

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 24 AUGUST 1955

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

WEDNESDAY, 24 AUGUST, 1955.

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

QUESTIONS.

MITIGATION OF FLOOD DAMAGE,
DON RIVER AREA.

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

“As the recent floods in the Don River area, caused, it is almost unanimously thought, by the substantial siltation that has occurred in the river due in large measure to the low-level traffic bridge, were exceptionally destructive of valuable crops, farmlands, roads, etc., and as experience has taught that such disastrous floods recur, on an average, once in every four or five years, will he kindly have an investigation made by an engineer of his department to ascertain and report on the cause or causes of the floods and suggest methods to be adopted to mitigate them in this productive area?”

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

“The investigation of the causes of floods is not the function of any Department under my Ministerial control. The hon. member should direct his question to the Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation.”

QUEENSLAND HOUSING COMMISSION TENANTS'
COMMITTEE, TOWNSVILLE.

Mr. JESSON (Hinchinbrook) asked the Secretary for Public Works and Housing—

“1. Has his attention been drawn to a circular issued by an organisation known as the Queensland Housing Commission Tenants' Committee, Townsville?

“2. If so, will he give an explanation of the allegations made by this Committee regarding the interest factor in the calculation of economic rentals?

“3. Will he also explain the reason for certain rental increases in the Townsville area in recent times?”

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

“1. Yes, I have received a copy of the circular referred to. Inquiries reveal that a number of well-known communists are associated with this Committee.

“2. The allegation contained in the circular issued by this Committee to the effect that the Housing Commission was making profits by way of interest charges in the compilation of economic rents is entirely untrue, and is typical of communist propaganda. The annual amortisation—principal and interest on the capital

cost of the dwelling over 53 years—is £3 15s. 10d. per cent. per annum. This is required to repay loan moneys advanced by the Commonwealth Government. The rate of interest is 3 per cent. per annum. This relatively low rate of interest was arranged by the Chifley Government when the Housing Agreement between the Commonwealth and States was formulated. The rents of all houses controlled by the Housing Commission are calculated on a non-profit basis. The various elements comprising the rent, also the basis of rental rebates, have been fully publicised by the Housing Commission by way of circular letters, from time to time.

“3. On large estates, when large contracts are being let by the Housing Commission, long periods lapse before final capital costs of the houses concerned can be ascertained. Most contracts contain a rise-and-fall clause and it is only when contracts are completed and development work on the estates carried out that final costs are known. When tenants are admitted to new houses, a tentative rental is fixed and tenants are informed that this is subject to alteration when final costs are known. Again, local authority rates are increased from time to time, and, as rates are a factor in rentals, adjustments have to be made because of this item. Maintenance costs have also risen substantially in recent years. Rents in the Townsville area, as well as in other centres, have recently been adjusted because of the factors referred to. The Commission is obliged to do this under the terms of the Commonwealth-States Agreement, but, I repeat, all rents are calculated on a non-profit basis. It would appear that certain people in Townsville are deliberately distorting facts or are entirely ignorant concerning elementary principles in Government finance.”

LICENSING OF PICNIC RACE MEETINGS.

Mr. LLOYD ROBERTS (Whitsunday) asked the Treasurer—

“Is it possible for picnic race meetings in isolated spots to be licensed? If so, what is the procedure, and if not, why not?”

Hon. E. J. WALSH (Bundaberg) replied—

“Race meetings never have been licensed nor is there any provision in the Racing and Betting Act recently proclaimed. Racing clubs, however, may be registered with the principal clubs and dates are allotted by the latter clubs. I suggest to the hon. member that information of such a routine administrative nature can be obtained by contacting the Commissioner of Stamp Duties. Accordingly, I would advise him to get in touch with the Commissioner as to the procedure necessary.”

ROADS AND BRIDGES DAMAGED BY FLOODS.

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) asked the Premier—

“Will he inform the House if any representations have been made to the Commonwealth Government to contribute with the Queensland Government towards the restoration of roads and bridges in local-authority areas which were damaged extensively during the floods earlier this year, and if so, has any decision in this regard been received from the Commonwealth?”

