidence to support such a statement, and no such offer was ever made. The Government of Victoria do not deal with the hon. member I have just quoted, nor do they deal with Gardiner & Warner Pty. Ltd. If the Victorian Government want to deal with the

Queensland Government, the Premier of Victoria approaches the Premier of Queensland.

**Mr. Kerr** interjected.

**Mr. HANLON:** If he was sent to join Santa Claus, the hon. member is not justified in making such a false statement, and I defy him to produce the slightest evidence to justify his making those statements.

We go on to hear the Leader of the Opposition on the 40-hour week. This is one of the very amusing pieces of work that have been going on here. Speaking on 26 October on the Budget debate, the Leader of the Opposition said—

“The 40-hour week, the claim for a basic wage of £10 a week, and the fostering of industrial disruption were all part of the Communist plan to bring about economic and industrial chaos in Australia. The Labour Party of Queensland and the Labour Parties in the other States submitted to the designs of the Communists because they did not have the courage to stand up against them.”

He went on to say—

“The Labour Party of Queensland and the Labour Parties in the other States submitted to the designs of the Communists because they did not have the courage to stand up against them.”

He goes on to say further—

“Fancy agreeing to reducing working hours after a world war of destruction when we were suffering from a shortage of all essentials of life and when the obvious thing to do was to work harder and produce more so as to bring about some real improvement in the living standards of the people. But because political expediency ruled and governed the decisions of the Labour Party that party decided to buy the Red support and get the backing of the Communist Party by falling in with the Communist plan in respect of this matter.”

He goes on to say—

“Mr. Chifley supported the 40-hour week and made a substantial contribution to creating the Treasurer's difficulty today.”

I think hon. members know that I do not get on very well with the Communist Party.

**Mr. Nicklin:** You marched pretty well with them in May last.

**Mr. HANLON:** They marched behind me and if you want to do something worth while for this country then march behind the Leader of the Labour Party.

Let me develop my story. It is suggested by hon. members opposite that the 40-hour week is demanded by the Communist Party. Let us suppose it is. I have a certain respect for a fellow who has the guts to be a Communist but not for the despicable creature who wishes to be a fellow-traveller with the Communists and who does the dirty work of the Communists. What is the hon. the Leader of the Opposition doing sitting there with the collaborators of the Communist Party?

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Kedron, and all other members of the Liberal Party voted for the 40-hour week and so, according to the Leader of the Opposition, are collaborators with the Communist Party. They apparently were also seeking Red support, yet the Leader of the Opposition takes them into his own Party and tells us that he is now united with them. Why does not the Deputy Leader of the Opposition disband this de facto marriage that has continued during the past twelve months and try to remain pure himself? Now he is quite satisfied to take into his united Opposition these Liberal Party collaborators who, according to him, fell for the machinations of the Communist Party. Both political parties opposite encourage and support the Communist Party in its attempts to destroy the Labour Party.

I am not going to believe that the amount of money necessary to carry on Communist propaganda in this country comes from the few thousand misled working people who contribute to their funds—that newspapers can be published, city properties bought, duplicating machines and typewriters obtained, and organisers paid out of the contributions by a few thousand misled working people. The money comes from somewhere else and it does not come from the Labour Party. The money comes from a political party and the Communist Party is serving that political party. It is serving the purposes of the people opposite who are endeavouring to bring the Labour Party down.

The crowning piece of impudence came from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Hiley, who also dealt with the 40-hour week. He said that here was a Government who with undue haste and impudence had sown the wind of the 40-hour week and were today reaping the whirlwind. He, himself, was one of the sowers. It is interesting to note that all Liberal Party members opposite voted for the 40-hour week, in their endeavour to seek Red support. Hon. members opposite must think that we have very short memories, but I am not going to let them get away with that.

Now let us hear the truth about what happened in 1948 when this Government had to adopt very stringent methods to deal with the strike, the leaders of which were members of the Communist Party. In plain fact hon. members of the Opposition were gloating for all they were worth over the impending destruction of the Labour Party. In fact, hon. members opposite thought it was inevitable that it was going to mean a split in the Labour Party and that the workers would not support a Labour Party that took action against trades-union leaders and Communists whom they prosecuted and imprisoned, that they gloated over it as a fact. Why, then hon. member for Windsor, now the hon. member for Kedron, went up to the Trades Hall and wanted to join in the band. Bad as these fellows are, it is to their credit that they would not

have him about the place. Then he was down in Sydney hobnobbing with Jim Healy.

**Mr. Evans:** You were with him.

**Mr. HANLON:** No, I was not. The only time in my life I spoke to Mr. Healy was in my office, when I had a witness with me, a gentleman who is now on the Industrial Court bench. When I was asked to see him I refused unless it was in the presence of a witness, the same as I would only see the hon. member for Kedron—in the presence of a witness. That is because I would not take the risk of what they would say after they left me.

In actual fact the Opposition were soothing the Communist Party, on, hoping that they would bring about the destruction of this Government, and so certain were they of it that they went so far as to formally pick a Cabinet, which they were going to inflict on this country if the Labour Party was defeated. (Opposition interjections.) That is true. It is a pity that the Leader of the Opposition did not get up in this Chamber at the time and announce the members of his shadow Cabinet. That is the sort of humbug we get from hon. members opposite who attack the Labour Party. The members of the Liberal Party will associate themselves with anything on this earth that will in any way contribute to the defeat of the Labour Party.

Then we get the statement of the Leader of the Opposition that 600,000 cattle and 5,000,000 sheep were lost because we did not build the rail link from Charleville to Blackall. Why, we have not enough trains to carry that number of stock, even if there were two links between those two points. That is a fantastic and misleading statement made for no other purpose than to damage the Government.

Then he went on to make another silly statement in his speech on the Budget in reference to the Burdekin dam. These are the criticisms of men who would hurry on with such great developmental schemes as the Obi Obi Creek dam. He said that the Government were proceeding with the Burdekin dam without studying its economics, and were basing the scheme chiefly on the production of sugar. I did not do anything of the kind. I never said that the Burdekin scheme was a scheme to develop the sugar industry.

**Mr. Evans:** It is on the Federal record.

**Mr. HANLON:** The hon. member is not so silly as to say he saw my speeches in Federal "Hansard."

**Mr. Evans:** Not your speech, but the economic record.

**Mr. HANLON:** I do not know whether the hon. member read anything, but I never stated that the economics of the scheme were based on sugar. Provision is made in the scheme for the protection of the sugar-growers in the Ayr district who now draw their supplies of water from underground. I do not know what will happen in 20, 30, or 40 years' time, but there is sufficient land for the development of the sugar industry, further north available for increased settlement. The

Leader of the Opposition never read any authoritative statement of mine to the effect that the main basis of the development of the Burdekin scheme would be sugar. Yet he gets up and says these things so that they can go out, the idea being that the people in another area will think we are doing something to hurt them and it will irritate them against the Government of the State.

I suppose it is foolish to waste much time on the member for Kedron—I do not think anyone takes him seriously nowadays—but in his speech on 19 October he said this—

"However, no guidance is given to intending migrants by the people at Queensland House.

"I went there every day whilst in London and interviewed intending migrants. The staff at Queensland House would say, 'Will you talk to these people?' and I would talk to them and get their backgrounds.

"What is wanted in Queensland House is someone to guide these people when they go there for information."

These people are a long way away—the staff at Queensland House.

**Mr. Pie:** A very good staff, too.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I took a record of the number of times the hon. member for Kedron interjected, and I shall not continue warning him. The hon. member must allow the Premier to make his speech. He will have an opportunity later to make his own speech.

**Mr. HANLON:** These people are public servants who live a long way from Queensland, and they have not much chance of redress. They are not likely to hear of these statements for many months. I cabled the Acting Agent-General and he replied indignantly. Referring to the statement of the member for Kedron, he said:—

"His statement regarding no guidance given to intending migrants by this office is gross misstatement of facts. Every possible information and assistance is at all times afforded these people. Investigations made by me disclose that at no time was Pie requested by any members of my staff to interview migrants but I have ascertained that during some of his calls to pick up his mail he would overhear conversations between the staff and people coming in to inquire regarding migration and would barge in proffering information and his advice as many other Queensland visitors have similarly been known to do."

He displays bad manners, then he gets up and makes a misstatement about a competent public staff who are doing an excellent job—"A good staff," he himself interjects. He makes a statement about their incompetence. They were being embarrassed by this rude visitor from Queensland who kept barging into conversations between migrants and officers of the public service who were doing their job. The hon. member, having a standing as a member of Parliament, could not very well be treated discourteously by

them—they could not very well be discourteous to him and kick him out as they would like to; they had to put up with him. I wanted to clear that matter up affecting our officials.

The hon. member gave us also a dissertation on tobacco. He said—

“I know something about it. I know how big a concern the tobacco-growing industry on the Tableland has developed into; but it is still under the control of a Communist, and he will be there after this motion goes through. That industry there is still under his control.”

It is progressing tremendously. That is not a bad advertisement for the Communist official. What a stupid thing to say, that the industry is under this man's control! This man is employed by a co-operative society and he is under the control of that society. They do not care about his politics as long as he does his job. I should not like to say whether any man was a Communist unless I had proof. Whether he is a Communist or a Liberal or a Tory or Labour, whatever he may be, evidently the co-operative society is happy about the work he is doing and he is under its control and not in control himself, as the hon. member said.

Then we get another real beauty—the acme of skite by the hon. member. He had this to say on 19 October—

“It has been said that the Government in power when war broke out did nothing to defend this State. I contradict that statement here and now and I lay the blame to the lack of defence at the door of the Labour Government in power. I was in the Caboolture area at the time; I got leave and came down to see William Forgan-Smith and said to him, ‘If the Japanese land here we have nothing to fight them with; we shall only be able to fight them with our fists.’”

The hon. member apparently forgot that the party in power when war broke out was not the Labour Party but the Liberal-Country Party. The Labour Party was asked to take power at the end of 1941.

The hon. member proceeded to say—

“He said, ‘Is that right? I will take it up with Michael Forde, the Minister for the Army.’ He did that, and as a result there came about a flow of arms.”

Mr. Farrell, did you ever hear such infantile skiting? You would not think a fully-grown man would say such a thing. In 1938, 1939, and 1940, when we were putting up a fight to get arms and equipment for the defence of Queensland, we were ridiculed by the Liberal Party. The present Prime Minister sneeringly wiped off every application we made for assistance. I have a statement from the Liberal Minister for Defence about the defences in Queensland in 1941, in which he contradicted my statement that the North was neglected. He said it was utter nonsense to say there were no defences in the North; that there was a battery of artillery at Gympie. There was not a battery of artillery at Gympie, there was only half a battery. The only heavy

armament I saw in North Queensland in 1940, when I went out with Colonel North, were two Vickers machine guns suffering from toothache, and the whole manoeuvre was stopped to admire one Boyce anti-tank rifle. That was all that was going to defend North Queensland in 1940. They were the only defences we had. But listen to the statement of the hon. member for Kedron, how he said, ‘I did this and I did that!’ He had nothing whatever to do with it.

This is another beautiful statement made by the hon. member. Mr. Forgan Smith took it up—

“He did that and, as a result there came about a flow of arms.”

The hon. member for Kedron also said, when referring to the cotton industry—

“I know a principal of an important firm who came out from Great Britain to start a mill here. We wanted him to start in Queensland and I sent him to one of the Ministers, who told him that cotton could not be grown on an economic basis in this State.”

That is bunkum. The hon. member proceeds to say—

“I said to this man, ‘Do not believe him: it can be grown on an economic basis.’ I got Mr. Young, who was then the chairman of the Cotton Board, to come to my office and he spent that afternoon trying to convince this man that cotton could be grown in this State on an economic basis. However, the Minister's opinion seemed to have the stronger influence, and this firm built its big show, which will eventually employ 1,500 people, in New South Wales. Queensland could have had that mill had this Government had the knowledge behind it to give encouragement for that industrialist to build it here.”

Is cotton grown in New South Wales? If cotton-growing had anything to do with the location of the mill, it would have to be in Queensland, the only State that grows cotton. The hon. member had the hide to say he sent this man to a Minister, who told this industrialist, who may be the brother-in-law of Santa Claus for all we know, that cotton could not be grown in Queensland. The thing is not right.

The hon. member then goes on to deal with canneries and pineapples. The hon. member should not talk of pineapples. You will remember, Mr. Farrell, that he made a speech on a development programme for Rockhampton that included a factory to can prawns, papaws and pineapples.

He was going to put up a cannery to can prawns, papaws and pineapples but we are still waiting for the prawns, papaws and pineapples. He said—

“I wanted to establish an industry there to can tropical fruits and had all the details prepared to place before a great American manufacturing concern, but the Government said, ‘No, we must put in a big co-op cannery there.’ That was five or six years ago and they are still talking about it.”

He never approached the Government about any cannery in Townsville. He then goes on to pools of unemployed and said—

“We have more unemployed in Queensland than the rest of Australia put together. That is a pool that we and others are able to draw on.”

The unemployment in this State is caused by men changing from one job to another but unconsciously the hon. member lets out what is in the minds of the Liberal Party, and all commercial exploiters—we must have a pool of unemployed.

There is a question asked this morning about the statement made by another Liberal in the Federal House about the policy of this Government being not to allow the sale of workers' homes built by the Queensland Housing Commission. This is a bit of nasty slander. He goes on to say that the political affiliation of people is taken into consideration in allotting houses. I suggest that the Kedron A.L.P. should go into the Chermiside area and ask the people if they had to become Labourites to get homes in that electorate. It is filthy slander. The people who get houses get them on the basis of an agreement with the Commonwealth Government, points being allotted to ex-Service men and whether the applicant has a wife and children. Nothing is too low or dirty for the Liberals to say about the Labour Party.

I should like to deal now with the criticism of the Sugar Agreement and the industry generally. I was in the House when the hon. member for Whitsunday made his attack upon the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board. He called it an octopus or a dictatorial body or something of that kind. He made out that it was a ruthless dictator controlling the industry without any regard to the industry's well-being. The Central Board consists of representatives of the millers and growers and there is the Chairman of the Board, Mr. W. Forgan Smith. Mr. Wheeler, the growers' representative has evidently—and the board, too—given satisfaction to the growers because at the last election Mr. Wheeler was elected unopposed; no grower opposed him for membership on the board. I should like to ask the hon. member for Whitsunday if he is prepared to abolish the board and let the sugar industry have an open go? There are many who would like to get the opportunity of growing cane. Would he like to see the board abolished? I can assure him that many who live in Brisbane and surrounding areas on small farms would be glad to get into cane-growing if the board was abolished.

**Mr. Gair:** The hon. member for Mirani prompted him.

**Mr. EVANS:** I rise to a point of order. The Treasurer said that I wrote his speech. That statement is untrue and I ask that it be withdrawn.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The Premier.

**Mr. Gair:** The hon. member says that my remark is an insult. I thought I was complimenting him by saying that he was

responsible for the writing of the speech. However, if it is objectionable to him, I withdraw. The hon. member knows, as do all hon. members in this Chamber, that he prompted the hon. member for Whitsunday throughout his speech and provided him with the ammunition that he fired.

**Mr. HANLON:** As I was saying, the hon. member for Mirani prompted the hon. member for Whitsunday throughout his speech. He made an attack on the Central Sugar-Cane Prices Board, which to my mind is the foundation upon which this State's sugar industry rests. Were it not for the control exercised by the Central Board, the sugar industry would be open to competition in the same way as any other primary industry in this State, and anybody who wanted to grow sugar could do so. As two of the three members are elected by the industry itself, I cannot see that anything very much can go wrong. The only suggestion that could perhaps be deduced from the hon. member's remarks is that there has been something corrupt or dishonest in the action of the members of the board. If the hon. member knows of any dishonesty or corruption on the part of Mr. Forgan Smith or Mr. Wheeler or Mr. MacGibbon—

**Mr. Evans:** There are five members on the board.

**Mr. HANLON:** If the hon. member knows of any dishonesty or corruption, he should make a charge, instead of getting up and whispering behind his hand. If he does make a charge, I can assure him that it will be investigated and that the same opportunity to justify his statements will be given to him as was given recently to the hon. member for Kedron.

The one satisfaction that I derived from listening to the hon. member's speech was that it was typically a commission agent's speech. In watching the interests of the growers, the board does not look after those of the land-jobber, the commission agent, or the speculator in the industry. The interests of the commission agent do not run parallel with those of the cane-grower; rather do they run contrary to them. It would suit the commission agent if people regularly sold their cane farms, as he could then regularly rake in commission. When commission agents complain about the actions of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board, it causes me to think that that board is functioning in the interests of the growers and that the interests of the commission agents are not being attended to.

The hon. member for Mirani had a good deal to say about the agreement that I had the privilege of negotiating in London, not as the Premier of Queensland, but as a representative of the Commonwealth Government. I should like briefly to emphasise the advantages that that agreement gives to the industry. From 1950 to 1952 inclusive, the United Kingdom will take the whole of Australia's sugar surplus at a negotiated price, irrespective of what quantity is sent. From

1953 to 1957 inclusive, the United Kingdom will take 600,000 tons of sugar a year; it has guaranteed to take that quantity—

**Mr. Evans:** That is not correct.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. HANLON:** The hon. member for Mirani has done considerable injury to the sugar industry by his speeches both here and in election campaigns throughout the country. Attacks on the agreement that have been made up and down the country by members of the Opposition have created the idea in Canberra that it is not wanted, with the result that it has not yet been signed, although it was negotiated 12 months ago, and it might not be signed if this sort of thing keeps up. When I was on my way back from England the Federal administration changed from a Labour Government to a Liberal-Country Party Coalition, and I have again taken the matter up with the Prime Minister and asked him to get on with the signing of the agreement. (Opposition interjections.)

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The Premier is making a very important statement and I hope hon. members will allow him to do it without interruption.

**Mr. HANLON:** Negotiations are now proceeding that may result in a slight increase in the guaranteed market of 600,000 tons. The agreement last year was a guaranteed price for 300,000 tons.

**Mr. Evans:** Not a guaranteed price.

**Mr. HANLON:** The hon. member may misquote as much as he likes but the words in the agreement are "guaranteed price." It does not matter how much the hon. member may quibble and mislead—he is doing an injury to the industry by creating a feeling in the South against the agreement. The impression in the South is that the sugar industry is a coddled industry, subsidised by the Commonwealth Government. I guarantee that if a referendum of the people of Australia was taken on the subject of sugar-protection tomorrow, sugar-protection would come to an end because of the false impressions created by hon. members opposite.

Let me get on with the agreement. The amount of 300,000 tons is to go at world market price. Then there is the Canadian preference and that is a higher preference than the U.K. preference. The other night the hon. member for Mirani said that he deplored the fact that some of the sugar had to go to Canada. That is the saving grace of the whole thing—a Canadian preference of a cent a lb.

**Mr. EVANS:** I rise to a point of order. What I said the other night was that the market in Canada and the Canadian preference could be taken away at any time according to the wishes of the Canadian Government.

**Mr. HANLON:** The hon. member certainly gave the Chamber the impression that he was disappointed to think that some of the sugar had to go to Canada, but I have pointed out that the Canadian preference exceeds the U.K. preference, and it is to our advantage to get all the sugar we can into Canada. If we could get all of the 300,000 tons into Canada over the guaranteed price, that would be all to the good. The hon. member says that the Canadian preference could be abolished at any time, and so it can, but preference is a two-way undertaking. If the Canadian Government abolished the preference on sugar, Australia could abolish a preference on motor cars against the Canadian Government, and so bring about a levelling-up. Canada has been one of the most loyal members of the British Commonwealth of Nations in the observance of these agreements.

One of the best features of the agreement is that it is for six years, that you must have six years' notice of any alteration. At the end of this year the parties to the agreement will be consulted again to see whether they desire to have it extended for another year. It is an agreement for seven years to operate from 1 January last, but in December the parties to the agreement will be consulted to see whether they agree to another year's extension. Next year the same thing will happen again. As long as the parties agree, the agreement goes on, but if there is to be an alteration we are to have six years' notice of it. We shall know for six years in advance what the market is to be and that is a tremendous advantage. We have never had that before. As a matter of fact, in the past we have been negotiating agreements in respect of the sugar industry after the land had been broken up, the cane planted, and it was almost ready to be harvested.

In future we shall know six years in advance of any alteration in the agreement, and every local board and every sugar farmer will be aware of the fact that a market will be available to them and how much sugar they can plant six years in advance. The hon. member for Mirani attacked that agreement. He pointed out that everything was wrong with it.

**Mr. EVANS:** Mr. Farrell, I rise to a point of order. I never suggested anything was wrong with the agreement. (Government laughter.) I spoke of the effect of this agreement and I said that the Premier did tell untruths in connection with it.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. EVANS:** Have I no right to make an explanation?

**The CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member can rise to a point of order but not make a speech.

**Mr. EVANS:** I am stating—

**The CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member cannot make a speech.

**Mr. EVANS:** The Premier stated that I said everything was wrong with the agreement. I only pointed out the effects of the agreement and said that there was no need for the Premier to tell untruths about it.

**Mr. HANLON:** We will forget about the hon. member and telling untruths. I am not in the habit of doing so. I am not a Liberal or a sell-out Country man. I suppose I could be accused of telling untruths, but I do not. The hon. member for Mirani had not a good word to say for the agreement. If he looks at "Hansard" he will find I interjected, "Do the growers want the agreement?" The impression the hon. member created was that the sugar-growers did not want the agreement. That was the impression he tried to create. He tried to make sugar-growers dissatisfied. I say very definitely that these attacks on the sugar industry under the guise of attacking this Labour Government are doing the sugar industry a lot of harm, and I say now, as I said in the Press, that if the hon. members for Mirani and Whitsunday are sincere in their attacks on the Central Sugar-Cane Prices Board and the Sugar Agreement it is time that the sugar-growers let us know whether they believe them or not. They can still get rid of the agreement. If I wrote to Mr. Menzies and told him that the sugar-growers did not want to renew the agreement he would be only too glad to say he would not sign it. No-one has any say in the signing of the agreement but the Ministers of the Menzies Government. All that has to be done is for the industry to say it approves of the agreement and I will communicate with Mr. Menzies and ask him to sign this agreement. I do deplore this continuous tirade and attacks on the State of Queensland in an endeavour to damage the Government. Surely hon. members opposite can dissociate their hatred of the Labour Party and the working people from the welfare of the country in which they live. They should be able to do that.

The recent Premiers' Conference came in for quite a lot of discussion. The whole atmosphere of the Premiers' Conference was bad. The conference opened with an attitude by the Prime Minister that anything he said had to be taken as true and factual by all members there. We promptly got into trouble because the Premiers of the various States, who were the members of the conference, were not going to be browbeaten by a man who was just over-swollen by his own sense of importance because he had just recently won an election.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to the practice of carrying out works from revenue. Everyone knows that is being done today. But after denying to the Premiers' Conference that the money for any public works was coming out of revenue, when we got to the Loan Council Mr. Fadden admitted that they proposed to do £90,000,000 worth of public works out of revenue—he did not admit it was out of revenue but he said they would do £90 million worth of public works, and they had

not 1s. on the Loan Council agenda paper, which is an admission that they were to do £90,000,000 worth of work but had not made provision for 1s. with which to do it. It was those falsehoods continually levelled at us that irritated all Premiers, not only Labour Premiers but the Premiers of other political parties, particularly the Premier of South Australia.

I want to point out that under the Commonwealth Constitution Federal Government revenue surpluses are allocated to the States. The Commonwealth have always evaded that provision by allocating revenue surpluses to certain trust funds. There was a case in 1910 when the New South Wales Government sued the Commonwealth for the sum of £160,000, being its share of a surplus that was made in June that year. The practice had been followed at the end of the year of allocating all surpluses to some trust fund. When that was found to be dangerous, they began allocating surpluses each month to two funds—the Coastal Defence Fund—and nothing was ever spent on that—and a fund for old-age pensioners. In that way they were defeating the Constitution. The High Court ruled that they were entitled, in the year in which the revenue was collected to allocate it to funds required for future use. When we look at the Commonwealth Constitution, we find that the reason those sections were put in it was that at Federation the Commonwealth took from the States their main source of revenue, which was customs and excise; so they made provision, in Sections 89, 93 and 94 of the Commonwealth Constitution, for the reimbursement of surpluses from those funds to the States.

The same thing applies to the disbursement of the single tax. When the single tax was introduced the main source of revenue of the States was income tax. The framers of the Commonwealth Constitution were not prepared to leave the States without something in return for their main source of revenue, without making some provision for an alternative source—the alternative source being the surpluses they expected the Commonwealth would have. The position when uniform taxation came about was the same, income tax being the main revenue of the States, I contended that under the Commonwealth Constitution the surplus income tax should be distributed among the States. It is not right for the Commonwealth to tax people £90,000,000 more than the Commonwealth requires and spend it on capital works so that it will not have a surplus, or, when it makes a surplus, to refuse to reduce taxation but divert it to capital works and so leave the State short of money.

