

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER 1953

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

REVIEW OF VALUATIONS ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.

Assent reported by Mr. Speaker.

NOISE IN CHAMBER.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope that in future hon. members will remain silent while I am delivering a message to the Assembly. This morning while I was standing in my place delivering a message there were some offenders and I ask that this should not occur again.

DEATH OF MR. R. M. BELL.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

Hon. J. E. DUGGAN (Toowoomba—Acting Premier) (11.3 a.m.) by leave, without notice: I move—

“1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this State by the late Roy Mackenzie Bell, Esquire, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland.

“2. That Mr. Speaker be requested to convey to the widow and family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland, in the loss they have sustained.”

The late Mr. Bell was elected to the twenty-sixth Parliament as member for the electoral district of Stanley at a by-election on 9 December 1933. He served through the twenty-seventh Parliament but did not seek re-election at the 1938 general election. He died on 20 August of this year. I am sure that all hon. members will join with me in deploring the loss of the late Mr. Bell, who

is within the memory of all of us. I personally received a very great shock when I learned of his death because I had seen him only two or three days previously and he appeared to be in his usual good health. As you know, he collapsed while attending a meeting of the Anglican Synod and passed away a few hours after that collapse. I always held the view that the late Mr. Bell was perhaps too kindly a gentleman to play the role of an Opposition member. He was indeed, I think, one of the kindest men who ever came into this House. He was a typical representative of the soil. His interests were wrapped up in pastoral pursuits and he had all the appearance of an outdoor man. He was a person who was possessed of a happy, genial disposition, and on all occasions when it was necessary for him to take part in the debates of the House he kept himself on a very high level indeed.

Not only this Assembly but Queensland and Australia are the poorer for the passing of men like the late Mr. Bell. He did not spare himself personally in serving his fellow citizens. He was a member of many committees and organisations and at all times was eager to prosecute plans for the development of Queensland and the improvement of its pastures, as well as the improvement of amenities for his fellow citizens and he associated himself generally with anything for the development of the State.

I did not perhaps know Mr. Bell as intimately as some hon. members of the Opposition, but I and others on this side of the House had a very high respect for his integrity, probity, and behaviour generally and I am indeed sorry that it is necessary to record a motion of condolence in this strain, particularly because his death was, like that of Mr. Farrell, so unexpected. But I have very much pleasure, in the circumstance, in seeing that the House recognises the services of this member. I should like to point out here that there seems to be some difference in the methods laid down for acknowledging the death of members of this Assembly. In some cases, as many years have elapsed since the members were in this Assembly, so few of us know very much about them personally that very often the duty or responsibility of moving motions of this kind depends upon the views held by the Premier of the day. However, we did decide recently that perhaps we should only recognise under certain conditions the demise of certain members, but I think hon. members on both sides will agree that if ever there was justification for departing from such a decision, it is in the demise of Mr. Bell. Mr. Bell is specially deserving of the recognition by Parliament of his work as a parliamentarian and his exemplary conduct as a citizen of the State.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (11.8 a.m.): In seconding the motion I desire to associate hon. members of the Opposition with me in joining with the Premier in expressing our deep regret at the passing of the late Mr. Roy Bell.

Although he was only in this Chamber for a comparatively short space of time, I think this Assembly suffered a very great loss when he decided to retire. Those who were in the Chamber at that time and who had the privilege of knowing the late Roy Bell appreciated his personal qualities, his genial nature and his good comradeship, and certainly were sorry when he decided to retire from public life in this State. I should say no citizen was more fitted than the late Roy Bell to hold the position of representative of the people. He earned that qualification by the service he gave to the people of this State.

He was a very unselfish man and he thought only of those things in which he was interested—and he was interested in all things worth while in this State—and it was a great loss to the public life of this State and this Assembly when he decided to retire. He took a very prominent part in the pastoral and business life in Queensland and his leadership in those spheres was appreciated by all who came in contact with him and all who had any knowledge of his work there.

As the Acting Premier has mentioned, apart from his public activities Mr. Bell took a very prominent part in church work and sporting activities in Queensland. Hon. members will recall that at one time he was a member of our parliamentary cricket team and, like the rest of us, he thoroughly enjoyed the game and the opportunity for a few hours' fun that we used to have, when that institution was associated with the activities of this Parliament. His personal qualities were great and this State has suffered a great loss in his passing. I think one can best sum up his many qualities by saying that he was one of nature's gentlemen and a citizen that this State could ill-afford to lose.

Mr. HILEY (Coorparoo) (11.11 a.m.): I should like to be associated with this motion, as it was to the late Roy Mackenzie Bell as much as any other that I personally owe a great debt for words of advice and counsel that helped me when I came into this House. I agree with the Acting Premier that if the test of a great Queenslander is his capacity to deliver barbed speeches in Opposition the late Roy Mackenzie Bell would miss out, but if the test was his consideration of his country rather than self and was based upon a wide knowledge of that country and its problems and the way in which the man responded to the demands in all sorts of directions in which a man could help his country and the public, we do mourn today the passing of a very great Queenslander. I was away in Rockhampton when I heard over a news session the news of his passing and it hit me with tremendous force. I repeat that I feel that in the death of the late Mr. Bell I have lost a particular friend and Queensland has lost a very desirable and useful citizen.

Motion agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

QUESTIONS.

STOCKFEEDING EXPERIMENTS, ATHERTON.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“In reference to feeding experiments conducted on the Atherton Tableland under the Federal grant, will he kindly state (a) the name of the owner and the locality of each farm on which such experiments have been or are being made, (b) the nature of the experiment in each case, and (c) the cost to date, respectively?”

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

“(a) Feeding experiments with concentrates were conducted in groups throughout the dairying areas of Queensland. Of a total of six such groups established one was located on the Atherton Tableland. The co-operating farmers in this instance were:—Mr. D. E. Beattie, Malanda; Mr. W. Knowles, Atherton; Mr. P. J. Donaghy, Malanda; Mr. A. Cornish, Malanda; Mr. F. Wakefield, Atherton; Mr. N. G. Larkin, Malanda; Mr. A. E. Biggs, Malanda. (b) Small quantities of concentrate fodders, i.e., grain, molasses, and meat meal, were fed. Grain alone, grain plus meat meal, and meat meal plus molasses were compared. Mixtures containing 10 per cent., 15 per cent., and 20 per cent. crude protein were used. Different amounts and mixtures were fed on each property and there was some change in mixtures from year to year. (c) Detailed costs for each farm have not yet been worked out.”

LONG-SERVICE LEAVE EXEMPTIONS.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

“1. How many applications for exemption from the long service leave provisions of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts have been made to date?

“2. How many of such applications have been (a) approved, either unconditionally or subject to conditions, (b) rejected, and (c) not yet finalised?”

Hon. E. J. WALSH (Bundaberg—Treasurer), for **Hon. A. JONES** (Charters Towers), replied—

“1. 137.

“2. (a) 87. (b) Nil. (c) 50 (This number includes 30 not yet heard, 19 decisions reserved, and 1 application heard and adjourned at request of the parties.)”

WEATHER FORECASTS OF MR. INIGO JONES.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) asked the Acting Premier—

“In view of the proved accuracy of the long-term weather forecasts of Mr. Inigo Jones and the enormous value to this State of such forecasts, will he please give favourable consideration to the appointment of a

suitable State officer to understudy Mr. Jones's methods, to ensure that the valuable data he has collected and collated will be fully preserved, and that work on the lines he has instituted will always be continued?”

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

“Mr. Jones's long-term weather forecasts are made for the Long Range Weather Forecasting Trust, a body which is maintained by commercial organisations and private individuals. A position as understudy to Mr. Jones could not be brought within the ambit of the Public Service Acts, nor could such an appointment be made in pursuance of the provisions of those Acts. Mr. Jones has been informed on several occasions that the matter of appointments to the staff of the Long Range Weather Forecasting Trust is one which is entirely within the province of the Trust. The Government, however, recognises the work of Mr. Jones by making an annual grant of £250 towards the operation of the Trust.”

QUEENSLAND-BRITISH FOOD CORPORATION;
SALE OF PLANT.

Mr. PLUNKETT (Darlington) asked the Acting Premier—

“Is it a fact, as stated in the ‘Courier-Mail’ of 1 September, 1953, that Peak Downs machinery worth £40,000 (or thereabouts) has been sold privately? If so, (1) why was not every landholder desiring such machinery given an opportunity to acquire it, and (2) why was it not retained for disposal to those who will acquire holdings on the properties of the Queensland-British Food Corporation which are to be made available for closer settlement?”

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

“Yes. (1) Cash sale of agricultural plant at Peak Downs, Cullin-la-ringo, and Orion Downs was advertised in newspapers in Brisbane (4), Rockhampton, Townsville, Maryborough, Kingaroy, Biloela, Toowoomba, Dalby, Warwick, and Mackay from 18 July, 1953, to 25 July, 1953. There is still considerable agricultural machinery for sale on the properties. (2) A proportion of matched agricultural machinery is being held for sale to settlers who may be successful in obtaining blocks.”

NEW CLASSROOMS, STRATHPINE AND
KALLANGUR SCHOOLS.

Mr. ROBINSON (Sandgate) asked the Secretary for Public Works and Housing—

“Did the Department of Public Works inadvertently erect an additional classroom at the Strathpine State School instead of the State School at Kallangur? If not, will he please inform the House regarding the provision of additional classrooms at both of these centres?”

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

“It is not true, as has been alleged by the hon. member for Murrumba, that the Department of Public Works inadvertently erected an additional classroom at the Strathpine State School instead of the State school at Kallangur, nor is there any foundation whatsoever for such an allegation. Representations were made to me in April, 1952, by the hon. member regarding conditions at the Strathpine school. I arranged for my Under Secretary and the Assistant Chief Architect to visit Strathpine and make an inspection of the buildings. Subsequent to this, and after consultation with the Department of Public Instruction, plans were prepared for the erection of a two classroom unit, and, under date 18 September, 1952, I advised the hon. member that additional accommodation would be provided. The third paragraph of my letter reads:— ‘Accommodation will consist of two 24 feet by 20 feet classrooms separated by partition and folding doors.’ This work was completed in January, 1953. The position at Kallangur was not as acute as at Strathpine, but in March, 1953, the Department of Public Instruction advised that an additional classroom was necessary. Plans were prepared for a single classroom unit, and although the hon. member for Murrumba did not make any representations to me in the matter, I gave him the courtesy of ministerial advice on 16 July, 1953, that approval had been given for the erection of this additional classroom. This work was commenced on 11 August last. In view of this, the hon. member’s false allegation which has cast a slur on the administration of my department can only be described as a shocking distortion of the truth. Furthermore, it is an abuse of the courtesy which I extended to him in my written advice.”

REGISTRATION CONCESSION ON TRUCKS FOR CARTING CANE.

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

“In reference to the concession registration fee on farmers’ trucks which are used for work solely on cane farms, even though a road may have to be crossed, will he kindly give consideration to allowing such concession rate to cover the same trucks which are also used for carting cane to the nearest loading point where such carting involves only the mere crossing of a main road or the use of a main road for a very short distance in order to connect with the ordinary road which gives access to such loading point?”

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

“This matter has already been carefully considered but it is regretted that it is not practicable to vary the conditions applying to the granting of concessional registration fees on farmers’ trucks.”

1953—1

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE, STUART CEMENT WORKS.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

“1. Is he aware that an industrial dispute of some weeks’ standing is holding up the completion of the cement works at Stuart and that union representatives claim that the dispute was fomented by the constructing authority, M. R. Hornibrook Pty. Ltd., in order to sabotage cement production at Stuart in the interests of Darra?”

“2. Was a compulsory conference on this dispute held by the Industrial Magistrate, Townsville, on 24 August?”

“3. Is it a fact that the Industrial Magistrate sharply criticised Hornibrooks at such conference, and, if so, does not this add colour to the union representatives’ claim?”

“4. In view of the need for the earliest completion of the cement works at Stuart, will he have the dispute fully investigated so that construction work may be recommenced?”

Hon. E. J. WALSH (Bundaberg—Treasurer), for **Hon. A. JONES** (Charters Towers), replied—

“1, 2, 3, and 4. As this dispute is the subject of an application to the Industrial Court, the matter is now sub judice.”

LOCAL GOVERNMENT STATISTICS.

Mr. NICHOLSON (Murrumba) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

“1. In what year was the last issue of ‘Part E—Local Government’ of the statistics of Queensland published by the Government Statistician, and why was publication discontinued?”

“2. In view of extensive and valuable data contained in that publication, which is not now readily available, will he kindly give consideration to its re-issue for public information and complimentary issue to all local authorities throughout the State of Queensland?”

Hon. E. J. WALSH (Bundaberg—Treasurer), for **Hon. A. JONES** (Charters Towers), replied—

“1. The last issue of ‘Part E—Local Government’ of the Statistics of Queensland was made on 18 July, 1949, containing statistics for the year 1944-1945. Publication has not been discontinued, but, as with other parts of the Statistics of Queensland, it has not been possible to maintain regular publication.

“2. In order to provide reasonably up-to-date statistics of Local Authority finances, it has been arranged to have the 1950-1951 issue of Part E printed. This is now in the hands of the Government Printer, and copies are expected in the near future. The charge to be made for such is now under consideration.”

USE OF TROOPS, BOWEN WATERFRONT.

Mr. JESSON (Hinchinbrook), without notice, asked the Acting Premier—

“Have the Federal Government been in consultation with the State Government in regard to the industrial trouble which has arisen at Bowen and which, if not checked, is liable to extend throughout Australia?”

“If so will he kindly outline the position?”

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

“Despite the fact that Queensland is a sovereign State, the Queensland Government were not in any way consulted in regard to the sending of troops to carry out the work on the waterfront at Bowen, the only advice received being a telegram informing me that troops were being flown to the area.

“I should like to make it quite clear that the State Government are equally concerned with primary producers and others who are desirous of having essential foodstuffs for overseas markets cleared, and believe that the relevant industrial unions, subject to prescribed industrial law and regulations, have a duty to co-operate in this task.