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

“When it was announced that the Commonwealth Government had decided to contribute the sum of £500,000 towards the restoration of flood damage to roads, etc., in New South Wales, I immediately made strong representations for similar treatment to be afforded to Queensland especially in view of the damage suffered in the Maryborough and Gympie areas. The Prime Minister replied, and I quote—

‘Your request has been examined and I would point out that it is not the Commonwealth’s normal policy to make grants to the States to assist in the restoration of flood damage of this kind. The Commonwealth departed from this principle in the case of the New South Wales floods only because of the catastrophic proportions of those floods. The reports of the Queensland floods would suggest that they could not be compared in their intensity with the New South Wales floods and for that reason the Commonwealth is not disposed to agree to the request. However, if it can be shown that the floods were in fact comparable with the New South Wales floods and an assessment given of the extent of the restoration work that will be necessary on roads, bridges and local government services, the Commonwealth would be prepared to give further consideration to the matter.’

I thereupon caused a survey to be undertaken by the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, who reported that the flood damage to roads, bridges and local government installations in certain local authority areas was considerable. This information, together with details of the areas affected and of the nature of the damage, was thereupon forwarded to the Prime Minister. Apparently the Prime Minister was not impressed, however, for I have now received advice to the effect that the Commonwealth cannot agree to provide special assistance to Queensland for this purpose. This decision, of course, is not surprising. It is in keeping with the callous disregard which the anti-Labour Commonwealth Government continues to display to requests from this State.”

ESTIMATED COST OF BURDEKIN DAM PROJECT.

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

“With reference to the estimated cost of the Burdekin Dam project, which was £70,000,000 as at June 30, 1951, when the basic wage was £8 6s., but is now £11 7s., has any later estimate been made? If so, what is the present estimate?”

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

“The estimate of £70,000,000 as at 30 June, 1951, has not been revised.”

EXPENDITURE ON BURDEKIN RIVER BRIDGE.

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

“1. What was the expenditure on the Burdekin River railway bridge in 1954-1955?
2. What was the total expenditure on such bridge to June 30, 1955?”

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

“1. £437,709.
“2. £1,997,452.”

REVENUE FROM CROWN TIMBER AND EXPENDITURE ON REFORESTATION.

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

“1. What was the amount of revenue from Crown timber for 1954-1955?
“2. What was the expenditure for 1954-1955 on reforestation (a) from loan sources and (b) from Consolidated Revenue?”

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Belyando) replied—

“1. The gross revenue received from the sale of timber, forest products, etc., for the year 1954-1955 was £2,046,785 13s. 6d. After meeting costs of marketing, measuring, supervision and other costs the net revenue was £1,205,318 8s. 9d.

“2. (a) From loan sources—£1,371,656.
(b) From consolidated revenue—nil.”

SEPTIC SYSTEMS AT STATE SCHOOLS.

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

“Further to the answer, on 10 August, by the Premier, to a question of mine wherein he confirms that he had stated that septic systems would be installed in all areas where water supply was adequate and the soil suitable for the discharge of effluent, will he please advise me when such installations are due to be commenced at the following State Schools:—Oakleigh State School, Bardon Infants' School, Brookfield State School, Brookfield Upper State School, Fig Tree Pocket State School, Kenmore State School, all within the Mount Coot-tha electorate?”

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory) replied—

“The claims for the installation of septic systems in schools in the Mt. Coot-tha electorate will receive full consideration in conjunction with the needs of other schools. I can assure the hon. member that his electorate will receive what it is entitled to and nothing more.”

REMUNERATION OF SUPERVISORS, QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS.

Mr. MUNRO (Toowong) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“1. What are the rates of remuneration per day for (a) Supervisors, and (b) Assistant Supervisors at Queensland University examinations?

“2. Are those rates considered to be adequate?”

“3. If the answer to the second question is in the negative, will he bring the anomaly under the notice of the responsible authority with a view to the matter being further considered?”

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory) replied—

1., 2., and 3. (a) £1 10s. per day; 15s. per half day. (b) £1 1s. per day; 10s. 6d. per half day. The question of rates of payment for supervision is already under consideration by the University and any revised scale of rates will be fixed prior to the 1955-1956 examination period.”

PUPILS IN CLASS I. SCHOOLS.

Mr. PIZZEY (Isis) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“What was the average number of pupils per teacher in all Class I. schools as at 30 June, 1955?”

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory) replied—

“38.5.”

TOURS BY ART TRAIN.

Mr. PIZZEY (Isis) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“In view of his statement in 1951 that it was proposed to maintain the Art Train and make tours every year, will he please advise (a) when the last Art Train toured Queensland and (b) when it is intended to make the next tour?”