One of the strange proposals made by the Treasurer, Mr. Fadden, was that he would have to borrow the £37,500,000 for the war gratuity to soldiers. He admitted it had been raised by taxation and put into a trust fund, but he said that the trust fund was used to redeem Treasury bills and therefore he proposed to borrow £37,500,000 to replace

it. That means that the taxpayers, having paid £37,500,000 in tax for the purpose of paying those gratuities, will be called upon when he borrows £37,500,000 to pay a tax against the interest and redemption on that amount. They will have to pay £37,500,000 twice, plus the interest on £37,500,000.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Under the Standing Orders there is no provision for an extension of time for an hon. member in Committee but if there is an hon. member in the Committee who will move for an extension of time to enable the Premier to complete his speech I will accept the motion.

**Hon. W. POWER** (Baroona—Secretary for Mines and Immigration): I move—

“That the Premier be granted an extension of time to enable him to complete his speech.”

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Is it the pleasure of the Committee that the Premier be given an extension of time to enable him to complete his speech?

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Aikens:** Divide!

**Mr. Walsh:** Democracy still rules.

**Mr. Aikens:** Democracy for him but not for us.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** I rise to a point of order. As it is the Premier of the State who is speaking we may be inclined to afford him the privilege of concluding his speech. But the question of granting an extension of time in Committee is new and this motion must be considered as something that we do not want to see made a precedent. In view of the fact that the Premier is making an important statement of State we will not oppose such a motion on this occasion.

**Mr. AIKENS:** Divide! I rise to a point of order. Mr. Farrell, you put the question and asked for the “Ayes” and “Noes” and I said “No” and called for a division.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. HANLON:** Mr. Farrell, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the courtesy extended me.

**Mr. TURNER:** I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member for Mundingburra in order in giving the Nazi sign and marching from the Chamber?

**Mr. Aikens:** That is quite true. I gave it and I think I was entitled to give it.

**Mr. HANLON:** The courtesy of the Leader of the Opposition throws into contrast the ignorance of the hon. member for Mundingburra. I thank the hon. gentleman, as I have important figures to quote in order to give an idea of the position. I am sure hon. members will like to have this information.

The question of stabilising the £1 came up and the only suggestion we got from the Prime Minister or Mr. Fadden was that the

States should arrest their loan expenditure—we should cut out our borrowing and so reduce employment, and according to Mr. Menzies in that way we should reduce the amount of money in circulation. We contended that was not the way to tackle the problem. They also contended that the way to stabilise the £1 was to peg wages. The way was to peg prices. If you peg the basic wage without pegging or reducing prices every increase hereafter is a prosperity increase, which big industry can well afford to carry. The pegging of prices is the basis.

We export a quantity of sugar and at the present time sugar that is exported is bringing between £7 and £8 a ton over the price for sugar sold in Australia. We do not allow the Australian sugar-growers to increase the price for local consumption because there is an increase of £7 or £8 on that price for sugar exported. The Australian requirements of sugar must be assured and the sugar sold at a price based on the —

**Mr. JESSON:** I rise to a point of order. It appears to me that this interruption by the Opposition is organised. The Premier is making a speech and I am trying to listen to him and the figures he is giving. But owing to the interruptions of the Opposition I am not able to hear a word the hon. gentleman is saying.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask hon. members to refrain from exchanging conversation in loud tones. There is too much of it.

**Mr. HANLON:** Sugar and wheat are both controlled and only surplus production in this country is allowed to be exported at the higher price. Sufficient sugar and wheat are kept in the country at Australian-consumption prices to supply the requirements of this country. The total receipts are pooled and the grower gets a fair average price. You can't help put value back into the pound unless the same thing is done with regard to our metals, wool, and other primary products—fixing the Australian quota and the overseas quota and in fixing the Australian price allow for the receipt of so much as can be got on the overseas market. That would be a means of stabilising the pound, because it is not so important to revalue the pound as to stabilise it. It would be of advantage to the State in some directions to revalue the pound on a par with sterling. We should save £700,000 on our overseas commitments and we should save exchange on railway rolling stock and heavy equipment that are being bought overseas. Looking at it from the Treasury angle alone, the revaluation of the pound on a par with sterling would be of great help to the Treasurer, but the thing to consider is whether it will help the people of the State. That is what we have to consider. We can do something by preventing the pound from depreciating any further; it is depreciating every day. Unless prices are pegged there is no way by which the position can be corrected; you cannot keep prices down by pegging wages. The pegging of wages does not stop the competition between the ordinary working man, the man who is

better off, and the wealthy when goods are in short supply. All it does is to see that less of the scarce commodities is obtained by the working people and more by the wealthy people. Therefore the pegging of prices is the first thing to do. It is a terrible pity that in the Prime Minister we have not got a leader of this country with the courage to face up to that position. I know that he is unpopular with some people. Anything you do will make you unpopular with some. The bulk of our advisers advising Governments advise them to act in the interests of the individual advising. For instance, the wool-grower does not want the wool price pegged and the butter-producer does not want the price of his product pegged, the commercial man does not want his profits pegged, and the manufacturer does not want his prices pegged, and the fellow with commitments overseas immediately wants the pound to be on a par with or above sterling, so that he can get his goods in cheaper. The man with "hot" money in Australia, gambling on the exchange, wants it revalued on a par with sterling. According to the Commonwealth Bank, some £300,000,000 of gambling money is being transferred to Australia for the purpose of cashing in on the exchange. I hope the Governor of the Commonwealth Bank will rigorously do what he hinted he will do, prohibit the export of "hot" money, make it stay here and make it work here and not let anybody take £40,000,000 or £50,000,000 out of this country for nothing.

We come now to the dollar loan that Mr. Menzies mentioned. In the first place I would point out that the dollar loan is not a great gift to Australia. The interest rate is high.

**Mr. Nicklin:** Not particularly.

**Mr. HANLON:** 3½ per cent. plus 1 per cent.

**Mr. Pie:** What is the average lending rate here?

**Mr. HANLON:** The rate at which the Government borrow is 3½ per cent., whereas the interest on this loan is 3½ per cent. plus 1 per cent., a total of 4½ per cent. India obtained a loan at 2½ per cent. plus 1 per cent., Finland at 2 per cent. plus 1 per cent., Jugoslavia at 2 per cent. plus 1 per cent., and the loan made previous to that to Australia was to El Salvador, at 3½ per cent. plus 1 per cent. We do not seem to have achieved anything wonderful.

However, I should like to say that the dollar loan is absolutely justified as long as the money is spent on urgently-required capital equipment that will enable this country to recreate its own interest and redemption. If the 100,000,000 dollars is not spent on goods that will create their own repayment the loan will be a handicap, because it will mean that we shall be paying back immediately 4,500,000 dollars more than we are already committed for, and in a few years, when redemption payments have to be made, 7,500,000 dollars will have to be sent to America each year. Unless the amount of 100,000,000 dollars is put into capital

equipment that will create something to repay the loan, it will be a dead loss to this country.

I come now to the means of meeting the loan. At the present time, we import into this country each year 10,000,000 dollars' worth of tobacco and about 8,000,000 dollars' worth of cotton from hard-currency countries, such as the United States of America, Egypt and Brazil. With the development of our water resources in the North, we can create the means of repaying the amount of 7,500,000 dollars a year to America. In the Burdekin, Walsh and Dimbulah areas alone we can create the means of paying the interest and redemption on the loan, and that is why I say that the Burdekin scheme is urgent and important.

I should now like to deal with the grants received from the Tax Reimbursement Fund. To my mind, these reimbursements are fantastically dishonest. For instance, compare the position of Queensland with that of South Australia. Queensland, with its huge area, receives £12,000,000 from this fund, which is equal to £10 12s. a head of the population. South Australia, on the same formula, receives £6,029,000, but through the back door the Federal Government have increased their handout to South Australia by £5,300,000.

**Mr. Pie:** Queensland did not apply for that, did it?

**Mr. HANLON:** No, but we are entitled to a fair deal; it all comes out of the Commonwealth's revenue, to which Queensland has to contribute. Queensland receives £10 12s. a head of population from the Tax Reimbursement Fund as against South Australia's £16 10s. On a population basis, South Australia receives in tax grants 56 per cent. more than Queensland. We have an area of 600,000 square miles to look after, whereas the majority of South Australia's population is situated within 150 miles of Adelaide. As our schools, hospitals, police and various other social services are scattered over 600,000 square miles of country, we naturally have a much more costly task than has South Australia. Of course, other factors have to be considered; I am not begrudging South Australia the extra help she receives because I know she has comparatively few natural resources in the immediate vicinity of Adelaide.

I am not complaining about that at all. I do not begrudge South Australia this additional help, and I am not suggesting that she should not get something outside the formula, but I am saying that we are not getting a fair deal in Queensland.

**Mr. Munro:** Why not proceed along the lines of my suggestion?

**Mr. HANLON:** I did not hear the hon. member's suggestion, but I can assure him that if there is any suggestion that has not been made I should be very surprised—thousands of suggestions have been made.

I heard hon. members opposite say that the Federal Labour Government never gave this State a fair deal, but we always got from the Federal Labour Government sufficient to balance our Budget, and we are not getting it this time. We shall be in tremendous difficulties, and do not forget that difficulties grow from an unbalanced Budget. Whatever deficit we have this year will have to be funded and will have to carry a plus 4 per cent. redemption charge, something about 7 per cent. next year on any debt that we have this year. Debts are dangerous today, and that provision was adopted to try to compel State Treasurers to balance their Budgets. It has worked very well so far. When Mr. Chifley was Treasurer we were always able to get enough to balance the Budget when we were able to point out to him the amount required for our needs, but today three of the main States are budgeting for deficits, and South Australia is budgeting for a small deficit too. The whole position is unsatisfactory to everybody, and there was no more savage critic of the present arrangement than Mr. Playford, the Premier of South Australia. Sooner or later we shall have to adopt a better method of disbursing this money, because everything that is being done now is building up the inflation. Every inflationary move improves the income of the Commonwealth—it increases income tax, payroll tax, excise duty, entertainment tax, social service contributions, and so on, while at the same time the States' expenditure goes up, not their incomes. For the first four months of this year there was an increase of 20 per cent. in customs and excise duty, amounting to £8,568,000. The Commonwealth Government are making a profit out of this all the time. Every basic-wage increase helps the Commonwealth Government, because £1 a week increase in the basic wage means a tremendous increase in the number of taxpayers, and in the number raised to new level of income.

**Mr. Morris:** But it costs them money too.

**Mr. HANLON:** It certainly costs them money, too, but they take in more than they put out. It increases the number of taxpayers, and raises a big number to a higher rate and so the Commonwealth Government are able to recoup themselves the extra cost incurred in paying their officers. That does not apply to the State Government. We are getting 200,000 immigrants every year, but every one that comes to this country means a profit of £45 a year to the Federal Government in increased revenue, but a loss of £10 10s. a year to the State Government in social services, and that is after allowing for some slight increase for such things as freights and fares. The Commonwealth makes a profit. These figures have been worked out by Mr. Colin Clark. The moment a migrant gets off the boat and buys a packet of cigarettes, or has a pint of beer he contributes to the Commonwealth revenue, while he at the same time becomes a charge on the expenditure of the State; therefore, 200,000 migrants a year mean a gain to the Commonwealth of £9,000,000 and a net loss to the State of £4,800,000.

I will not keep hon. members much longer. I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for his courtesy in this matter, because I wanted to make this contribution to the debate. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition gave us the real key to the Budget. He said that it firstly made a real contribution to defence; secondly, that it recognised the pressing need for the development of the State, and thirdly, that it protected the State from inflation, or that it made a contribution to correcting inflation. He passes on to the State the major responsibilities of the Commonwealth Government, namely, the defence of the country and the correction of inflation. Those are solely the responsibility of the Commonwealth. As far as the development of the country is concerned, at no time has it been proceeding at such a pace as it is today. Development is a major contribution to the settlement and defence of the northern parts of our State. Right from the Far North, where the Dimbulah-Walsh River dam and irrigation scheme will encourage tobacco-growers—the dam is under way—to the Tully hydro-electric scheme, the Burdekin dam scheme, the Queensland-British Food Corporation's Scheme in Central Queensland, the construction of roads into the Central West, and the investigations into the Nogoa River dam scheme, all major development works will have a tremendous effect on our population and wealth-production. They will also play a major part in the defence of the Commonwealth.

I do hope that hon. members will keep in mind that inflation keeps building up Commonwealth revenue at the expense of the State whose Public Service officers and I are at their wits' end to cope with it. Finally I ask them to keep in mind also a proper understanding of the difficulties of the Government in carrying on and if they do they will be more helpful in dealing with matters as they arise than they otherwise could be.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. PIE (Kedron) (3.38 p.m.):** The Premier has put his speech back to front. The latter part of it contained the soundest logic. The last part is what this Committee has been looking for, some indication of the important things confronting this State in its development. If the Premier's speech had been made back to front, and he had given us those things first instead of personal abuse, hon. members on this side would have felt that perhaps he was fit to be Premier. I have always held that the Premier has real ability, but the depths to which he can sink are below the depths of any backbencher on his side of the House.

**Dr. DITTMER:** I rise to a point of order. I, as a backbencher, object to that individually. As the term backbencher includes me I find that the statement is offensive to me and I ask that it be withdrawn.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt objects to being put in that category and I therefore ask the hon. member for Kedron to withdraw that statement.

**Mr. PIE:** If the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt objects to being put in that category—which is a category I do not understand—I will accept his denial, but I do not know what it is all about.

This State as a whole is receiving the greatest revenue it has ever received but the inflationary spiral is causing it grave concern.

If the Treasurer had made provision for the contingent liabilities set out by hon. members on this side he would have budgeted for a much greater deficit than he has, £750,000. It is a phony Budget; it is not a true reflection of the State's real position. In the Budget are works that cannot possibly be carried out in the next 12 months, and the Government know that. I say definitely that it would be wiser for the Government or any individual to come out into the open and say to the Commonwealth Government, "If we can do these works, this is what we shall need." The shortage of manpower and material will make it impossible for the Government to spend what they estimate for in the development programme. So it goes on year after year—these promises of what the Government are going to do.

I do not intend to deal any further with the Budget because the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Opposition, and the hon. member for Toowong, who are equipped with far greater knowledge than any member on the Government side in financial affairs, have put the case very ably and effectively. What I want to bring before the Committee is the evidence that I could not put before the Royal Commission on the Golden Casket. This is the first opportunity I have had of publicly making a statement in regard to the matter. If I use copious notes, which I shall, I crave your indulgence, because I do not want to exaggerate any fact in the matter. I want to quote examples that will prove conclusively that there is an underhand racket going on in relation to the relationship between this State Government and this so-called Golden Investments.

The Premier, with his cheap political gibe—you remember how he said when the terms of reference were drawn up that people should shut their mouths unless they were prepared to bring evidence forward to the Royal Commission—said again, "The commission will give everyone an opportunity to say everything they want." How farcical that statement turned out to be! I want to make it clear to the people of Queensland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, India and all countries where Golden Investments operate illegally as an instrument of the Queensland Government that not one person who offered through us was called to give evidence on oath, that not one person who had given us sworn declarations of complaints was called as a witness before the commission to substantiate his complaint. As a contrast I will show that the commission, having full knowledge of our evidence, permitted the calling of certain people to rebut the evidence that some of our witnesses would

have given on oath had they been afforded an opportunity to do so. I contend that the adviser to the commission was distinctly partisan towards the Premier and the Premier's close friend and colleague—if colleague is the correct word to describe this peculiar association that exists with Gray or Yarg and Golden Investments. I make that grave charge advisedly—that the adviser was markedly biased against me, so much so that at an early stage in the proceedings I was forced to ask the learned judge if he was not acting as the commission's prosecutor rather than acting as an impartial advocate.

**Mr. F. E. ROBERTS:** I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member for Kedron in order in levelling the grave charge he is doing against an honourable judge, and a gentleman who since the commission sat has been appointed to the judiciary of Queensland, without a substantive motive?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! No reference was made to His Honour the judge. There was no reflection on the judge.

**Mr. PIE:** Many people in their ignorance of the position that existed have asked why such-and-such a person had not come forward to give evidence, why we did not insist on their being called, what happened to all the people who had written letters to us? That is what they wanted to know and that is something that deserved explanation. I know this Committee and the people of Queensland, in the interests of fair play, are anxiously awaiting that explanation. Does this Committee realise that we were not permitted to call anybody in order to give evidence? I repeat that we were not permitted to call anybody. All we were permitted to do was to submit the names of persons who desired to give evidence, together with the evidence they proposed to give. All information passed then to the Crown Law Office and presumably to the adviser to the commission with advice whether or not these people should be called. Did anyone ever hear of such a farcical position? How could truth and justice possibly be served under such circumstances? We also had many others wanting to give evidence on oath such as Charles Keen, who was the officer granted 12 months' leave of absence by the Premier in 1946 to exercise the rights given to him and Mr. Carter to sell Casket tickets outside Queensland—to break the laws of other States and sister dominions.

Let me prove this—I am not making idle statements. In "Hansard" of 1936, at page 1387, we read this statement made by the Premier, then Secretary for Health and Home Affairs—

"After his retirement from Parliament Mr. Carter started a business in the city and he and an officer of the Home Secretary's Department, who obtained 12 months' leave of absence, were given the right to sell outside of Queensland on exactly the same terms as Golden Investments."

and on page 1427 the Premier then said—

“I pointed out yesterday that Mr. Carter, a late colleague of hon. members opposite, and a Mr. Keen, first undertook the business of selling ‘Casket’ tickets outside the State. They had the agency on the same terms as Golden Investments for six months.”

They held an agency to break the laws of other States and sister dominions at the connivance of the Premier of this State.

**A Government Member:** Keen was a Liberal candidate.

**Mr. PIE:** He claimed he had evidence that would expose the Government on this fantastic Golden Investments racket. I do not know what this evidence was. He was advised to see the Crown Law Office and nothing further was heard of him or his evidence.

Another public servant had offered to come before the commission and give evidence on oath but he was not allowed to give evidence, the Crown Law Office no doubt ruling again that his evidence was not within the terms of reference.

**Mr. Walsh:** Who was that?

**Mr. PIE:** I will lay the whole file on the table.

He had vital evidence implicating the Premier.

**Mr. Walsh:** Who was that?

**Mr. PIE:** Let me read the extract. I will put the whole on the table if the hon. member wishes. The extract says—

“About 1935 I was officially engaged with the audit of the Golden Casket office and some matters of importance connected with the newly-formed firm of Golden Investments came under audit scrutiny. I was told something by one Noble, then manager of the Golden Casket, regarding this firm. Noble said he was very much opposed to the conditions regarding commission given to the firm by you as Home Secretary and that the firm had rented premises from the Public Curator adjacent to the Golden Casket at your suggestion, and that he felt so sore about it that he was not going to hand over for nothing to Golden Investments the business with Rankine in Canada that he personally had fostered.”

And this is important—

“At your suggestion.”

That is to say, the present Premier—

“I visited your home at Paddington one night subsequently and told you of Noble’s statement, of the dilemma I was in regarding Audit Office administration, that no written agreement was in existence regarding Golden Investments and its working arrangements with the Casket Office, of the construction that Noble had placed on the absence of such an agreement, that Noble was running ‘a young Golden Investments’ with Rankine in Canada and he was adverse to handing this business over. The out-

come of the interview was that I was to formulate the terms of a working arrangement between the Home Secretary (yourself) and the firm of Golden Investments. I was not to inform Beal”—

who was then the Auditor-General—

“of the visit to your home or to discuss with him the matter of the agreement. I complied with this arrangement and subsequently the agreement was completed and attached by me to the audit report of the Golden Casket Art Union. My memory is that the agreement was not compiled by the Crown Solicitor’s office, but a firm of solicitors in Brisbane.”

This was Cannan and Petersen, a reputable firm.

“At the interview you discussed Noble in adverse terms and showed considerable antipathy to that officer. When the agreement between the Home Secretary (yourself) and Golden Investments was completed and signed it was found by me to contain additional matters regarding the appointment of Gray as manager of Golden Investments, which had been added at your instructions. Mrs. Gray then also registered as a half partner in Golden Investments and her husband was the manager of the firm. When the other registered half partner, Partridge, heard of the suggested agreement he came to Brisbane from Sydney forthwith and I was introduced by Noble to Partridge. Partridge told me that he was opposed to the terms of the agreement regarding Gray, that Gray had been given too much power by you, and he also told me something regarding the other half partner Mrs. Gray. Partridge said, ‘Something had been put over him by you and the Grays.’”

There is the file in regard to the whole matter. It is there to go on the table of the Chamber. It gives the whole story of the interview with the present Premier in regard to this matter and if any hon. member likes to move accordingly, it can go on the table. I only want to expose this whole business.

**Mr. Foley:** Didn’t that go before the Commission?

**Mr. PIE:** The Premier must have knowledge of this letter because he acknowledged it. The acknowledgment is on the file. Those are some of the things I told you that this man would have to say. If the statements are untrue—and they are there in black and white—the Premier had a right to refute them if not launch legal proceedings, as any decent man would do. That man wanted to give that evidence but nothing was done in regard to the matter.

Those are two only of the many whom we advised to see the Crown Law Office. I did not want to have anything to do with the matter and anyone who came to us we sent straight to the Crown Law Office, but never heard anything more about them.

I agree that within the limited terms of reference, the commission could not logically be expected to find more than it did.

But all fair-minded people will agree with its recommendations, which, in view of the lengths to which the Government went to protect themselves were beyond my expectations anyhow. I say that they were a wholesale condemnation of the loose administrative methods operating in the conducting of the Golden Casket, which would have been repugnant to any business concern that thought anything of its good name and were viewed with amazed horror by administrators of State lotteries in other States.

Reverting to witnesses, I say it was wrong in principle that none of these witnesses were called who were critical of the Casket or the Government. However, far more serious to my mind—and I should like to emphasise this—is the fact that in many selected cases the statements written in good faith by these people, which should have formed the basis of evidence against the Golden Casket and its administration, were used by the Crown Law Office in assisting counsel advising the commission in order to build up his case. In other words, the so-called impartial advocate, having received and considered the evidence contained in the letters in advance, and without hearing any evidence on oath, proceeded to call evidence in rebuttal. In my opinion, that cannot be regarded as British justice, and it is with sincere regret that I find myself compelled in this Parliament to censure counsel assisting the commission for adopting such methods.

Let me quote the example of a New Zealand woman who wrote a letter of complaint about Golden Investments and who was prepared to substantiate her complaint on oath. Instead of calling this woman, counsel assisting the commission put Gray, of Golden Investments, into the box to tell a cock-and-bull story about leaving tickets in his drawer and forgetting to send them. Included in that batch of mislaid tickets were some belonging to people who had never received prizes due to them, and one of them was this woman to whom I have referred; we obtained from her a statutory declaration to that effect and she was prepared to give evidence on oath. However, she was not called as a witness but Gray was allowed to give evidence in rebuttal about having received cables from his shady agents to the effect that she could not be located, and that everything in the garden was lovely. I will tell the Chamber about Gray's shady agents a little later. It is a very peculiar thing that our representative in New Zealand was able to locate the prize-winner and obtain a statutory declaration from her while the Yarg-Gray operators could not.

Another amazing aspect of this commission was its composition. I believe that the Government were grievously unfair in asking a learned judge of this State to preside over a commission that bristled with political implications. Surely it would have been far better to bring in an outside judge, as is the traditional practice in other States, where justice and not party welfare is placed first! This is not only my own opinion, but the opinion of many eminent legal practitioners,

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and I hope that the Government will never again place one of our senior judges in such a difficult position.

**A Government Member interjected.**

**Mr. PIE:** I have known Judge Mansfield for 27 years, but I say definitely that it was unfair to appoint him to a position in which there were so many political implications. It might be all right to appoint a judge to normal economic commissions, such as the commission that investigated the fruit and vegetable industry, but where politics and political personalities are involved, surely it is wrong in principle!

I do not desire to say anything further at this stage about the adviser to the commission. As to the other personnel of the commission, I felt extremely sorry for the Auditor-General, Mr. Crosser, and quite a large body of opinion holds that he was unfairly placed by the Government in the position of being judge and jury on his own department's activities.

Here is an extract from the report by the Deputy Auditor-General, the late Mr. J. D. Ross, on the agreement between the manager of Golden Casket Union and Golden Investments, dated 8 January, 1937, and tabled in this Parliament on 7 October, 1937—

“It has been suggested in some quarters that any system of private control such as Golden Investments is open to fraud, and that tickets of overseas clients could be held until the drawing, when if any of the particular tickets drew a prize same could be collected through a dummy.

“These suggestions are condemnatory of all agents who despatch tickets through the mail whether overseas, interstate or Queensland itself. The Golden Casket management provides against such fraud by having the butts of the 100,000 tickets in a casket examined before each drawing to ensure that a name and address is recorded on the butt of each ticket.

“Golden Investments provides added protection to the Casket management by entering into a bond for £2,000 with the State Government Insurance Office, for the full and faithful performance of its work.”

That is the report that was tabled in the House and they wondered where we got it.