“I have despatched a telegram to the Right Honourable the Prime Minister, requesting him to convene an immediate conference of interested parties, in an endeavour to avoid the prospect of a nationwide upheaval following the unprecedented action of the Commonwealth Government in using troops to augment port-labour strength at Bowen. I am confident, particularly in view of the message received from the Melbourne branch of the Waterside Workers' Federation, where there is said to be a surplus of waterside labour to the extent of 800 men, that a conference could amicably iron out the difficulties at present existing.

“I can only express the hopes that the Commonwealth authorities are motivated solely by a desire to assist in the orderly marketing of primary products, rather than the precipitation of an industrial crisis designed to synchronise with the presentation of what they believe to be a favourable Federal Budget, and thus use these two political elements to enhance their damaged political prestige by an unnecessarily early appeal to the people.”

PAPERS.

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

Report of the Agent-General for Queensland for the Year 1952-1953.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Regulation under the Diseases in Stock Acts, 1915 to 1952.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—FOURTH ALLOTTED DAY.

Debate resumed from 1 September (see p. 209) on Mr. Diplock's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (11.27 a.m.): First I wish to associate myself with the part of the Governor's Speech relating to the consecration and dedication of Her Majesty and the expressions of loyalty to Her Majesty. Because of her charming manner and good sense she has endeared herself to the people of the British Empire. The pending visit of Her Majesty to Australia, in company with the Duke of Edinburgh, is awaited with keen interest.

I should like to take this opportunity of offering you, Mr. Speaker, my sincere congratulations on your appointment as Speaker of this House. Perhaps there is no greater compliment one could pay you than to say that it is one thing to attain a position but it is another thing to retain it. The felicitations that have been expressed to you during the last couple of weeks indicate that you have won the approval of members of this Parliament. We realise that your duties are very onerous and that your first duty is to maintain the honour and decorum of this House. In that respect I assure you that as a member of this House I shall endeavour to support your efforts in that direction.

The debate on the Address in Reply affords members a great privilege. It gives us the opportunity of discussing matters of public interest and offers to new members the opportunity of getting the ordeal over of making a maiden speech. I congratulate the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply on their speeches. I congratulate also the new member on this side, the hon. member for Cunningham, on his contribution, which mainly dealt with that very important question, the conservation of our soils. I think everyone will admit that our greatest asset is our soils and that if their productivity is lost we shall lose everything, including our civilisation.

My speech this morning will centre round the economy of our State. The time has arrived when all thinking people should give some thought to the drift that is occurring in that economy. I am not blaming anyone in particular but I do say that I believe Labour policy throughout has accentuated that drift. We must realise the one fundamental truth, that the economy of this State is just as strong as the economy of the industries within that State, that the economy of this State can be no stronger than the economy of its industries. I wish to examine very briefly their general trend.

It is true that in order to review the affairs of any business organisation we must look at its balance sheet; but we must consider not only the balance sheet, its assets and liabilities; we must look at the income and expenditure account also. We must examine all the circumstances surrounding the business and today I propose chiefly to deal with one of the industries in which I believe our economy has been weakened as the result

of this Government's policy. I hope that the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock will remain in his place to listen to what I have to say about the great Australian dairying industry.

I should like to draw the attention of the House to what has happened and is happening as the result of this Government's policy. I refer chiefly, first of all, to production and the stabilisation of the industry. We have a great interest in this Australian industry and the people of Australia are concerned, in particular, with regard to Government policy in the licensing of the manufacture of margarine. A few years ago a gentlemen's agreement was reached throughout Australia, under which the quantity of margarine allowed to be manufactured in Australia was limited. This was done first of all for the purpose of stabilisation and in order that the people engaged in that industry might be able to earn an honest living. At the outset I would point out that the principles enunciated in the control and manufacture of margarine are based on principles exactly similar to those that govern the sale and distribution of sugar. We know perfectly well that if it were not for our Australian Sugar Agreement, the Queensland sugar industry today would be in a very sorry plight. The people of Australia have conceded to the people of Queensland the need to maintain the economy of the sugar industry in this State in order that it might become a white-man's industry. Of course, that means that the people of the southern States make some contribution to it in order that a fair price may be obtained.

Mr. Walsh: And the people of Australia get efficiency in the industry in return.

Mr. MULLER: I am not saying that they have not. But they are getting efficiency in the dairying industry also. The hon. gentleman should not reflect on the dairying industry by saying there is no efficiency in that industry. I challenge the Treasurer to show me one section of the community that works harder than the dairy farmers. If it were not for the fact that the wives and children of dairy farmers work seven days a week there would not be dairy produce to export. I resent the remark, coming from a Minister of the Crown, that there is no efficiency in the dairying industry. No section of the industry works harder. Nor has any section of the people worked harder to provide the people of Australia and the world with the foodstuffs so much required and the Treasurer is quite out of step when he reflects on the efficiency of the dairying industry.

Mr. WALSH: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member is deliberately misrepresenting what I said. I made no reference to the dairying industry whatever.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member for Fassifern to accept the denial of the Treasurer.

Mr. MULLER: I am accepting the hon. gentleman's statement but at the same time he made that statement by way of innuendo.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MULLER: For the last 20 years we have had a gentleman's agreement throughout the Commonwealth that the production of margarine would be limited to 4,000 tons and that Queensland's quota of that amount was to be 645 tons. I should like the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock to reply to the comments I am about to make because he has seen fit to go into the country and endeavour to prove to the dairy farmers that he is the champion of their industry and then, when he takes his place in Cabinet, he is probably the greatest enemy the dairying industry has. This 645 tons has been lifted now to 6,860 tons for Queensland, an increase of 1,063 per cent!

I do not want to bear false witness here this morning but if the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock would practise in Cabinet what he preaches in the country things would be a lot better from our point of view. To my mind there is nothing more callous than a person who plays the role of a false witness. The Minister comes from a dairying district and he should know as well as I do that this competition from margarine is not fair.

First I should like to deal with the question as it affects stabilisation of the dairying industry. For many years the leaders of the dairying industry have fought with all State Governments and the Commonwealth Government to maintain some standard of stability in the industry. This effort to stabilise the industry has been costing the Commonwealth Government £16,000,000 a year by way of subsidy and if the policy that has just been enunciated by the Queensland Government is to be pursued to its logical conclusion it will be the end of stabilisation. In providing this £16,000,000, the Commonwealth Government said at first that they would guarantee the price that was agreed upon by the industry as being economic. That price was 4s. 1½d. a pound. The Commonwealth Government agreed to pay the guaranteed price on Australian consumption, plus 20 per cent. For instance, if we sell 100,000 tons on the Australian market we are guaranteed the Australian price for 120,000 tons. Of course, as our Australian sales fall so does our 20 per cent. This matter is so serious that I think all members of the Government should know just where they are going, for I believe that if they knew the ultimate result of the policy they propose adopting they would certainly exercise their votes in a different way altogether. After all, I am only asking that the Australian dairying industry be granted a set of conditions similar to those obtaining in the sugar industry, and, as white Australians, we are entitled to that.

Mr. Walsh: Can you explain why you opposed an increase in the price of butter?

Mr. MULLER: I am prepared to be reasonable, and I will deal with that matter in a moment, but that does not say that the Minister is right in endeavouring to drag the question of price down to the dirt in the way in which he is doing by his interjections this morning.

My complaint this morning relates only to table margarine. I emphasise that different types of margarine are manufactured. Some of it is used only for cooking and we do not mind that. We think that any product grown in Australia is entitled to compete with us, but the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock, who has just gone away and hidden himself—

Mr. WALSH: I rise to a point of order.

Mr. Morris: You are touchy this morning.

Mr. WALSH: I take exception to the statement made by the hon. member for Fassifern. The Secretary for Agriculture and Stock asked me whether I would sit here and take notes of the speech of the hon. member for Fassifern because he has to meet a deputation from the pineapple industry.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope the hon. member for Fassifern will accept the explanation of the Treasurer.

Mr. MULLER: I will accept his explanation but I hope the Treasurer will contain himself and listen to the story.

Mr. Walsh: You should not say he went away and hid himself.

Mr. MULLER: I was pointing out that the standard of margarine varied and that the only thing we were complaining about was table margarine. I have evidence to prove—and I think the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock knows that my statement is correct—that virtually the whole of the ingredients of table margarine manufactured today are produced under cheap black-labour conditions. As a matter of fact, we have evidence, taken from Commonwealth statistics, to show that 98 per cent. of the ingredients of table margarine in use in Australia is produced under cheap black-labour conditions.

Mr. Jesson: Why don't you take it up with Menzies?

Mr. MULLER: If anything happens hon. members opposite blame Menzies. I have told them that the Menzies Government found £16,000,000 to stabilise the industry whereas hon. members opposite, because of their actions, are trying to jeopardise the industry. People in the South, including Victoria, are not obliged to buy our sugar but because they have a big Australian outlook they are willing to pay a little more for sugar so that we might retain our white-labour conditions.

Mr. Devries: That is questionable too.

Mr. MULLER: They are doing it; it has been done for years.

Mr. Devries: It is not because they like to do it.

Mr. MULLER: I do not care what they like or what they do not like.

Mr. Walsh: Do you say the whole of the sugar?

Mr. MULLER: The Sugar Agreement has been in operation for years, and I ask the Secretary for Public Instruction

whether he believes that the people of Victoria will continue to subsidise the sugar industry if his Government on the other hand try to break their dairying industry? That is a fair question. He cannot reasonably expect it. Queensland, as I have said, has increased its quota of margarine by more than 1,000 per cent; Victoria has not increased its quota and New South Wales has only slightly increased its quota. I have the figures with me and the fact remains that the Queensland quota of 6,860 tons is more than that of the quotas for the whole of the southern States combined.

This Australian dairying industry is a rather important industry and if it goes down the repercussions must be felt on the economy of this State. In last night's "Brisbane Telegraph" there was a paragraph concerning the recent visit to North Queensland of Mr. E. B. Rice, Director of Dairying. His statement might appeal to North Queenslanders because he said that dairying had definite possibilities in the Burdekin. I believe that it has every possibility and I think that if the Government approached the question of developing the Burdekin by regarding it as a dairying district, they would find it worth consideration.

Mr. Walsh: You should tell that to the Commonwealth.

Mr. MULLER: If the hon. gentleman is beaten he resorts to anything; he is like a drowning man who clutches at anything he can get hold of. Dairying might not perhaps be as profitable as sugar or tobacco, if you can sell it, nevertheless hon. members opposite will agree that the development of this State hinges on the dairying industry. The hon. member for Warrego made a very valuable contribution to this debate and I commend him for his remarks. He said that we must have closer settlement. To populate this State we must reduce the extent of the sparsely settled areas, and how can you populate and develop the State if you do not give consideration to the people who are prepared to go out into such areas and pursue their industry there.

Mr. Devries: Synthetics have not ruined the wool industry.

Mr. MULLER: That is another matter, although I think there is something in what the Minister has said. The dairy farmer has made a greater contribution to closer settlement than any other section of primary industry. But if what I have described continues, as I said a moment ago, it must be a threat not only to further expansion but to the existing farmers.

Only a few weeks ago a special committee was appointed by the Commonwealth Government to review the price of butter. That committee reported that there was a definite increase of 1½d. in the cost of production of butter, but in view of the tremendous increase in margarine sales it felt that the industry should absorb the increase. I wish the Treasurer was listening to me now. He barges in occasionally—

Mr. Walsh: Don't worry, I am listening.

Mr. MULLER: I am explaining why I disapproved the other day of a further increase. This committee said that in view of the increase in margarine sales it felt that the industry should absorb the extra 1½d., which the industry did. The people in the industry, of course, realised that the price they were getting did not meet the increase in the cost of production, but the margarine industry presented such a threat to the dairying industry that there was nothing else for them to do.

Why must we foster this margarine industry? I picked up my newspaper yesterday morning and saw these headlines—

“12 Months’ Figures: Coconut Link.
17 Typhoid Cases Here.”

This article, which includes a comment by our own Director-General of Health and Medical Services, Dr. Fryberg, reads—

“Seventeen cases of typhoid fever have been notified to the State Health Department since 1 July.

“In July and August, 1951, the total for Queensland was two cases.

“The State Health Director-General (Dr. Fryberg) said last night: ‘It would appear that Papuan coconut is related to the increase.

“‘Bacteriological investigation of some coconut eaten by some of the patients is being carried out.’

“Dr. Fryberg said eight of the typhoid cases reported since last July were from Brisbane. Two of these were suspects.”

There is a lot more in the article but I will not worry hon. members with it. Here we have an industry—a very doubtful industry—using coconut oil produced by people who know no health standards and nothing of hygiene.

Mr. Walsh interjected.

Mr. MULLER: That is a statement one would expect from a child, not from a responsible Treasurer. The Treasurer knows he has no argument. If he wishes to have this argument with the gloves off, he can have it from me.

I propose to mention a few more important facts to show why I think the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock has run away from us today. He knew this debate was coming on today and wanted to be out of it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer has explained why the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock is absent. I hope the hon. member will accept that explanation.

Mr. MULLER: I accept your ruling, Mr. Speaker, but you cannot blame me for—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MULLER: Here is a report of a statement that the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock made in Toowoomba a few weeks ago—

“‘We must be realists,’ he declared. ‘No-one can deny the fact that margarine is a valuable food, and no-one has any right to debar a good wholesome food from the market.’”

“He said most of the margarine consumed in Australia was manufactured from the oils of peanuts and cotton seed grown in Queensland, and the producers of those crops had just as much right to sell them as margarine as had dairy farmers and manufacturers to sell butter.”

You will remember, Mr. Speaker, that a few days ago I asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock the following question about the constituents of margarine—

“1. Of the 913 tons of tallow margarine which he stated was produced in Queensland in 1952-1953, what quantity was manufactured from (a) coconut oil, and (b) vegetable oil from Queensland-grown products?

“2. What quantities of copra were imported into Queensland in 1951-1952 and in 1952-1953, stating country of origin in each case?”

The Minister replied that information about the actual constituents was not available. How then can he say that it is a valuable food if he does not know what is in it? He went on to set out the quantity that the Department of Commerce permitted to come into the country. It has been suggested that the Commonwealth Government should prevent the importation of copra but I am sure hon. members must agree that it is almost impossible to do that, seeing that a considerable quantity of it comes from the mandated territories. Coconut oil is extracted from copra and the following figures set out the quantity of copra imported for the year 1951-1952—

	Cwt.
New Guinea	567,000
Papua	550
India	11,800
Solomon Islands	60,500

It is impossible to stop the importation of copra, seeing that it is required for many purposes, including the manufacture of medicine, soap, and other things.