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory) replied—

“The Art train in question was assembled, at considerable expense, for the express purpose of bringing before the people of country areas of Queensland the significance of the Jubilee of the Commonwealth of Australia. Full and careful consideration was given to the question of the retention of the Art train after its Jubilee tour had been concluded in November, 1951, but it was decided that tours by the Art train should be discontinued.”

LIQUIDATION OF THE PEAK DOWNS SCHEME.

Mr. KERR (Sherwood) asked the Premier—

“Will he inform the House as to the progress made in the liquidation of the Peak Downs scheme?”

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

“Of the 729,817 acres originally owned by the Queensland-British Food Corporation, 268,964 acres have been sold and 92,774 acres have been ballotted by the Department of Public Lands for closer settlement. The Lands Department is arranging for subdivision for closer settlement of the remaining areas in the Central West. Fifty-eight per cent. of all movable assets have been disposed of by auction sale or private treaty. Private sales are continuing and further auctions have been arranged.”

POST-PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SCHOOL AT CORINDA.

Mr. KERR (Sherwood) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“In view of the vital importance to the pupils of the Darra, Inala, Oxley, Corinda, Sherwood, and Graceville State schools, will he kindly advise me as to the prospect of the early establishment of a post-primary or secondary school at Corinda where a site has been held by his department for five or six years for this purpose.”

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory) replied—

“The claims of Corinda for the establishment of a secondary school are receiving full consideration in conjunction with the needs and claims of other suburbs in the metropolitan area.”

SUGGESTED RAILWAY STATION AT MENIN ROAD.

Mr. KERR (Sherwood) asked the Minister for Transport—

“Will he kindly advise me whether provision will be made for a railway station at Menin Road between Corinda and Oxley in the electrification scheme now under construction, as a station at this point would serve the Montrose Crippled Children's Home, the Presbyterian Home for Aged People, the proposed new post-primary school, and the residents generally in that area?”

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

“It is not possible to immediately establish a stopping place in this location but the matter is being borne in mind in connection with the electrification of the suburban railways.”

AYR-TOWNSVILLE ROAD VIA THE GAP.

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

“With reference to his letter to me of 23 June last, concerning the proposal for the construction of an all-weather road from Ayr to Townsville through The Gap, will he kindly advise whether the economics of the proposal have yet been fully examined and, if so, what decision has been arrived at in regard to the proposal?”

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

“I informed the Minister for Mines and Immigration and Councillor Clayton of the Ayr Shire Council, who interviewed me on this matter a few days ago, that a preliminary economic examination of the investigated routes between Ayr and Townsville, one via the Gap and the other via Clevedon, has been made. This examination indicates that a more detailed comparison is necessary before any decision can be made on the route to be adopted. The latter survey is proceeding.”

SEPTIC SYSTEM AND PARADE GROUND, VIRGINIA SCHOOL.

Mr. DEWAR (Chermside) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“Will he kindly advise what progress has been made towards the provision of a septic system and a sealed parade ground at Virginia State School, plans for which were being prepared in 1951?”

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory) replied—

“The installation of a septic system at Virginia State School that will meet with the approval of the Brisbane City Council (Health Department) is still under consideration in the Department of Public Works. Quotations for a sealed parade area have now been received and are being considered.”

GIBBER GUNYAH IRRIGATION SETTLEMENT.

Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) asked the Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation—

“With reference to the Gibber Gunyah irrigation settlement now in course of preparation,—

1. What is the number of farms envisaged under the scheme?

2. What is the estimated cost of improvements to such farms?

3. What is the total overall cost including water channelling and improvements for the whole area?”

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Belyando) replied—

“1. Twenty-three (23) farms each comprising an irrigated block of 100 acres and a separate dry block of approximately 150 acres.

“2. At present it is proposed to open the farms as partially improved blocks with approximately 50 acres on each farm cleared

and graded. It is estimated these improvements will cost £22 per acre. The clearing has already been carried out by contract. Structural improvements will be the responsibility of the settler and will depend on his requirements and the type of production undertaken.

“3. The total estimated cost of the scheme including surveys, pumping station, electric power extension, channels, drains, levee banks, roads, together with improvements provided as in 2, which will be recoverable, is £255,400. A further £18,200 has been estimated as the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission's share of the cost of the new high-level bridge across the Dawson River, which will serve the Gibber Gunyah area and provide wet weather access between Taroom and Theodore.”