Let me get along. That is how the Golden Casket was intended to be conducted—all the butts to be in the possession of the Casket before the drawing the same as is done in New South Wales with the lottery there, but in 1949 fictitious names of witnesses were announced over the air while the winning butt was not even in the Casket Office at the time of drawing. Then when the butts did eventually turn up this staggering deficiency was treated with such contempt that names and addresses were written on some of the missing butts while others were left blank. And later alterations were made on the winning butt to cloak up what I say was loose administration. That was the basis of our whole complaint, to the extent of the commission's limited reference terms.

That the winning ticket was not present at the time of the drawing of Casket No. 1367 and that it was filled in—and altered—after the drawing, and that the prize was paid to Gray of Golden Investments under a *nom de plume*—the evidence before the Commission showed this to be true on every count.

Without having Mr. Ross's report before it the commission's recommendations make it clear that grave laxity had crept into the affairs of the Casket since that report and the assurance given Parliament in 1936 by the then Minister for Health and Home Affairs, our present Premier, was not fulfilled. He said at page 1427 of "Hansard" for 1936—

"The only dispute that we had with the principals of the firm was in connection with one clause that I insisted on going into the agreement, and that was that the Auditor-General should have the right to investigate its accounts. I put that in deliberately because I know my Tory politician."

At page 1429 of the same "Hansard" he said—

"The Commissioner of Taxes and the Auditor-General can inspect their accounts at any time."

Let us be scrupulously fair to Mr. Crosser. The Premier has said in the debate in 1936 that the Government had no right to audit the accounts of Golden Investments. I quote from page 1388 in the same debate where the Premier said—

"The Golden Investment accounts would be audited." Then he said "Someone suggested that we should call upon Golden Investments to give us a list of expenses. We have no right to do that any more than we have the right to call upon the hon. member for Keppel to tell us what are his expenses in running his 'Golden Casket' agency. We have no interest in what he is doing. What he pays for rent is no concern of mine. All that I am concerned about is that he run the agency properly and return the money correctly."

That is running his agency properly, not breaking the laws of other countries. When he is in a corner he says, "Get an audit," and when he is talking freely he says, "We have no right to audit the accounts of Golden Investments." That is the attitude of his colleague Gray.

Mr. McGill, in his best manner, thundered out one afternoon, "Mr. Pie has no right to come here and do what his counsel asks, to probe into the business methods of my client." All we wanted to know was whether the Auditor-General was auditing the affairs of Golden Investments. He was not. No opportunity of any sort was given to probe into the affairs of Mr. Gray, alias Yarg, and alias a few other names. I do trust that the commission's recommendations are now so adopted that they make mandatory a strict and efficient audit of Golden Investments' affairs, especially as they are really acting for the Government with overseas sales, and particularly the remitting of overseas prizes.

It is not too much to say that the Auditor-General's performance on the opening day when he read a prepared reply to the argument put up by my counsel that he never heard, was something, to say the least of it, that was very unhappy. I commend Mr. Huish, who I felt was able, because of his business training and practical experience, to appreciate the astonishing weaknesses then operating in the Golden Casket administration.

If the recommendations put into this report are honestly implemented and exactly audited, then many of the grave laxities which have crept into the administration of the Golden Casket will be eliminated. To that extent my endeavours will have secured protection to scores of thousands of Golden Casket investors. That has been my objective from the start and will remain so until I finish this matter. It is not finished yet by a long way.

Let me deal with the recommendations. The limited terms of reference were beyond our expectations. They prove to any unbiased mind that our contention about any looseness of administration was amply justified. Take Recommendation No. 1. It shows very clearly that there was very great laxity of administration, and that without it the juggling of unsold country returns was possible. Where in the world would you find the manager of a business like the Golden Casket being permitted to sell tickets verbally, not knowing the numbers of the tickets, or even where the tickets were, and not receiving any written confirmation of such sales? He could sell to anyone at all after the Casket was closed and no-one knew to whom he had sold them.

This shows clearly—I am dealing with No. 2 now—that under the past loose administration these matters were left to chance. An important matter like the return of unsold tickets was the subject of no written instruction, and the Commission rightly saw that such a position was preposterous—not knowing what to do with sold and unsold butts in country centres that could not be in Brisbane in time for drawing, so they put in recommendation No. 2.

Recommendation No. 3 bears out our contention that the appointment of agents was most casual, that it was despotic and monopolistic, some agents having more than one agency. That was proved. Previously the agreement and rights of agents were open to abuse and could vary with the mood of the manager.

No. 4. Why wasn't this done before with all agents? Because the Casket was run under Rafferty rules.

No. 5. This recommendation was getting at the real racket in which Golden Investments were engaged. It is only right that the remuneration of sub-agents and the fixing of the price of overseas tickets should be in the hands of the Golden Casket. In the past Golden Investments could sell overseas at any price they liked.

There are more things I want to deal with. Having dealt with particular aspects of the commission's achievements let us concentrate

on the main deficiencies of an inquiry which could only be termed because of the limited terms of reference an expedition of white-washing, although I say it was not entirely white-washing, having a bucket of white-wash in one hand, a bucket of mud in the other, The Government got the white-wash and I got the mud. (Opposition laughter.) To paraphrase Churchill's words, it was done to me because I dared strike politically at the Premier's soft under-belly between wind and water—to strike at the arrangements between a member of the Cabinet and a man named Gray or Yarg which set up a very dubious agency known as Golden Investments.

Whom do we criticise in relation to the limited terms of reference? Not the Deputy Premier and the Cabinet who consistently refused to grant any commission. I say that in all fairness. I say there is only one person to be criticised for the limited terms and that is the man who, when Secretary for Health and Home Affairs, completed arrangements with this man with the string of names and knowingly, as a Minister, made it possible, by subterfuge, to break the laws of other countries and the sister dominions. I think all will agree that for a Minister of the Crown to knowingly break the laws of other States and countries and allow this arrangement to continue after he became the leader of the State is a glaring breach of principle—not only a breach of principle but criminally wrong to have persons of low repute acting as agents for Golden Investments under the authority of the Premier and as agents ultimately representing the Queensland Government in its illegal interstate and overseas activity.

To prove what I say is correct I wish to quote from the reports from New Zealand and India. This is the Indian one—

“Our inquiries so far show that the parties named by you are very closely related to each other and moreover their addresses, though differently stated, are in fact either care of Messrs. B. X. Furtado or Messrs. A. F. Abreau and Co., both of Dhobi Talao. The latter firm handled the Goa Lotteries for several years until it was banned by the Bombay Government.”

“The address of Captain Renkinke similarly, though given as care of the National Bank of India Ltd. The registered address in the bank is care of Messrs. B. X. Furtado & Sons. Mrs. Olive Pereira—”

This is another person who won a prize—

“—whose address was stated as Holland House, Colaba Causeway, is a partner in the firm of Messrs. B. X. Furtado & Sons. The Toscanos—”

They won about six prizes

“—are all members of Abreau & Co. and the two Toscanos are the brothers-in-law of Mr. C. F. Abreau. The Toscanos were staying in Yusuf Building, Dhobi Talao. Mr. P. Correa—”

the agent for Golden Investments

“—is one who was involved in a similar fraud in a lottery which was conducted by one Mr. Carberry on behalf of Janjira

State Lottery. In this case he had posed for a photograph in Elphinstone Circle Gardens opposite the Town Hall and had it published as a winner of the first prize. He had not received his promised share and turned the tables on Mr. Carberry. The whole swindle was exposed and Mr. Carberry left India.”

And now we will have a look at New Zealand—

“The preliminary inquiries in Wellington revealed a surprising proportion of the prizes in this period going to persons either with a criminal record or being convicted or suspected bookmakers.

“It is suspected from our sources of information that the principal person concerned in the sale of Golden Casket tickets in New Zealand is one R. D. “Bob” Donaldson who has an address in Wellington but also carries on a racing stud business near Levin which is some 55 miles north of Wellington.”

This is the agent for Queensland.

“Donaldson has a long list of convictions as a bookmaker, commencing in 1935 and ending in 1945. He has now retired from bookmaking so far as is known. We have been informed that in 1945 Donaldson, when in Australia with the Kiwi Concert Party, established an association with Mr. and Mrs. Gray.

“Dealing with some of the successful ticket holders mentioned in your list as being in Wellington we make the following comments:—

“‘Evans and Harry Blanket’—£15,000 17 August, 1948.

“The ‘Evans’ mentioned has been found to be a person who either owned or held some interest in the Gresham Hotel, Wellington, just prior to his death last year. It is known that there was a close association between him and Donaldson. We can trace no records in respect of Evans.

“The ‘Harry Blanket’ has been identified as one Mr. R. W. Harry of Wellington. He was employed as a barman by Evans for a number of years. He is a convicted bookmaker and he also has a conviction for receiving stolen goods in 1936. Apparently he has several convictions of being on gaming premises.

“E. N. Franklin—£350—9 May, 1949.

“Franklin is a convicted bookmaker. We have no knowledge of any tie-up between him and Donaldson.

“W. Hardy—£15,000—1 August, 1949.

“Preliminary inquiries through the usual channels failed to trace any record of this person.

“Mrs. Pollock—£6,000—6 October, 1947.

“Similar comments as to Hardy.

“In addition to the foregoing it is known that V. Blake, of Auckland, winner of £12,000 on 3 October, 1945, has a long list of criminal convictions.”

These are the people who represent this Government in other dominions. They are agents for the Golden Casket, they are agents for the Queensland Government. No person can deny that if a Government appoint a

man as an agent the Government are liable for the agent's action. That same principle applies in business. The Premier, fourteen years ago, boasted that he accepted the responsibility as the Minister who planned the invasion by breaking the laws of other States and dominions. He did not do it with regret. Fourteen years ago the Premier boasted of the formation of Golden Investments and at that time said, and this is to be found on page 1387 of "Hansard" of 1936—and I point this out to all Ministers, including the Minister for Transport—that a State department would not break the law of other States but agents will. That is much the same thing as the Government's doing it, and at page 1388 the Premier stated it was his duty to run the Golden Casket successfully. And, on this specious justification, he has never denied that the agreement entered into with Golden Investments as agents absolved the Government from all responsibility from prosecution and that was why it was entered into. I do not think any decent citizen will claim that the Premier is right, either morally or in law, for it is obvious to honest ordinary people that providing the opportunity for an agent to knowingly break laws of other States and dominions does not absolve the principal from action and responsibility. No agreement in my experience could ever overcome the responsibility of the Government as the body originally responsible for law-breaking or conniving to break the law. I advise every fair-minded member not blinded by party prejudice or fear of the Premier's influence, to read the 1936 debates on the Casket and form his own opinion and, if he has got any guts at all, so openly express them.

The people of Queensland should know that because of the Premier's sanctioning of the breaking of the laws of other countries that over £250,000 in prize money has been paid to Golden Investments on trust. I repeat the words "on trust." There has been no audit of where that money has gone. It was paid on trust for remission to doubtful overseas prize-winners, as I pointed out. I have a list here marked with the prize-winners of Golden Investments. Let hon. members go through them to see the doubtful people in Canada, New Zealand, India and America. Take, for instance, C.B., Vancouver. Who in the world would know who that person was? And then there is J.S., Jerusalem. Who could trace these things? This list marked "J" contains the names of these lucky people—lucky winners, nearly as lucky as Les Gray or Yarg, who won £16,867 in eight years free from tax, exclusive of minor prizes, and we cannot find out what he won in minor prizes. Sufficient to say that it would be enough to pay the expenses of Mr. McGill and Mr. Acting Justice O'Hagan and still leave enough to pay for a tour of inspection of the Queensland Government's agents acting for him in breaking the laws of other countries. Some people have to work for what they get; others are born under a lucky star, and others find somebody with whom they can conclude an agency such as this to give a steady income.

I was rather amazed at the Premier's remarks—and I will get on to the question of Santa Claus—on recommendation No. 9. The hon. member or Minister for Hinchinbrook interjected that I would be in gaol within three months. I can assure the Premier that I would never divulge a suspected name of any person or informant unless certain beyond all doubt of the person's identity. I have already described—

**Mr. JESSON:** I rise to a point of order. I did not say that the hon. member would be in gaol. I said that he should be in gaol.

**Mr. PIE:** I accept the hon. member's assurance. I have described to the Premier the man I believe my Casket informant to be. He is the man who knows so much about the Golden Casket and Golden Investments and the Premier's intimate affairs. Let me describe him again to the best of my limited ability. He is a member of the same club as the Premier; a man who once held an important executive position in the Casket office, and was disappointed because he was not made manager; a man who has known the Premier for many years and Gray for many years; a man who claims that the Premier is very wealthy and who has nominated to me the name of the bank in which his wealth is held and the name in which the account stands; a man who has now fallen out with the Premier; a man who still keeps closely in touch with certain people within the Golden Casket office; a man—and this is important—who attended the Golden Casket inquiry every day and who spoke to me over the phone each morning about the previous day's hearing. Is there any member on the Government side who does not know now who he is?

**Government Members:** Yes.

**Mr. PIE:** Is there any member on the Government side who, from the very beginning, has not known his identity?

**Government Members:** Yes.

**Mr. PIE:** The Premier's idle threats do not worry me. It might interest him to know that members of the Royal Commission know as much as I about who Santa Claus is.

**A Government Member:** You said he was a figment of your own imagination.

**Mr. PIE:** That is implicit in the report, and he is a figment of the commission's imagination. The commission knows the man who attended the sittings every day, the man who I think, but cannot prove beyond all doubt, rang me every morning for weeks to tell me what had happened. Is action to be taken under this new Act against the Acting Chief Justice, the Auditor-General and Mr. Huish? If so, at least I shall have some distinguished company in gaol. Every member on the Government side knows, to his acute embarrassment and fear, that Santa Claus is a very real person—

**A Government Member:** Name him.

**Mr. PIE:** That he is exceedingly well-informed on the Labour Party's choice array of skeletons in various cupboards. Hon. members also know only too well that when I originally asked questions based on his information, the answers that were given invariably exposed some shortcoming, thus proving that his information was faultless.

The other informant—the one who was responsible for giving the Rev. Mr. Alcorn's friend his original information, was and still is an employee of the Golden Casket office. He was present at the drawing of No. 1367 Casket, in which the winning butt was filled in and subsequently altered after the Casket was drawn. But the Crown Law office again stepped in. Had all employees been subpoenaed, the person who was responsible for the information that reached the Rev. Mr. Alcorn would have told what he believed to be the truth, but he was afraid voluntarily to come out in the open because of possible subsequent victimisation. Let there be no doubt about that fear. There is not one State public servant who cannot speak in confidence about the victimisation of officers who have displeased the Government. For instance, why are the police to hold a mass meeting? Is it not to discuss that very subject.

Dealing with the commission's report, the commission has told us in its report that I had certain inquiries made in Charleville regarding the origin of "Charleville Syndicate," which was announced over the radio as the winner of Casket No. 1367; the ticket was subsequently altered in the Casket office to "D. C. Yarg Syndicate," care of Charleville News. The commission heard evidence from Mr. Aiken, but the man who made inquiries on my behalf at Charleville was not called. All that was mentioned was his name, but Aiken was allowed to give a complete contradiction of what this man, Mr. McNamara, was prepared to swear on oath. Prompted by the adviser to the commission, Aiken said that he remembered McNamara's coming to his shop and asking for a ticket in the name of "Charleville Syndicate," but I say emphatically that his evidence in that regard was a deliberate fabrication. Had McNamara been allowed to give evidence, he would have told the commission that he specifically went along to the girl under instructions—she was mentioned during the hearing as Miss Stanley—and made sure that he had no dealings whatever with Aiken. He never saw Aiken at any time on this matter, so you can see how false was this carefully contrived piece of key evidence. Aiken told a story of Miss Stanley thinking she had written out a ticket in the name of "Charleville Syndicate." Actually, Aiken admitted he had nothing to do with it. He said he was away from Charleville when all this business was on, so why was he called? Why was not Miss Stanley called to give her own story, and why was not McNamara called so that his story might stand against Aiken's fabrication? If the commission was to get at the truth it is difficult to understand the Crown Law Office's rejection of such vital evidence.

I don't know about Miss Stanley, but Mr. McNamara is here in Brisbane and I know he would be prepared to give his evidence today if the Premier were big enough to have the Casket and his Government's astonishing associations with the Golden Investments octopus fully exposed.

Now, here is a very interesting point: the commission criticised my counsel for not subjecting Gray to cross-examination on his illegal overseas activities on behalf of the Queensland Government. My counsel refrained from cross-examining Gray as a further protest against the Government's limited terms of reference. Where was the point in fighting with your feet and hands tied? We originally contended that the commission could have investigated any evidence we might have raised outside the terms of reference. But as the commission continued and we saw to our amazement the type of tribunal it had developed into, we regarded it as farcical to waste our own time and that of the commission in getting exparte one-sided statements which could not possibly be tested. For instance, early in the proceedings, we wanted to investigate what happened to all the dollars Gray or Yarg or Edgar received from Casket investors in dollar countries, for we had been informed that he was not declaring this money to the Commonwealth and was running an illicit traffic in it and we were told the Premier had knowledge of it. Evidence in support of these allegations could and should have been considered but when we tried to widen the terms to discuss this matter, the commission, accepting the spirit as well as the letter of their terms of reference, ruled otherwise.

We should also have liked to know whether the Commonwealth Bank had proof of the remitting of £250,000 overseas winnings paid by the Casket to Gray and details of how he was able to remit such money to dollar countries, in view of stringent restrictions existing at that time. We should have liked to know because, Mr. Farrell, this huge sum was paid to Gray and no effort was made by the Government to see who ultimately received the prizes. Thus we found L. Gray, Vancouver, D. Yarg, New Zealand, winning prizes and in one instance, as in the Charleville case, with a butt filled in after the Casket was drawn. Is this sort of thing to be accepted without question when a quarter of a million pounds is involved?

Well, Mr. Farrell, I have given you, within the limited time available, some of the evidence that was not, because of the limited terms of reference, placed before the commission where the whole ramifications of the Casket and its law-breaker Golden Investments and their relations can be properly and openly investigated. The people of Queensland were not satisfied with the way the Casket was being run, and I know hon. members opposite, with a few exceptions, were very worried, and the limited scope of the inquiry did not banish their feelings that everything was not as it should be with the Casket.

Personally I shall not be satisfied—and will not let up—until the affairs of Golden Investments are laid bare to the searchlight of public audit.

Here are extracts from an interesting letter:—

“I did the Audit of the Golden Casket office for this interesting period and I had the advantage of an interview with you, at your invitation, at this time and I obtained first hand from you the specious reasons you then advanced for the formation of this Syndicate.

“I state definitely that Ross should have dealt with the reasons for the formation of Golden Investments in 1933; with the subterfuge adopted at its invitation; with the services rendered to the Crown by the Syndicate and with the commissions, allowances and concessions granted by you as Home Secretary to the Syndicate.”

This letter is to a Minister of the Crown, the present Premier. I state definitely that Mr. Ross should have dealt with the reasons for the formation of Golden Investments in 1933. The letter proceeds—

“You became Home Secretary in June, 1932, and interested yourself immediately in Golden Casket affairs.

“At the interview in 1934 you told me that Golden Investments was formed to act as a buffer between the Government and overseas agents in the trade in Casket Lottery tickets. This business had to be done in an underhand and surreptitious way, you said, as public officials could not carry out such duties as it was dirty and compromising business for Government officials to handle. Golden Investments could do this dirty work without compromising the Government, which Golden Casket officials could not.”

That letter was acknowledged by the Premier—

“As Home Secretary and Minister of the Crown you consented, by agreement, to the substitution of Golden Investments for the Golden Casket Office in this overseas trade in Casket Lottery Tickets and you were still aware that, through you authorized agent Golden Investments, the laws of New Zealand, Canada and other Dominions were being broken by this illicit traffic in Casket Lottery Tickets. You allowed the State of Queensland and Golden Investments to profit by the illicit traffic overseas in this Casket Lottery business and Parliament was not advised by Beal, Ross or yourself of this illicit and illegal traffic in Casket Lottery Tickets.”

The whole file is here. As I said before, if hon. members want them tabled they can be tabled.

**Mr. Burrows:** Put them on the table.

**Mr. PIE:** You move that it be tabled and it will be done.

I do appreciate the tolerance that has been shown me but this is the first opportunity I

have had of putting before the people of Queensland evidence that was not allowed to be brought before the commission under the terms of reference.

**Mr. LOW** (Cooroora) (4.33 p.m.): The speech made by the hon. member for Kedron is a very serious one and is one of which I am sure the Government will take particular notice. The Government should look very very carefully into the statements he has made, with the object of reviewing the whole of the association between the Golden Casket and Golden Investments.

I want to make a few comments on the Budget. The Treasurer has budgeted intentionally for a deficit of £767,825, for the purpose of creating a foundation for Federal election addresses. It could have been avoided if careful consideration had been given to its preparation. The deficit of £767,825 will ultimately be greater because of the basic-wage increases, etc., which will throw the Budget out thousands of pounds in addition to the deficit budgeted for.

It is regrettable that the relations between the State and Commonwealth have been so strained, particularly in the difficult period we are passing through, because a combined effort should be made by all parties to complete the work of rehabilitation, especially in Queensland. In speaking on the Address in Reply I quoted from copious notes. I expected that there would be a difference of opinion and bad feeling between the Premier and the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, because this was the first occasion since the introduction of uniform taxation on which a Queensland Labour Premier had to meet a Prime Minister and a Treasurer of a Country-Liberal Government in the Commonwealth Parliament of Australia. In 1946 the State Premiers made an effort to obtain the abandonment of the uniform-taxation scheme, but at that time the Commonwealth did not see their way clear to agree. Mr. J. B. Chifley was then Prime Minister. As this was a war-time measure, I believe that the time is fast approaching when the whole of the financial relations between the States and the Commonwealth should be reviewed. The sovereign rights of the States were taken away during the war period and have not been returned. Once a State ceases to be able to tax its people, it ceases to govern.

**Mr. Aikens:** They were not taken away; they were given away by the States.

**Mr. LOW:** I stand to be corrected in connection with that matter. Even if they were taken away, not much resistance was offered.

I should like to draw attention to the fact that a single taxing authority is more popular with the taxpayers than two. If at any time these sovereign rights are returned to the States and they again become the taxing authorities, there should be one assessment notice showing State and Federal tax separately and they also should retain the system of “Pay as you go.” If, of course, the financial relations between the States and the Commonwealth are not satisfactory, the State Government of Queensland will con-

tinue to put the fangs deep and heavy into the people of this State in order to continue raising money for their own purposes. That being so, I forecast that they will continue the plan of increasing railway freights and fares—which automatically increases road-transport fees—main-roads registration fees, land tax, succession and probate duty, stamp duties, &c. All these taxes help to finance the State and boost revenue and were firmly retained by the State Premiers at the time the other powers were taken from the States.

I observe that the distribution of the finance as arrived at under the formula worked out as follows: from 1942 to 1949 Queensland received 17 per cent. of taxation revenue, in 1949-50 16.4 per cent., 1950-51, 16.3 per cent. What I do not understand—and there is possibly an anomaly here—is that under the Federal Aid Roads Agreement Approval Acts from 1947 to 1949 Queensland received 19.2 per cent of the total road grant. Why the difference between 19.2 per cent. road grant and 16.3 per cent. income-tax grant? It would appear as if the Premier slipped badly when the original formula was being worked out and that it is to the detriment of this State. The financial condition of the States is an increasing worry, not only to the State of Queensland but to the local authorities, which are asking for greater financial assistance. The State likewise is asking the Federal Government for greater financial assistance. It is a question where this unhappy state of affairs will end. I suggested in my speech on the Address in Reply that a commission be set up to define clearly the responsibilities of local authorities, State and Federal Government. During this Budget debate the Treasurer made the remark that the Federal Government had butted in on the hospital question. The present overlapping services to the people by both the State and Federal Governments should be defined, so that there will be no unnecessary overlapping.

In his Budget the Treasurer made particular mention of employment in secondary industries as having increased 50 per cent., but did not make any comment about the acute shortage of farm labour. The greatest problem today is to get sufficient farm labour to carry on our primary industries. That is a very important point and must be looked into by the Government with a view to rectifying the unfortunate position.

Much has been said by hon. members about the defence of the North. Everything possible should be done to develop the North as much as possible, but on making inquiries as to migrants from the United Kingdom to this country, I find that approximately 500,000 persons are waiting in the United Kingdom to come to Australia, the hold-up being the lack of accommodation. The Government should get busy building hostels in the North and throughout the country districts and bring these people to Queensland at once.

**Mr. Power:** That is what we are doing.

**Mr. LOW:** The Government are certainly doing it in a way, but the scheme will have to be expedited so that people in the United Kingdom who want to come to

Australia and Queensland in particular could come here as quickly as possible.

**Mr. Aikens:** You want to turn a trickle into a flood?

**Mr. LOW:** That is correct.

In connection with the defence of the North, much has been said on the unification of railway gauges throughout the States. I contend that the time is inopportune for this but it would be the sensible thing to do to build a railway of 4 feet 8 inches gauge from the New South Wales border through Central Queensland to the Gulf. This would mean a railway to the South, should there be an invasion of North Queensland, and consequent disruption to the coast road and rail services.

Summing up the Budget, we find that the position is not a happy one for Queensland. There is extreme bungling in housing. Thousands of people are waiting for homes and not able to get them. Their position is becoming more desperate each day. Public works such as hospitals, schools, &c., are virtually at a standstill. The programme of hospitals works is approximately £5 million, but the jobs have not been started.