This matter has been considered on previous occasions; it is nothing new. Governments in the past, both State and Commonwealth, have agreed that the only way in which to limit the production of margarine was to fix the quota that could be manufactured. A moment ago the Treasurer made a sensible interjection about efficiency in the industry, but how can you expect efficiency in the dairying industry in Queensland, or Australia for that matter, when it has to compete with a product grown by blackfellows who are paid a wage of about 1s. a day? I am told they do not always get that 1s. a day. In New South Wales the dairying industry is required to pay a proper wage to white people in the industry and we have no objection to that in Queensland either. We believe that the dairying industry should be a white man's industry, but the manufacturers of margarine can put their product on the market for 2s. 6d. lb. The committee of investigation, the independent tribunal appointed by the Commonwealth Government to report on conditions in the dairying industry in Australia, said that it cost 4s. 1½d.

a pound to manufacture butter. Indeed, the last report indicated that it cost that sum, plus another 1½d. lb., but I have explained that the dairying industry decided to absorb the increase itself. When the margarine quota is manufactured it naturally must be sold. And this is what happens: it is not all sold in Queensland; a good deal of it is sold in the southern States. I want to tell hon. members that interested people in the southern States are very resentful of the attitude of the Queensland Government in this regard. They take the view that if that is the policy of the Queensland Government in connection with the manufacture of margarine it will be necessary to have another look at the sugar position.

Mr. Walsh: They are getting a very fair deal.

Mr. MULLER: Let the hon. gentleman remain quiet for a moment and not act like a child. Sooner or later the southern people are going to kick against the decision of the Queensland Government in the matter of manufactured margarine.

I understand that the Treasurer is acting for the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock today and if that is so I should like him to tell me whether it is a fact that the Queensland Government have made representations to the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria, asking them to increase their margarine quotas? It has been so reported to me. Responsible members of the dairying industry have been told that such an approach has been made. I cannot understand why the Queensland Government should take up such a callous attitude.

Mr. Walsh: Who told you that? You will listen to any silly rubbish.

Mr. MULLER: I should not like to put one of the Minister's industrial friends in an awkward position. This man holds a high position in an industrial union in the southern States, but he is a big man with a big outlook. He was concerned about this approach and he took steps to see that the Victorian and New South Wales Governments did not bring it about. He is a man who does know something about it, and he is endeavouring to do all he can to prevent that increase from being made. The position is becoming so serious that it will mean that the dairy farmer cannot carry on. I think everyone will agree that no-one can say that the poor unfortunate dairy farmer has ever exploited anybody. The £16,000,000 the Commonwealth Government are providing is going into the pockets of the consumers.

Mr. Walsh: You have not explained why you opposed the increase in the price of butter.

Mr. MULLER: I explained while the hon. gentleman was talking to the Acting Premier. I told him that I opposed a further increase because I saw that the sales of margarine were making such inroads into the sales of butter that it would be dangerous and that if we increased the price the sales might fall off to an even greater degree.

I have the honour to be the chairman of the Queensland Butter Marketing Board, whose annual report is now in the printer's hands and will be circulated in a few weeks. It shows that for last year our sales were down 15 per cent., and if we allow for the increase in population the sales are down even more. That is the reason why I opposed the further rise at that time. I want to be fair, and I believe the dairying industry wants to be fair; we do not want to exploit anybody.

Mr. Devries: It is like a person buying from Woolworths or Coles instead of Pikes.

Mr. MULLER: I say that there is no more justification for advocating the sale of a black-grown product, margarine, than there is in the case of sugar.

I listened to the very laudable statements made by the Acting Premier at the recent dinner at which he expressed the need for the expansion of our primary industries and the necessity to populate our empty spaces. I am glad that he is here in his place in the House. At that dinner he went on to say that Australia is now jealously eyed by coloured peoples to the north of this country. I agree with him. But what is the good of lip-service? We need action. What is the good of talking tripe? One must be prepared to do something about it. What is the difference between inviting those people to come here and compete with our white people for any old wage and bringing here the products that they produce? There is no difference. If we are going to fill these empty spaces we shall have to put people in them, but unless you can provide the means of livelihood for the people it is not much use bringing them here. If we are to pursue a policy of this kind we shall defeat our objective of closer settlement and the filling of our empty spaces. The people who are producing this article have no sanitation standard; hygiene is unknown amongst them. Just fancy bringing them here and competing with them! Perhaps no-one knows better than the Treasurer—and he is old enough to know—that it is not many years since Kanaka labour was banned from the sugar industry. At the time the people were told that if we banned this labour there would be no sugar industry.

Mr. Walsh: We have the cheapest sugar in the world here.

Mr. MULLER: I should not like to say that. It is not the cheapest sugar. If it were not for the contract with Great Britain to take our sugar, you would not be sending any.

Mr. Walsh: Great Britain does nothing of the sort.

Mr. MULLER: Would the hon. gentleman say that white people here should have to compete with black labour? Will he say that?

Mr. Walsh: I have not said that.

Mr. MULLER: He says it by implication. There is another very important point in this matter that we must not overlook. Within the last week or two we have been

discussing closer settlement. A number of the young men who served in the armed forces became, on their return, established in dairying and other farming. Many of them, in fact nearly all of them, bought their farms at very high prices. They are now endeavouring to pay for their farms. What would be their position if the Government take the lid completely off margarine? They will have to suffer a further reduction in sales and a further reduction in price. Does it not appear to the Treasurer that this will continue and these men will be robbed of the few pounds they have put into their dairy farms? In a great many cases it was the savings they made while in the services.

Mr. Walsh: Does the peanut industry benefit in any way?

Mr. MULLER: The peanut industry does not benefit as the result of this move of the Government. Peanut oil and cotton-seed oil are too dear, at 2s. 5½d. a pound to put into margarine. The Treasurer knows that. Peanut and coconut oils cannot be used because of the cost: and this is the reason why I wanted the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock in the House this morning to listen to me and not have the information passed on to him second hand. The Secretary for Agriculture and Stock told me and members of a number of other important bodies representing farmers throughout the State that margarine is manufactured cheaply from peanut oil and cotton-seed oil. We must be fair. If that was the truth—it is not—I should have no case this morning. The case I am putting forward this morning and submitting to this, might I say, honourable Parliament, is that this is not fair competition. We must have some sense of responsibility. If we have not, of course our position must decline. A fortnight ago I asked the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs a question in regard to the hygiene of countries where some of the raw materials of margarine were grown and asked whether it was safe to pass on this margarine, which Dr. Fryberg and others state is infected with typhoid germs. The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs replied that it was pasteurised and there was practically no danger of typhoid germs. To show how unfair this competition really is, I would point out that all milk sold in the Brisbane area is required to be pasteurised. It is not so in every case, because a very small percentage is not pasteurised, but people are told they take that at their own risk. At our butter factories all our cream is pasteurised.

Mr. Walsh: Some milk is sold with 33 per cent. water.

Mr. MULLER: Under the Act we are allowed 15 per cent. of moisture and no more in butter.

Mr. Walsh: I am not talking about your butter.

Mr. MULLER: The hon. gentleman does not want to hear this. If in the sale of milk you have 15 per cent. or 16 per cent. of moisture you are prosecuted. As far as the

33 per cent. of water is concerned, the Minister knows that is quite untrue. I could use a very much stronger adjective than that if I wanted to.

Mr. Walsh: A milk vendor was fined £33 at the court here for selling milk with 33 per cent. of water.

Mr. MULLER: That does not mean that all milk sold is adulterated with water. Not one-thousandth part of it would contain 33 per cent. water. There have always been crooks in the country. Our Dairy Produce Act prescribes the amount of moisture and if the moisture content is only 1 per cent. over the vendor is liable to a penalty. Because one man is prosecuted and fined heavily one cannot say that all the vendors are the same. For instance, if a man robs a bank you do not call all people bank-robbers. If anybody walks into a shop and steals an article and is prosecuted, you do not attribute that practice to all shoppers.

We have a double precaution with dairy produce, in that the cow is tested for T.B. and milk must be pasteurised. This doubtful product, margarine, is subjected to some heat, but no machine can be perfect. Hon. members can well imagine what the position would be if all States did what Queensland has done. After all, if it is right for Queensland to manufacture nearly 7,000 tons of margarine a year, it is equally right for other States to do it. In order to show how serious the position has become, I point out that Queensland's butter consumption is estimated to be 15,000 tons a year. That being so, 7,000 tons would represent 40 per cent. of our total butter consumption, and it is proposed to allow 7,000 tons of margarine to be manufactured each year.

Mr. Jesson: If it is not good, why do people eat it?

Mr. MULLER: That is a matter for the people themselves. The reason is largely because it is 1s. 6d. a lb. cheaper than butter, and it is cheap because it is grown with black labour. If we are to maintain our Australian industries, whether dairying, cane-growing, fruit-growing, or anything else, we cannot expect the people engaged in them to compete with black labour.

A little while ago I mentioned a drop of 15 per cent. in Queensland butter sales. What is going to be the position if we have similar falls in Sydney and Melbourne? The Commonwealth Government have agreed to provide enough money to pay dairymen the pegged price for the volume of Australian consumption plus 20 per cent. of that volume. If our Australian sales are stolen from us, no stabilisation scheme can be possible.

Mr. Jesson: Are you suggesting that margarine should be abolished altogether and that everybody should have to buy butter?

Mr. MULLER: I have said that we should be fair and reasonable. Till this change was made, we agreed to the manufacture of 640 tons of margarine a year in Queensland.

(Time, on motion of Mr. V. E. Jones, extended.)

Mr. MULLER: I thank the hon. member for Callide and hon. members of the Chamber for the courtesy extended to me.

We did not object to an increase in the production of margarine so long as that increase had some relation to our increase in population, but we find that whereas our population has increased by 2½ per cent. the production of margarine has increased by 1,060 per cent. and I cannot help feeling that this is a deliberate attempt on the part of the Queensland Government to smash butter prices.

Mr. Jesson: No. There is a demand for the product. The people want margarine.

Mr. MULLER: The Minister said at Toowoomba the other day that margarine was a good wholesome food and he questioned our right to prevent anyone from offering wholesome food for sale. The Minister evidently does not know what is in it. We know how it is made, and I am not satisfied that it is wholesome.

Mr. Jesson: The people of England have been eating it.

Mr. MULLER: They were obliged to eat it when butter was short, and that applied to America and to other continental countries also. Here we talk a great deal about the need for closer settlement and the development of Queensland. Only a few weeks ago the Acting Premier said we have to populate our empty spaces, and I agree with that.

How are you going to populate the empty spaces if you cut the ground from under the feet of the people who will do the job for you? There is a possibility of developing the dairying industry throughout a good deal of Queensland in parts where they are not dairying now. In the South there is perhaps not the room for development that there is in Queensland. Queensland has wonderful possibilities, and to strengthen the economy of the State and to bring about the closer settlement so often spoken of, the possibility of the extension of the dairying industry must be considered. We had a very valuable export trade but we lose about £90 a ton on the butter we export. We have to take the world price for our export butter but we have endeavoured to stabilise the price in Australia so that our people will get a fair price. We have appealed to Governments over the years but today we find that the Queensland Government are breaking down stabilisation. I know that many hon. members opposite would not stand for that principle and I think that they do not know the truth of the position, and it is my function today to tell them the truth. Submit my statements to whatever investigation you like and if it is found that I am not telling the truth I have £50 to give to any charitable institution in Brisbane.

If any industry is entitled to fair treatment it is the dairying industry. We have not exploited the consumer. The hon. member for Hinchinbrook asked why people bought margarine and to that question I say, "because it is 1s. 6d. a lb. cheaper." Can any hon. member tell me any commodity

or any line of foodstuffs that has had a smaller rise in price than butter during the last five or six years? Butter is still a cheap food and is not as dear as meat or the clothes we wear. There has been a rise in price but on the other hand butter is being sold today at approximately 4s. a lb. and that is possible because on every lb. eaten the Commonwealth Government pay 10½d. If the Government are going to get away with their proposal to allow unlimited quantities of margarine to be made from imported oil produced under black-labour conditions, there is only one thing that can happen and that is the end of the dairying industry.

Mr. Walsh: Who said they are going to be allowed to make unlimited quantities of margarine?

Mr. MULLER: Whereas the quota was 645 tons it is now 6,860 tons.

Mr. Walsh: Not unlimited quantities.

Mr. MULLER: That is only splitting straws. It is 40 per cent. of Queensland's consumption of butter. We know that Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution applies and the gate is wide open to sell margarine in the southern States. The people in New South Wales are complaining that Queensland-manufactured margarine is being sold in that State; it is being sold in Victoria. I pay a tribute to New South Wales because although it is under a Labour Government, Mr. Graham, the Minister there, has been able to take a big Australian view and only increase the quota to be manufactured from 1,200 tons to 2,500 tons. Victoria has not increased its quota at all. The Queensland quota is more than the quotas of the other States combined.

Mr. Walsh: Is any margarine imported?

Mr. MULLER: No, the constituent parts are imported.

Mr. Walsh: I heard of British "Daffodil" margarine.

Mr. MULLER: It is generally sold in a fresh condition.

Something must be done. There is a very old saying that you cannot unscramble an egg that has been scrambled, but members of the Government should scramble as quickly as possible to stop this threat.

Mr. Jesson: People cannot afford to use butter for cooking. Therefore they are using margarine.

Mr. MULLER: I have already explained that cooking margarine is different from table margarine. It is usually made of pig fat and sometimes pig oil and that kind of thing. We are not complaining about that. What we are complaining about is table margarine. I want to enlighten members of this Chamber as to the difference between cooking margarine and table margarine. We should have all the information we can possibly get about table margarine.

I hope that at an early date legislation or regulations will be introduced to reduce very considerably the quota of margarine

that can be manufactured in Queensland. I should like to see the quota reduced to the old quota that was in existence for many years. I know that many mistakes have been made, and we all have to admit that we make them. However, when we make a serious blunder such as this we should rectify it as soon as possible. It is no use the Government's saying that the dairy farmers are charging too much for their butter and that they should do so-and-so.

Mr. Walsh: You yourself said that.