GAS SUPPLY BY TOWNSVILLE GAS COY.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) asked the Secretary for Mines and Immigration—

“1. Does the Townsville Gas Company operate under a charter or similar authority granted by the Government?

“2. If so, does such authority provide that the company shall maintain a full supply of specified calorific quality gas to consumers at all times?

“3. If such provision is made in the authority, what powers are vested in the Government to ensure that the company abides by such provision?”

Hon. C. G. McCATHIE (Haughton) replied—

“1. Yes. ‘The Townsville Gas and Coke Company (Limited) Act of 1884.’

“2. and 3. No, but requirements as to quality, purity and pressures are prescribed by ‘The Gas Acts, 1916 to 1952,’ with penalties for noncompliance, provided that such noncompliance is not due to circumstances beyond the control of the company. I was aware that some time ago quality and pressures of gas at Townsville fell short of the requirements and investigation by the Government Gas Engineer showed that these deficiencies were due to circumstances beyond the control of the company.”

DREDGING OF CHANNEL, BROADWATER, SOUTHPORT.

Mr. GAVEN (Southport) asked the Treasurer—

“As a new industry has now been created in Southport, namely, the prawning industry, which has attracted up to 50 boats and almost the entire fleet from Evans Head to Bundaberg, would he kindly give consideration to the dredging of the channel at the entrance to the Broadwater opposite the Grand Hotel, Southport, as the siltation of this short channel is the cause of great inconvenience to all boat owners desirous of entering the Broadwater?”

Hon. E. J. WALSH (Bundaberg) replied—

“The channel, at the entrance to the Broadwater opposite the Grand Hotel at Southport, was dredged at a cost of approximately £4,000 to a depth of 6 feet L.W.S.T. in December, 1952, but it quickly assumed a stable depth of 3 feet 6 inches L.W.S.T. On 28 April, 1955, there was still a depth of 3 feet 6 inches L.W.S.T. The Chief Engineer, Department of Harbours and Marine, considers it uneconomic to maintain the channel at a greater depth than 3 feet 6 inches. So far as the present large scale prawning activities in the area are concerned I am advised that the bulk of the fleet engaged is from New South Wales and approximately 90 per cent. of the prawns taken are conveyed to that State. For the information of the hon. member I might add that Bundaberg is famous for extensive prawning activities.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. MUNRO (Toowong) (11.20 a.m.), by leave: I wish to make a personal explanation. My reasons for seeking permission of the House to make the personal explanation are that yesterday the hon. member for Port Curtis in the course of his remarks when speaking to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply made a personal attack upon me and later associated with my name a personal attack on the Mayor of Rockhampton, Alderman Pilbeam. Both attacks were unworthy of the hon. member. I would not have taken any notice of the hon. member's remarks if it had not been for the fact that one particular aspect of the matter has been given wide publicity through the columns of ‘The Courier-Mail.’ In these circumstances, I feel concerned, not with any personal considerations, but with the harm that has been done to this Parliament. I realise the limitations of my right to speak on the matter and I will therefore be as brief as possible. The first matter to which I refer is in relation to the question of whether or not a road should be built to connect Rockhampton with Port Alma. The hon. member challenged me to reply to the points that he put forward. The fact is that I have already spoken in this debate—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I hope it is not the intention of the hon. member to speak of roads to connect Rockhampton with Port Alma. He has been given the leave of the House to make a personal explanation.

Mr. MUNRO: I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that that is not my intention. It is therefore not permissible, under the Standing Orders, for me to reply to the point put forward by the hon. member. He either knew this or he did not know it. If he knew it, it was mere buffoonery to issue the challenge, but if he did not know it then, it was an obvious indication of neglect of his duties. The general nature of the second

matter is broadly indicated by my quoting the following short paragraph which was included in the headlined article on page 7 of this morning's "Courier-Mail"—

"Mr. Burrows said Mr. Munro must be given full credit for accepting the signature of 'Central Queensland's greatest lover.'"

In passing, I may say that the attempt to link my name with that of Alderman Pilbeam is completely false as, in fact, I have never at any time met Alderman Pilbeam, nor have I taken any part in his selection as a parliamentary candidate.

The selecting of Liberal and Country Party candidates in the Central Queensland Division is controlled by the Central Queensland Co-ordinating Committee, of which I am not a member. However, I have full confidence in the judgment of that committee and of the people of Central Queensland.