**Mr. Power:** Contractors will not tender for the job.

**Mr. LOW:** I realise all the difficulties but at the same time we must double our efforts to improve the position. Production has declined. We have shortages of everything. Costs are increasing and prices are still soaring and what a shameful record this Government have in this fair State of ours! I believe that we are living in a fool's paradise and I appeal to you, Mr. Farrell, and to everybody else to wake up before it is too late.

Dealing with matters left over from my Address in Reply speech, I say that one of the most important duties of the Government is to concentrate on the construction of roads throughout the State. Roads are as important as railways, from a national point of view, from a defence point of view, and are necessary too from a production point of view. A network of roads is as important as railways but at the same time I realise that railways are important and they too should be extended as quickly as possible. I cannot understand why we only build roads out of money more or less made available by taxation. We should go into the road position carefully and particularly to see whether we can get additional loan money for the purpose. We should not have to wait for money available by increased taxation on motor vehicles and similar things, nor should we wait on money from the Federal Government. We should set about the raising of a huge loan and meet the interest and redemption payments from motor vehicle registration fees, State transport tax, collected under the Road Transport Facilities Act and the Traffic Act and if necessary, from the State land tax. There would be no more useful way of using the money from State land tax than by paying interest and redemption on a loan to cope with the road problem.

According to a recent announcement by the Treasurer motor-vehicle registration fees have been increased by 68 per cent. To me that is staggering because roads are deteriorating and fees are increasing. I should like to read this extract from the Main Roads Act as to exemption from payment of fees—

“ Exemption from payment of fee.

Exemption from payment of any fee for the issue of a certificate, or for the transfer or copy of a certificate shall be granted in respect of—

(i) Any motor truck owned by the Crown, or by any corporation representing the Crown, or by any department, sub-department, board, or commission, under the State Government;

(ii) One motor car owned by and used for the purposes of each department, sub-department, board, or commission under the State Government;

(iii) Any motor truck owned by a Local Authority and used exclusively for Local Authority work and not for the conveyance of passengers for hire;

(iv) Any motor vehicle not used upon any public road;

(v) Any motor vehicle owned by a foreign consul or a member of a foreign consulate staff if such person is a national of the country represented.”

The reason why I mention this matter is because I can understand that exemption would be granted to the vehicles owned by the Main Roads Commission and local authorities throughout the State but I think vehicles owned by the State itself should make some contribution towards the solution of the road finance problem. There must be thousands of exemptions throughout the State, particularly when you consider that we have such a large exemption list. The ambulance brigade is not exempt under the Main Roads Act. It has to pay £1, plus insurance, and I ask: what more worthy body could there be than the ambulance? It is doing a great job, particularly in country areas.

If roads are to be financed from revenue, the State should make some contribution in that regard. On 2 August Mr. Crawford said that the lack of money and equipment was the biggest hold-up in the road-building programme but Mr. Williams, the chief engineer, said that the old roads were cracking up because the highways of 20 years ago were not made to stand up to heavy trucks of up to 16 tons. That shows what our roads are expected to carry.

On investigating this matter further, I find that our roads are carrying more than 16 tons. Regulation 71 of the Main Roads Act, issued on 8 September, 1949, under the heading “Restriction of total weight on roads” reads—

“1. A person shall not use upon any State highway, main, developmental or tourist road any vehicle having two axles, the total weight of which vehicle exceeds sixteen tons.

“2. A person shall not use upon any State highway, main, developmental or tourist road any vehicle having three axles, the total weight of which vehicle exceeds twenty tons.

“3. A person shall not use upon any State highway, main, developmental or tourist road any vehicle having four axles, the total weight of which vehicle exceeds twenty-seven tons.

“4. A person shall not use upon any State highway, main, developmental or tourist road any vehicle having more than four axles, the total weight of which vehicle exceeds thirty-one tons.”

Such heavy vehicles as that are tearing the very insides out of roads that were constructed to carry only small loads, and are smashing the bridges.

Another matter to which I should like to refer is the following extract from the annual report of the State Electricity Commission—

“The transport by road from Brisbane to Howard of a 10,000 kVA transformer weighing nearly 25 tons was a major enterprise carried out by the Board's staff and equipment. The fact that this was successfully carried over roads and bridges between Brisbane and Maryborough is a tribute to the Board's officers, and thanks are due to the assistance received from the Main Roads Commission and other Departments concerned.”

It was not successfully conveyed to Maryborough by road, Mr. Farrell; one road over which it was conveyed was the Cooroy-Pomona road on which is a bridge carrying a notice to the effect that the maximum load to be transported over it shall be 6 tons and that the penalty for taking a greater load over it is £20. That notice is signed by the Noosa shire clerk. Shortly after the vehicle carrying that transformer crossed the bridge it was bogged to the axles and the shire council had to meet the cost of repairing the road. Local authorities throughout Queensland are not very happy about the fact that these large vehicles carrying heavy loads are allowed to travel over their roads and bridges, without receiving any compensation from the Government for any damage that is done. Every day we see heavy loads going along roads that were not built for such a purpose. It is wilful destruction, and it is no wonder that the Main Roads Commission and the local authorities object to having to bear the cost of repairs under those circumstances.

For the year 1949-50 the Government collected the sum of £426,675 from owners of heavy vehicles using the roads. The most unfortunate aspect of this is that not one penny went to the Main Roads Commission or to construction and maintenance of roads. All fees collected under the State Transport Facilities Act and the Traffic Act, amounting to £630,906 were placed to Consolidated Revenue and were not used for road purposes. There is an urgent need for a thorough investigation of State highways and main

roads throughout the State with a view to limiting the load of heavy vehicles on roads not built to carry such fast-moving traffic.

Up to 30 June last we had in Queensland 20,608 miles of gazetted roads, 9,300 miles of constructed roads, and 11,308 miles of unconstructed roads. Prior to the war the Main Roads Commission was constructing roads at the rate of 500 miles per annum, but today the construction has slowed down to a little more than 200 miles per annum, and the cost of bridges and roadworks has increased by 110 per cent.

The time is dead ripe for a complete revision of the financial set-up between the local authorities and Main Roads Commission concerning the construction and maintenance costs of gazetted roads under the Main Roads Acts. I believe that local authorities should be relieved of maintenance costs of all roads gazetted by the Main Roads Commission, such as highways, main roads, developmental roads, secondary roads, mining-access roads, tourist roads, and farmers' roads. At the present time they are called upon to make a contribution which averages 30 per cent. over the whole road system. This would amount to a saving of almost £300,000 per annum for the local authorities. The Main Roads Commission could be compensated by the transfer of all moneys collected under the State Transport Facilities Act and the Traffic Act to the Main Roads Commission which in 1950-50 amounted to £630,906. If that is not sufficient, there is no reason why State Land Tax which amounted to £368,335 9s. in 1949-50 should not also be transferred to the Main Roads Commission for the same purpose.

The number of local authorities in Queensland today in which roads are awaiting construction is 134, and with the present rate of construction the best the Main Roads Commission can do is to construct  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles in each shire annually and if this rate is maintained it will take 50 years to complete the construction of the roads already approved. Last year an additional 592 miles of roads were added to the number that had already been placed under the control of the Main Roads Commission throughout the State. If the local authorities could be relieved of the construction cost of State highways and main roads which carry a considerable amount of through traffic, it would be a step in the right direction. Today we find quite a considerable amount of foreign traffic using the highways and main roads, and if the local authorities could be relieved of any expense in connection with these roads it would be a great assistance to them. If the Main Roads Commission was given sufficient finance and opportunity it would do a good job. It has certainly carried out its job in the past but at present it appears to be hamstrung in every direction. If given sufficient finance, materials, and encouragement I am sure that its road programme would be pushed ahead.

**Mr. Gair:** In what way is it hamstrung?

**Mr. LOW:** It is hamstrung in every way. It has not got sufficient finance.

**Mr. Gair:** But if given finance in what way is it hamstrung?

**Mr. LOW:** As the Commissioner states, one of the main factors in its road programme is finance. I know of many important Main Rads projects waiting for finance to be made available. If more finance was made available to the commission Mr. Crawford and his staff would see that the necessary communications were made throughout the State. I pay a compliment to Mr. Crawford and his staff generally because they ably discharge their onerous functions. If they were placed solely under the control of the commission, it could go ahead with its road programme and thus eliminate division of responsibility. There are many energetic local authorities, but there are some who do not look upon main roads and State highways as sympathetically and as favourably as they might do. If their construction and maintenance was delegated to the commission, they could proceed with their job without being hampered.

**Mr. Power:** Who would pay for them?

**Mr. LOW:** The State, the same as it does the railways.

A greater proportion of road expenditure should be on secondary, developmental and farmers' roads. These are the roads that can be defined as feeder roads to main and State highways. They are the most important from the country point of view. Stronger road foundations and wider roads are required to withstand the inroads made into them by modern motor vehicles because of their increased width, weight and speed. Road construction should keep pace with the development of road transport.

There is much waste in maintenance work. The Commissioner's report for last year discloses that £1,000,000 was spent in maintenance. We should do everything possible to obviate spending such large sums on road maintenance. When roads are constructed they should be sealed so that considerable expenditure on maintenance could be saved. The need for this exists throughout the State. There are many instances in my electorate where roads could be sealed to save maintenance costs. The commission should concentrate on building more concrete roads, to eliminate as far as possible its huge expenditure on maintenance work as revealed in its 1949-50 report. A commencement should be made on the most important highways. They are the Bruce Highway between Brisbane and Cairns, the Downs Highway between Brisbane and Toowoomba, and the Pacific Highway between Brisbane and Tweed Heads. If this was done we should be using a local product. Our supplies of cement should be stepped up. We shall have to face up to this type of road construction sooner or later. Concrete roads constructed in the country require little or no maintenance, whereas bitumen roads are cracking up very badly under the strain of modern fast-moving vehicles.

**Mr. Sparkes:** That has been found out in the United States.

**Mr. LOW:** That is so. That is all the more reason why we should undertake that type of road construction here. We should get road contractors from Britain and the United States, for they would bring with them both material and man-power. If we are able to do this I feel that we shall go some way towards solving the road problems of this State. There should be a decentralisation of administration by the appointment of engineers, surveyors and draftsmen in country centres, because that would overcome some of the delays in the letting of contracts.

One thing that I cannot understand is that a number of shires have excellent shire engineers, who are paid only 1½ per cent. on a sliding scale, with a maximum of 2 per cent., yet the consulting engineers for the shires are paid on a fixed scale of 3 per cent. That does not give the shire engineers much encouragement to carry on the work of the Main Roads Commission. There should be no distinction between one man and another if they are expected to do similar work.

In connection with obtaining contractors and other migrants from overseas, I believe, in view of the serious position of many Main Roads Commission projects, which are held up on account of the shortage of man-power although hundreds of thousands of British people are waiting to migrate, that the commission should ascertain the number of men required to step up the road-building programme and should build accommodation centres and hostels throughout the State, and submit a group nomination so that the migration authorities at Australia House could select suitable persons for transport under the group nomination scheme.

We come to another point regarding the Main Roads Commission. We get back to a very vital question that I have brought up before. We find today that the Main Roads Commission will not accept any responsibility whatever for the eradication of noxious weeds on roads controlled by it. The commission has passed on the responsibility to the local authorities concerned, and the local authorities say it is the responsibility of the commission; and the noxious weeds continue to grow on the roads under the control of the Main Roads Commission. That is a very disappointing aspect of the problem. I feel that the commission should be obliged by law to clear all the roads of noxious weeds which are both a menace and an eyesore.

I wish to refer to a matter that I believe is deserving of rectification. You will remember, Mr. Farrell, that in November, 1949, when the Estimates for the Department of Public Works and Housing were before the House, strong criticism was levelled at the department regarding the delays in attending to school buildings, police stations and residences and other public buildings throughout the State. The Minister at that time, the hon. member for Baroona, said that if we continued to criticise the department he would not answer correspondence. On that occasion I voiced my disappointment at this proposed action. For the information of the younger members—I am sure most of the older members are aware of it—I wish to

point out that prior to that time the Minister, who has the right to approve of expenditure to the extent of £1,000 each week for repairs on public buildings throughout the State, at the end of each week had informed members of the work approved to be carried out in their electorate. I find that since that debate in November, 1949, the information as to the work approved of and the expenditure involved has not been passed on to members of the Opposition. The information is continually being passed on to members of the Government party. Rank discrimination is displayed; if it is good enough to provide Government members with the particulars of work approved in their electorates and the expenditure involved it is good enough for the same information to be given to members of the Opposition. I hope this matter will be taken up by the responsible Minister. Unfortunately, the Secretary for Public Works and Housing has adopted that practice.

For a considerable time I have felt that a change was being made and on going through the various newspapers from the northern and western centres to be found in the library, I find in them published statements of members of the Government party from time to time mentioning certain works to be done. On one occasion I telephoned the secretary to the Minister and he told me he would look into the matter. I have received no further information.

To substantiate my statement I will read from the Gympie "Times" of 3 October, 1950.

"School Improvements.

"Mr. T. Dunstan, M.L.A., has been informed by the Minister for Public Works, Mr. P. J. R. Hilton, that an expenditure of £117 has been approved for works to be carried out at the State School and residence at Glenwood, as follows: School, repairs to sashes and E.C. screen and provision of storeroom; residence, repairs to sashes and stove, painting breakfast-room and hall."

Not one such advice has been received by me or other members of the Opposition since November, 1949. That is gross discourtesy and an omission that is not in the best interests of this State. I ask: What led up to this action? I have every justification for bringing forward this matter. Here I read a letter from the then Secretary for Public Works, Housing and Local Government, Hon. W. Power, on 1 July, 1949—

"Dear Mr. Low,

"I am pleased to inform you that I have now given approval for the expenditure necessary to enable certain works to be undertaken at the State School, Kin Kin.

"The work will comprise the external painting of the school building and the residence, internal painting of kitchen and bathroom at the residence, and repairs to casements at the school."

and here I register my protest. That work has not even yet been started. It is the principle involved that gives me cause for complaint: it is not because we do not make

representation. I have files on every public building in my electorate. I hope the Minister and the Treasurer will take this matter up and in future there will not be this discrimination.

The time allowed to me is drawing to a close and I will briefly refer to the Treasurer's statement about the increase in secondary industry. I am glad the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock is in the Chamber. I draw attention to three important industries that are well and truly on the down-grade: banana, maize and cotton. Much has been said about the cotton industry and the help given by the Federal Government. The hon. member for Barambah, who knows the maize industry from A to Z, will deal with the decline in production in that industry. But I wish to deal with the banana industry. If something is not done for the banana industry—and it can be called the forgotten industry—we shall end by losing the whole of our industry and trade to New South Wales. I want some action taken by this Government and the Department of Agriculture and Stock.

I intend to put on record figures showing the decline in the banana industry in this State. If one goes to fruit shops in Brisbane one will find how scarce they are. This has been going on for many years and my electorate, which was the centre of great banana production, today is virtually declining. I know the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock will take some action to revive this industry, because he realises its importance. I have been on an investigation into banana production for the past three months, and I wish to read some figures beginning with 1929 to show the areas under production and the bunches produced. They are—

Year	Acres.	Production 1,000 Bunch.
1929-30 .. .. .	12,874	2,941
1930-31 .. .. .	12,565	3,068
1931-32 .. .. .	10,885	2,951
1932-33 .. .. .	7,235	1,870
1933-34 .. .. .	6,777	2,028
1934-35 .. .. .	7,027	1,906
1935-36 .. .. .	7,004	1,733
1936-37 .. .. .	4,983	1,447
1937-38 .. .. .	5,288	1,517
1938-39 .. .. .	6,462	1,759
1939-40 .. .. .	6,845	1,688
1940-41 .. .. .	5,987	1,557
1941-42 .. .. .	6,330	1,428
1942-43 .. .. .	5,989	1,306
1943-44 .. .. .	5,345	1,324
1944-45 .. .. .	5,033	1,365
1945-46 .. .. .	5,941	1,722
1946-47 .. .. .	6,145	1,645
1947-48 .. .. .	6,616	1,406
1948-49 .. .. .	6,325	1,468

Those figures were taken from the "Queensland Pocket Book for 1950," pages 65 and 66, and show conclusively that the acreage of bananas in Queensland has dropped by one-half and that production also has dropped by the same percentage between 1929-30 and 1948-49.

**A Government Member:** Any other crops growing in their place?

**Mr. LOW:** I should say that most of our banana-farming is conducted on very steep slopes. Pineapples and beans are competitive industries but most of the banana areas are on steep slopes and whereas they used to grow bananas the crop is now groundsel. In the banana-growing area of Queensland between Gympie and the border the main varieties are cavendish and ladies' fingers and the chief disease has been bunchy-top, but that is now more or less under control. The main pest today is the banana beetle and although some experiments are being carried out with baits of Paris green and flour, the beetle and the grub are still playing havoc with crops.

As the lady-finger variety withstands the beetle better than other varieties, it may be advisable to advocate an extension of its cultivation in Queensland. Primary industries are of the greatest importance to this State and, in view of the alarming drop in the production of bananas, I urge the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock to make urgent investigations into the conditions of that industry.

**Mr. Aikens:** What is the cause of the drop in production?

**Mr. LOW:** In the past, the virgin lands of this State have been exploited and after the bananas have more or less gone out they have not been replaced. The banana advisory staff should be increased so that banana-growers can be given more encouragement and assistance to farm scientifically so that the production per acre can be increased. In the other primary industries, complete harmony and good feeling exist between the advisory officers of the department and the producers, but the banana industry has been allowed to slip back and has been neglected.

To increase banana production in Queensland, there should be a reconditioning of the banana lands, the adoption of sound farming practices, and the selection of slopes more suitable for the use of horse implements; mechanical implements cannot be used on the sides of hills on which bananas have been grown in the past. The selection of a good type of planting material is also necessary, and a sound basis of growing bananas is desuckering and the practice of one bunch, one follower. In addition, the fertiliser programme recommended by the department could well be followed. In many instances, green crops could be grown and the surface of the ground covered with mulch in order to help in conserving moisture and assist in weed control. All those things could be considered in reviving the banana industry, which, if something is not done urgently, will be lost to New South Wales. At the Royal National Show, we saw a display of bananas from northern New South Wales, but there were very few from our own State.

I believe, too, that this Government could help to revive and stabilise this industry by means of a guaranteed price that would cover the cost of production. Such a suggestion should receive earnest consideration from the Government and from those engaged in the industry.

I am sorry that the canning of bananas has not proved as successful as was expected, but experiments are still being conducted. Bananas are very difficult to can, but I hope that the experiments now being made will overcome the difficulties being experienced.

If we wish to compete with the northern New South Wales banana industry, more research work must be carried out to discover improved methods of cultivation and pest destruction. I suggest to the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock that we should have more experimental trials. Experimental trials are being conducted at Nambour and on other plantations in south-east Queensland and much good work is being done by officers of the Department of Agriculture and Stock. If we are to save the banana industry, greater efforts must be made by all concerned as the position today is a serious one. I also suggest that there should be more banana field days so as to create a greater interest in the industry, which now appears to be a forgotten one and on the way out.

**Mr. Collins:** Pineapples have been very attractive in that area.

**Mr. LOW:** The pineapple industry has been organised and developed and is on a fairly sound basis and it would appear that quite a number of persons previously engaged in growing bananas have drifted into the pineapple industry. However, I emphasise the point that we cannot afford to forget the banana industry, even though other industries have been given favourable consideration and have perhaps attracted all the attention. At the moment the banana industry is fast going downhill. It needs rejuvenation—it is too good to lose—and if we plan soundly we can rejuvenate it. The farmers are doing their best in difficult circumstances but one problem today is the acute shortage of farm labour. Although greater numbers are being attracted to the secondary industries than in the past, it is at the expense of the primary industries. Many almost worn-out farmers are continuing in their industries, working hard when they should in fact be living in retirement. The present is a very difficult time for them.

One means of reviving the banana industry and placing it on a sound footing is a guaranteed price based on cost of production. More advisory officers should be appointed to go into country centres to try to resurrect the industry. A headmaster of an important school the other day told me that at one time every child who came to school had a banana in its lunch, and that today he hardly saw one. That is to be deplored. I appeal to the Minister and the Government to do everything possible to resurrect the industry and to see that it does not decline any further, but by continuous effort lift it to its proper place as one of the most important primary industries in this State of Queensland.

**Hon. P. J. R. HILTON** (Carnarvon—Secretary for Public Works, Housing and

Local Government) (5.34 p.m.): Hon. members will agree that the debate on the Budget this session has been protracted. Some constructive views have been put forward—very few from the Opposition—but I regret to say that statements have been made that in common decency should not have been made.

I do not propose to discuss the financial, economic and developmental aspects of the Budget, but I should like to join with other hon. members in congratulating the Treasurer on the very fine picture that he has put forward for the information of the people of Queensland. His Financial Statement gave a very clear outline of the State's position and revealed a very pleasing picture of the development that has taken place and what will take place in the future. Any hon. member who follows financial trends throughout the Commonwealth knows very well indeed what the financial position is at present so far as both Commonwealth and States are concerned.

I was prompted to rise to refute the baseless attack that was made by the hon. member for Mount Coot-tha on the Department of Public Works and the Queensland Housing Commission in his contribution to this debate, if it can be called a contribution. More particularly do I rise to defend a very efficient officer of the Public Service who was taken to task by the member for Mount Coot-tha without warrant and without taking the opportunity to ascertain the facts of the two cases he dealt with. There is another aspect of the hon. member's attack in Mr. McPhie's case. He approached me some time ago about that case.

**Mr. Morris:** Four times.

**Mr. HILTON:** I did interest myself in the matter and I gave him full details of the position as it developed. I kept him informed of events as they occurred and if he thinks his outburst measures up to the courteous attention I gave him, then I do not think it does. However, the hon. member has a right to make the statement he made but the obligation is on him to justify the charge. I should be very remiss indeed in my duty if I did not refute his untruthful statements and defend the good name of a man to whom he imputed improper administration. Further, he even charged that officer with deceiving not only myself but my predecessor.

I will quote briefly some of the comments the hon. member made. First of all, he said that it should not be the function of the commission to become builders of homes. He proceeded and said houses being built for the Government in dozens and dozens of cases were a shocking indictment of the Government. He further said that he had inspected numerous houses and if they had been built by private builders under the supervision of private architects they would have been condemned by this Chamber and we should have accused these architects and builders of being racketeers. He also said that the Government were doing more to build jerrybuilt houses and handing over inferior dwellings to the people than any private contractor. He

then proceeded to say he would prove those statements. He quoted two particular cases but, passing strange to say, of the two cases he quoted, one was a dwelling erected by a private contractor, and the unsatisfactory work associated with the other building, which was a day-labour job, was the fixing of the plaster in the house, which was done by a private sub-contractor.

I repeat that the hon. member accused the Housing Commission of doing this inferior work. Whilst I do not by any means condemn all private contractors I want to make the point that in the two cases he mentioned the unsatisfactory work was carried out by private contractors.

**Mr. Morris:** Under the supervision of the Housing Commission.

**Mr. HILTON:** The hon. member tried to make a case out against the Queensland Housing Commission; he attached all the blame for this unsatisfactory work to the Housing Commission, and went so far as to say it was all the fault of Mr. Calvin, the commissioner. I shall make the hon. member eat his words.

First of all I propose to deal with the McPhie case. The hon. member started off by saying that the McPhies—husband and wife—asked the Housing Commission to build them a home. That is not correct. The McPhies applied for an advance to finance a home to be built on a piece of land they owned and they applied for the advance to the Queensland Housing Commission. Tenders were duly called for the house and a contract was accepted, and the signatories to the contract were Mr. McPhie, his wife, and the contractor. The price of the contract was £1,698. It was drawn up on 24 November, 1949, and as usual in all building contracts in these times there was a "rise and fall" clause in it. Up to date the sum of £1,350 has been paid to Burgess, the contractor, and on account McPhie has paid £624, plus £15 4s. in fees, and the commission had paid the balance of £725 to the contractor, making a total payment of £1,350 up to date. So hon. members will see, despite the payments made, there is still a provision of well over £300 to meet any defect that certainly does exist in the house, before any final payment is made and before McPhie is asked to accept the house.

**Mr. Morris:** Payment was withheld at the request of McPhie.

**Mr. HILTON:** That statement again is entirely incorrect. If the hon. member, when he mentioned this case to me, had asked for detailed information on that point I should have been glad to put him right. The last payment was made to the contractor in June and it was in August this year that McPhie requested that no further payments be made. The Housing Commission was on the job in that respect and no payment has been made since last June. The hon. member can dive for all the papers he wishes to dive for; I have the file here and I studied it from beginning to end this afternoon.

I now propose to quote the relevant communications between the McPhies and the Housing Commission and between the Housing Commission and the contractor. First of all, there was a complaint about the stumps for the house. We go back to July this year. The following is a memo from the senior inspector of the Housing Commission to the Commissioner and it reads as follows:—

"Mr. McPhie, borrower, called and stated that he had opened a trench for drainage under the dwelling and this trench passes close to one row of stumps, and he is of opinion no footing has been put to the stumps as specified. Borrower also complains about several joists having shrunk and split. I accompanied Mr. Marsden to the dwelling.