Mr. MULLER: I have never said that.

Mr. Walsh: You opposed the increase.

Mr. MULLER: Mr. Speaker, I wish you would allow me to tell you what I think of the Treasurer.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MULLER: I should like to give hon. members an analogy. Some few years ago this Government had an idea that the price of grain was too high. I admit that it was higher than I wanted to see it; I am not an advocate of extortionate prices. Nothing does a nation more harm. We should make every endeavour to beat this inflationary trend. We heard a great deal about the high price of grain and the Government embarked upon the scheme known as the Queensland-British Food Corporation, with the intention of growing grain for pigs. They estimated that they would be able to produce grain at £5 12s. a ton. However, in the first year the grain they grew cost £21 8s. a ton, in the second year it cost £25 8s. a ton and in the third year it cost £55 6s. a ton. And look at the assets of the Queensland-British Food Corporation, because to examine the affairs of any company you must look not only at its income and expenditure account but at its list of assets. The Government invested £2,500,000 in this scheme and the report discloses that in four years they lost £826,000, or one-third of the capital.

Do not blame the dairy farmer for these high costs. He is working seven days a week. Only the other night I rang my son at 7 o'clock and my grandson answered the telephone and said, "Daddy isn't in yet. He is still at the milking-yards." That is quite a common thing among dairy farmers. They work from daylight till dark and from Monday morning till Sunday night. Anyone who begrudges them a livelihood and says they are exploiting the people is either untruthful or does not know the facts. I will give hon. members opposite the benefit of the doubt and say that they do not know the facts.

The question of costs can be dealt with from many different angles. Hon. members know the price of bread today. A close examination of the baking industry only a few months ago revealed that if the miller got the wheat for nothing, bread would cost 8d. a loaf. That fact cannot be disputed. Do not blame the wheat-grower for the cost of bread. We must blame our economic conditions, our all-round high cost of production.

When the prices of foodstuffs rise do not jump to the conclusion that it is because the producers are exploiting the people. Consider the price of meat, for instance. Every time I go to buy meat I think it is too dear, that the price is terrific, but even if the butcher got the meat for nothing it would still cost the people 1s. 6d. a lb. Handling charges would absorb 1s. 6d. You cannot always blame the people that perhaps you would like to blame.

The producers are out to help us, and if there is a section of the community that has played its part in helping governments, State and Federal, it is the dairying industry of Queensland and Australia. Therefore I appeal to hon. members, indeed I plead with them, to go out and learn something about the dairying industry if they do not know anything about it now. Let them get some idea of the conditions under which the dairymen actually work. If they did that, I am sure they would not begrudge them one half-penny of what they ask. The price of butter is fixed at about 4s. a lb., not because of any laziness of the primary producer or because of any desire on his part to exploit the consuming public. That figure is fixed purely because of the economic conditions that prevail. Furthermore, do not encourage another industry to compete against it unfairly, otherwise you will break the dairying industry. If the Government are going to use these tactics in order to achieve their own purpose to the detriment of the dairy farmers, then all I can say is, "God help Queensland!"

Mr. BROSNAN (Fortitude Valley) (12.23 p.m.): When an hon. member rises to take part in this debate it is customary for him to extend congratulations to the mover and seconder of the motion. I want to conform to that custom in all sincerity, and not in any superficial way. Both the mover and seconder of the motion have had encomiums heaped upon them for their able and capable efforts, to which I desire to add my share.

With equal sincerity I desire to congratulate the Premier on the able way in which he led the party to the country during the elections, and on the splendid return. The hon. gentleman will shortly be returning from his Coronation visit in accordance with his scheduled programme.

I extend my congratulations also to the members of my party who have been elevated to Cabinet rank. Likewise I congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your appointment to the high office of Speaker of this Assembly. Despite the murmurings and whisperings that went round, you were not opposed for the position, nor did I ever think that you would be. I congratulate Mr. Clark on his appointment to the position of Chairman of Committees and the hon. member for Hinchinbrook to the position of Whip.

It is also customary for an hon. member who feels so disposed to reply to the statements made by hon. members of the Opposition. In this connection I regret that the hon. member for Mirani is not in the

Chamber. However, if his private business is such that he cannot afford to devote time to his parliamentary duties that is no reason why I should refrain from saying the things that I wish to say.

Mr. Sparkes: He is in conference with the sugar industry, a very important industry.

Mr. BROSNAN: If he is not far away from the Chamber, let him come in, and I will delay my reference to his remarks until then. The hon. member for Mirani has made a reputation for himself in this House for the careless way in which he handles the truth. During his speech on the Address in Reply the other day he said that the Q.C.E. had directed the Labour Party to introduce State enterprises. In 1915, one of the noblest men the Labour Movement has ever known—and we have had and still have some grand men—the late T. J. Ryan led the Labour Party at the elections with the slogan that if returned he would introduce State enterprises and would give the people cheap beef, cheap butter, and cheap bread. History has shown that the price of meat was reduced and brought right down to the level where it should be; and history has shown that the State enterprises were capable of being successfully carried on but unfortunately and unforgivably the frailties of human nature sabotaged them from within. Let us be frank about it. It was not that State enterprises themselves failed—the principle is not wrong—the failure was due to the frailties of human nature. And the time might be fast approaching, when we think of the prices of beef and butter today, for State enterprises to be reintroduced.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. BROSNAN: The hon. member for Mundingburra raved and ranted for the period allotted him under the Standing Orders, but in keeping with his usual practice he said nothing. So his mind should be at rest in that he can listen to the rest of my speech with an easy conscience. I make that statement now—that he said nothing; therefore there is nothing to which I need reply.

Again, I regret that the hon. member for Chermside is not in the Chamber. I presume his absence is due to the need for procuring substantial orders for leather belting so that he can make the profits allowed him under the price-control of this State.

Under the privilege of Parliament he has centred an attack on a citizen of this State, one William J. Barry. I do not have any brief for Barry or anybody else but I do have a brief for the citizen, for the loyal public servant who goes out on the hustings during election time in support of the political party whose pledge he has signed, and who is then subjected to abuse under privilege of Parliament by a member who has waited six months to do so. This gentleman, Barry, has committed the unpardonable sin, apparently, of going on the hustings with a public-address system and giving what was his view of the political character of the Liberal member for Chermside. The hon. member for Chermside

said that because of his utterances and attack on his character, when he came home he found his wife and children suffering from nervous prostration. I listened to his words and I wrote them down. We find this hon. member alleging that during a campaign conducted in the ordinary way and under the laws of this State he was so abused and so misused as to cause his wife and children to suffer from nervous prostration. I put it to you, Mr. Speaker, that this would not be so. The wife of the hon. member possibly could be a little upset at hearing something that gave a line on her husband's nature that even she did not suspect or know of but I could not imagine that this would be sufficient to cause her nervous prostration. But I do know that it was not such as would warrant a delay of six months in bringing this matter forward, and then in this House. The logical thing for the hon. member to do was to get out onto the stump the next night or, if it was as serious as the hon. member would have us believe, to avail himself of the laws of defamation or merely the vagrancy laws. But the hon. member did not avail himself of these.

The hon. member proceeded a little farther and said that he defeated two Scotsmen, and added "now wheel up an Irishman." As you know, Mr. Speaker, a candidate to contest an election for the Legislative Assembly of Queensland must be a citizen entitled to the franchise. I wondered why the hon. member used these terms, because I could not imagine that he would be opposed to the Gaelic races, nor would he be annoyed at the fact that Scotsmen and Irishmen have their names written in the registers of the armed forces of the British Commonwealth of Nations. I could not imagine he would be upset because Irishmen, like other nationalities within the British Commonwealth, have shouldered arms. Then I began to wonder and I was forced to the conclusion that probably and most likely this hon. member was the type of person who would dispense a brand of intoxicant, not the kind of liquor bearing the same name of the hon. member poured out of bottles—not Dewar's whisky—but rather that poisonous vapour that issues from the mouth of the serpent and insinuates itself into the souls of men and burns and sears to the extent that we find one of the freedoms for which we are fighting, that of the freedom of worship, completely cut across. I wondered whether that could be the reason and the intent. Or is it that, in "TRUTH" it could be said—and probably read—he is a puny, paltry, petty, petulant, pompous pseudo-politician? Is there a doctor in the House?

The Leader of the Opposition contributed to this debate and spoke on the 40-hour week. He accused this Government of introducing legislation that was ruining industry and was virtually, to use his own words, the sole cause of the prices that employers and manufacturers were forced to charge for their products. He stated that this is a particularly controversial point overseas.

Mr. Sparkes: From where are you quoting?

Mr. BROSAN: From the hon. gentleman's speech in this Chamber.

Mr. Sparkes: From "Hansard"?

Mr. BROSAN: Yes, and if I am out of order I presume Mr. Speaker will call me to order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Is the hon. member referring to a previous debate of the current session?

Mr. BROSAN: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then the hon. member is out of order.

Mr. BROSAN: Before I attempted to quote, I sought some advice. If I have been misled, I regret any transgression, but I was told that I could quote from the debate on a motion that had not been completed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is in order in quoting from the debate on the Address in Reply for the current session.

Mr. BROSAN: That is what I was quoting.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then the hon. member is quite in order but he is not in order in quoting from the debate on a matter that has been concluded.

Mr. BROSAN: I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I trust that the Whip of the Opposition will take notice of that in future.

The Leader of the Opposition said that when he was overseas he found that this was a controversial subject, and he said that when he was discussing the matter with people overseas who are buying our products they would say—

"Why should we be asked to carry the costs that you have imposed upon yourselves, for example the cost of a shorter working week? We cannot enjoy that luxury over here. We have to work harder to exist and you cannot expect us to keep on for all time carrying the cost that luxury has added to the cost of your products."

He then went on to say—

"I find that a particularly hard argument to answer. If hon. members opposite know the answer, let us hear it."

I do not know whether I have the answer, but I suggest, with all respect, that the shorter working week is not and cannot be the sole cause of the high costs of production or manufacture in this country. Let me point out that the 40-hour week is worked in America. Whilst I do not want to emphasise the fact that I have been overseas, I believe that I am just as entitled as the Leader of the Opposition is to draw an analogy. It is a fact that the working week in America is 40 hours. It is also a fact that they are able to produce, pay the rate of exchange and tariff, and still sell on competitive markets in other countries. It is true, too, that the suit I am wearing now was bought by me for 32 dollars, about £12 10s. or £13. It is true, too, that the

average wage paid to unskilled workers in America is 80 dollars a week. It is also true that tradesmen on the West Coast and in the Mid-West average 96 dollars a week and that in some of the bigger cities, in the city of New York in particular, they are paid 120 dollars a week when working on ordinary maintenance jobs.

Mr. Aikens: Are they paid by the week, or on a piece-work basis?

Mr. BROSAN: They are paid a weekly wage. It is not piece-work.

Mr. Kerr: Is overtime included in that?

Mr. BROSAN: No. That is for 40 hours. If they work overtime, they are paid overtime.

Mr. Kerr: Do they get more than 96 dollars if they work overtime?

Mr. BROSAN: Yes. They are paid overtime in addition.

Mr. Sparkes: Who are mainly their employers—the Government?

Mr. BROSAN: The employers of these men are the same in America as they are in Australia or any other country.

Mr. Sparkes: Nearly all private enterprise.

Mr. BROSAN: If it is nearly all private enterprise, why does the hon. member's opposite numbers, the Republicans, in America say that there are too many in Government employ? They tell the same story as hon. members opposite hawk all over Australia. The position is that you can live in America at approximately the same relative cost as you can live in Australia, that is to say, from about one-quarter to one-third of your weekly income goes in rent and about one-half of your income is required for food to sustain life, but there are many other things in America that are much cheaper in comparison with Australia. Shoes are not as cheap as in Australia; a good shoe in America would be dearer, but suits and shirts are cheaper. I was fortunate enough to buy shirts for 2.50 dollars, which is just over £1, reckoning on 2 dollars 40 cents to the £1. I could buy Van Heusen shirts at 2.50 dollars. To say that the shorter working week is the sole reason for high costs is wrong. Let me say this about America: you don't see so many executive officers of businesses at bowls during the week, or at golf, or pigeon-shoots or mid-week races. When I had the occasion to see a president or a vice-president of an organisation—I had entree to quite a few of the biggest organisations in the country—I could see him at any time. When I said to the president of an organisation of about £12,500,000 paid-up capital in Australian money, "What is a convenient time for me to telephone you?", he replied, "I am at my office from 8 a.m. to noon, and from 1.30 p.m. to 6 p.m." I then began to realise just why business in America was such a success. There is co-operation between employer and employee; the employer realises that his

worker is a human being. I was always led to believe that the production-line was a slave-line. I saw cars being turned out by the Ford Motor Company at Detroit, at its River Rouge and Windsor plants and frigidaires, washing machines, stoves, ovens and the like being produced by General Motors' Dayton plant and I never saw a worker on the assembly line resembling anything like a slave. There were the time and the opportunity to do the task allotted and have a breather too. What is more, the trade unions of America would see to it that the worker was not exploited, and it is a fact that the multitudinous tasks appertaining to the various articles they put on the market are so arranged and organised that the tedium of repetition is reduced to the minimum and the worker gets a share of the production as he is entitled to. In this country, unfortunately, the employer takes the view that the worker does not do an honest day's work, that he does not apply himself in the way he should and that he and he alone is responsible for production. In America the employers themselves have responsibilities and they are the responsibilities that employers in Australia will have to accept and shoulder before many years are out because their businesses must be organised methodically and factually, and when they do this we shall not have the spectacle of the hue and cry—and I do not intend the pun on the name of the ex-member for Roma—that the 40-hour week and the conditions our workers enjoy are the reasons for high costs.

The Leader of the Opposition had much to say about the A.L.P. industrial groups. Devoid of any policy during the election campaign, completely barren of any practical formula that it could put to the people, the Liberal-Country Party, under its leader, Mr. Nicklin, went through Queensland attacking the A.L.P. industrial groups. The A.L.P. industrial groups were formed for the purpose of ensuring that the rank and file of a trade union would control that trade union in accordance with its rules and constitution, and that the thinking of the rank and file would be expressed and displayed in the policy of that trade union. It is a fact, and an indisputable fact, that the industrial groups were formed by the Labour Movement within the Labour Movement. It is an indisputable fact also that their origin and their continuance have been supported by the highest authority of the Australian Labour Movement in this land, our triennial conventions.