My first inclination on reading "The Courier-Mail" article this morning was to criticise "The Courier-Mail" for its choice of subject matter in headlining yesterday's parliamentary proceedings. On reflection, however, I have been forced to the conclusion that we cannot reasonably expect the Press to protect this Parliament from the scorn and disrespect that at times is heaped upon it, arising from the unseemly and irresponsible statements of some few of its members. That is our responsibility. Accordingly, I have felt it my duty to bring this matter under the notice of the House.

I thank hon. members for their indulgence in permitting me to make these short comments. I note that the hon. member for Port Curtis is in the House, and I ask for similar permission for him. I feel that he may wish to say something by way of extenuation, and I rather hope and trust that he may wish to make some expression of regret to the House.

PAPERS.

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

Report of the Public Accountants Registration Board for the year 1954-1955.

The following paper was laid on the table—

Regulations under "The Torres Strait Islanders Acts, 1939 to 1946," and "The Aboriginals Preservation and Protection Acts, 1939 to 1946."

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE, RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

RETURN TO ORDER.

The following paper was laid on the table—

"Return to an Order made by the House on 10 August last, on the motion of Mr. Nicklin, showing (a) the revenue and (b)

the expenditure of the Railway Department for the Southern, Central, and Northern Divisions of the State, respectively, for each of the past three financial years."

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Debate resumed from 23 August (see p. 106) on Mr. Brosnan's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. SKINNER (Somerset) (11.29 a.m.): At the outset, I wish to join with my colleagues on this side of the House in expressing, on behalf of the people of Somerset, continued loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign. I also join with previous speakers in congratulating the hon. member for Fortitude Valley and the hon. member for Mulgrave for the able manner in which they respectively moved and seconded the motion.

I desire also to express my appreciation of the excellent and informative Opening Speech of His Excellency the Governor. Nobody who has read the Speech could fail to agree that it was very comprehensive, and that it gave a full and complete survey of the activities of the various departments of the State and of what has been achieved by the legislation of Labour Governments.

It also set out quite clearly and concisely Queensland's contribution to the Australian trade balance overseas and gave an interesting survey of the development of our primary and secondary industries, clearly indicating that the Government had legislated wisely and that there had been sane handling of the finances available to the Treasury through Consolidated Revenue, Trust Funds, Loan, and other funds. His Excellency's address disclosed that for the 16th year in succession the Treasurer has shown a surplus; the amount for 1954-1955 being £217,723.

I take this opportunity on behalf of the people of Somerset, particularly those in the Brisbane Valley area, of thanking His Excellency and Lady Lavarack for opening the Esk show. Despite the unfavourable weather His Excellency and Lady Lavarack appeared to enjoy their excursion to the Brisbane Valley. Their visit was very much appreciated.

When speaking on the Address in Reply yesterday, the hon. member for Barambah adopted a role I did not expect of him. He stooped almost to the level of the gutter-snipe. I had always held the opinion that he was above that sort of thing, but yesterday he made specific reference to the work of the Commission that was established in 1949 to determine the electoral boundaries. He said that Government members had a distinct advantage on election day. He went further and said that many of the electorates were arranged very much in favour of Government members, and he referred to my

electorate of Somerset, which I have the honour to represent in this Assembly because the people have confidence in me.

Mr. Devries: They will continue to do so, too.

Mr. SKINNER: I sincerely endorse my colleague's remark. The chairman of the Commission was none other than a Justice of this State in the person of His Honour, Mr. Justice Sheehy, and it was in poor taste for the hon. member to cast reflections on a member of the judiciary. The hon. member should do as the hon. member for Toowong did this morning and seek permission to make a personal explanation and withdraw his statement.

He tried to make the point that because of boundary alterations the Somerset seat had been made safe for a Labour candidate. How can he reconcile his statement with the fact that at the general elections in 1950 when the seat was contested by a Labour candidate and a Country Party candidate the Country Party candidate won? Clearly, the electoral boundary could not have been determined in favour of the Labour man. The Country Party lost the Somerset seat because of its ineptitude, inefficiency, and disservice to the people in rural areas.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. SKINNER: The hon. member also spoke of Nanango. Before the 1953 election, the Labour candidate in Nanango was always behind by about 130 votes, but after three years of organisation in that area by me and other members of my electorate executive committee, we were able to transform a loss of 130 votes into a majority of 19. It was in no way due to the boundaries, but it was entirely due to the efforts of the people in supporting my candidature and my own efforts in spending eight weeks in a house-to-house canvass before the election. The Country Party, complacent in the belief that it was an easy seat, gave their candidate only three weeks in the electorate before the election. That is the reply to the statement of the hon. member for Barambah.