"Whilst several joists must be reinforced to give stability, I spoke to Burgess, builder, and he agreed to fix extra joists, whilst the question of stumps would be discussed with borrower. Borrower called today and advised the joists had been fixed. He discussed the question of footings to stumps with the contractor and he, borrower (Mr. McPhie), agreed that in view of the solid nature of the ground he is willing to allow stumps to remain without footings providing the builder agrees to a reduction of £50 in contract price. I promised to contact the builder and advise him of the borrower's decision."

**Mr. Morris:** Why do you not read the letter of 18 July?

**Mr. HILTON:** I told the hon. member that no payment had been made since June and that the Housing Commission was on the job in that respect before Mr. McPhie. No payment has been made since last June.

**Mr. Morris:** You said McPhie asked you to withhold in August: it was on 18 July he wrote to you.

**Mr. HILTON:** Mr. McPhie wrote a letter. He may have made a verbal request but he wrote a letter subsequent to that. Be it July or August, the fact remains that no payment was made and Mr. McPhie was informed accordingly. I will not worry the Committee with all the details of the negotiations carried on since that date. The Housing Commission realised that the building contractor had done an unsatisfactory job and has given constant attention to the matter. It has taken our Forestry officers to inspect the timber and the report of these officers was to the effect that if they had seen the timber put into that house before its erection they would have condemned two pieces only. These pieces happen to be of ironbark and they were condemned because of certain knots in them.

Admittedly, there has been the shrinkage. Scribbly gum, to which the hon. member referred, and box are permitted to be used in house construction in protected places. The shrinkage was due to unseasoned timber and that is why there was a deterioration of the floor. It was not because of the actual nature of the timber. As I said in reply to a question asked the other way, we are guided by

the experts. The Housing Commission does not use scribbly gum and box if they can avoid it, but when it is used in protected places and when seasoned it is a valuable building timber, in view of the shortage of timber that exists throughout Australia.

**Mr. Macdonald** interjected.

**Mr. HILTON:** I thought I made the position clear. The Housing Commission would prefer not to use it. If it is seasoned and used in protected places—and it is in many instances—it gives entire satisfaction. Contractors have used it extensively and it is used very extensively by private builders.

**Mr. Kerr:** Is there not any inspection before the timber is made available?

**Mr. HILTON:** If timber has been milled for a month or so, it is impossible for any man, even the greatest expert, to know whether it is sufficiently seasoned at that time. It may appear to be seasoned. Of course, there is an obligation on the contractor in order to ensure that it is seasoned, to hold it for a certain time so that there will be no undue shrinkage.

**Mr. Morris:** There is an instrument to test the moisture content in timber.

**Mr. HILTON:** Surely the hon. member would not expect an officer of the commission with that appliance to be able to test every stick of timber put in every house?

Obviously that is an absurd demand to make. There is an obligation on a contractor to use seasoned timber and if he fails to do so he has to pay the penalty. I make it clear that for any remissness of the contractor in this case he will have to pay the penalty.

To proceed with some of the more relevant letters on the file in this case, I quote one the commission wrote to Mr. and Mrs. D. S. McPhie on 4 August, 1950—

“In reply to your registered letter of 1st instant I have to advise that, following receipt of your letter of 18th ultimo, further payments to your contractor were held pending decision on the matters disputed by you in regard to the erection of your dwelling at Mitchelton.

“Your contractor, Mr. Burgess, is not agreeable to the proposed deduction of £50 from the contract price and has requested the Superintendent of Works, Mr. King, to inspect the disputed items. This inspection will be made very soon, and you will be advised of the result thereof without delay.”

It does not indicate that the commission was falling down on its job.

On 6 September the whole question in connection with this building was submitted to the Solicitor-General and the advice of that officer was to this effect—

“In my opinion the Housing Commission should not accept any responsibility for compensation and has ample powers under clause 33 of the general conditions of contracts to deal with this matter.”

In order to ensure that there would be no responsibility on the part of the commission, the whole matter was submitted to the Solicitor-General for his advice and, of course, I informed the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha, who was handling the case, that that step had been taken.

On 18 September, 1950, a letter was written from the commission to Mr. A. C. Burgess, which reads as follows:—

“Re: H.S.809.

“With further reference to your contract in connection with the erection of the above dwelling and previous request for you to carry out correction of faulty workmanship, I would advise that you are requested to put such work in hand forthwith.

“Your attention is drawn to clause 33 of the building agreement which you signed in connection with above dwelling. You are advised that unless you take immediate steps regarding correction of faulty work, the commission will have no alternative but to take action under the abovementioned clause.

“For your information a copy of the agreement is attached hereto.”

On 13 October the Queensland Housing Commission wrote to Mr. Burgess as follows:—

“Re: Dwelling—H.S. 809—D. S. and W. I. McPhie, Station view street, Mitchelton.

“In regard to your contract for the erection of the abovementioned dwelling, I have to advise that the following items require your attention:—

1. Provide and fix a further three (3) anchor bolts.
2. Complete vermin proofing to front wall plate.
3. Remove surplus earth from under back stairs.
4. Cut bottom plate at dwarf wall to back stairway.
5. Provide and fix small gate under house.
6. Trim stump cap for downpipe.
7. Provide flashing over laundry door and louvres.
8. Door to laundry to be braced and adjusted.
9. Install fuel copper and chimney.
10. Provide uniform taps in bathroom.
11. Check vent from heater in bathroom with regulations of Gas Company.
12. Anchor washbasin.
13. Provide and fix saddle cap to stringers of front stairs.
14. Provide and fix braces to E.C. door, also clean out building and provide sawdust box and scoop.
15. Replace back door which is affected by borers.
16. Paintwork.—Paint inside all cupboards. Rub down with glass paper and refinish mouldings to cupboards in

kitchen. Paper off and repaint 4 x 4 post to front landing. Another coat is required to door and fascias and barges to E.C. Another coat to laundry door.

17. Provide and fix two additional collar ties to roof and also complete bird proofing.

18. Replace stop window bathroom.

19. Level weatherboards at bathroom window.

20. Adjust all joinery.

“This list is in addition to the list of items issued on 18 August last.

“Please arrange to have items completed without further delay.”

I have read that letter in detail purposely. A direction was issued on 18 August last, long before this man had made all these complaints, and I have mentioned all those items to inform hon. members that the commission was watching this job very closely.

**Mr. Decker:** After the house was built?

**Mr. HILTON:** The hon. member must think that the commission has an army of inspectors and that it can plant one at each dwelling all day long whilst work is being carried out on it. The commission demands that the work will be carried out to the satisfaction of everybody concerned.

**Mr. Morris:** This was 39 weeks after the house was supposed to have been finished.

**Mr. HILTON:** That suggestion is on a par with the stupidity of the remarks of the hon. member for Mount Coot-tha today. Even though a contractor might undertake to complete a dwelling within a certain time, we cannot compel him to do it. This was a private contract, under which the contractor incurred certain obligations. The charge made by the hon. member was that the Housing Commission was responsible for all these things, and I am making a case to prove that the commission did everything possible within reason to ensure that the contractor did the job properly and that the McPhies were fully protected. However, the hon. member is not satisfied. He admits that he rushed in without being fully informed on the matter, and when I prove a case for the Housing Commission, he interjects that the house should have been finished long ago. It would have been finished if the contractor had fulfilled his obligations. Does the hon. member think that we should arrest the contractor, or hold a gun at his head and say, “You must work on that job day and night and finish it within the specified time!”? How stupid it is of him to make such an interjection!

**Mr. Morris:** If you are getting a fee of about £50 to supervise the job, it should be done properly.

**Mr. HILTON:** In reply to that interjection, I ask the hon. member to put himself in the position of the Housing Commissioner. What would he do if, within the time specified in the contract, these things went wrong and the contractor had not completed the

building? Would he go out with a gun and hold it at the man's head and make him do the work? How stupid it is of him to talk like that! Knowing his mentality, however, I do not doubt that he would do that if he was personally concerned.

I am not going to weary the Committee much longer with quotations from this file but there are two more communications I should like to read. First I should like to read a letter dated 18 August last because it contains a significant concluding paragraph and is addressed to the contractor concerned with Mr. Burgess. It refers to the fact that this house was constructed in an unsatisfactory way and it says—

“With reference to your recent discussion with the Commissioner, Borrower and Superintendent of Works, and later with the Superintendent of Works on the site, regarding the abovementioned job, I would advise that you are hereby instructed to carry out corrective work as follows:—

(1) Remove bulge in floor of dining room and hallway; re-ramp floor where necessary; make good where daylight is showing through same.

(2) Remove angle stop under sill on left hand front corner of house and replace same with new in correct manner.

(3) Remove and make good faulty sill to group of sashes over front steps and also make good any disturbed work.

(4) Remove short piece of spouting to raking fascia over stove recess; make good in one piece between angles; check all angles to spouting for required laps and have same rivetted; make good all disturbed work.

(5) Check and ease all joinery and leave same working freely.

(6) Provide 1-inch quadrants under window sills and paint same as specified for walls. This is necessary to cover up bad fitting of weatherboards to grooves under sills.

“You will realise that even with the above corrective work, it will still not be possible to hand over a first-class job to the Borrower in respect to plates, bearers, joists and floor, therefore, it will be necessary to also compensate the Borrower in this regard.

“Please treat this matter as urgent in order to expedite completion of the contract.”

Perhaps I should have read that letter earlier but I would point out that the Housing Commission realises that a faulty job is being carried out.

**Mr. Morris:** After the borrower had complained.

**Mr. HILTON:** The hon. member may make that puerile interjection but the Housing Commission realised in August that a faulty job was being done and indicated to the contractor that he would have to compensate the borrower, Mr. and Mrs. McPhie, even after he had carried out the only work that could be done to put the job in order.

In view of that fact, will any honourable member stand up here and charge the Housing Commission with robbing these people, with being negligent in the matter of supervision?

I conclude reference to this case by pointing out that the Housing Commissioner brought Mr. McPhie, the contractor, and other people concerned into his office and these matters were discussed at length. He did that on more than one occasion and the position had been reached on 23 October last, which is only a little over a week ago, disclosed in this memorandum from the senior inspector to the Commissioner—

“Re dwelling—H.S. 809—D.S. and W.I. McPhie, Mitchelton.

“I accompanied Mr. Galvin and Mr. McPhie to the dwelling at Mitchelton at 1.30 p.m. today. Contractor Burgess was on the job. After much discussion, during which I used my best endeavours to reach a settlement, Mr. McPhie stated that he wished to consult a solicitor before coming to any decision. He promised to contact and advise this office of his decision in the near future.”

I want to state in fairness to Mr. Burgess that at that conference he promised to do certain things to the best of his ability and at his own expense in order to compensate for the faulty work. Mr. McPhie knew that, but he intimated that he wanted to consult his solicitor before making a final decision.

There the matter stands at the present time. I informed the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha of that conference and told him that Mr. Burgess had promised to do certain work next week. That was last Monday week. The commencement of that work was contingent on Mr. McPhie's being willing to accept the work promised by Mr. Burgess and, of course, if they could come to terms regarding compensation to be allowed to Mr. and Mrs. McPhie. What more could a man have done in that respect?

I make this point: what greater supervision could have been exercised by any private architect than was exercised in this case? I defy challenge on that point. Furthermore, under the conditions of the contract Mr. and Mrs. McPhie had their own redress all the way through. They could have instituted legal proceedings against the contractor, but I do not think they would have been wise at that stage in doing so. I want to inform the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha that the signatories to the contract were Mr. and Mrs. McPhie and the contractor, Mr. Burgess. Today he twisted my information and said that I informed him that the McPhies would have to institute legal proceedings on their own account in order to obtain satisfaction.

**Mr. Morris:** That is what you did say.

**Mr. HILTON:** I did not give that information to the hon. member. I pointed out that Mr. and Mrs. McPhie had legal redress. (Interjections). If the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha cannot take it he at

least should keep quiet and allow other hon. members to hear my reply to his charge. I pointed out to the hon. member that Mr. and Mrs. McPhie, under the terms of the contract, had a right to legal action if they wished to execute it, but I did not say that the right devolved on them. Under the conditions of the contract the State Housing Commission, as supervising authority, had certain rights. It intimated to the contractor as far back as last August that those rights would be exercised in favour of their clients, Mr. and Mrs. McPhie. As I mentioned, the last conference took place on the matter only a few days ago. We have not heard yet the decision of Mr. and Mrs. McPhie. If the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha was supplied with that brief story by Mr. McPhie, as undoubtedly he was, he must have known that that conference took place and he must have known that Mr. McPhie had not made a final decision in the matter, yet in spite of that he came along here today and made a very grave charge against the Queensland Housing Commission. Every hon. member has the right to criticise administration but I do strongly resent a charge of grave maladministration being levelled against an innocent man who went to no end of trouble to put the matter right. He was aware that the contractor had done a bad job, but it was not the fault of the Housing Commission. I throw the accusations made by the hon. member back into his teeth. (Interjections.)

I propose to deal now with the second case referred to by the hon. member in support of all the grave allegations that he made. That is the case of the gentleman Mr. Peel who complained that he has received a raw deal from the Housing Commission. The hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha made this grave charge:

“He was told it was £1,575 and he was prepared to pay £1,625 and you jacked it up £300 because it was falling to pieces and you had to spend a couple of hundred pounds to repair it and you charged this man for it. That is how the Housing Commission is treating these people. They do nothing but rob them right and left. As long as the Housing Commission operates you will continue to rob the people.”

That is a most serious charge. Again by implication the hon. member makes the point that the Housing Commissioner personally was carrying out this maladministration and robbing the people.

Let us get the full story on this case. We go back to 16 December, 1948.

**Mr. Morris:** Why don't you go back to 13 October last?

**Mr. HILTON:** I will present this case in my own way and truthfully.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha has had an opportunity to state his case, and he must now give the Minister the right to reply.

**Mr. HILTON:** To satisfy the hon. member and to show there is nothing to hide, I will go back to the first letter dated 1 October, which reads as follows:—

“With reference to your application to purchase the dwelling known as Brisbane 1244, situated at Edith Street, Enoggera, I wish to advise that it has been approved to sell the property to you.

“The Commission is not yet in a position to advise you the purchase price thereof, but will do so at the earliest opportunity.”

Now we come to the letter of 13 October, which reads as follows:—

“Further to the Commission’s letter of the 1st inst. I wish to advise that if you make an offer of £1,625 for the dwelling known as Brisbane 1244 on a deposit of £375, such offer will be submitted to the Minister for his consideration.”

The following letter in reply is dated 14 October:—

“Dear Sir,—In reply to your communication of 13th inst. regarding the cost of the home I was informed when I made my application that the price of same could not be assessed until near completion. As the house is only 40 per cent. complete would you please notify me if the £1,625 is the final price. It seems to me to be excessive and would it be possible to have same revalued?”

There is the man himself admitting that the place is only 40 per cent. complete on 14 October. Even at that stage he thought the price was excessive and he asks that it be revalued.

The Commissioner replied on 12 November as follows:—

“With reference to your application to purchase property Brisbane 1244 situated Edith Street, Enoggera, I have to advise that the price of this house which is now under construction may be around the £1,625 mark. However, the Commission cannot sell the house to you except on completion.”

“It is approved to set the house aside for sale to you. As evidence of your good faith you may lodge the amount of £325 suggested by you, such sum will be placed in your name to the Commission’s Savings Bank Trust Account where it will earn the interest allowed of the bank. By this action you do not in any way commit yourself to purchase the property and should, for any reason, you desire to withdraw your application before the completion of the building, you may do so. On completion of the house the purchase price will be finally determined”

On 8 December Mr. Peel wrote to the secretary of the Housing Commission—

“With reference to my desire to purchase property Brisbane 1244 I would point out owing to heavy expenses incurred by me a few years past, of a medical nature, in connection with my wife’s illness and daughter I am unable to meet any higher deposit than £325, the amount

already paid in by me. I would request the Commission to try and see if they would grant me the sale of the property under these conditions.”

On 16 December the Housing Commission wrote to Peel—

“With reference to your application to purchase the dwelling known as Brisbane 1244 I wish to advise that the Minister has approved of the sale to you for approximately £1,575, with land on freehold tenure, on deposit of £325. Kindly note that this is an approximate price only and it is a condition of the sale to you that, should the purchase price exceed £1,575, the difference in cost must be met by you in cash.”

This man was anxious to purchase a house and the limit of advance on a wooden dwelling at that time, speaking from memory, was £1,250. He had a certain amount of money that he could provide. The final price of the house could not be determined, but in order to meet this man this arrangement was entered into it. It was perfectly legitimate under the circumstances. The commission tried to help him. It was pointed out, however, that any increase over that price must be paid for in cash. There was no ambiguity about that and Mr. Peel understood it very clearly. He knew that because of his circumstances an effort was being made by the commission to help him in buying the home.

**Mr. Hiley:** How close was the house to completion when that estimate was made?

**Mr. HILTON:** It was round about 50 per cent. completed then and in case it escapes my memory later I must mention here that it is impossible for each house to be costed individually. When a group of houses is being constructed by day labour and there is development work associated with the land, that also has to be taken into consideration. At times over a year elapses, sometimes more, before the final price can be determined. That is due, of course, to the carrying out of developmental work, which on a big estate sometimes takes a long time.

**Mr. Hiley:** Do you cost on the whole estate and not the individual dwelling?

**Mr. HILTON:** The cost on the whole estate; developmental works, roads, drainage and that sort of thing have to be taken into consideration.

**Mr. Luckins:** Would you not be able to cost on so much a square?

**Mr. HILTON:** That is the actual cost of the building but there is the developmental work associated with the estate. This man knew a special effort had been made by the commission to meet him and here I will read the concluding part of his letter of 12 January, 1940, which indicates that he appreciated then the efforts made on his behalf—

“Well, Mr. Galvin, I thank you for the way in which you have helped us, but as we are buying same I think something should be done. I honestly think that in a few years time or less the plaster will crack.”

**Mr. Hiley:** He was in occupation then?

**Mr. HILTON:** Yes. The plaster had shown defects. As I mentioned earlier, the plastering of this house and other houses in that locality had been done by a sub-contractor. I am not blaming the contractors for the quality of the plaster; I do not know whether they manufactured it or not. They fixed the plaster and defects appeared. Mr. Peel was in occupation and he wrote—and rightly so—about the faulty plaster but he concluded his letter by thanking Mr. Galvin for all he had done to help him.

The Secretary for Mines and Immigration was the Secretary for Public Works, Housing and Local Government at that time. The whole question was looked into and instructions were issued to the sub-contractor to make the faulty work good. He did make it good but the cost of making it good was not a charge to Mr. Peel. I have examined the figures, and on no occasion was the extra cost of the faulty work charged to the capital cost.

**Mr. Hiley:** Did it cost the commission anything?

**Mr. HILTON:** It did cost the commission something. Defects do not appear for some time and there is a limited time within which the commission would have a call on a sub-contractor. The plastering proved to be defective and at the present time another defect is showing in one room and the commission has given a guarantee that it will fix the plaster at its own expense—not Peel's expense—and put the house in absolutely good order.

**Mr. Sparkes:** That is fair.

**Mr. HILTON:** Nothing could be fairer. The Commission went out of its way to help Mr. Peel to get this house and at no time was he told that the final price was £1,575 or £1,625. He was informed that he would have to pay in cash any sum over the amount mentioned.

The hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha made reference to the question of insurance, and tried to make up a strong case because of a certain communication regarding insurance. Obviously there is a condition that houses must be insured. The final cost cannot be known but an approximate price was quoted to Mr. Peel, and this was the amount for which insurance was taken out. When reference was made in the communication from the commission to Mr. Peel the contract was referred to, or the approximate amount in the contract Mr. Peel had signed. There is no case against the commission on that score. The house was insured for the approximate amount less the cost of the land. Mr. Peel knew that and he was told he was in order in insuring his own furniture under a separate policy.

**Mr. Morris:** Why did the letter say the contract was for £1,425.

**Mr. HILTON:** If the hon. member has the intelligence to follow my remarks, he would not ask that question.

**Mr. Morris:** There is no need to be insulting.

**Mr. HILTON:** I am obliged to be, because I mentioned that it was an approximate price that was put in the contract. I read out the letter to Mr. Peel intimating that the commission would sell at that price on the condition that any cost over that amount had to be paid in cash. As I said, the insurance was taken out on that basis; you do not insure land. It was then the approximate cost of the house as mentioned in the contract and that amount was covered by insurance.

**Mr. Morris:** Did you build this house by contract?

**Mr. HILTON:** An agreement between Mr. Peel and the commission—an agreement to buy. It might help the hon. member to understand the case if I put it that way. The final price was ascertained earlier this year—some time back—and Mr. Peel was notified of the price. He contended that because of the approximate price was quoted he was being given a raw deal. He inspired the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha to say that the price had been jacked up by £300 and that Peel was being robbed. That was the final cost of the house and the land, and did not include the cost of repairing the plaster. Mr. Peel objected, and Mr. Galvin invited him and Mrs. Peel into his office and explained everything to them; he guaranteed to them that any defective plaster would be renewed at the commission's expense. Furthermore, he said to them, "If you are not satisfied with the house, you can inspect another house if you wish and can have all your money back under this contract, less the economic rent payable by you during your occupancy." Could anything be fairer than that?

**Mr. Morris:** Yes, a lot fairer. Add the cost of the land to the £1,420 and you are giving them a fair price. On the figure you have quoted you are charging them £450 for the land, and you know it is not worth £150.

**Mr. HILTON:** It is impossible for the hon. member to understand a simple statement, otherwise he would not make such a statement. If he would confer with his leader, who is sitting beside him, I am sure he would be put on the right track, because I know that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition appreciates the meaning of what I have said on this matter. The price of £1,575 was approximate only and the contract with Mr. Peel was that any cost in excess of that amount would have to be paid by him in cash.

That is the story with regard to Mr. Peel. I have given personal attention to this matter because Mr. Peel was represented to me as a very decent type of man. However, I believe that this matter has become an obsession with him. He has not been robbed of one penny; on the other hand, the Commissioner has done everything possible to help him, even to the extent of offering to release him from this contract, allowing him to look

at another house, and offering to refund him all the money he had paid on account of this dwelling less the economic rent payable by him.

**Mr. Hiley:** On an examination of the dates, it would appear that he was not told the latest estimate of £1,425 till within a fortnight of going into possession of the house.

**Mr. HILTON:** Because of the limit of the advance that could be made at the time and Peel's lack of finance and because the final cost of the house could not be estimated, the Housing Commission made a special effort to meet this man. If the hon. member will examine the figures I have quoted he will see that they are related to the conditions laid down in the Act at that time.

**Mr. Dewar:** How many squares were there in that house?

**Mr. HILTON:** I do not intend to go into any details. I think it was close on 10 squares, but that is entirely irrelevant to the discussion.

**Mr. Dewar:** I was wondering about the dates—

**Mr. HILTON:** If the hon. member had been listening he would have known the dates.

That offer to Mr. Peel still stands if he desires to take advantage of it. He has not been robbed in any shape or form; on the contrary, he has been given very courteous consideration by the Housing Commission.

I do not want to worry hon. members any further, but whilst I admit the right of hon. members to indulge in fair criticism, it is a shocking thing for any member to come here and make grave charges of maladministration that impugn the honesty of the Housing Commissioner. I know of no public servant who devotes himself more earnestly to his job and who works longer hours than does Mr. Galvin in his endeavour to expedite housing construction in this State.

Perhaps later on in the session we may have an opportunity of debating housing activities to a greater extent than I have done today, but I am glad to have had this opportunity of rising in the defence of this officer, who has done a magnificent job, who does not spare himself one iota in carrying out his duties to the full. I very strongly resent the unfair charges that have been made against him. I feel sure that I have convinced those hon. members who can appreciate a case that no charge can be levelled against the Housing Commission in respect of the two cases quoted by the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha.

**Mr. WALSH (Bundaberg) (7.46 p.m.):** I desire to make a few observations on the Financial Statement, which can be accepted as one of the most important documents presented to hon. members of this Chamber. It has a vital bearing on the welfare of the community as a whole, regardless of the occupation in which any of them may be engaged.

Remarkable though it may be, I think it can be said that very few hon. members have applied themselves to the financial aspect of the matter. I have listened very attentively to the debate, because I make it a practice not to absent myself from Parliament while it is in session, and I am satisfied that it can be said without contradiction that very few hon. members have applied their minds to the financial aspect of the Budget. Since hon. members opposite have departed from it, with few exceptions that perhaps I can name, such as the hon. member for Coorparoo and the hon. member for Toowong—as time goes along he will realise just the conglomeration that he is associated with over there—I am not bound to apply myself to it either. It is not incumbent on any hon. member on this side for that matter to discuss the financial aspects of the Statement, because after all we are aware of all the implications and all the facts contained within it.