What did we find from the election campaign? As I said, we found that the Leader of the Opposition—and not one candidate of the Opposition parties attempted to dissociate himself from the statements made by the Leader of the Opposition—stumped the country attempting to tell Labour that its house was out of order, attempting to tell Labour that it was divided, attempting to tell Labour that it was bringing forth an insidious pressure group that would destroy the democracy under which we live. The success of his campaign was reflected in the vote of the people of Queensland.

Who were the original opponents of the A.L.P. industrial groups, and why were industrial groups established? The A.L.P. industrial groups were first established to counter the cells, the groups, that operated within the trade unions—and not only within the trade unions—and were set up by the Communist Party. The opponent of the industrial groups in the initial stages, and for some years, was only the Communist Party, until a little collaboration was forthcoming, as early as January of this year, from the Leader of the Opposition and other hon. members opposite and their candidates. Such collaboration and joining-up with the attackers and opponents of the industrial groups, the Communist Party—never denied and never dissociated from—must make them colleagues of the Communist Party in its attacks on Labour. Labour knew who were the spurious Unity Campaign candidates. Labour came out and stated publicly, without fear of contradiction, who were the loyal Labour men and who were the spurious candidates tagging along on a so-called Unity ticket, and with that action the Leader of the Opposition found fault. In the 'As I See It' column of 'The Brisbane Telegraph' of 9 January he said—

"The executive decided, it was stated, that any connection with the self-styled Unity campaign in the trade unions would lead to the expulsion of the unionist concerned from the Labour Party."

Why not? We do not want a Judas Iscariot in our ranks.

Mr. Aikens interjected.

Mr. BROSNAN: That might be all right for the Townsville playboy, but I am serious in this matter. The hon. member is a pretty close follower of the opponents of the A.L.P. industrial groups and of course he is also quick to attach himself to anyone or anything that might enhance his reputation as the most versatile fence sitter we have seen in this House. However, let me assure the hon. member that he will never attach himself to me because I will successfully repulse any attempt that he may make to do so.

Where did the Leader of the Opposition say these things about the A.L.P. industrial groups? It was not only in Brisbane but also in Ayr, Cairns, Yeppoon, Mitchell, Goondiwindi, Stanthorpe and at many other places during his campaign. Frequently when he referred to the A.L.P. industrial groups he made reference to Fascism and Mussolini, and one can be pardoned for conjecturing why a man of the standing of the Leader of the Opposition should want to tie up the Queensland Labour Government with Mussolini and Fascism. One is entitled to think and to believe that there was a good deal in the rumour that he was to be deposed because of his failure in the campaign in his attack on industrial groups in collaboration with the Communist Party.

Dr. NOBLE: I rise to a point of order. There was never any truth in that statement.

Mr. BROSNAN: I have often been told that he who protesteth too much sometimes

leads to the path of truth. My skeleton is as clean today as it was when I was born and I trust it will be just as clean when I am interred. While it is clean and my cupboard is clean anyone may make any attack that he likes on me and I shall be prepared to stand up to him.

Mr. Sparkes: You are a mighty man.

Mr. BROSAN: I am not a mighty man. I am an ordinary citizen, loyal to the Throne, with a full and conscious realisation of the oath of office that I took here, and with a full realisation too that within our Christian democracy—I make no apology for using the word Christian—we must have virtue and tolerance. We must do that if freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and fear and security in employment are to be real and practical things. That does not make me a mighty man. It simply makes me one who endeavours to postulate a doctrine that will save this democracy in which we live.

I should like to relate briefly the history of the A.L.P. industrial groups. They had their origin in the 1947 Labour in Politics Convention at Townsville, when it was unanimously agreed that action was necessary to combat the infiltration of Communism into trade unions and where it was also agreed that this could best be achieved by setting up within the Labour Movement and by the Labour Movement itself, these industrial groups. The authority to do that was delegated to the Q.C.E., which after consideration and in its wisdom appointed a committee of three and gave them a charter to establish, maintain and have control over all A.L.P. industrial groups in the trade unions.

The original committee consisted of Messrs. Waite, Rasey and Bukowski, and subsequent to Mr. Walsh's resignation I was appointed to the committee. From 1947 to 1950 the groups functioned with a degree of success. The organisational operations in the early stages were necessarily rather difficult, but obstacles were overcome and at the 1950 convention in Toowoomba the following resolution was agreed to—

“That this Convention expresses satisfaction with the progress made by industrial groups in this State and urges vigorous support for their activities from all sections of the Labour Movement and places on record its appreciation of the efforts of Messrs. Walsh, Bukowski and Rasey in this direction.”

That, Mr. Speaker, is positive proof of the good work carried out—when Labour's supreme authority in Queensland offers congratulations and urges further progress by the industrial groups. Those industrial groups continue to function and prosper, and a report concerning the activities of the groups for the previous three years was made to the last Labour in Politics Convention. The report was distributed to every delegate at the convention. There were 119 delegates present and after a debate lasting 4½ to 5 hours, when Standing Orders were suspended, the motion for the adoption of the report was carried by 107 votes to 5, some members

not being present when the vote was taken, which accounted for the discrepancy between 112 and 119. I point out that delegates to conventions are predominantly industrial, and the same applies to delegates on the Q.C.E. As I said, the delegates to that convention accepted the industrial groups and a further motion was carried unanimously along the lines of the one I have just read.

Mr. Aikens: Would you say that all A.L.P. members are Labour men?

Mr. BROSAN: The Labour Movement in Queensland has knockers from without and like every other movement that lives as the Labour Movement does—for the people, with the people, and in the interests of the people—it has some knockers within.

Mr. Aikens: I'll say!

Mr. BROSAN: The interjector was at one time within our movement but because the movement did not do what he thought it should do, he got out.

Mr. Sparkes: He is now knocking from without.

Mr. BROSAN: His knocking from without will never get him in.

The A.L.P. industrial group movement has accepted willingly the challenges that have been issued to it, because it is part of the Labour Movement, whose very existence depends on its ability to accept a challenge and meet it successfully.

I have talked at some length of knockers without the Labour Movement and I desire to deal with those within. In all movements there are those who do not see eye to eye with the wish and will of the majority. That is not peculiar to the Labour Movement by any means—we had an example of it in the last few weeks among the Opposition. If they want me to tell them of it let them interject and I will do so. In the meantime I confine my remarks to those within our movement. Either for self-aggrandisement or because they always carry a chip and perpetually like to be in opposition there are those who do not find themselves able to accept the authority of the movement to which they belong and to which they pledge loyalty.

Mr. Sparkes: Are you talking about the Lord Mayor?

Mr. BROSAN: If I desire to speak of any particular person or hon. member, be assured that I will and that I will accept any consequences that might arise. If I find it necessary in this Chamber to name any particular body or person I will do so but in the meantime I want to carry on a little further with the industrial group committee. I have traced its origin and given its history and we have the confidence and the mandate given to us in the convention at Rockhampton to carry on. The knockers within our movement who do not like the A.L.P. industrial groups in the main tag their objections to what they say is the dictation of the industrial group committee, to Mr. Bukowski, Mr. Rasey, and myself.

(Time, on motion of Mr. Whyte, extended.)

Mr. BROSNAN: I thank the House for the compliment paid me in granting me this privilege and the hon. member for Mackenzie for making the time available to me.

Knockers declare that the industrial group committee dictates and determines all matters in relation to the groups. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The charter given to the industrial group committee requires it to be responsible for the establishment, administration and co-operation of the groups individually and collectively but at all times it has been, and I trust as long as the Labour Movement is based on the principles on which it is now based, it will continue to be the practice for the groups to select (a) the officers they desire to control the group—that is, the president and secretary, and (b) to select and determine from among themselves and their workmates those candidates who they think, because of their intimate knowledge and their industrial associations, will carry the banner of Labour successfully in their union elections. That being so, the statement of the knockers that the industrial group committee is a committee of dictators is given the lie, emphatically. That is in distinct contrast to some other organisations, particularly the Communist organisation, which, if a member does not do as instructed up comes "Junior," swinging his little axe, and off goes his head. I understand that similar discipline obtains in the Liberal and Country parties. I may be wrong.

Mr. H. B. Taylor: You are wrong.

Mr. BROSNAN: I may be wrong, but the hon. member for Loekyer is an authority on discipline. The hon. member for Warwick knows a little bit about it too, and the hon. member for Fassfern also possibly would know a little bit about it.

Mr. Sparkes: You ought to start cleaning your own house up a bit.

Mr. BROSNAN: If there is any necessity to do any cleaning within the house of Labour, hon. members can be assured that Labour will do its own cleaning. The Labour Party lives dangerously. It has always done so and I hope it will continue to do so, because in that dangerous living there are the fire, the zeal, the earnestness, the enthusiasm and the sincerity that make the Labour movement what it is today, and what it will continue to be. The only test that we require in the A.L.P. industrial groups and the only test required within the Labour movement is the test of loyalty. If you are loyal to the principles and tenets of the Australian Labour Party, if you are loyal to the decisions that are made by constitutional authority in accordance with its rules and constitution, that is the only test that is required.

Again—and here I do not like raising these questions, although I never run away from them because I am not one who subscribes to the theory that you can defeat any matter of concern to a community by hiding your head in the sand like an ostrich—the groups have been attacked on the sectarian basis. We have been told that the industrial group committee members are Catholic Actionists.

I make no apologies for my religion and I have never asked any other man to make an apology for his. What is more, the Labour movement never asks any man what his religion is, or to make any apology for it. It has never been a prerequisite to membership of the Labour Party that you must be of a particular religion. It has never been a condition of membership in the Labour Party that you must either remain of a particular religion or become a member of a particular religion. It has never been a qualification of continuance of membership in the Labour Party that religion is of paramount importance. The only test is the test of loyalty to the principles and tenets of the party as determined by the authorities, within its constitution.

Mr. Sparkes: Who let you down over the salaries?

Mr. BROSNAN: No-one has let us down over the salaries, and let me say that just as hon. members on this side of the House will accept the cheque from the Treasury so will hon. members opposite, but with the difference that we will come out and say we are entitled to it and the hon. member for Aubigny will pretend he does not want it though taking it just the same.

Let me revert to my point concerning the test of loyalty. That is the only test required by this party, so let us do away with all this humbug, all this sham, and all this hypocrisy that the industrial group committee is anything but what it is, a committee functioning in accordance with the charter granted it by the convention and reaffirmed by two other conventions. At the New South Wales group conference a few weeks ago at which I was fortunate enough to attend, Dr. Evatt, on his return from the Coronation, addressed us and in the course of his remarks he said that he went out on the stump in opposition to the referendum, fully conscious of the things that would be said about him and what they would try to tag onto the Labour Party, but he was satisfied now, as he had always been satisfied, that you did not defeat Communism in any country, and particularly in the industrial world in the trade-union movement, by legislation, but that you defeated it in the way in which Labour was defeating it, through the A.L.P. industrial groups, and as a loyal member of the Labour Party I trust that the words of wisdom uttered by our Federal Leader will ring true in the ears of those members in Queensland who were less fortunate than I in that they were not able to hear him. I question the sincerity of lots of people in their supposed antagonism towards Communism. It is not sufficient to be non-Communist; we have to be anti-Communist, and the industrial groups are just that, and the Labour Movement is just that.

I believe—and I believe there is justification for the belief—that the campaign that is being waged by the Opposition in collaboration with their colleagues, the Communist Party, against industrial A.L.P. groups, headed by the Leader of the Opposition, is nothing more nor less than sheer

cant, humbug and hypocrisy. It is nothing more nor less than that. I challenged the Leader of the Opposition, when I spoke in the Forum of the Air over Station 4BK on 22 February, to say whether he knew that there was an industrial group within the Liberal Party, and I said that if he did not know that the Liberals had been holding out on him, and I asked, if he did know it, what was he going to do about it. He stumped Queensland saying that A.L.P. industrial groups were pressure groups splitting the Labour Party, though it had nothing to do with him, nevertheless it would give him pleasure to defeat this party by dividing it. He will not do that.

Mr. Sparkes: Are you united? Did you read the newspapers lately?

Mr. BROSAN: In answer to the interjection I ask: if this party is divided, what about the Opposition? Don't tell me that it is united!

Mr. Sparkes: Don't tell me you are united.

Mr. BROSAN: At least the Labour Party is united to the extent that it has one leader, one policy, and one enunciation of it, but the Opposition have two leaders, two deputy leaders, two whips, two policies. I ask the Opposition to declare themselves one way or the other. By their silence they stand condemned in the eyes of the people of Queensland. The proof is the majority this Government have, not only in members but in votes. That is the proof. If hon. members opposite desire, they can look at today's "Telegraph" and see that Mr. Herbert is complaining that Liberal Party members do not pull their weight on the industrial relations committee. A rose by any other name—the industrial relations committee. I challenged the Leader of the Opposition in February with this challenge: did he know of the industrial group committee within the Liberal ranks? He has never accepted the challenge. He has not got to—this is a free country—but I gave him the right to accept it. It cannot be denied that it exists, and I will tell the Leader of the Opposition of my being invited to go along to give the benefit of my industrial experience to this bunch of young fellows within the Liberals, who say "They only want to do the right thing anyhow." You can imagine what my answer was. The fact that I have never been along shows what it was.

I believe I have shown the Leader of the Opposition, and other members of the Opposition, to be not only collaborators with, but colleagues of the Communist Party in an attempt to divide Labour. They are unanimous in their opposition to the A.L.P. industrial groups and if there is any defection within the Labour Party, remember that that defection has resolved itself into unity by the resignation of the man concerned; he is no longer in the party, if that is what the hon. member who interjected was referring to when he said, "Have you read the newspapers lately?"

The Australian Labour Party will continue in Queensland, as it will throughout Australia, to put its own house in order and to resolve its own differences in the same way as it has done since its inception. Furthermore, the Labour Party will be prepared, as always, to admit that it progresses by the virility of the opposition that exists within its own ranks and its ability to accept, in the final analysis, the democratic constitutional majority decision. Is anything wrong with that? Not one thing.