Early this year part of the State was devastated by floods, and I believe no portion was more severely hit than the Brisbane Valley. Two days after the flood waters had subsided I made a personal inspection of the damage in the agricultural areas and it was evident that they had suffered severely. In spite of my appeals on several occasions to "The Courier-Mail" to give the matter some publicity, what happened? After two weeks during which requests were made to "The Courier-Mail" to give publicity to the matter, on the Thursday of the following week there was a small paragraph in the inside pages referring to the flood damage in the Brisbane Valley. Had "The Courier-Mail" carried out a service to the people and given full publicity to what had taken place some

assistance might have been forthcoming from the Commonwealth Government. "The Courier-Mail" said that it could not get any news on the matter. If I could go in there and observe the damage surely a reporter from "The Courier-Mail" could have gone there too. I was there less than two days after the flood waters had subsided. If "The Courier-Mail" had given the matter full publicity it is possible that there would have been more support from the Commonwealth Government in the way of a grant similar to the one made in connection with the floods in New South Wales. The blame does not lie with this Government or their representatives. "The Courier-Mail" did a disservice to the people of the Brisbane Valley; and it has a pretty wide circulation there too. Apart from the damage from erosion and loss of crops there was much disorganisation from the washing away of the rail bridge over Emu Creek at Nurinda. A temporary service had to be organised. I take this opportunity on behalf of the people in the Somerset electorate of expressing their appreciation of the service by the Railway Department, and the approval that I was able to obtain from the Secretary for Public Instruction for a temporary road service to be organised to permit the children to continue to have a transport service while rail services were disrupted. On behalf of the people in the area I express appreciation to the Premier and his Government and the officers of all departments who were concerned with the relief measures. These temporary services will terminate on the week-end of 28 August. By the untiring efforts under trying conditions of the gang of men camped at Nurinda a mighty job was accomplished; a new bridge was completed over Emu Creek. I also refer to the untiring efforts of the employees of the Southern Electric Authority and the Post-Master General's Department in working with short periods of rest to restore electricity and telephone services to the people so that they might have power to operate their separators. If it were not for the untiring efforts of these men the production losses in the Brisbane Valley would have been much greater than they were. I am sure that the hon. member for Fassifern has some knowledge of the fall in production that took place and the consequent decline in supply to the butter factories at Esk, Lowood and Booval because of the floods. I cannot let the opportunity pass without making reference to the excellent work of Mr. Frank Cannell, his wife and family. These people occupy and control a flood-watching station at Watts Bridge on the Brisbane River. They maintained their vigil, and phoned people to warn them of the danger. The people they phoned were in bed asleep and did not know that the flood waters were coming down. It is surprising to me that despite that wonderful service some people did not lose their lives. For instance, they were ringing one man for several hours and finally woke him. He was

able to leave and reach safety only because he had a battery mounted on the top of his tractor. He drove away with his wife and children sitting on the tractor, and he had to go through water 4 feet deep. The water was inside his home. The wonderful service rendered by Mr. Frank Cannell and his wife and family should be recognised. It was a service not only to the people in the area, but to all people on the Brisbane River. The information they had was relayed to the Meteorological Bureau in Brisbane and that enabled police warnings to be given to residents in the city reaches of the Brisbane River. The service that this family was able to give terminated shortly after midnight because of the washing away of telephone lines in that area. I urge the establishment of additional flood-warning stations on the Brisbane River and suggest that those stations should have equipment that will enable them to maintain communication. They would not then be exposed to the danger of being cut off from headquarters in Brisbane or the engineer at Somerset Dam when telephone lines are washed away. I ask the authorities concerned to take notice of that suggestion, and I trust that "The Courier-Mail" also will give publicity to it.

Floods in the Brisbane River affect not only the people in that area but also residents of Brisbane. Wharves and shipping may be damaged through uncontrolled floods.

During that period a revaluation of the Esk Shire was taking place, but I am pleased to say that as a result of the representations by me to the Valuer-General consideration is being given to a re-assessment or re-appraisal of the areas severely damaged by flood, so that no undue hardship will be suffered by the people whose properties are now completely out of production and will be out of production till the end of this year.