If I may join with other hon. members in their commendation of the Treasurer on the Budget he has submitted and on the way it has been presented to Parliament, I should like to say that when I listened to the hon. member for Mulgrave offer his commendations I realised just how much he was out of step with the members of his own party in making that complimentary reference. I have some experience of the Treasurer and I do not know of any hon. member in this Chamber who applies himself more to his job than he does. Whether as secretary of the Parliamentary Labour Party or as member for South Brisbane or whatever his position within the Labour Party or in this Chamber has been, I have always found that he applies his mind to all the subjects it is his duty to deal with.

Do not run away with the idea that I am going to apply myself to the financial aspects of the Budget, and there are many reasons why I should not. However, I am going to say a few words about it. I think uppermost in the minds of those who have applied their minds, if only theoretically, to the financial affairs of the State has been the subject of inflation.

Like that blessed word Mesopotamia in the first World War, it seems to be on everybody's tongue today. I have seen a lot of people come into this Chamber very much inflated and I have seen them go out very much deflated as time went on.

**An Opposition Member:** As you went out.

**Mr. WALSH:** I am still here, whether I went out or not. I am back here, despite all the dirty work of the Opposition, including the hon. member for Coorparoo.

There have been various presentations of the question of inflation just as if it were something new that had arisen in our financial economy. After all, inflation can be taken back to the days of the great industrial revolution when kings and dishonest Governments took the opportunity, because of inflation, to debase the currency. What is

happening in this country today is an example of what happened over 200 years ago. It is not the result of administration of Labour Governments. Long before Labour Governments came into the field of politics these things were experienced in our financial economy, not only here but in other parts of the world. Consequently, we have to look at the reason why so many people are talking about inflation today. It is true that during the course of the debate many suggestions have been made and many palliatives have been offered whereby we might overcome this problem. The hon. member for Coorparoo, in his anaemic contribution to the debate, suggested various ways and means whereby the Commonwealth might be relieved of those forms of taxation that may not be popular and pass them on to the State. I agree that the hon. member for Toowong came down to a more practical basis but, as the Premier said here this afternoon, there was nothing new in what he said. His suggestions have been made time and again by Governments of varying political colour throughout the Commonwealth.

It is true that one of the factors that may help in overcoming inflation is increased production, but as I heard an interjector say the other night, increased production is not the sole factor in curing this economic disease, one of the most insidious ills in our economic structure, but it is one that might help. I want to dissociate myself from those people who say that because we have an anti-Labour Government in the Federal sphere the workers should slow up in their production.

**Opposition Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. WALSH:** That is what I regard as typical Communist talk. After all, who are the people who suffer in an inflationary trend or period? The workers themselves. Since the great bulk of the community constitute the people who live on a humble wage they are the people who suffer, and any hon. member, or any man occupying a public position who advocates the slowing up of production because a certain type of Government are in power is not doing the right thing by the working-class in Australia.

**Opposition Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. WALSH:** I do not want your "Hear, hears!" If you are going to say that, I am going to be a bit suspicious of my own thoughts. I am making myself clear that it is the worker, whether it is in housing, or whether it is in clothing, or whether it is in the necessaries of life, who is affected by the slowing up in production, not the man who can sit back in his limousine or Rolls Royce—only the humble worker. Do not let us advocate anything that is going to help the Communist technique of disrupting this democracy by the slowing up of production.

Might I say here again that I agree with my friend the hon. member for Windsor, who has been actively associated with me in anti-Communist activities. I make the appeal,

as the Premier has made it and the Cabinet, to unions generally not to be led astray by the propaganda that is put forth by the Communist Party in regard to the Communist Party Dissolution Bill. If they want to strike and if they have a good industrial grievance, then let them strike, irrespective of the Government in power, Labour or other—if they cannot get their rights. That is a right won by the trade unions not only in this country but throughout the world, to demand their industrial rights.

**Mr. Muller:** Do you support it?

**Mr. WALSH:** I support it in every case where there is a genuine industrial grievance. I am not forgetting the fact that a cat was found in the vat. (Government laughter.)

There has been much talk about inflation. I agree that one of the things to be remembered in seeking means to counter inflation is that where production equals velocity of circulation we need have no fears in regard to inflation. But the thing I want to talk about is not so much inflation as deflation. Casting my mind back to 1929, 1930 and 1931 (Opposition laughter.)—I am not going back to the Moore Government; you need not worry about that; I am going further afield—I see that the danger that confronts the workers, the producers and business men generally in this country is deflation, not inflation—not inflation. While you may at the moment have inflation on your doorstep, the policy that has been developed by the Menzies-Fadden Government is one that is obviously directed towards deflation. Anybody who casts his mind back to the period of the Lyons Government in 1930-31 must appreciate that all the moves that are being made today by the Menzies-Fadden Government—as explained by the Premier this afternoon—are in the direction of deflation.

If you argue on the one hand that increased production is the essential thing to combat inflation, how was it that in this country in 1930-31, when you had production increases in every industry in Australia, there were thousands of people out of work—thousands of men carrying their swags whose families were hungry. When the plans for some financial adjustment were submitted for the purpose of carrying out a works programme when private enterprise fell down on its job, what was the attitude of hon. members opposite and their parties generally? It was the attitude that has been adopted today, the obstruction that has been continued by the Labour-controlled Senate. Take your minds back to the days when those people were tramping the roads hungry and tired and whose families were under-nourished, and think of what the attitude of the anti-Labour-controlled Senate was in those days. What was the attitude when Scullin and Theodore brought down financial measures to make money available to provide work for people in this country? Were not the same obstructionist tactics adopted by Sir George Pearce, then leader of the Senate? Did not he and his friends

do everything they possibly could to prevent the majority-controlled Labour House of Representatives from giving effect to the policy on which the people of the country had returned them?

Of course they did, but we hear nothing about that in the capitalistic Press—nary a thought of it whatever! That is the thing we need to watch, and I want to warn the workers, the farmers and the business men who went bankrupt because the worker and the farmer did not have the purchasing power in those days. That is the thing they have to look to. Two years or three years hence it could be possible that in this country we shall be seeing just as many thousands walking the roads, going round from place to place, seeking rations, but with no place to live in either for themselves or their hungry wives and families.

**Mr. Muller:** Because of your strike policy.

**Mr. WALSH:** If that is so, what is this anti-Labour Government doing about it? What are the Menzies-Fadden Government doing about it? From 1931 to 1941, they controlled the destinies of this country, apart from the previous period from 1917 to 1929, and the Communist Party grew and thrived under anti-Labour Governments in this country. Now that they have control, what are they doing with the Jim Heals and the other Communists who want to disrupt industry? What is their party doing? They are doing nothing about it. (Opposition interjections.) Menzies and Fadden never did want to do anything about it, and never will. It is just as the Premier said here this afternoon—they use the Communist Party or any other subversive organisation in this country to destroy Labour in Australia. The Liberal-Country Party would use these forces, no matter how subversive they will be to the nation. That has been the history of the party, and hon. members opposite cannot deny it.

**Mr. Kerr:** We would not touch them with a 40 foot pole.

**Mr. WALSH:** All the evidence is there, including the fact that their own Mr. Fadden made available the sum of £300 to a Communist-controlled organisation.

I had hoped that I might contribute something on the general economy and financial aspects of the Budget, but as I realise that, like other members, I have a time limit imposed on me, I do not intend to continue that line of thought. I think the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition this afternoon should be generally appreciated. The hon. gentleman knows I have often spoken of him as a very gentlemanly individual; I cannot understand how he comes to be associated with the group round him, particularly the hon. member for Mirani who has so often misled him on sugar policy. I think the hon. gentleman's gesture this afternoon in supporting the Premier's being allowed to continue his important statement was in keeping with what might be described as the high

principles of democracy. After all, the Premier is the Premier of the State, no matter how some may disagree with him, and if he is presenting a case in the way he presented it this afternoon, there should be recognition of the fact, despite the attitude shown by hon. members opposite, including the hon. member for Mundingburra who wanted to divide the Committee and gave the Nazi salute in this Chamber.

**Mr. Aikens:** I am entitled to divide.

**Mr. WALSH:** You are not.

I do not propose to continue any longer to deal with the financial question, but I do intend to deal with some of the statements made by the hon. member for Mirani.

**An Opposition Member:** It is on again!

**Mr. WALSH:** It is on again. If I have to take the remainder of my time tonight in dealing with the things that he has raised during the Budget debate, I cannot be blamed for that.

**Mr. Evans:** Why don't you read the anonymous letter?

**Mr. WALSH:** I have got the anonymous letter. The hon. member is not making my speech for me. He need not worry about that. He will have to sit and take everything that is coming to him, just as I sat and took everything he gave the other evening. In testing the honourable member's credibility I wish to refer to a few statements he made during the debate. He said, amongst other things, that he had resided at Balnagowan for 23 years. That is not true and the hon. member knows it is not true and cannot deny it.

**Mr. Evans:** I am not saying I did.

**Mr. WALSH:** It is in "Hansard."

**Mr. Evans:** I know it is there.

**Mr. WALSH:** The hon. member said it, and I heard him say it, and it is just one of the many concoctions he put over this Chamber. He said that he resided there for 23 years and he knows that he did not live there for 23 years.

**Mr. Evans:** I never lived there at all.

**Mr. WALSH:** Then why did you say it in this Chamber?

**Mr. Evans:** I owned a property there.

**Mr. WALSH:** The hon. member said that he had a property at Balnagowan and had lived there for 23 years. Do not deny your own words!

**Mr. Evans:** It was never said by me.

**Mr. WALSH:** The hon. member corrected his own proof. Do not blame the unfortunate "Hansard" staff, who have to submit to all the interruptions in this Chamber. God knows, I don't have to correct my proof very much; they can hear me.

On the question of voting at Sarina, I challenge the honourable member's assertion that he had a majority.

**Mr. Evans:** So I did.

**Mr. WALSH:** He did not.

**Mr. Evans:** I gave you the figures.

**Mr. WALSH:** Look at the figures and see how awkwardly the honourable member handles the truth.

**Mr. Evans:** You read the figures.

**Mr. WALSH:** Of course I will. I make my case backed up by figures—not like the honourable member. I knew he did not get a majority at Sarina. These things test the credibility of the honourable member for Mirani. The voting at Sarina was—

O'Neill .. .. .	545
Evans .. .. .	524

**Mr. Evans:** Read the group figures.

**Mr. WALSH:** To protect himself he asks me to read the group figures. In "Hansard" he is reported as saying he got a majority at every centre at Sarina.

**Mr. Evans:** That is correct.

**Mr. WALSH:** Will the hon. member say that East Funnel is associated with Sarina?

**Mr. Evans:** I don't.

**Mr. WALSH:** Of course the hon. member does not.

**Mr. Evans:** You don't.

**Mr. WALSH:** Elalie is 50 miles south of Sarina and there is Sarina Range and Eton Range and the people whose names start with "Z." The honourable member would not suggest that Eton Range is associated with Sarina and he would not suggest that Sarina Range is connected with Sarina. At Sarina he did not get a majority and when he made that statement to this Chamber he knew he was telling a lie. The group consists of East Funnel, Sarina Range, Elalie and Eton Range—all far removed from Sarina—and only five names in the Sarina subdivision were contained in that group.

On two occasions during the speech made by the honourable member for Whitsunday, the honourable member for Mirani made statements by way of interjection that do not appear in "Hansard," when I said that an inquiry would be justified into the operations of co-operative mills and management in this State—and I still say it, because I have the evidence in my possession. The honourable member knows it and nobody knows it better. In front of the honourable members for Flinders and Mackay he heard me doing his friend Hamilton over in regard to the rackets he was in with regard to the Race-course mill. He said during his speech in this Chamber that I should have to divulge the amount I had invested in war bonds during the period I was Secretary for Public Lands.

**Mr. Evans:** That is correct.

**Mr. WALSH:** I had one investment in the war of which I am very proud—and so is their mother—two sons. One of them went into the Commandos, and I want to emphasise that to the hon. member for Mirani. He

resisted any suggestion that he might be given preferment by way of appointment to a non-commissioned or a commissioned rank, and on my last visit to Bundaberg his mother experienced the pleasure of having an unknown person come up to her and tell her how much he thought of the boy. The other lad served on the "Australia" during a period when it was subjected to 67 air raids in three days. I am very proud of my investment and their mother's investment in the war.

**Mr. Evans:** Were you the only one?

**Mr. WALSH:** No, but I should like to know what was wrong with the hon. member in 1914-18.

**Mr. Evans:** What was wrong with you?

**Mr. WALSH:** The best that I could do was to offer my services, which I did.

**Mr. Evans:** You are the only one that knows about it.

**Mr. WALSH:** That is what the hon. member thinks.

**Mr. Evans:** I had three brothers—

**Mr. WALSH:** That is not the hon. member. In the same way as he has always been, he was a shirker.

The hon. member said, "You will have to divulge what money you put into war bonds when you were Minister for Lands." That is part of the slimy propaganda that he and his man "Friday" indulged in during the 1947 campaign. He spoke about the pastoral leases that I held and the amounts that I received by way of bribes and something else. If there is one thing of which I am proud, it is that I have never been a sugar-bag for anybody.

**Mr. Evans:** But you invested that £7,000.

**Mr. WALSH:** Here is the test. I now hand my two bank passbooks to the Clerk of Parliament. I ask the hon. member and his leader to examine them and see for themselves what investments I have. I have never drawn one penny interest in my life from any investment in bonds. If the hon. member can cite any instance of where I have £1 invested, other than in war savings certificates, payment for which was deducted by arrangement with the Plane Creek Central Sugar Mill, from moneys due to me for cane supplied, I will resign my seat in this Parliament.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. WALSH:** There is a challenge—

**Mr. Evans** interjected.

**Mr. WALSH:** They are my passbooks.

**Mr. Evans:** That is an old trick.

**Mr. WALSH:** I will deal with the hon. member's passbooks; do not worry about that.

**Mr. Evans:** Mine are available.

**Mr. WALSH:** The hon. member said his income-tax returns were available, which does not mean a thing.

I intend tonight to table a letter that was sent to me to the effect that on one occasion the hon. member pulled £1,000 out of his pocket in loose cash and said he had to do it because of the tax.

**Mr. Evans:** That is a deliberate lie.

**Mr. WALSH:** Have no doubt about it. I directed my secretary to send the letter to the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation, Mr. McCorkell, and I have the correspondence here tonight.

**Mr. EVANS:** I rise to a point of order. The hon. member's statement that I had £1,000 in my pocket and was endeavouring to evade income tax is untrue. It is a deliberate lie; it is insulting to me, and I ask for its withdrawal.

**Mr. WALSH:** You will not get a withdrawal.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! First of all, I cannot accept the statement that it is a deliberate lie, because I would not know.

**Mr. EVANS:** I say it is untrue and insulting, and I ask for a withdrawal.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Will the hon. member for Bundaberg accept the denial of the hon. member for Mirani that the statement is true?

**Mr. WALSH:** I realise that under the Standing Orders, in due respect to your authority as Chairman of this Committee, I must withdraw, but I will table the letter.

**Mr. Evans:** Some of your own.

**Mr. WALSH:** It was in his own handwriting, it was not typed, not roneoed—in his own handwriting.

**Mr. Evans:** I should like to see the one he sent out.

**Mr. WALSH:** One was addressed to my home, and I shall deal with that as I go on. I shall refer to the letter and table it. During the election campaign a number of people came to me and told me that the hon. member for Mirani insisted on being paid in cash for various sales of cattle he made—that he insisted on being paid in cash.

**Mr. EVANS:** I rise to a point of order. That is untrue and I ask that it be withdrawn. I deny it. It is insulting to me. He is a filthy animal.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member for Mirani must withdraw that last statement.

**Mr. EVANS:** He is a filthy animal. I am not going to withdraw it. I am not going into a filthy campaign with him. He is a filthy, dirty brute. I withdraw nothing.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I ask the hon. member for Mirani to withdraw that statement. It is unparliamentary.

**Mr. EVANS:** It is true and I will not withdraw anything that is true. He is an animal.

**Mr. WALSH:** Then you do not want to stay here and hear all that I can say about you?

**Mr. Evans:** I am not afraid of you, either here or outside.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I make my last appeal to the hon. member for Mirani. I know that we all have tempers, that they rise and fall, and so I appeal to the hon. member for Mirani to withdraw the statement.

**Mr. EVANS:** An animal that will use the poisoned pen to defame me and my family—I won't withdraw it.

**Mr. WALSH:** You can't take it.

#### NAMING OF MEMBER.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I am sorry that the hon. member for Mirani cannot see his way to obey the wishes of the Chair. I ask him to obey my ruling. I have no alternative but to name the hon. member for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

The House resumed.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Chairman reports that he has named the hon. member for Mirani for disregarding the authority of the chair.

**Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca-Premier)** (8.33 p.m.): I appeal to the hon. member for Mirani to reconsider his decision, to do the right and decent thing.

**Mr. EVANS:** I regret very much that I cannot. I should like very much to oblige the Premier but when you have the poisoned letter like the one written by the hon. member for Bundaberg, I cannot withdraw.

#### SUSPENSION OF MEMBER.

**Mr. HANLON:** Then I have no alternative but to move—

“That the hon. member for Mirani be suspended from the service of the House for one week.”

There can be no excuse for the way in which the hon. member has behaved.

**Mr. Walsh:** I took all that you gave me the other night.

Motion (Mr. Hanlon) agreed to.

#### SUPPLY.

##### COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT— RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Farrell, Maryborough, in the Chair.)

Debate resumed from 2 November (see p. 1073) on Mr. Gair's motion—

“That there be granted to His Majesty for the service of the year 1950-51 a sum not exceeding £643 to defray the salary of the Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor.”

**Mr. WALSH:** It is obvious that the hon. member for Mirani is not made of the same substance as myself. I did not object to

anything he said of me the other night, for the obvious reason. I am always prepared to "cop" anything anyone gives me, so long as he can "cop" anything coming to him.

The other night I interjected when the hon. member for Mirani was speaking with reference to the statement that he made to me when his son was in trouble. He immediately, of course, got onto the sentimental side and wanted to hide behind sentiment. I want to relate the circumstances. That is all I want to do; I do not want to relate other than facts. A report appeared in a Brisbane paper in regard to a young fellow named Evans who had got into trouble in Melbourne. It said he belonged to Mackay. Somehow or other I associated that lad with the hon. member for Mirani. Later on—I have the records here—I got a ring from the hon. member for Mirani.

**Mr. Nicklin:** What about getting on with the Budget? If you talk that nonsense, we will go out.

**Mr. WALSH:** It will still appear in "Hansard." (The Opposition then walked out of the Chamber.)

**Mr. Riordan:** You mob of dingoes, you were not game to walk out the other night when you heard the other man vilified.

**Mr. WALSH:** I want to put this on record: the hon. member for Mirani immediately hid behind the sentimental side the other night. I am going to say that if that lad had been my lad I should have been proud of him because the circumstances, as they were related to me by the hon. member for Mirani, showed that he was only protecting the honour of a woman of the services I should have been proud of him had he taken the same action.

**Mr. Aikens:** You would have done the same yourself?

**Mr. WALSH:** I would have, exactly.

The fact I want to record is that the hon. member for Mirani rang me on 18 January, between 3 and 4 p.m., and asked me could I assist him in getting a remand of a case affecting his son until he could get down to arrange for his defence. When he rang me—and he apologised for his action in ringing me—I said, "Don't worry about that, Ernie; it could have been my own son, and anything that could be done for me in the circumstances I would appreciate." I arranged with the then Commissioner of Police, Mr. Carroll, to send a police radio message to Melbourne to arrange for the necessary remand. I got a reply back through Mr. Carroll in a little over an hour. I proceeded then, as my records will show, to communicate with the hon. member for Mirani through channels that I could best arrange at the time. I got my secretary to look up the phone book, but he had no number in the phone book and the shire office was closed. I then sent an urgent wire to Inspector Osborne, asking him to contact the Evans family that night and advise that the necessary arrangements had been made for the remand. I took it upon myself next morning to communicate with the shire office and

notify the shire clerk, Mr. Cowley, to tell Mr. Evans when he came to Brisbane to contact me and I would do everything in my power to see he got transport to Melbourne. He came to this House and I made a departmental car available to him. I arranged for his transport to Sydney in an evacuee train that was taking Portuguese from Timor to New South Wales and Victoria.

I arranged for a special compartment for him and his wife. I arranged through my secretary for their bookings from Sydney to Melbourne. He sent me a wire, a copy of which I have here tonight in my hand. He returned to Mackay and told them what a great fellow I was—Labour supporters and non-Labour supporters alike—and that he would see he would never oppose me for Mirani and he would do everything he could to see that there was no candidate to oppose me. Not that I was worried about that, but I am portraying the type of man he is.

When the Mackay by-election occurred I went up to take charge as campaign director, and he approached me and asked me to come along and have lunch with him—he and Mrs. Evans would like to show their appreciation. I rejected the offer in the first place. I told him I was engaged on other important business. He came back two days later and made the same proposal. He said Mrs. Evans would be very disappointed if I did not go. There are two members in this Chamber tonight—the hon. member for Mackay and the hon. member for Flinders—who know that he came to take me out to his home. If I drop dead in this Chamber now, he repeated to me and said, "I just want to show you how much we appreciate what you have done. There is one thing, you can rest assured, Ted, I will never oppose you for Mirani." I did not trust him then and I never did trust him. I said, "It is entirely a matter for yourself, Ernie." Twelve months later, in 1944, he was one of a group who raised £300 to £500 to put J. M. Mulherin in the field in Mirani against me and in 1947 he was the candidate against me. I am not worrying about that; I can take my defeat—don't worry about that—and come up again and have another go.

I will give the particulars of the wires. The wire from Melbourne was addressed to E. J. Walsh, Parliament House, Brisbane, and reads—

"Many thanks position very hopeful. E Evans."

The following telegram was 'phoned from B 8316 at 5.40 p.m. on Monday, 18 January, 1943, at urgent rates—

"Inspector Osborne, Officer of Police, Mackay.

"Inform Evans Chairman Pioneer Shire Council immediately case in south remanded to twenty-fifth instant and advise him to contact me when in Brisbane. Walsh Minister for Lands."

I do not quote anything in this Chamber unless I can back it up by some factual evidence.

I referred earlier, on the Address in Reply, to the sale of a farm belonging to one G. H. Pearse. I referred to the fact that the hon.

member had bought this farm at a very low figure and that the person concerned was in straitened circumstances because he owed a lot of rates to the shire council and had a lot of indebtedness for rural loans. Early in 1939 the hon. member sold his farm for a considerable sum—the house was burnt down some time before that; that may not mean anything, of course—and after he sold it—and for the information of members who may not know it, in the co-operative mills it is necessary for the chairman or any director to hold an assignment of land to the mill—he bought this small farm with an assignment of 5 acres.

The land ranger's valuation of that farm was £455. The hon. member gave £420 for it, so it is obvious he did not give too much for it. I made reference to the fact that on 27 June, 1940, an Italian, Francesco Natoli, was appointed bailiff. Italy declared war on Britain and France on 19 June, 1940. Seventeen days after Italy had declared war on Britain this good patriot employs an enemy alien as his bailiff! This Labour Government, whom I proceeded to defend here the other night, knowing their obligation to the thousands of soldiers who had offered their lives in the Middle East against this enemy, adopted a policy that no lands were to be transferred to enemy aliens during the war. The hon. member, with all his boasting, comes into this Chamber and attacks this Government on their ex-servicemen's land-settlement policy and other concessions given to ex-servicemen. This is a classical example of his attitude we have seen here. The facts are in this document I propose to table. I ask that one be handed to the Premier for his information. I have also a copy for the Leader of the Opposition, which I will leave with the Clerk of Parliament. I will table the other document—a copy of it will go on the records of this Parliament. It shows that I have not come into this Chamber and made any misstatement or anything that cannot be substantiated by factual evidence. All the evidence here indicates that. The land ranger reported—

“I am satisfied that Evans is not a desirable selector as regards this block of land, and that he grasped the opportunity of his position of chairman of the Pioneer Shire Council to purchase the area when Pearce was in extremities as regards large amounts of rates owing. This is a splendid block of 100 acres of good scrub land available and properly cleaned up and grassed should run at least 60 dairy cows. It is a first-class dairying block and has a good living area.”

Now let us look at the terms and conditions under which this bailiff went in. Natoli signed a statement under date 17 October, 1940, to the effect that he had known Evans for about three years through working occasionally for the Pioneer Shire Council. Evans approached him at the time about the purchase with a view to working on the selection. The proposal put to him by Evans was that he was to work the selection, to be

paid for cutting the cane and retain anything earned outside of this for the first 12 months. Thereafter he was to receive a half share in the returns from the farm, including the cane crop. Mr. Evans undertook to send 15 good milking cows to the selection, the return from which Natoli was to have. About 16 July Evans sent 20 cows and bull by rail and Natoli had to pay the freight. There were five milking cows from which he obtained three gallons, but after two months 13 were milking. The cream cheque for July was £1 13s. 9d. and for August £4 3s. 8d. The cows were said to be poor and ticky when they arrived.

I make that reference to the sale of the farm from Pearce to Evans when he was chairman of the Pioneer Shire Council. This man got a notice from the shire council that they were going to compulsorily sell him up unless he paid the rates. This is the chairman of the Pioneer Shire Council coming in and taking advantage of the position, only to secure his position as chairman of directors.