The A.L.P. industrial group movement will continue to play its part as the section of the Labour Movement that will be the spearhead of attack against the Communists. The Australian Labour Party, and particularly its Queensland branch, and those of its members who have the honour and privilege to be present in this House, will always give the lie to the cant, humbug and hypocrisy that issues from the Opposition in relation to A.L.P. industrial groups.

Mr. PIZZHEY (Isis) (2.33 p.m.): With other hon. members, I should like to associate myself with the pledge of loyalty expressed in this motion, a pledge of loyalty to a Sovereign of whom we are all very proud and who has been a great inspiration to the British people. Only a few years ago many nations were prepared to write Britain off as no longer one of the leading nations in the world, but by her inspiration our Sovereign has brought about a renaissance in the spirit of the British people, with the result that they are once again coming into their own. I feel sure that her inspiration will again reflect itself next year when she visits Australia and that we too shall benefit from a renaissance in spirit in the building of this nation.

I should like also to pay a tribute to His Excellency the Governor and to all our previous Governors. We have been indeed fortunate in the representatives of the Sovereign that we have had in Queensland. They have all shown that they are not interested in only one section of the State, but have travelled widely to make themselves as conversant as possible with the needs of all the people.

I desire also, Mr. Speaker, to congratulate you on your reappointment to the office of Speaker. I have always found you very fair and impartial, whilst at the same time keeping a firm hand on the affairs of this House. I wish you a long and an easy term as Speaker, and I know that all members on this side of the House will co-operate with you to the utmost in seeing that decorum is observed in the conduct of the House.

The debate on the Address in Reply presents a great opportunity for members to talk about their own electorates, but I think it is more important to consider affairs of State. I should like to pay a tribute to the hon. member for Balonne for his very interesting and useful contribution to the debate, one that was free of party politics, and devoid of any bitterness and was a manifestation of an earnest desire to put forth something constructive in the interests of Australia. The

hon. member for Cunningham made one of the finest maiden speeches that we have heard in this House. The mover of the motion made a very good speech too. He brought, as it were, fresh air into the debate. I hope that we shall have more of such speeches, contributions that will in no way conflict with national interests, contributions free of petty carping criticism.

I should like to express my thanks to the electors of Isis for their renewed confidence in me. There were members of the Government Party who expected that I should be defeated because I took what I believed to be a proper stand in cleaning up affairs at the Maryborough General Hospital. It is a strange thing that the only place in my electorate where the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs spoke was a place where I doubled my majority. All I can say now is that I hope he comes again to help me in my political campaigns, because the more Ministers who come the more will my numbers grow.

Mr. Hilton: What was the place?

Mr. PIZZEY: My own home town of Childers. You may be able to discredit a man outside his own town where he is not known but you cannot do it in the place where he was born and where he has lived, because no-one will believe you.

We were all disturbed and I should say amazed at the statement by the Deputy Premier today concerning the waterside dispute. I think everyone in the House must view with alarm the disgusting innuendoes he made in relation to the Federal Government. I never thought that I should see the day when a Deputy Premier would come here and trade his country for party politics. Surely his own party does not think that any responsible Government, except of course a Communist Government, and certainly not a Government from this side of the House would be prepared to suggest that another Government would precipitate a nation-wide strike for a political advantage? The Deputy Premier got up in this Chamber and made a statement that could only be a figment of his imagination. He suggested what he thought was the motive of the Federal Government, when only last week he had urged the Federal Government to take immediate and appropriate action to have sugar and meat loaded for export. That is something like sooling someone into a fight and then stabbing him in the back when he gets there. I have had a very fine impression of the Deputy Premier, because in the past few months he has built himself up into something like a real statesman but by his statement today he proved himself to be nothing more than a petty little politician. He did not seem very happy about the statement and he looked very glum when he sat down.

Even the Leader of the Federal Opposition said that there was a responsibility on the National Government to see that all the sugar and meat were exported.

Let us get back to the State elections. Ministers went round saying to the people that

unless they returned a Labour man they would not get anything for their electorate. That was said by my opponent—that only by having a Labour representative would they get assistance. That is a very undemocratic system. I do not believe it is true, because most of the decisions are made by senior public servants, whom I have found to be very fair and just. That is a tribute to them. After 38 years of Labour Government senior public servants still will do what they think right in the interests of the country. Whenever we have approached them, if we have a fair case we get as good a deal as the Labour man. I fought my campaign on that basis—that senior public servants will do justice. However whilst I do not think that any special advantage is given to a Labour electorate over a Country Party electorate, it is spoils to the city and to hell with the country. You have to be in a city electorate to get the advantage, and the country can take what is left.

Mr. Hilton: You are contradicting your own remarks.

Mr. PIZZEY: No.

Mr. Hilton: Now you are saying they are not doing the right thing.

Mr. PIZZEY: The public servants make the recommendations?

Mr. Hilton: You are qualifying it now.

Mr. PIZZEY: I was not going to take that any further but I will take it further. Many a time the recommendations of the public servant are overridden by Ministers for party political advantage. I am exonerating public servants. They make honest recommendations, but when it comes to the ministerial decision, in many cases—frequently not—you find party political advantage intruding into the merits of the case. Figures speak for themselves, and if we look at the development of the State we shall see that during the last generation it has occurred mainly in the cities; the North and the West, particularly the West, have been neglected. There are very little secondary educational facilities in the West.

Motor-vehicle registration hits the man in the country, who has to travel over the roughest roads yet he pays comparatively the same registration fee as the fellow who runs on the bitumen roads in the city. Then take the question of housing in the West. I quote the member for Warrego, who criticised the Housing Commission for not building more houses in the West.

Mr. Dufficy: That is untrue.

Mr. PIZZEY: He said they should build more.

Mr. Dufficy: I paid a tribute to the Minister. I want you to be fair about that.

Mr. PIZZEY: The hon. member paid a tribute to the Minister but he said also there was more need for further housing, that something like 140 houses were needed in one area.

Mr. Dufficy: I also paid a tribute to the Minister for the work accomplished.

Mr. PIZZEY: Some legislation has been very good to the city people and unjust to the farmers. In the Governor's Speech we are told that we must concentrate on helping the farmers. Anybody who reads the Speech would know that up to and including that part it was written by the Governor but from there on it was prepared by the various departments.

Mr. Collins: Do not insult the Governor.

Mr. PIZZEY: I am not insulting the Governor. It is recognised that the greater part of it is prepared by the Government.

His Excellency's part was a very simple statement, that we should concentrate on farmers and fighters. The Labour Party has not shown much enthusiasm for fighters. It opposed the National Service Training Scheme and it was not prepared to come out in the open and help in the voluntary training scheme. Time after time it has criticised the Defence vote and the expenditure from it. Dr. Evatt, now the Leader of the Opposition in the Federal sphere but at the time a member of the Federal Cabinet, sacrificed Manus Island, one of the most important defence outposts of Australia. Since then it has cost tens of millions of pounds to re-equip that island. I will deal later at greater length with the question of soldier settlement, but here would point out that the Government have shown a disregard for the soldier settlers. They were one of the first sections of the community to have their rights and opportunities taken from them when there was a cut in loan money. We all agree that they should have top priority. Further on in the Governor's Speech one reads the list of Bills outlined to come before this Parliament: tiddly-winking bills really, although important enough in themselves, but they do not show great imagination or statesmanship on the part of the Government.

There are three great problems facing Queensland today, (1) the problem of costs, (2) the problem of land settlement and (3) the problem of immigration. But let me deal with the problem of costs first. The Government are concerned with two kinds of costs, costs in Government departments and costs in industry. The Acting Premier has admitted that it is beyond the resources of this State to build a railway-line from Dajarra to Camooweal. What a terrible admission to have to make in this young State, which even before Labour ruled and with fewer people was able to build 3,000 miles of railway, but today with a far greater population finds that the building of approximately 100 miles of railway is beyond its resources. There must be something very wrong with the economy of such a State. I received a letter from the Acting Premier the other day, as Minister for Transport, in reply to a letter from me asking about installation of electric light in the Gin Gin station-master's home in which he stated that he regretted that owing to the shortage of loan money they were unable to install electricity there. But this same Government six months ago installed electric light in a gaol cell at Gin Gin. Apparently one must be a criminal or a no-hoper to get electric light

but if you are a decent hard-working servant in the Railway Department you have to put up with carbide or kerosene lamps.

Mr. Foley: That is nonsense.

Mr. PIZZEY: That is the truth.

The railway deficit this year is tremendous. I am not one who says that our railway system should be made to pay. Some railways are constructed for developmental purposes and in this young country we have to pay the penalty of carrying railways that do not quite pay their way. However, this is a young country and some country districts are not fully developed. It is necessary that we should help in the development of our own State, but our deficit should be kept to the minimum.

The maximum of efficiency should be the slogan of the Railway Department. We have reached the stage where Labour Ministers and members should be honest with themselves and with the people. They should not be afraid to go outside and preach the doctrine of hard work and efficiency. I know that in their own hearts they realise that today we are not getting the output per man-hour that we should. They tell you that in their costs. We can get more work from our people if members of all parties will impress upon them the importance to them of increasing production per man-hour. I do not say the worker alone is responsible for that. Management has an equal duty to perform. I had some experience of handling men for five years in the army, and I know there is nothing they dislike more than inefficiency, but if you give them the initiative, if you show them there is something worth while for them to do, show them that they will not produce themselves out of a job by producing more and working harder, you will succeed. We have an outstanding example of that in Great Britain where the responsible leaders of the Labour Party have not hesitated to come out in the open and say to the men, "You have to produce more to save your country; in the interests of your own country you have to work and bring down costs." Here we know we have the 40-hour week and we are competing against countries where a 44- and 48-hour week operate. The only way we can compete with them is to produce more in the 40 hours. The whole of our economy has been geared to the 40-hour week. Let us make it work. Let us ask the men to make it work to show that we can enjoy a higher standard without jeopardising our future.

Now let us look at the costs in government. It was interesting to me to see that the Deputy Premier had something to say in "As I see It" about the Public Accounts Committee's findings in the Federal sphere. He would gloat over the fact that Mr. Menzies was told that he must practise economy in his departments and over that committee's finding of examples of extravagance and waste in Government departments. Nobody regrets that extravagance and waste more than does Mr. Menzies or more than we do, and this Government could well do with a Public Accounts Committee. It is interesting to note that the first Public Accounts Committee introduced by a British

Parliament was introduced by a member of Mr. Gladstone's Ministry by the name of Mr. Childers, after whom my birthplace is named.

The success of this Public Accounts Committee would not lie in how its reports were viewed by Parliament, but in the attention those reports received from Government departments. I should say that probably the most important result would be the state of mind they induced in the various departments. It might be said that we have our Auditor-General's report and one might ask whether that is not good enough, but I point out that the Auditor-General's report is not an efficiency report. The Auditor-General is concerned only with making certain that there is correct approval for money that is spent and with seeing that it has been spent for the purpose for which it was intended. He also reports any deficiencies. If he sees 20 cars being used where half a dozen would do, or if he sees 15 men working where 10 would do, he does not make a report on that. He is not concerned with that. His is not an efficiency check. If a Public Accounts Committee was set up in Queensland you could take advantage of the knowledge of such excellent men as the hon. member for Toowong, the member for Sherwood and the hon. member for Coorparoo from this side, and experts from the other side. The representation could be in proportion to the number in each party and if an independent Public Accounts Committee was set up with, say, half a dozen members representative of both sides of the House with power to call witnesses and to survey and examine any governmental expenditure where it thought there was, perhaps, laxity, extravagance or inefficiency, the Government would be doing a wonderful thing by themselves and by the State. It would be no humiliation to the Minister concerned to find that there was some way by which money could be saved and efficiency improved. A Minister cannot watch closely over every section of his department and if such a Public Accounts Committee was set up it would be of tremendous assistance to him.

I have dealt with costs in Government departments and touched briefly on costs in industry and I have mentioned the need for all parties to impress upon the people not only that they work hard and do more within the 40-hour week but that they see whether they can produce more efficiently and cheaply than the other countries of the world. It is only by doing all those things that our industries can hope to expand. We have reached the highest point in costs and no longer is the price for our sugar overseas for example, equal to what we receive in our home country, and the more we export the lower the average price for our product will be, unless we are prepared to increase substantially the price to the home consumer, a thing we hesitate doing, a thing we do not want to do. The answer is to see whether we can produce at a lower cost and compete with other countries of the world. It is the duty of the Government at all times to

do whatever is possible to keep down costs, not only in their own departments but in industry generally.

Speaking on land settlement, with particular reference to soldier settlement, I pay a tribute to the sugar industry, an industry that has expanded remarkably during the last five years and one in which soldier settlers have been settled successfully. The story is not bright in other respects because it was a great blow to prospective soldier settlers throughout the State to hear of the Government's intention to abandon or cease settling soldiers on the land this year.

Let me put the case plainly and simply. After the war two schemes were outlined, the first a scheme which a State might become a principal State and the other whereby a State might become an agent State. The three eastern States of the Commonwealth, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, elected to be principal States and run their own soldier-settlement schemes out of their own loan moneys allocated by the Loan Council. The other three States, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania, elected to be agent States, meaning that they would be agents for the Commonwealth, the Commonwealth to provide the money and handle the scheme overall. This has gone on for several years but as each year went by less and less money seemed to be spent. comparatively, on soldier settlement in the principal States. Does this House know that at one stage Victoria, as a principal State, spent 49 per cent. of its loan money on soldier settlement? This year we cannot afford to spend any. At no time did Queensland approach, in its expenditure of money on soldier settlement, anything like that spent in any of the other principal or agent States.

Mr. Hilton: Will you quote the numbers settled in the other States and forget about the money spent?

Mr. PIZZEY: When the Minister talks about the number settled he will include the number who got help outside of those who balloted for land.

Let us have a look at Queensland's figures. Queensland has never spent on soldier settlement in any one year more than 10 per cent. of the loan money that has been allocated to it, and last year we got down to something like 2.6 per cent. Victoria, whose population admittedly is more than twice ours, spent £24,000,000, compared with Queensland's £4,500,000.

I can give hon. members information in detail as to what the various States have spent per head on soldier settlement since the war. Western Australia has spent £20 a head of population on soldier settlement, Victoria has spent £14, and Tasmania has spent £12, I do not want to exaggerate. I am merely giving the story as I see it. South Australia has spent £9 a head of population, New South Wales has spent £8, and Queensland has spent £4. Those figures show the lack of interest displayed by the Queensland Government in any really vigorous and progressive soldier-settlement scheme.