For the information of hon. members and those who are not conversant with this part of our State, I mention that part of the Somerset electorate embodies one of the richest agricultural, dairying, and pastoral areas in the State. The dairying industry maintains supplies to butter factories at Esk, Lowood, Booval, and Nanango. The fattening areas in the grazing country are among the best in the State, and fat cattle of excellent type and quality are turned off. That is proved by the fact that at the Ipswich and West Moreton Show the award for the champion fat bullock is invariably given to a beast reared and fattened in the Brisbane Valley. On one occasion a beast was sold for the record price in Queensland of £134.

Forestry work provides the greatest avenue of employment and economic stability for people not associated with dairying and grazing in the Brisbane Valley. I was particularly pleased to hear the reply of the Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation to a question asked this morning. We have more than one-third of the total forestry plantations of Queensland in the Brisbane Valley.

The forestry areas are at Googa, Benarkin, Blackbutt, Yarraman, Nanango, Jimna, and Monsildale.

The Minister's reply indicated that there was a maximum revenue from this source of over £2,000,000 and that an amount over £1,000,000 was paid into Consolidated Revenue from Forestry operations. The forestry programme was initiated by a Labour Government in 1917. It is an industry which could be termed a socialistic industry, and is one of which the whole State should be justly proud. It makes a tremendous contribution to the welfare of this State. The products are used in the sawmilling industry, building and other industries. If it was not for the work of the Forestry Department this State would be in a parlous position so far as softwoods are concerned.

Because of the sympathetic consideration that has always been given by the Government to representations, the Brisbane Valley highway has been improved considerably. Prior to 1953 there were miles and miles of corrugated surfaces, but great progress is being made in the complete bitumen sealing of this Northern Inland Highway. I am confident that by the end of 1956 a bitumen road will extend right through the Brisbane Valley area into the South Burnett and almost on to Townsville and Cairns by an inland highway and the coast route.

Educational facilities in the Brisbane Valley and the South Burnett reached a high level in the last three years. We must give consideration to the youth of the State because they are the future citizens who will guide our destiny and anything we can do to provide for greater educational facilities is, therefore, in our best interests. And here I convey to the Government the appreciation of the people of Toogoolawah recently expressed when I had the privilege on behalf of the Secretary for Public Instruction of officially opening the high school top and secondary department in that centre. In the near future there will be another secondary department officially opened at Nanango. New classrooms have been provided in primary schools at Toogoolawah, Brassall, Lower Tivoli, and Nanango to meet the influx of new pupils and thus obviate overcrowding in the class rooms. It will enable the children to be educated under the best facilities.

School road transport facilities have been extended by the establishment of consolidated schools in the Brisbane Valley area. Here again credit must be given to the department for what has been done. Circulars were sent to parents pointing out the advantages to be gained from consolidated schools. The benefits, as well as the disadvantages, of such a proposal were outlined and the matter was left to the people themselves for their determination. They unanimously decided that a consolidated school at Toogoolawah was in the best interests of the area. Some primary schools were closed and road transport services were instituted to bring about 70 children to the Toogoolawah school.

The school road-transport services were extended and consolidated schools were developed by closing one-teacher schools and providing transport services to the bigger schools. The new services include Emu Creek to Colinton, Taromeo to Benarkin, Mt. Byron to Somerset Dam, Glen Esk, Moombra to Esk, Grindstone to Nanango, and Barker's Creek to Nanango.

Several of the existing transport services have been extended to cater for small groups in remote areas who in the past did not have transport of any description for their children.

Much has been done by the Southern Electric Authority of Queensland with finance made available by this Government to provide additional electricity services and amenities in the Brisbane Valley district. I give full credit to the Southern Electric Authority for what it has done, but I think that it has fallen down somewhat on its obligations to the people. More than three years ago the area from Scrub Creek to Linville was surveyed for electricity extension. I have made repeated requests for it but for some reason the S.E.A. has failed to construct the line and over 200 families, farmers and others in the Harlin, Moore and Linville areas are denied the amenity of electricity service. Production in that part of the State would considerably improve if electricity could be extended to it.

The local authorities in the Somerset electorate are grateful for the help of this Government. Since 1953 the towns of Lowood, Toogoolawah and Nanango have had their own town water supply schemes. The Lowood and Toogoolawah schemes are in the Esk Shire and the Nanango scheme in the Nanango Shire. Hon. members opposite have repeatedly said that the Government are not doing justice by the local authorities in giving them their equitable share of finance. How can they reconcile those statements with the facts? The estimated cost of the Lowood water supply scheme was £41,630, the expenditure to date has been £29,639, and the amount of subsidy received has been £9,577 15s. 10d. Incidentally, the scheme is now in operation and the Lowood people have the use of the water.