I have a few things to say about the subdivision of the land on the North Side at Mackay at a later time in other debates, in which the hon. member for Mirani was involved.

In the time at my disposal—and the hon. member for Mundingburra might feel rather pleased that I am not mentioning statements he made in his typical style about the Labour Party and the Communist Party and agreements entered into; I am not taking that responsibility tonight but will perhaps later on in the session—

**Mr. Aikens:** I shall be happy to hear it.

**Mr. WALSH:** I will give it to the hon. member.

**Mr. Aikens:** I will give it to you back.

**Mr. WALSH:** I am sorry the hon. member did not remind me of my anniversary on Tuesday night. (Laughter).

However, to continue, the hon. member for Mirani made some references to a Q.C.E. official meeting and a certain individual in the Q.C.E. who more or less prevented the endorsement of certain Labour stalwarts. He referred particularly to Mr. Bruce. I do not propose to take advantage of the absence of hon. members opposite but I say those statements are untrue. At no time was any person I know or was associated with brought in to interfere with the endorsement of Mr. Bruce. I do not know of any Labour member refused endorsement. That gives the lie direct to the statement made by the hon. member. I repeat: I do not know of any Labour member refused endorsement. He said “This Q.C.E. member stated that this man lived in my suburb.” I do not know whether he means his suburb or my suburb, and he went on to say, “and is of high standing and repute.” If you read that literally as it is in “Hansard” you would understand that the person referred to is living in the hon. member for Mirani's

suburb. I cannot be blamed if I put that interpretation on it. He proceeded to say—

“A policeman gave me the records of 11 convictions of the person concerned—assaulting the police, stealing, running a common gaming house, etc.”

I know the person he refers to and he is Charlie Duvey, who lives opposite me. I do not know why the hon. member for Mirani embarrassed the hon. member for Brisbane because Mr. Duvey and the hon. member for Brisbane had been friends for a period extending over 20 years, up until recent years. And so, if all the things he said about Mr. Duvey are correct, why apply it to me? Why not apply it to the hon. member for Brisbane? I might say that Mr. Duvey informed me that he might have had 30 convictions but he has had only one criminal conviction and that was on an occasion when he was prosecuted on indictment for stealing a case of coffee. His information to me is that a person under the name of McCabe was associated with him. However, Duvey was the man prosecuted; he was the man convicted and we have to accept it at that. Of the number of his convictions, he has only had one criminal conviction. His conviction for assaulting the police was under the Towns Police Act and the maximum fine of £5 was applied accordingly. I have known Duvey for the past 12 years or more. I did not have to come here to defend him. That is not my objective. I want to explode what the hon. member for Mirani is talking about and to say that if any hon. member of this Committee wants to use any hon. member of the Opposition as a megaphone to attack me in this Chamber, he will have to put up with the consequences. It might be that the hon. member for Mirani is very lucky, too, in that he himself has not got some convictions against him. He might have for all I know and if he was arrested in a common gaming house I should not hold it against him—not under any circumstances.

However, there are such things as failing to comply with the Unemployed Workers' Insurance Act, and here is another instance of the hon. member's ringing me at this building in about 1937 or 1938, when the late Mr. M. P. Hynes was Secretary for Labour and Industry. The hon. member told me that he was threatened with prosecution and asked me to make some representations on his behalf, because he did not think that a man occupying the public position that he did should be faced with such a prosecution. I left the matter in Mr. Hynes's hands to do what he thought fit.

Then there is the employment of coloured labour contrary to the Sugar Industry Award, and I ask the hon. member for Mundingburra to remember these things when he applauds the hon. member for Mirani. There is also the under-payment of cane-cutters, which the hon. member cannot deny. There was an occasion when he waited on the doorstep of the A.W.U. office in Mackay from early in the morning till it opened in order to pay in a cheque. He said he did not

want a receipt for the money, but the official told him that he must have a receipt. Obviously, he was desirous of obliterating anything that might act as evidence against him.

If the hon. member was present tonight I should love to see him squirming in his seat whilst I told the story of Doyle's brindle bullock. Ted Doyle, a well-respected citizen of the Marian area, apparently having received some information connected with the disappearance of this beast, which had been on a property adjoining that of the Evans group, rang the hon. member for Mirani several times about it, but the hon. member consistently denied that he had seen anything of the bullock. However, the information that Doyle had was so good that he followed a mob of bullocks that had gone to Proserpine. He rang the hon. member for Mirani from Proserpine, but the hon. member still denied all knowledge of the bullock. Doyle then said, "I am ringing from Proserpine now. I have seen the mob, and my bullock is there." As the result, the hon. member for Mirani paid Doyle compensation in respect of the bullock.

Then there is such a thing as rolling drunks. I am not saying that in a democracy people who do even that cannot be elected to Parliament. However, there are men sitting in this Chamber who can get a statement from the individual witness concerned, and they will have the evidence that it was done.

I now deal with the statement of the hon. member for Cook, who said that the hon. member for Mirani was held in high esteem in the Gordonvale district. I know different. The hon. member for Cook said that even the men whom the hon. member for Mirani had bashed still had respect for him. As far as I know, men are being indicted week after week for bashing. We have had evidence from the other side that the hon. member for Mirani bashed certain of his own workmates. I have it further from a book-maker in Bundaberg, who was the cook for a gang in the North to which the hon. member belonged—and I am not doing this without having some confirmation—that he warned the hon. member when he walked into a hotel with loaded dice. He said to him, "Get out of this with them or they will kick you to pieces!" Do not let the hon. member tell me that I am not fit to sit in this Parliament, I might know many people who are not fit to sit in Parliament but if my observations are correct the only place that I know for which the hon. member for Mirani is properly fitted is Boggo Road.

I was out of this Parliament for three years, and the Opposition's walking out tonight means nothing to me. For the three years that I was out of the House he never let up on me and if the hon. member for Mundingburra wants to come back to the attack, I am here now. I am right here. For three years I could not get into this House and had to take all the slander levelled against me in various way by various people, in collaboration with hon. members on the other side. If I take up the next three years in exposing the crooked methods of the

people associated with the co-operative sugar mills and other activities in the Mackay district I shall have done my job to the community.

Why should the hon. member for Mirani the other night come here and without any reference having been made by myself offer to make available for inspection the minutes and share register of the Farleigh mill? I am prepared to allow him to appoint Fadden and Company as auditors of my financial transactions for the period ever since I started farming, and particularly since I came into this Parliament, provided, of course, that he will allow me to nominate my auditors to investigate their accounts and those of his fellow worker, Hamilton, chairman of the Racecourse mill, now travelling on the other side of the world—allow an investigation of betting on the racecourse and other activities that will not indicate he made all his money by farming transactions.

I realise that my time is now running out, but I listened here the other night to all the hon. member for Mirani said—it was not much—and I did not walk out I would not walk out, knowing the cur that he is. The hon. member for Flinders and the hon. member for Mackay saw with their own eyes how I punctured the armour of that racketeering Hamilton and in this session subsequently I will tell you of the terrific things that have been done on the advice of Fadden and Company in the alteration of the articles of association of Racecourse mill in robbing the farmers. I have the original documents, I have the legal opinions to back them up. I am not going to ask this Committee to take my version of the facts. I shall give them to you from the documentary evidence I have here.

**Mr. COBURN** (Burdekin) (8.48 p.m.): My speech, succeeding the one that we have just listened to, will probably be regarded as something in the nature of an anti-climax. As you know, I have not been a member of this Parliament for very long but I have been here long enough to make some important observations and my greatest reaction from what I have heard and seen here has been one of deep disappointment. We were told the other day that the policy of the Labour Party was founded on the Sermon on the Mount, which gave us our Ten Commandments and from which we get the injunction, "Love thy neighbour as thyself," and "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you." The utterances and actions of hon. members following this statement are so incongruous that one wonders at their failure to mould their actions to conform to those superlative teachings. If we were to take that injunction to heart we should be better men and the State would be a better and happier place to live in.

My main purpose in participating in this debate is to endeavour to revive interest in what about thirty years ago was a very vigorous and virile advocacy. I refer to the establishment of the steel and iron works at Bowen. As there has been so much talk

about decentralisation and the development of North Queensland to bring about a dispersal of our population, this is an appropriate time to resuscitate this advocacy.

Generally speaking, it will be conceded that the best place to establish a steel and iron works is at the point best adapted for the assembly of all raw materials necessary in the manufacture of iron in all its forms and a place where the distribution of the manufactured product could be carried out in all directions. Bowen fulfils all those requirements. It is connected by rail with an abundance of furnace-building materials, ores, fluxes and fuel, and it is also situated on the shores of the best seaport in Queensland in and out of which overseas and coastal shipping is freely established.

The greatest quantity of ore known to exist in Queensland is, happily for us, in the northern parts of the State. For instance, if we take the iron deposits in Mt. Leviathan in the Cloncurry district, and still vaster deposits of iron in Mt. Philp in the same district, we have a sufficient quantity of iron-ore to establish our steel and iron industry in the North. If there are iron-ore deposits in Central and Southern Queensland of a sort desirable to mix with our northern ores, it will be cheaper to bring the lesser quantity from the Central and Southern districts to the iron works at Bowen than it would be to carry the greater quantity to a southern depot. Bowen is as close to New Caledonia as any other port in Queensland, if it was found necessary to bring supplies from that source. At this juncture I would remind hon. members that the long carriage of iron-ore to the point of treatment is the adopted practice in Australia. The Broken Hill Pty. Company brings its iron-ore supplies to Port Kembla and Newcastle from as distant a centre as Iron Knob in South Australia and is prepared to go further afield to Yampi Sound, if necessary.

Iron works at Bowen would be infinitely better situated for fuels than any other iron works established in the State. To those who know the situation it would be unnecessary to argue that point, but for emphasis it might be repeated that tests by bores and shafts have proved that there are sufficient coal deposits in the Bowen River coalfields to supply all Australia's requirements for centuries to come. Laboratory tests have proved that much of this coal is of a very high coking quality and a wide test carried out on the largest seam existing in the Bowen River coalfields under Government supervision has proved that it produces a very valuable coke of high quality. Within 55 miles of the actual proposed site there are lying ready for utilisation unlimited deposits of coal of every class and at least a large quantity is of the coking variety necessary for the manufacture of steel and iron.

We must not forget that associated with the development of the steel and iron industry would come the manufacture of the by-products that come from the coking industry. Fluxes, which are used in

quantities, are to be found in abundance in the Bowen area. There is one deposit of the finest quality of limestone very conveniently situated on the site proposed for the iron works for Bowen, where it is known there are at least 1,000,000 tons of the finest limestone that could be found anywhere. Through the enterprise and initiative of a Bowen syndicate this deposit has been fully explored. In addition to this, there are other known deposits of limestone that could supply the flux needed in the manufacture of iron.

In the district we have also quantities of common clay and very fine magnesite. Close to Cloncurry there is an almost unlimited supply of firebrick clay. With those materials on hand the construction of the ovens would not present any difficulty, because the materials would be provided. It would not be necessary to go as far afield as Cloncurry to get a firebrick clay because all the bricks that went to build the coke ovens in Bowen were made from fireclay that came from the Collinsville district.

Thus, there are remarkably bountiful supplies of the raw materials necessary for the iron and steel industries. We have an area with fuels and fluxes and the necessary clay. The suitability of Bowen as a distributing centre cannot be denied. The site suggested is at the foot of Mt. Bramston, with a deep water frontage of ample area. There is available a considerable amount of Crown land, which would be very suitable for building the town that would spring up with the establishment of the iron industry. There are unlimited supplies of fresh water, which could be drawn from the sands on the bed of the Don River. Any reclamation of lands that would be necessary would be easily effected by using the material from Mt. Bramston itself. What dredging is necessary on the wharf front could be executed with comparative cheapness, and once it had been completed it would be permanent, as there is no silting in the Bowen Harbour. The harbour board has already put down bores that have indicated that the floor of the harbour in this area lends itself admirably to dredging.

The site is sufficiently distant from Bowen to guarantee that there would be no difficulty in getting sufficient areas for the erection of the steel and iron works, and the Don River would give all the water necessary, and the necessary facilities in connection with the works could be erected here just as cheaply as they could be on any other place that might be selected. It is admitted beyond dispute that Bowen has an excellent harbour, from which distribution could be effected by water in every direction except inland, and the distribution in that direction could be carried out by means of it. With the steel and iron works we must associate railway utilisation. One of the factors contributing to the failure of the Queensland railways to pay is that not sufficient trains run over the lines to meet the cost of keeping the permanent way in satisfactory order and pay the railway men.

An iron industry established at Bowen would mean an enormous increase to railway traffic on all lines radiating from Bowen. Trains running from Bowen to Cloncurry would convey coke for the Mt. Isa mines, coal for the townships between Bowen and Mt. Isa and to the Railway Department's depots themselves and on the return carry iron ore from either Mt. Leviathan or Mt. Philp for processing in the steel and iron works. This would augment greatly the number of trains running over these lines and both forward and return journeys would haul full loads—the best means of enabling the railway to pay its way. These would be long-distance trips.

In making trains pay their way the density of traffic in proportion to the cost of maintaining the permanent way is important. I am given to understand by those who should know that the permanent way in this area would carry 10 times the present traffic without very much additional upkeep. This feature of the establishment of an iron and steel works at Bowen has not hitherto received sufficient consideration. One of the very big costs entailed in railway maintenance is renewal of sleepers, because of the ravages of white ants which are extremely severe in this area. Again I am given to understand by those who work in this calling that the ravages of these termites are less severe when trains run over the tracks at frequent intervals. They are disturbed more often.

Other industries would be attracted to Bowen, for instance industries concerned with the by-products of coke and the production of enormous quantities of cheap cement from iron slag and lime. This would be admirable for building purposes. The rapid depletion of our supplies of timber is troubling the State and reforestation on a large scale is imperative. A saving of the timber supplies now available by the substitution as far as possible of other materials such as concrete and ferro-concrete would be made. As I have mentioned formerly, the white ant is a great destroyer of timber in North Queensland and the use of these substitute materials would deprive the white ant of his only food.

Iron and cement works would be of immeasurable value both to North Queensland and the State in general. It could become an industry in itself. The preparation of hydrated lime would be appreciated as a public convenience, owing to its suitability for carriage anywhere without the need for air-tight trucks. It could be packed in ordinary paper bags and sold by grocers over the counter.

There is no better method of bringing population to the North than by creating secondary industries there. Bowen, as anybody who has been there knows, is one of the finest towns it is possible for people to live in. The climate is unrivalled; I understand it is one of the most equable in the whole of Australia. It is a delightful place climatically and in the matter of health compares very favourably with any other place in Queensland. There are many ideal building sites on the foreshores of the

harbour and it would be difficult to imagine a more delightful spot for a home than round Queen's Beach. All along the Don River there is fertile soil that produces very good fruit and vegetables. For recreation there are shooting, fishing, surfing, bathing and an Olympic-sized bath. Somebody has said that some other place had the only heated bath in Australia but the people of Bowen refute that because the water of their bath, during the winter, is heated by pipes from the adjacent electrical works. Bowen is well provided for in the matter of recreation. A large population is desirable in a place so delightfully situated and that offers so much to make life so congenial. It would be much better if we could decentralise our industries and bring population away from the already too congested larger cities in the South and disperse them in places in North Queensland.

In my searches in connection with this subject I was able to unearth a report made by a Royal Commission appointed in 1917, a report that had been pigeon-holed and forgotten. On 11 August, 1917, that Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into and report upon the desirableness of establishing a State iron and steel works in Queensland. It furnished a progress report, in which it was stated—

"1. That all the essentials are in this State for the successful manufacture of pig-iron;

"2. That a complete plant for the manufacture of pig-iron can be established at a cost not exceeding £5,000.

"3. That such a plant could be utilised for the testing in bulk of iron-ore from different parts of the State thus deciding whether the various deposits are suitable for smelting and converting into steel."

**Mr. JESSON:** Was this before the Cowley expedition or afterwards?

**Mr. COBURN:** I do not know. I am trying to give this matter a blood transfusion so that it will live again. I think we talk too much of personalities and too little of schemes. If we set our minds to doing something beneficial towards developing the State it would be better than finding flaws in somebody's personality.

The progress report goes on to say—

"4. That, taking present prices and rates which must obtain for at least a considerable time after the war the making of pig-iron would be a profitable undertaking to the State;

"5. That the site chosen for such works would not in any way affect the selection of a site for central iron and steel works if finally decided upon by the Commission."

"We therefore beg to recommend that steps be taken forthwith to establish, at a site to be chosen by the Mines Department, a State iron smelting plant capable of producing pig-iron commercially and of testing in bulk the iron-ore deposits of the State."

It is a shame that something was not done as the result of that report and to implement what the commission said could be done so profitably and with such benefit to North Queensland.

Today, if we want to induce private enterprise to engage in the steel and iron industry outside the capital cities, we shall have to offer them some inducement. In this connection, I note that in the report furnished by the Director of Secondary Industries and Chairman of the Industries Assistance Board, Mr. Ross, the following appears:—

"Decentralisation of industry is the declared policy of both the Commonwealth and State Governments and though every encouragement and inducement are held out to new industrialists to commence in country centres, they still prefer the cities, where the main conveniences and markets are.

"The earlier policy of centralisation of industry encouraged, especially in the Southern States the development of overgrown cities.

"Both from the national health and defence point of view, it would appear necessary that the already existing over-industrialised cities be no further increased and that new industries as well as branches of present industries be encouraged to establish in country areas.

"In the present day scientific development of destructive armaments and missiles of war, the large coastal industrial cities become very vulnerable, and one of the recently developed atom or hydrogen bombs exploded in Newcastle or Sydney might well destroy Australia's defence potential in time of war.

"However, industrialists contend, rightly or wrongly, that to establish their works in country centres, with extra costs of freights, power and other charges, difficulties of transport, and a limited local market places them at a great disadvantage compared with their competitors already established in the large populous cities, where the main markets are. It may become a question of granting decentralised industries some form of subsidy or compensation to place them on an equal footing with their city competitors."

We who live in the country areas and who know the disadvantages that they suffer because their small populations do not allow of the provision of the same facilities as large populations, hope that subsidies will be granted to encourage decentralisation, and that instead of talking about it we shall do something to endeavour to implement it. We shall then get the industries that we can establish firmly and economically, if the desired help is given in the initial stages. I sincerely hope that will be done.

One matter that I must bring up, because I should be failing in my duty to the Bowen people if I did not, is that of the Bowen Hospital. You have not seen it, Mr. Farrell, but some of our Ministers have. I know that the Minister for Transport visited it on one occasion when I was there, and I understand that the Secretary for Labour and

Industry also is fully conversant with the conditions existing there. On my first visit to that hospital I was astounded at the condition of the building. It would be impossible to imagine a building more unsuitable for hospital purposes than the Bowen Hospital. It was in 1945, I think, that the Bowen people first applied for the building of a new hospital. As the result, approval was granted for the preparation of sketch plans for a new hospital and an architect was engaged.

The Department of Health and Home Affairs intimated that the new hospital would be erected on the present site. The original estimate of cost was £44,000, but after discussion alterations were proposed that made the estimated cost £70,000. When the plans were returned to the board it was seen that the proposed building would not conform to the site, so that contour plans had to be prepared and they were not received until January, 1948. Sketch plans were then amended to provide for a 64-bed hospital at an estimated cost of about £154,000. A further loan was granted in November, 1948, for the preparation of working plans, but no further action has been taken.

I am going to quote the opinion of a doctor of high standing in whom the people there have the utmost confidence, to such an extent that they have elected him as their mayor, a man who has had considerable experience in hospital work, especially at Bowen, and I intend to give the opinion of the Bowen Fire Brigade chief, who in his department should be an expert on the matter. At a meeting held in Bowen in May last year when about 40 representatives of all organised bodies in the town met to discuss the position of the hospital, some straight and very appropriate talk was heard. Dr. Delamothe, a highly-esteemed medical practitioner and mayor of Bowen, who was most outspoken in his criticism of the present building, declared emphatically that the original design was lousy, the building inadequate and decrepit and a perfect fire-trap. He had invited Chief Officer Honey, of the Bowen Fire Brigade, to be present to support his reference to fire hazards.

Continuing, the mayor said that £27,000 had been spent on the Proserpine Hospital in the past three years and £7,000 at Collinsville, yet of the three the Bowen hospital was the most decrepit and out of date. To his mind there was no question of the urgency of the need for the erection of a new hospital. He knew no worse hospital in the State. It was built 31 years ago to accommodate 12 patients. The original design was lousy, providing for six males and six females in adjoining wards, separated by a narrow veranda. There was no privacy for female patients in these circumstances. The six-bed male ward had to accommodate every possible disease in the one room. There was no provision for infectious diseases, children or surgical cases. Through the years the intake of patients had grown until beds were now placed cheek by jowl in every available space. A private house was more suitable for doctoring the sick. The general lay-out of the place was all wrong—the morgue was 30 feet

to windward of the kitchen and under certain conditions the results were unpleasant. The kitchen was placed next to the nurses' quarters. There was no provision for an out-patients' department. Out-patients' consulting and dressing facilities were the last word in discomfort for patients and staff. Waiting out-patients were stuck on a small exposed veranda and their dressings were done in full view of each other and the men's lavatory was situated right in the middle of the consulting and dressing sections. A women's lavatory was placed beside the labour ward, with its vent pipe alongside the window. In his time in Bowen very little maintenance had been done on the building. The roof needed replacing and the spouting was a mass of holes.

Two ladies told me that the water would run onto them as they were so leaky, and a railway employee who was having attention to his back also told me that they had to put a bucket alongside the bed to catch the water pouring in through the holes in the roof.

The Mayor said that the roof needed replacing and the spouting was a mass of holes. The operating theatre stuck out on to the roadway so that its windows could not be opened without letting in the dust of traffic. Being built on low blocks it was a refuge for rats and other vermin. It was a perfect fire-trap. With those facts they could establish a case for a No. 1 priority for a new hospital.

Mr. Honey, the fire-brigade chief officer, said that hospitals generally were enemy No. 1 for fire brigades and the Bowen hospital was particularly so. Being on a hilltop and on stumps, in the event of fire, dangerous draughts would be created from one end of the building to the other. Its layout was such that it would be difficult to get water pressure for hoses. The restricted approaches meant that in the event of fire, ambulances removing patients would be blocked by fire hoses and evacuation would be difficult. He considered that a hospital building should be of fire-proof construction.

I can confirm that this building is one that requires very urgent attention. I realise the disabilities the Government are faced with in regard to labour and materials. The people of Bowen realise that too, but say that their claims for a new hospital at Bowen can be well substantiated and that no centre could put forward a case requiring attention more urgently than theirs.

We are told by the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs that so much has been spent on the nurses' quarters. Those quarters are very satisfactory; it is a very fine building and the people of Bowen and I appreciate what the department has done in that respect. The department has also provided a home for the doctor and I understand from the secretary of the hospitals board that a sum of money has been made available for improving the laundry buildings which goodness knows needs improving, but the fact remains that our sick and injured people are not treated in the nurses' quarters or doctor's

residence, they are treated in this hospital, a hospital in which there is provision for 12 patients, whereas in the new hospital provision is made for 64 patients.

The Premier, in his pre-election speech at Bowen, explained why Bowen was in the Burdekin electorate. It was because of the development that would take place in the Burdekin Valley as a result of the Burdekin dam scheme. The Premier told the people of Bowen that Bowen would be the port of outlet for all those districts coming within the ambit of the Burdekin scheme. That would bring about an increase of population.

There is a laudable move to establish an additional coke plant at Bowen, which it is estimated will provide work for at least another 100 people. If Bowen is to get an increase in population because of those works and it is to become an important tourist centre, which also would bring more people there, we should have a hospital where patients can be treated efficiently and adequately. I hope we shall receive consideration when new hospitals are proposed and that we shall get our turn when the opportunity occurs, which will probably be when sufficient material and labour are obtainable. One very sore point with Bowen is that only a few miles south a million-pound hotel has been built where the minimum tariff is £20 a week, yet they are told no labour or material is available to build such an important institution as a hospital.

I am asked to be brief because there are other speakers and as it is desired to finish the debate on the Budget tonight I will defer elaborating on other subjects I propose to touch upon until another opportunity is afforded to me.

**Mr. EWAN (Roma) (9.25 p.m.):** I listened very attentively to the Treasurer's presentation of the Budget, and after assimilating its contents I feel restrained from offering any congratulations to him; rather would I offer him my sincere sympathy, because after all it is apparent to me that in the framing of the Budget the hon. gentleman must have approached it with extreme caution and perhaps the vision of a seer. Whether the hon. the Treasurer possesses those attributes only the effluxion of time will prove. The difficulties of State finance—in fact all forms of finance—must be fully understood to be appreciated. I feel that I can extend to the hon. the Treasurer at least my sincere sympathy.