As the result of the difficulty in getting loan money, the States had of necessity to cut their spending in the various departments. The Federal Government, too, were becoming worried about the slackening down in soldier settlement in the principal States, probably because not as much loan money was available as previously, and they said they were prepared to negotiate with the States with a view to taking over soldier settlement and the States becoming agent States.

That offer was made last year, in plenty of time for the States to come in and agree to be agent States in accordance with the terms of the Act, in just the same way as the other three States have been and still are agent States. And so our Premier and our Deputy Premier went down to Canberra. They wanted a certain amount of loan money. I forget the amount, but it was something like £30,000,000. Because of the state of the loan market and the fact that the people of Australia were not prepared to lend the huge sums required by the States, there was of necessity a reduction in the loan money available and Queensland's representatives came back with £18,500,000. When the Deputy Premier went down to Canberra, I take it he would have with him the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works and that he would submit a schedule of his works programme in which would be allocated so much for soldier settlement, so much for hospitals, so much for school buildings, and so on. When he came back to Queensland he found that he could not allocate that money in accordance with his schedule because he did not have sufficient loan money, and so cuts had to be made. I should have thought that soldier settlement would be the last item in the schedule to be slashed, yet apparently it was among the first. According to the information we have been given by the Minister, this Government just cannot carry out any soldier settlement this year, because no money is available. Out of that £18,500,000, even though Victoria was prepared in one year to spend 50 per cent. of her money on soldier settlement—

Mr. Hilton: You know you are talking through your hat now, don't you?

Mr. PIZZEY: I am telling the truth. Victoria spent 49 per cent. of her loan money in one year on soldier settlement.

Mr. Hilton: In what year?

Mr. PIZZEY: In about 1947 or 1948, yet we are not prepared to spend anything at all on soldier settlement this year!

After the Loan Council met and the Loan allocations had been made and the Federal Government had drawn up their loan programme, I think the Queensland Labour Government tried to put over a swifty. They said in effect, "We have included soldier settlement in our loan schedule but as soon as we get home we will use the money for some other purpose and say to the Federal Government, 'You can take over soldier settlement in Queensland by making this an agent State.'" They did not say that the Commonwealth Government could take over

soldier settlement here on the same terms as applied in the other agent States. Queensland insisted on having its own land tenure, which would have called for an alteration of the Act, but the other three agent States were happy to allow the Commonwealth Government to take over soldier settlement and they have been happy with the results. In the case of Queensland, when her representatives get home they say, "Soldier settlement is to have no priority at all. We will forget about it for a year. It is not important and there are other things more important and we will say to the Commonwealth Government, 'You finance our soldier settlement.'" The Federal Government will finance it as from next year but the State will have to carry on with its own scheme because the Federal Government will not take over any soldier settlement scheme now in progress. They will want their own new scheme. Although the State Government have allocated nothing this year for soldier settlement they will have to do so next year, to complete the soldier settlement schemes now under way in this State.

It is a crying shame that the people to suffer should be the soldiers. They are caught between these two difficulties. I should not have complained if the Queensland Government had decided to make a reduction in loan expenditure on soldier settlement, in accordance with the reduced amount of loan money for loan works but no, soldier settlement had to be excluded altogether—virtually wiped out, given no priority, not slashed but demolished. There are other people apart from soldiers who would like to be settled on the land. There are some soldiers too who, through their own fault, were late in applying for land and thus became ineligible for the benefits available to soldier settlers. There are hundreds and perhaps thousands of ex-service men who still would like to go on the land and we have a definite obligation to them.

Land settlement is one of our most important responsibilities and duties. What progress has been made in the last decade or so? Take the dairying industry. I have here authentic figures taken from the Commonwealth Year Book and they can be checked in the Parliamentary Library. Ever since 1942 there have been fewer dairy farmers each year in this State. In 1942-1943 there were 31,572. The next year it was 31,213, then 31,180, 30,740, 30,384, 30,152, 30,089 and 29,145. There must be something wrong, something unattractive about the land when, despite a growing population and the development of the country generally, more and more farmers are leaving the soil.

Take the wool industry. I am sure that the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock agrees with me that the most important crop in this country is grass. It is a very important and valuable crop. More than half our wealth comes from grass. A great opportunity for increasing the State's income and developing our industries can be availed of through the dairying and grazing industries. The number of sheep shorn over a period is a fair indication of the progress of an

industry. You do not look at the amount of money received by the industry, you look at the number of sheep and lambs shorn. In 1935-1936 the number of sheep shorn was 19,000,000 and from then up to 1942 the figure ran to 26,000,000 and from then declined, till today there are not many more than 17,000,000 or 18,000,000. (Government interjections.) I know the droughts and other hazards have had a lot to do with the varying numbers of livestock, but Government policy also can encourage or discourage an industry. I am not going to say that taxation has not discouraged them. Relief from taxation should be given to those people.

Let us take the cattle industry. In 1895 we had something like 7,000,000 cattle but today the figure is about 6,500,000. In the pig industry, in 1941 the figure was 723,000 and a few years ago it was under 500,000, which indicates another dying industry. Instead of bringing down many small Bills, let the Government devote their time to discussing ways and means of giving greater encouragement to the dairying and grazing industries; let us build up our production.

The cotton industry shows a sorry record. It has declined from 68,000 acres in 1934 to something like 3,000 acres during the last few years.

The Government have done a good job in connection with sugar. There has been a remarkably steady and healthy growth throughout the State. Sugar, pineapples and wheat show a pretty good record. The advance of the sugar industry is the result of the desire on the part of all Governments to help in the development of the coastal areas. I wish to pay a tribute for the result to the industry itself and to the men who control it. The whole set-up has brought about a steady and healthy development. I agree with the chairman of the Central Sugar-Cane Prices Board that it is time we marked time and consolidated, till we see what the future holds. Apart from this, little has been done to develop the various areas of the State. Evidence to support that is to be found in the fact that for the last 28 years the western areas have remained static. For instance, in 1933 the population of Roma was 16,735 and in 1950 it was 15,914. The south-western population in 1933 was 12,303, and in 1950 it was 11,733. The total population of the Roma, south-western, central-western, far-western and north-western areas was 74,236 in 1933 and in 1950 it was 73,245. That indicates that there has not been much development or wise Government legislation. (Government interjections.) If there is any increase in industry members opposite say it is due to Government legislation and when there is any sliding back they say it is the fault of the farmers and not the Government. When things get better it is due to the Government and when they get worse it is due to the Federal Government or to the farmers themselves.

It is time this Government and all parties set about solving the real problems of this State, those of cost, land settlement, and migration. Do we realise the dangers we are

in? I am not talking about living dangerously, as did the hon. member for Fortitude Valley. Hitler talked about living dangerously.

(Time expired.)

Hon. H. H. COLLINS (Tablelands—Secretary for Agriculture and Stock) (3.15 p.m.): Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the outset I desire to pay my tribute to the Governor for the Speech he delivered in this Chamber. It sets out the position as it exists in Queensland fairly well, and it is very appropriate that he referred to the two matters of major importance, rather than problems, those of food and defence. They go hand in hand and His Excellency shows that he has a very broad vision when he links them. He is a man with very high military qualifications, one who has served his Empire well in peace and war, and his advice must be heeded by every citizen in Queensland. It is a great pleasure to the people of this State to have him with them, and they appreciate the efforts he makes to get about so much among them. This is very greatly appreciated in every nook and corner of the State. I doubt whether we have ever had any man holding this high position who has given so much attention, and without sparing himself or his lady, to getting round and meeting the people and seeing how they live, and giving them every encouragement to go on and do their best. We are all very grateful to His Excellency for the great work he has done.

I compliment the new members of this Assembly on their opening speeches. I think we have listened to some of the best speeches from new members that have ever been heard in this Chamber since I have been here, and that is many years now. In particular I mention the hon. member for Candamaine and the hon. member for Nash, the mover and seconder for the adoption of the Address in Reply to His Excellency. Their efforts were very commendable, and the hon. member for Nash is to be commended for making the statement he did as to the need for effort to produce more and having pay related in some way to output of work where that is possible. There is much of that in this State at the present time. For instance, in the shearing industry the shearers are paid on their efforts; sugar workers in the field are paid on effort, and so are workers in the meatworks. Wherever it can be done, it is a very good principle because the more work a person turns out, so long as he does not injure the health of himself or anybody else in doing it, the better for society. So long as nobody suffers as a result, the country is enriched because of it. As I have said, I commend these hon. members for their speeches. I congratulate also other new members for the speeches they have made. That goes for the new member for Cunningham, who made a good contribution to the debate. As a man on the land, his speech was of assistance to this House.

I take this opportunity of congratulating Mr. Speaker on his re-election to his high office. His efforts in the past certainly warranted the confidence placed in him. To

you, Mr. Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees, I extend my congratulations on your elevation to that office, which is a very high and important one in this Parliament.

I should like to extend my hearty congratulations to our Premier for the work he has done on behalf of the sugar industry, overseas in particular. That work has been very meritorious and very successful for the State for, while preserving under the International Sugar Agreement all that we gained in the 1950 and 1951 agreements in connection with the sale of sugar, possibly we have gained still further, although I have no details at the present time. We realise that he has been helped overseas by Mr. Pearce and Mr. Muir, who went over representing the Queensland sugar industry, and by Mr. O'Sullivan, the Minister for Trade and Customs. Last, but by no means least, he has had the help of the Queensland Agent-General, Mr. Dave Muir, who is a tower of strength in London on sugar matters. I doubt if there is any young mind in the sugar industry today, either on this or the other side of the world, with a better knowledge of the Queensland sugar industry than our Agent-General. He is of great assistance to one of our most valuable primary industries.

I rose also to reply to the comments made by some hon. members on one or two very important matters. The hon. member for Fassifern spoke about butter and the manufacture of butter substitute. I apologise for leaving the Chamber when he rose to speak, but I ask him not to look upon that as any discourtesy towards him. I had arranged a few days ago to meet a deputation, and, as was natural, the hon. member had not told me that he intended speaking at 11.30 this morning. The deputation was arranged by his leader and one of the members of his party. But I have a knowledge of some, if not all the matters he raised. I know that one of the more important was the question of the quotas given by the Queensland Government for the manufacture of margarine. He was worried about the effect of these increased quotas on the future of the dairying industry but I deny emphatically his suggestion that our extension of the quotas for the manufacture of margarine was a deliberate attempt by the Queensland Government to hit at the dairying industry. Such a thing was farthest from the thoughts of my Government and myself. That question did not arise, and it could not have arisen under the circumstances that obtained when the position was reviewed and quotas increased. At the present time there is no threat whatever to the butter industry from margarine. The total out-turn of table margarine in Queensland was only a little over 900 tons a year whereas the total quantity of butter produced was a little under 50,000 tons. In any case, the whole of the 900 tons would not be used in this State.

Let me now review briefly the conditions that obtained to show that the increased quotas could not have an adverse effect upon the dairying industry. In 1947, the Commonwealth Government—not the present, but the Chifley Labour Government—gave the dairying industry a guaranteed price based on the

cost of production for all the butter produced by the dairymen not only in Queensland but in the whole of Australia, whether it was used here or exported. That being so, there was a guaranteed price that would give a fair return. I will not at this moment go into details of whether it was enough or not, but the fact remains that it was the first time in the history of dairying that there was any such guarantee from any Government. It was not given by a Country Party Government or by a Liberal Party Government. That position continued until the present Government came into power, and I want it to be well recognised by our friends in the Opposition who are criticising us that the guarantee applied up to the whole of the butter and cheese manufactured in Australia and, I think, to the whole of the dried milk too. It was more comprehensive than we have at the present time.

As time went on, these things were altered to some extent. I shall come to that shortly; I now want to deal with butter substitute. Margarine is not made entirely from imported oils or fats. A lot of it is made and the whole of it could be made from cotton-seed oil, peanut oil, sunflower-seed oil, and it could be made also from whale oil. Fish oil is an ingredient of table margarine in Europe; in fact, the principal ingredient of table margarine is fish or whale oil. Whale oil is a product of this State just as much as butter is, and the man who produces peanuts, and the man who produces cotton-seed and sunflower-seed is very often himself a dairyman. Why should a dairyman be denied a market for his product to favour another product he produces? After all, fair is fair. Why should he be denied the right of processing it in its most valuable form?

I make no beg-pardons on behalf of the Department of Agriculture and Stock or on behalf of the Government of the day in regard to increasing margarine quotas. The whole legality of quotas is being seriously challenged today and will shortly make history in the High Court of Australia because table margarine manufacturers are taking no notice of quotas and say that they are ultra vires of the Constitution. Are we going to stand idly by and see our own commodity not treated to the best advantage to protect an industry that, according to hon. members opposite, is a dying industry. The hon. member for Isis gave figures that it was going back and back each year. We must protect ourselves against having no edible fats. The reason why we increased the quota was that the dairymen could not lose on the deal; that position does not exist today, unfortunately.

The hon. member for Fassifern questioned whether margarine was a wholesome food. The Department of Agriculture and Stock does not control the health side of the question but I venture to say and doctor's opinion is that margarine is a perfectly wholesome food. I will not give it any more advertisement than I need give it. To the extent that it is manufactured from imported copra and coconut oils is not a matter over which the State Government have any control; it is a matter purely and simply in the hands of the

Federal Government, who are at the present time controlled by people of the same political affiliations as hon. members in Opposition.

It has been widely suggested, "Yes, that is all right, but what about the oil that comes from New Guinea and mandated territories? You cannot do anything about that." You can. The whole of the importations into Australia from mandated territories and New Guinea are governed by customs regulations, just as are goods imported from foreign countries. In fact, if hon. members who made that statement are in doubt—and I do not think they are in doubt—they could check it with the Customs Department. It is a matter for the Federal Government to protect commodities that can be produced here from having to meet competition from commodities produced under sub-standard wage conditions in some other country. That is how the matter lies. If hon. members opposite have a case, it is against their own Government. And they have a case against their own Government, too, and I shall help them to put it up very shortly.

We come now to the question how the dairying industry has been and is being treated by the present Federal Government. I say that the dairying industry is getting a very raw deal. I have already said that it got its first uplift from the Federal Government when the party that is at present in Opposition was in power. In 1949 a change was made, and I now quote from the policy speech of Sir Arthur Fadden in 1949. He had this to say about the dairying industry—

"The dairying industry has been harder hit by Socialist policy than any other. Notwithstanding that our population has increased by three-quarters of a million since the beginning of the war, the number of dairy cows has declined and our whole milk production for all purposes has remained practically stationary. Manpower and materials shortages and the Government's refusal to offset high production costs by fair returns to the producer are the main causes, while the housewife is still subjected to butter rationing.

"By refusing to accept the Joint Dairying Industry Advisory Committee's recommendation and thus forcing the farmer to produce at a loss, the Government has involved the industry in a total loss of £2 million a year."

And then he comes in with the remedy. God knows what they are losing today! He says—

"To remedy this, we will determine production costs on just basic principles which will give the farmer a fair return for his labour, investment and long hours of work and an incentive to produce on a sound and equitable basis."

He goes on to say—

"A guaranteed minimum price will be decided and, if the State price-fixing authorities are unable to co-operate, this ascertained price will be adjusted by means of Commonwealth subsidy."

Mr. Sparkes: What is wrong with that?

Mr. COLLINS: There is nothing at all wrong with it, but why was it not carried out? Apparently he wrote it into the Act. The Dairying Industry Act of 1952, which was assented to on 18 November, 1952—not very long ago—says in the preamble—

"Whereas the Governments of the Commonwealth and of the States are desirous of guaranteeing to producers of milk and cream used in the production of butter and cheese, for the period of five years which commenced on the first day of July, 1952, a minimum return in respect of so much butterfat as is used in Australia in each year of that period in the production of butter or cheese up to a quantity equal to the quantity of butter or cheese (as the case may be) produced in Australia that is consumed in Australia in that year, plus so much of the quantity of butter or cheese (as the case may be) produced in Australia that is exported from Australia in that year as does not exceed one-fifth of the quantity of butter or cheese (as the case may be) so produced and consumed in Australia."

It goes on to say—

"And whereas the minimum return referred to is a return based upon the cost of efficient production of the butterfat as estimated by an authority to be established by the Commonwealth for the purpose and, pending the establishment of that authority, by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the Commonwealth:

"And whereas it is intended that the guaranteed return shall be ensured partly by the payment by the Commonwealth of bounties on the production of butter and cheese and partly by the maintenance of appropriate prices for butter and cheese consumed in Australia."

That was the subject of negotiation. What they wanted—and what they got—was that the States should hand over to the Commonwealth Government authority to fix the price of butter ex-factory. That authority was handed over *carte blanche* so that the Commonwealth Government would have no hindrance whatever in that direction.

It is very interesting, too, to read some of the speeches that were made in the Federal House when the Bill was brought down. I will quote a little from the Hon. J. McEwen, Minister for Commerce and Agriculture, in his second-reading speech. He says—

"The broad character of this stabilisation plan is to assure a return to the primary producers concerned of a price for their product designed to secure for them the cost of production of their product and an adequate margin of reward or profit for their labour and investment."

There is nothing wrong with that, but why does he not carry it out? He sets out the general stabilisation plan in simple language when he says—

"On the other hand, a stabilisation plan, in the common usage of the term, is one in which a Government assumes a financial liability. This financial liability is related to a guarantee of a certain return to

producers from the sale of their product, with a consequent stabilising effect upon the industry."

Again there is nothing wrong with that, and he goes on in the same strain right through until he comes almost to the end, when he says—

"It is against the background of this mass of facts, and the division of constitutional responsibility—I refer to State power of price fixing—and out of the welter of political and industry controversy, that the proposals now before the House have been formulated. Briefly stated, these proposals are that for a period ending the 30th June, 1957, dairy farmers will be assured in respect of butter and cheese sold in Australia a return based on the cost of efficient production. For butter and cheese exported, they will be guaranteed by the Commonwealth that cost of production figure for an annual tonnage being an amount equal to 20 per cent. of the tonnage locally consumed."

If he had carried that out he would have done not exactly what Mr. Fadden said in his policy speech in 1947 but at least something substantial. Mr. Fadden said in his policy speech, "We do not believe in 5-year contracts, we believe in 10-year contracts, and that is what we will do."

The Minister said also that that would apply to all butter consumed in Australia plus 20 per cent. of the Australian consumption. Where do we stand today? The dairy farmers today stand at the cross-roads, not knowing whether to go on or whether to continue their faith in their own political leaders, who have badly let them down. Notwithstanding what has been said in the various sections of the Press, there is the feeling that the dairy farmer has been very badly used by his political friends, some of whom sit in opposition here.

Only recently, I think in July last, the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture came to Queensland and had a meeting with the Queensland supporters of his party, of which the following report appeared in "The Courier-Mail" on 30 July last—

"Delegates at the Country Party's annual State conference in Brisbane yesterday supported the Commonwealth's decision not to increase butter and cheese prices for 12 months."

There we have that statement after a finding that the cost of producing butter had risen by about 1½d. per lb., bringing it to about 4s. 3d. a lb. today. The price that the dairy farmers are getting for their butter and cheese is somewhere about 3s. 6d. and 3s. 8d. a lb. Where are all those promises that were so lavishly given?

Mr. Muller: They are getting nearly 4s. a lb.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member cannot trot that out to any of his dairy farmers today. I will give the hon. member the information directly, if he wants it. I should like him to have it.

Mr. Muller: They got 4s. a lb. for the whole of last year.

Mr. COLLINS: What are they getting this year? They are not getting the cost of production by pence a pound, and that comes from members of a party who have criticised this Government in season and out of season for the way in which they have treated the industry, although we are the only Government who have given them a decent standard and a guaranteed price.

This is what the Australian Dairy Farmers' Federation thought of it. This is a letter written by the president of the Australian Dairy Farmers' Federation, a very authoritative body, to the editor of "The Courier-Mail," but it was never published. It reads as follows—

"I have had brought to my notice a statement made by the Hon. The Minister for Commerce and Agriculture, Mr. McEwen, and which appeared in your issue of Thursday, July 30th.

"I was astounded by the claim made by Mr. McEwen that the Government decision in regard to butter prices had been supported by a conference held in Sydney on Tuesday, July 28th, and attended by members of the Australian Dairy Farmers' Federations, Australian Dairy Produce Board and the Commonwealth Equalisation Committee Ltd.

"This claim is entirely incorrect. The conference was called together for the purpose of meeting Mr. McEwen and hearing his statement in regard to the Government decision. A number of questions were asked but no resolutions were moved either for or against the decision.

"In a Press statement issued when the price announcement was made, Mr. McEwen claimed that industry leaders were fully aware when the guarantee arrangements were concluded last year that at some period in the future it may be necessary to consider factors other than cost when assessing dairy farmers' returns.

"This statement is also incorrect. The first intimation that industry leaders had that other factors were to be considered was when the Committee of Investigation had been appointed and the terms of reference made public.

"The question never arose in the discussions between the Minister and Industry leaders, and it appeared to be perfectly clear that for the period of the guarantee producers of butter and cheese would receive cost of production for that portion of their output sold on the Australian market plus a margin of 20 per cent."

It is obvious from the Act from which I just read that they were to receive the full cost of production.

Mr. Madsen: What was the States' understanding of that?

Mr. COLLINS: The States' understanding was they could only go back to the Act; that is why the Commonwealth Government

were given the power to fix the price so that there would be no hindrance. That was given before this Act was brought in.

The letter continues—

“The guarantee was the responsibility of the Federal Government negotiated in good faith by dairy leaders. Despite the recommendations of the Investigation Committee it was still within the power of the Government to honour the agreement with the industry.”

I maintain that what they are doing today is illegal and against their own Act.

Mr. Muller: Who signed that?

Mr. COLLINS: That is a copy of a letter signed by J. P. Norton, president of the Australian Dairy Farmers' Federation in Western Australia.

Mr. Muller: Who handed you a copy?

Mr. COLLINS: Never mind that. You agree that what is said there was true?

Mr. V. E. Jones: That letter was printed in “The Courier-Mail.”

Mr. COLLINS: I did not think it was; if it was, it must have been in a place where it would not be seen easily. If it was published I beg their pardon; I do not want to do them any injustice.

So much for the Federal Government and what they have done for the industry. It is perfectly true that the dairying industry is not making the progress that it should be making, for which I am sorry. The land is not going out of production; it is being used for something else. The dairying industry could not progress under those conditions.

The Federal Government have all the power in the world, and they are the only Government with the power to subsidise butter or any other product. They have that power under this Act of Parliament they themselves drafted. It did not need an Act of Parliament but they passed the Act to give it publicity. It is only putting a rope round their own necks and this rope will choke them eventually as far as the dairying industry is concerned.

I now come to a very important matter, wheat industry stabilisation. At the present time there is disagreement between the various States and the Commonwealth not as to whether the wheat farmer should be guaranteed the cost of production, because all States are in agreement absolutely that he should receive at least the cost of production for his product but whether he should receive the cost of production plus another 2s. 6d. a bushel or whether the extra 2s. 6d. a bushel that is regarded necessary should be the province of the Commonwealth Government and not the States. The States are equally divided on that. Obviously the States can only pass it on to the consumers but the Commonwealth Government have the power, which is written into this Act of Parliament I read, to do it by way of subsidy, which they are doing partially at the present time.

There is no new principle in it. It has been done by nearly every other country in the world and it is being done today by the Government of New Zealand, notwithstanding the fact that their costs are very much lower than costs in Queensland or Australia. No new principle whatever is involved but the Commonwealth Government have flatly refused to carry out their obligation under this Act to the dairy farmers of Queensland and I am astounded that the dairy farmers accept it.

Mr. Plunkett: You mean the wheat farmer?

Mr. COLLINS: No, the dairy farmer. It is nothing new if they want to subsidise industry, because they are already doing it to the dairying industry. If the Federal Government contend, as they do contend, that the extra money over the cost of production is essential to increase wheat production as far as the national economy is concerned—not the internal economy of the industry—and to serve their overseas exports it is the bounden duty of the Federal Government to do that themselves by way of subsidy and not pass it on to the wage-earner with ever-increasing rising costs to industry. The leaders of the present Federal Government say, as was stressed here yesterday by the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture, the Federal member for Toowoomba, Mr. Swartz, that Australian industries are pricing Australian industries out of the world's markets, and we must stop rising costs. However, we have the spectacle of the Federal Government refusing what is their obvious duty, if they believe in what they say themselves, of giving a subsidy in order to encourage wheat-growing. Nevertheless wheat-growing is expanding without it. Obviously wheat-growing is one of the most profitable methods by which one can use suitable land today, otherwise we should not have had the spectacle of wheat production in Queensland almost quadrupled during the last few years. This year was possibly a very bad season but over 100,000 more acres were prepared for wheat this year than last. In New South Wales there is an increase of 40 per cent. over the previous year and in South Australia one reads the same story. Notwithstanding this, it is said that unless we give more than the cost of producing people will go out of wheat-growing. It is not true, to begin with, and secondly, it is a perfectly wrong assertion.

Now I come to the most important point. In Queensland we have three of our major agricultural industries, sugar, wheat, and butter. The price of sugar is fixed in Australia at a price based on cost of production, negotiated by the sugar industry through this State Government and the Federal Government. They have been doing that for the last 30 years, and it is one of the most successful industries today. In the second place, the dairying industry, notwithstanding the fact that it was guaranteed the cost of production, is today getting approximately 20 per cent. less than cost of production for its commodity. But notwithstanding the fact that the wheat industry is increasing in all States,

and despite the advice given by all thinking people today that we are pricing ourselves out of our own markets through the ever-increasing cost of living, we find this sort of thing happening. I do not blame any particular political party, because Western Australia and New South Wales are amongst the worst offenders in trying to get the price increased by relieving the Federal Government of their obvious obligations. It is time for all sensible people to look at these things in a rational way. What position should I be in as Secretary for Agriculture and Stock if I agreed to giving the wheat-growing industry something that was denied to the sugar-producers or something that was denied to the dairy people? In all conscience, I could not consider doing such a thing, and I will not do it.

On top of all this, I received the following telegram from the Minister in Canberra calling a conference—

“I now invite Ministers to confer Canberra Friday 11th September 10.30 a.m. Four State Governments and Commonwealth approve three-year orderly marketing plan with domestic price provisions as agreed majority Agricultural Council stop therefore obvious this must be basis upon which to seek unanimity stop obviously highly desirable Ministers come with authority to give approval on behalf their Governments stop.”

That is an invitation to attend a conference to agree to a decision that has already been made by some people! Could anyone imagine anything of a more stand-over kind than that in any of the dictator countries? It says in effect, “Come to Canberra and agree to a proposal I have already decided upon.” I am not going to go to Canberra under those conditions, because I cannot agree to it. If I do go, it will be purely and simply to register the same protest that I am registering here and that I registered at Toowoomba the other day. Is it right that simply because the Commonwealth Minister represents a wheat area, one section of the industry—

Mr. Jesson: And he has not even got a big farm.

Mr. COLLINS: I do not know whether he has a big farm but I do give him all credit for being a man with a great deal of capacity. Mr. Graham, from New South Wales, also represents a wheat area. Western Australia also is interested in wheat and so is South Australia. Because wheat is politics in those three States, they are simply going to give a hand-out from the Commonwealth public purse to a body of people who are simply hucksters and horse traders. I have never seen pressure politics used more forcibly than during the whole of our negotiations in the last 12 months in connection with the various wheat agreements.

I did want to register my emphatic protest at the high-handed methods, which were adopted in the first place when a Minister acting for the Commonwealth, in order to

get a majority vote on a question, voted when really he had no moral right to do so. This is purely and simply a matter that should be under the control of the States, but in order to get a majority decision, he comes in and votes. I admit that he had a legal right to do so but he had no moral right to do it because it was a matter directly concerning the States and only the States should be empowered to make decisions on such an important question. The proposal does not deprive the wheat-growers of something more than the cost of production, if they want it, although I say they are not entitled to it. Nor does it deny the Federal Government the right to give them the subsidy, which they are now revoking.

I register my strongest protest against the action of the present Federal Government for the way they are treating our various primary industries, because there is in their proposals neither common sense nor justice for the people of the Commonwealth.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Jesson, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 3.56 p.m.