It is regrettable that for the reasons he outlined the Treasurer has perhaps little alternative but to budget for a deficit of £767,825. He admits quite frankly that to budget for a deficit in times of high national income cannot be justified in normal circumstances, but I presume that no doubt it will be the intention of the Government at least to endeavour to correct, perhaps even remedy the inevitable or abnormal circumstances to which he refers. It must be admitted that to budget for a deficit at any time—particularly at the present time—is simply defeatism, as it tends to increase the existing

inflationary tendency in our national economy. However, his action in calling upon all State departments to observe the strictest economy is highly laudable and, if I may be permitted to say, extremely desirable.

**Mr. Riordan:** What about the £103,000,000 from the wool-growers.

**Mr. EWAN:** I will deal with that too at a later stage, when it suits me. The hon. member for Flinders knows more about howling like a dingo than about Budgets.

It was not my intention to refer to the regrettable incident that we witnessed this evening, but as a new member (Government interjections) and in spite of the dingo howls—and I know how to deal with dingoes only too well, I have killed hundreds of them—I want to say how foreign it is to my upbringing and my associations to hear such bitter personal innuendoes voiced by any individual who could have the temerity to call himself a man against any other individual in this Chamber. It detracts from any dignity that this Parliament can claim to possess. It is an honour to me to be under the leadership of the hon. member for Landsborough, who publicly indicated the disapproval of the Opposition of this state of affairs. (Government interjections). I now offer some suggestion for the development of Queensland to enable our vast natural resources to be exploited for the benefit and security of the State and Commonwealth as a whole. I think my time will be more profitably spent in dealing with those matters than indulging in cheap gibes and personalities.

It is incumbent upon us to settle large tracts of fertile land and provide adequate rail and road communication. After all, communication is a very important factor in the development but before getting onto roads I shall deal briefly with lands. I note the extremely wide terms of reference of the Royal Commission appointed to investigate matters relating to the settlement of pastoral and agricultural lands but until that commission furnishes a report I will refrain from comment. I would indicate to the Secretary for Public Lands a few aspects that struck me rather forcibly in the last few months, especially in relation to grazing blocks of land, particularly grazing homesteads. In spite of the cheap sneers of some Government members I know something of the settlement of grazing homesteads. I started with a grazing homestead, living in a tent for a few years. Then I put up a tin hut. I know all there is to know of them. In view of the tremendous number of people, particularly young people, both soldiers and civilians, who are desirous of settling on the land I want to say something about their eligibility to ballot on account of the altered conditions that have come into effect since the present regulations were framed. Briefly, the regulations governing the ballots—the Minister knows them but I give them for the benefit of hon. members on the Government side who have been in the cities all their lives—require the age to be 16 for males and 21 years for females. The applicant is required to deposit the

first year's rental and one-fifth of the survey fees on application, to prove his or her ability to finance or to obtain the necessary money to finance the improvements, and to fully stock the property within three years. The applicant is also required to set out his or her land experience.

First of all, I would point out to the Minister that he should take steps to exclude any applicant from existing ballots, particularly non-service applicants, unless he has had land and stock experience. I know that they are required to state their experience but I know very well that a considerable number of the applicants go to the ballot possessing no land or stock experience whatever. I ask the Secretary for Public Lands to investigate my charge in that connection and if possible to tighten up the administration on that point, as I think it would be beneficial to the genuine applicants.

On the second point I think the Minister will agree with me, because this matter needs sympathetic consideration. Many intending applicants are debarred from balloting at the present time because of the widespread disinclination of banks or financial houses, such as woolbrokers, to guarantee the necessary financial backing. The Minister will realise this, having had experience in these matters. Under existing conditions it would be necessary in many instances for the financial houses to guarantee a young man or woman, if the existing regulations are to be complied with, finance in the vicinity of £25,000 to £30,000. I have had quite a few letters in connection with this matter and at a later stage I shall probably worry the Minister about them. I name the Commonwealth Bank as one financial house that has refused to extend a guarantee any longer to one ex-service man, despite the fact that he had a meritorious war record and despite the fact that he was born and reared on the land and is now working on the land in the Roma district. These people are being excluded from applying for a loan, as are many station hands, drovers, shearers and the sons and daughters of many small landholders. They are debarred from the chance of acquiring a block because of the conditions prescribed very recently, despite the fact that their experience, the nature of their calling and their upbringing, endows them with all the rudiments necessary for success.

**Mr. Riordan:** It is surprising how you and I agree on that matter.

**Mr. EWAN:** Wonders will never cease.

**Mr. Collins:** How do you propose to finance it?

**Mr. EWAN:** I thank the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock for asking the question because when I started off one of the conditions was that you were required to find the first year's rental and the survey fees, there being no financial requirement at all. Naturally, if you could not get finance you did not hold your block very long. There were not many forfeitures and I think the records of the department will prove that. In my district I could name 20 who started off with

a capital of less than £500 and acquired 20,000-acre blocks. The Government supplied us with netting and most of us started off with 500 or 1,000 ewes. We had dingoes to contend with. We drilled bores for water and subdivided and in a matter of 10 or 12 years those settlers were all getting along, some acquiring additional areas at a later stage.

But for the conditions operating then in the area to which I have referred, that is, round Roma and Cunnamulla and down to St. George and Quilpie, there would have been no closer settlement today. It is now one of the safest areas in the State.

**Mr. Devries:** That was when the brokers and the bankers held you.

**Mr. EWAN:** They helped us very considerably, and they stuck to us during the depression.

**Mr. Devries:** You know that is not true.

**Mr. EWAN:** I know it is true. I cannot say that one genuine settler in my district had anything but sympathetic consideration from any financial house that he was dealing with.

**A Government Member interjected.**

**Mr. EWAN:** Sometimes they told us to cut down a bit on the tucker, but who did not have to cut down on tucker during the depression?

**A Government Member:** The Woolbrokers.

**Mr. EWAN:** Someone on the Government side said that the wool-growers did not have to cut down on tucker.

**A Government Member:** He said, "The wool-brokers."

**Mr. EWAN:** They had to tighten up a little, too.

I think I can leave those few small suggestions with the Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation. I feel sure he will give them sympathetic consideration.

**Mr. Foley:** We are watching very carefully the experience of all successful applicants to see how they get on.

**Mr. EWAN:** I thank the Minister, and I hope he will take cognisance of what I said about the refusal of the financial houses to guarantee many of the applicants. I will not worry him any further.

I now turn to the Secretary for Mines and Immigration with a few suggestions. At the outset, I want to tell him how sorry I am that he was not able, because of circumstances over which none of us had any control, to come to Roma and inspect our efforts to discover oil in the Roma district. He was prevented on a subsequent occasion from coming because of rain. Even though we are supposed to have a highway to Roma, the Minister realised that it might be difficult to get there, despite the fact that the hon. member for Hinchinbrook has said that he averaged 50 miles an hour on that road.

The discovery of commercial oil within the Commonwealth of Australia has reached such national and international importance from a defence point of view, as well as from the point of view of the development of our primary and secondary industries, that it is up to this Government and all other Governments in Australia to support and aid in every possible way the Commonwealth Government and the private companies that are now endeavouring in the Roma district to advance Queensland in this direction. We in Roma know only too well that oil does exist there, and I presume that this Government and the Federal Government also are aware of it.

**Mr. Power:** Take me up and show me where it is when you are ready.

**Mr. EWAN:** My word I will! Oil has been found in several bores in the Roma district, and 30,000 gallons of commercial oil was recovered from one bore. The Federal Government are playing a major part in the present extensive investigations, in conjunction with the geological-survey officers of four private companies.

The Federal Government have made their seismic equipment available to these four private companies. It is the only equipment available in Australia and records, in the same way as the seismograph, the vibrations from explosions in the holes drilled for the purpose. In this way it is possible to determine the structure of the earth for many thousands of feet. Little assistance has been given by the Queensland Government to date and the time has arrived when some practical assistance should be given to further the important investigation now under way. If honourable members could only realise that this search for oil has been carried out in detail over an area about half the size of Tasmania and there is no scientific periphery but a vital preliminary to a deep-drilling campaign they would realise the important work that has been done and financed by the Australian public. I am sure that the Government would feel obliged, as at least a moral duty in the advancement of Australia, to support this undertaking tangibly and without hesitation. The Secretary for Mines may say, "What can we do to help these companies?" seeing that the whole of the preliminary investigation has now been completed and Commonwealth officers will be returning south in a day or two and particularly as the Shell Oil Co. has started a deep well between Injune and Rolleston with very good prospects?" In view of the fact that the Shell Oil Co. has what is known as electric logging equipment—very expensive I believe—capable of getting correct records of the whole of the strata passed through in a deep drilling campaign I suggest that the department of Mines might investigate the practicability of obtaining one of these machines from the United States of America and making it available in a deep-drilling campaign that will be undertaken in the very near future in the vicinity of Roma. It would not be a complete loss as I have been told that the equipment can be used not only for logging oil bores but also for the logging

of holes in testing ground, for deep artesian bores so that we can have an accurate record of the strata passed through.

I am of the opinion that the search for oil in the Roma district has been materially retarded by the fact that such equipment as I mention was not available during the early stages of the search for oil in Roma because of the fact that cores were not taken nor was sampling carried out very scientifically, which means that many thousands of feet were drilled in Roma in a search for oil there that are now of no scientific value in the present investigations.

I throw out the suggestion—I know at the present moment there is a State Government geologist in Roma—in view of the facts I have outlined, for correctly logging and correctly sampling all cores taken from the various wells that it would be advisable if a Department of Mines survey office was opened in Roma and a State Government geologist was stationed there. The need for this would be more apparent, as it would be necessary to keep efficient supervision, if oil was struck there in the near future. The Minister will take cognisance of what I have told him in relation to these matters. I understand he will be out there in the near future but I throw out these suggestions in the hope that I shall make him a little more enthusiastic than he appears to be at the moment, because he surely realises the importance of bringing in commercial oil somewhere in Australia, and particularly in Queensland.

**Mr. Power:** I have been in Roma before.

**Mr. EWAN:** I know, but we want him out there again, and we want more assistance from his department. We shall not get that assistance until we get him out there and get him enthusiastic.

I will now pass to the railways. Firstly, I want to repeat my advocacy in my maiden speech of the linking up of the Charleville-Blackall rail centres. I was rather amazed to hear the Premier today, for some reason best known to himself, make some slighting reference to this proposal. I want to indicate a few passages of the evidence given before the Royal Commission on Public Works that inquired into the most suitable points for connecting the central and southern railway systems. The report at page 30, states—

"Again, owners, particularly if seasonal rains are threatening, persist in handfeeding and scrub-falling in order to keep their stock alive, and in many cases when seasonal rain fails to materialise the animals are too weak to travel the stock routes to the railway. A material reduction in the distance to the mulga area or more favoured districts by such a rail facility would probably induce them to avoid such risks."

Let us hear the experience of the New Zealand and Australian Land Company, who owned a property not very many miles from where I am situated—

"It is only the financially strong that are able to rail stock long distances, and

even they have practical instances of this great disadvantage. One of many is as follows: The New Zealand and Australian Land Company in June, 1935—the year Mr. Wills quotes—consigned two train-loads of young ewes and one train-load of older ewes at Emerald to Wallal, south of Charleville, a distance of 1,060 miles, for agistment on the company's Boatman Station. They were in quite strong condition, but the long train journey was too much for them, for 3,597 died en route. Eventually, the actual loss was 4,722, or about 37 per cent. Had rail communication been available between Blackall and Charleville, these sheep would have travelled only 350 miles, and many valuable breeders would have been saved."

Let us hear what Mr. J. F. Meynink has to say. He is one of the few graziers the Premier likes because he makes provision for calamities such as floods and droughts. According to the Premier his evidence is worth listening to. This is what he had to say—

"When we say economic reasons, we mean that the State of Queensland, over a term of eleven years, has actually lost through drought alone 17,681,867 sheep, which is an average of 1,607,442 per annum. We are not going to say that the whole of these sheep would have been saved if a connection between the two railway systems had been in operation, but we do say that a great number would have been saved, which would have meant that the saving to Queensland growers and the State generally would have been well over £1,000,000 per annum.

"These two lines comprise a vast length of railway running parallel to each other from east to west, and are linked only at the extreme seaboard. From a rail traffic point of view this has divided the greater part of Queensland into two distinct areas not capable of an interchange of traffic. Whatever the effect of this situation on dead loading, the effect on transport of livestock has been disastrous over a long period of years. Particularly in drought times owing to existing rail systems the traffic of livestock to agistment from drought areas to more favourable areas for relief purposes is frequently forced onto eaten out stock routes.

"We have been well aware for many years, that the inability to travel stock from north to south by rail by a direct rail link, has been the major factor in the disastrous losses which our flocks have suffered.

"As we have said before, the drought losses over the last eleven years have aggregated 17,681,867 sheep, but if the years 1926-27 and 1935-36 are taken separately, the losses aggregate 7,829,254 which, on a conservative estimate would amount to a loss of £3,914,627. The total value of the losses over the eleven years, estimating the value at 10s. per head has been £8,840,933.

"The areas served by the Blackall and the Charleville line are complementary from a pastoral point of view. The northern area is rich breeding country which, in a good season, carries a large number of stock, but, in drought periods is forced to move a large proportion owing to the lack of edible shrubs. The southern portion on the other hand is predominantly wool-growing country which derives its supplies from the north and has an abundance of top feed for use in drought times. Seasonally also it is common knowledge that a drought in the north often occurs at the same time as a good season in the south, and vice versa."

I will not weary the Committee by reading any more evidence from the report. I will just read the findings of the commission, which state:—

"The construction of the Charleville-Blackall line would give the State as a part and the Commonwealth as the whole:—

A substantial section of a modified Great Western pastoral railway;

A strategic defence line;

An insurance against drought;

Substantial closer settlement, not only in the benefited area, but also in contiguous areas;

Development, revitalisation, and partial re-organisation of the two principal sections of the pastoral industry;

Additional permanent and temporary employment;

Greater security and improved social conditions in the far Central West."

I add that that would greatly assist for vital defence purposes.

I wish to touch briefly on the importance of wool as a money-spinner to the railways. I have taken out a few figures from the report of the Commissioner which indicate that the Railway Department received £570,855 for transporting 69,818 tons of wool throughout the State, which works out at an average of approximately £8 3s. 6d. a ton. The department also transported 670,676 tons of sugar for £502,560, an average freight of about 18s. a ton; and the average for wheat works out at about £1 a ton.

We know full well that wool is hauled a greater distance than sugar or wheat, but we also know full well that on a mileage basis wool pays the highest rail freight of all primary commodities. I could quote ad lib on the difference of rail freights between Charleville and Brisbane and Mt. Isa and Townsville but will not do so this evening. In view of the simple little facts I have indicated, it is rather amazing to me to hear wool-growers, on whom the economic welfare of the State depends, treated with such scant courtesy by Government members.

I have here an article giving the plain truth about wool prices. I heard the hon. member for Balonne say that wool was bringing up to 200d. a lb., but the hon. member should know very well that a few pieces of wool have been picked out to make

up a bale that will bring a high price, and he knows just as well that the average price for wool last year was in the vicinity of 62d. or 63d. a lb.

**A Government Member:** What is it now?

**Mr. EWAN:** We cannot tell you that until the season closes. Far too frequently we have a jump in prices at one sale and a fall in the next. That amuses the members on the Government benches: they have experienced only the jumps, not the falls. That is the difference between the genuine wool-grower and his critics in this Parliament. Eighty-five per cent. of the wool is produced by growers producing less than 30 bales a year. With present prices, say bringing £100 a bale, that would mean an income of £3,000 a year. After having paid the very high costs of production and taxation, they will be very lucky if they get a net income of £400 or £500. Today wool-packs cost £1. When I started they were 3s. 2d.

Ridiculous propaganda is engaged in by city manufacturing interests in telling the people they will be paying very much higher prices for their suits of clothes, but with wool at the present price, if there is any fairness, justice or equity for the wool-growers, this rotten, filthy propaganda will be ended. The figures I am about to quote were arrived at after close investigation into the increased price of wool and the increase will be 18s. 8d. a suit length.

I am not going to touch on the Dajarra-Camooweal link. I dealt with it fully, and the hon. member for Flinders has already dealt with it.

I draw the attention of the Minister for Transport to a letter I have received, especially because Government members are very keen supporters of price-control. The Premier this afternoon gave us a nice little pep talk on economics and advocated the restoration of price-control.

**Mr. F. E. Roberts:** By the Commonwealth.

**Mr. EWAN:** That is all right. The State Government are now supposed to be exercising control over prices and I say sincerely that the State should pay more attention to its policy in relation to people living in isolated areas. Let us first of all take the price of the staff of life in the metropolitan area and in the western areas. I admit that in Roma the price is the same as in Brisbane. The State controls the price of bread and I read a letter as follows:—

“Dear Sir,—I have been directed by my association to contact you regarding the rail freights charged on the freight of bread.”

I make no apologies to the Minister for Transport for reading this letter, because the following paragraph absolves me of springing something on him—

“I am forwarding herewith copy of a letter received from the Minister for Transport in reference to this question.

From this letter you will note that the cost of sending one loaf of bread a distance of 26 miles is 5d.—almost two-thirds of the original cost of the article. Why should such an imposition be placed on people living in the backblocks?”

**Mr. Donald:** Why not send it by motor lorries—private enterprise?

**Mr. EWAN:** I thank the hon. member for his interjection because when I first lived in the western areas my wool-carrier carted it for me and for nothing, but today the railways charge 5d. for carting a loaf of bread 20 miles. The letter continues—

“People living on the Injune line and the lines running east and west of Roma are suffering in consequence of this freight—they are paying up to 1s. per loaf for their bread and even when they do get it it is most times quite stale.”

I do not think I need go any further and I ask the Minister for Transport to give some attention to this matter, and I trust that he will deal with it in the sympathetic way it deserves.

There is another matter that I should like to refer to the Minister. I ask him to undertake an investigation amongst western employees of the Railway Department as to the adequacy of the western allowance. This western allowance is supposed to cover the difference in the cost of living in the areas in which these men are engaged in work as against the city areas. I personally have not been able to give this matter the investigation it needs. First of all I have not the requisite facilities, and that is why I am making the suggestion to the Minister. Off-hand, I should say that if railway employees in the West are entitled to that western allowance, they are not receiving sufficient to cover the difference in the cost of living out there as against the metropolitan area. I do ask the Minister to investigate the matter.

**Mr. Riordan:** Do you mean the parities to be made as regards shearing and station hands?

**Mr. EWAN:** They are.

**Mr. Riordan:** Do you mean that they should be greater?

**Mr. EWAN:** The Industrial Court deals with that. If the Industrial Court decided to increase the parities of shearers and station hands, I do not think one quibble would be forthcoming. However, I think that the western allowance paid to railway employees is far more iniquitous than that paid to station hands and shearers.

I had intended to deal with pullman cars on the western trains, but I have noticed in “Hansard” that the honourable member for Cook dealt with that matter. However, I want to say publicly that the conductors had something in their favour when they made their recent application to the Industrial Court for the employing of two conductors on the Western Mail train. I support their claim, because they work under very difficult conditions and to my knowledge their statements are perfectly true.

Now, Mr. Farrell, I will get on to a subject that is perhaps not so pleasant. It deals with the answer of the Premier to a question that I asked him on 27 September, as follows—

“In reference to his published statement on 31 August that ‘Queensland carries 50 per cent. of the beef in the Commonwealth and the graziers and meat operators have a responsibility to see that consumers in this State are supplied with meat. Queensland taxpayers have, when the cattle industry has been in difficulties, supplied vast sums of money to enable the industry to carry on,’ will he kindly supply the full details of the ‘vast sums of money’ to which he referred?”

Well, now, in his rather fulsome reply, the Premier ignored my question. I asked a question about the cattle industry, but in his reply the Premier saw fit to lump together all subsidies and concessions that the Government had granted to the whole of the pastoral industry, including sheep, wool, cattle, and so on.

**Mr. Devries:** The Government have been very generous. You cannot deny that.

**Mr. EWAN:** Just a minute. The Premier was simply bolstering up the weakness of his case by misleading the members of his own party, and perhaps the uninitiated city people. In attempting to justify his ridiculous statement that the cattle-grower had a duty to supply meat to the rest of the community, the Premier saw fit in his reply to my question to go back as far as 1932 for proof of any help given to the cattle industry. If the cattle industry was dealt with separately from the wool industry, honourable members would find that any assistance given to it has been only in thousands. However, the Premier, with the remarkable facility that he possesses for painting a very good picture to support his case—and he gave a very good indication of that in his speech today—

**A Government Member:** It is easier when you stick to facts.

**Mr. EWAN:** What the Premier said had no relation to facts. He spoke about the money provided for improvements to stock routes, which after all are just as much public utilities as are city streets and parks and bridges. The grazier contributes his share of the cost of those things by way of subsidy and the writing-off of loan indebtedness. The Premier speaks of rebates of interest as though that were peculiar to the grazing industry, but it would be interesting for him to indicate the amount of interest and loan indebtedness written off the capital of the Rockhampton Harbour Board for instance.

I suggest that it has not been fully written off properly or perhaps honestly, but let us not forget the interest that has been written off in order to help the cities and the towns. If a balance was struck between the percentage of tax paid by the graziers, which was returned to the grazing industry, and the percentage taken to bolster industries in cities

and towns then in spite of the Premier's denial we should find that the thousands given to help the cattle industry in this State and even the £2,500,000 or the £3,000,000 he talks about as being given to help the whole of the pastoral industry since 1932 would be wiped off tenfold—only chicken feed. Now that the Premier is here let me tell him that the facility with which he can build up a good case without relation to facts misleads no-one but the members of his own Government party and uninitiated city people.

**Mr. Hanlon:** All facts. All meat shipped from Rockhampton benefits.

**Mr. EWAN:** What about all the interest, subsidies and capital written off the Rockhampton Board?

**Mr. Hanlon:** It all benefits the meat industry.

**Mr. EWAN:** The whole economy of the State is dependent on the industry and the Premier says that this £2,500,000 or £3,000,000 was given to help them over their difficulties and they are many—fire, flood, pests.

I am not going to berate the Government any more but I must refer to one important matter in the development of the State, that of roads. I referred to them in my maiden speech and the hon. member for Hinchinbrook told me that the roads were pretty good, that he had travelled over the road from Longreach to Brisbane at a rate that I worked out according to his figures at 49 to 50 miles an hour. He said that he was driving a Ford V-8. He may have been telling the truth but all I can say is that he so damaged the road between Charleville and Roma that we have not got a road there now. Let me show you a picture of the present condition of this defence road from Roma to Charleville over which Air Force and other military convoys travelled to Darwin during the war. Here it is. That is the road along which the hon. member for Hinchinbrook drove at 50 miles an hour. There are ruts in the road 3 feet deep and in a distance of 50 miles, 30 miles of it are in that condition. In view of the irrefutable evidence that I have placed before the Government some action should be taken by the Main Roads Commission to repair the road. The Secretary for Mines is coming out to have a look at it and I will invite the Premier to have a look at it, too. In view of the irrefutable evidence that I have submitted the Government should take proper action to make this a trafficable road again in case it should be urgently needed for an important purpose.

**Hon. V. C. GAIR** (South Brisbane—Treasurer) (10.20 p.m.) in reply: For many days hon. members on both sides have been engaged in debating the Financial Statement which I had the privilege of presenting to this Committee more than two weeks ago. I thank those hon. members who directed their minds to the important issues of State and national significance raised in the Budget. It is to be regretted, however, that so many hon. members opposite failed to deal at all

with the many important issues, particularly the grave question of the financial relationship existing between the Commonwealth and States. I regret that far too many hon. members were content to deal with purely parochial matters. Too many dealt with questions that could more appropriately been dealt with on the Estimates that are to follow. Certainly a variety of subjects were raised by hon. members and we have had long dissertations on sectional and parochial questions. This afternoon we had a long rehearsal or rehash of the Royal Commission on the Golden Casket which took place early in the year. We had a dissertation on dietetics and an advertisement of his uncle's physical culture school in Melbourne by the hon. member for Barambah.

**Mr. Bjelke-Petersen:** Don't you think dietetics worth while?

**Mr. GAIR:** In their proper place, yes.

I endeavoured in my Financial Statement to give a thorough review of the financial position of the State, its relationship with the Commonwealth and the Government's plans for the future development of Queensland. Because I considered the financial relations between Commonwealth and States had reached such a position that they were giving cause for grave concern, I deemed it appropriate and timely that I should set out at considerable length the history of the financial relationship between the Commonwealth and States and the formula used as a basis for the taxation reimbursement to the States. Because of that the Financial Statement was a little longer than usual. However, I believe, and my belief is confirmed by the remarks of many hon. members, that whatever effort was devoted to that phase of the Financial Statement was appreciated by this Committee. After listening very attentively to hon. members opposite, and later perusing their speeches in the "Hansard" proofs, I feel that no substantial criticism has been submitted by hon. members opposite.

The hour is late and what I have to say in reply to the speeches made by members of this Committee on this very important Budget will take some time. I respectfully request the Committee to permit me to continue my speech at a later date. If the Committee is agreeable to that course, we can report progress and ask leave to sit again and I will continue my speech on Tuesday next.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the Treasurer be permitted to continue his speech on Tuesday next?

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. GAIR:** I thank the Committee for its consideration in that matter, which I think will be of benefit to us both.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 10.27 p.m.