The Toogoolawah water supply scheme was estimated to cost £50,750, the expenditure to date has been £38,744, and the amount of the subsidy has been £19,111. In the case of Toogoolawah, too, the people can now use the water in their homes.

Who can deny that in providing services such as that, this Government are not doing justice to the local authorities? The Government that are not doing justice to the local authorities are the present Federal Liberal-Country Party coalition Government led by Bob Menzies and Artie Fadden. They are denying justice to the local authorities of this State by reducing the amount of loan money available to local authorities and to other semi-governmental bodies.

In addition to what I have already said, this Government have provided finance to local authorities to enable them to construct roads, bridges and other facilities.

Somerset Dam is now almost a completed project. Only a negligible amount of work remains to be done, and the number of men now employed there is at the lowest possible level. I recently addressed a meeting of the members of the Esk Shire Council and advised them to purchase some of the cottages that are now available at Somerset Dam so that they could develop the tourist industry in that area. Whilst there were one or two reactionaries in the Council—and I do not blame them for holding their own views—the majority of the aldermen decided to apply to the Treasurer for a loan for the purpose of purchasing a number of the cottages at Somerset Dam, and furnishing them so that they could be made available to tourists.

Somerset Dam enjoys the finest climatic conditions in Queensland. Quite recently I was speaking to a Victorian business man who, with his wife, had just returned from a tour of the world. They came to Brisbane and approached the Stanley River Works Board with a request to purchase one of the cottages at Somerset Dam. When they were asked their reason for doing so, they said that although they had travelled the world, they had nowhere experienced finer climatic conditions than those at Somerset Dam. The scenery and topography of the area could not be improved on, and it has everything that the tourist seeks. It is only 81 miles from Brisbane by bitumen road, and the distance from the railhead at Esk is only 17 miles. Anyone who is interested can purchase a cottage at Somerset Dam at an improved value of £225 on a 30-year lease, and the rent is only a nominal one. I urge hon. members generally to give this matter the greatest publicity possible, and so help to develop Somerset Dam as a tourist resort.

Much criticism has been levelled by hon. members opposite against the Attorney-General for the manner in which he has administered price control in this State. I sometimes wonder whether our political opponents ever take the trouble to do any research into statistics, or to read "The Courier-Mail", which gives them far greater publicity than it gives the Government. I should like to know if they read a recent article in "The Courier-Mail" setting out that as the result of a statistical survey of the capital cities of the Commonwealth, it was found that the rises in living costs in Brisbane were the lowest in the Commonwealth. That is a clear indication that the legislation of this Government designed at preventing profiteering has reacted in the best interests of the people of this State, and has given them greater economic security than is enjoyed by people in the other States. The facts cannot be denied. There they are in their own Bible, "The Courier-Mail".

Reference was made by the hon. member for Barambah to what he claimed was the

action of the Attorney-General in retarding industry. He said it was entirely due to price control that the primary industries and other industries in this State were going downhill. That has always been the claim of the Opposition. However, the people responsible are those who have the greatest influence on credit and credit facilities in this State. Quite recently, and for some months, people in my own electorate who desired to get money to effect improvements to their properties or purchase machinery to increase their production have been unable to get it from the private banks. Six people have appealed to me personally in the last three months for financial assistance. To the everlasting credit of the State Labour Government I have been able to have each one of them accommodated through the State Agricultural Bank. But what was the headline in the "Telegraph" of 12 August, 1955?—"Cattle slump blamed on bank controls"! After all, who regulates the policy of the banks? It is all very well to run round trumpeting through the State that all the recessions and setbacks to primary industry are due to price-control and profiteering-prevention legislation enacted by the State Labour Government. Once again I say that the hon. member for Baranbuh and others should seek leave to withdraw such statements made in this House.

I want to refer now to the policy of this Government in building homes in rural areas. Admittedly, on previous occasions when they wished to embark on that project in the Brisbane Valley, contractors were not available to build the homes, but in the last three years we have been able to induce builders to tender for the contracts there. Six homes are now almost completed in Esk and of the six being built in Yarraman several have been completed. That gives some indication of the confidence the people have in this Government. The tenants of all six homes in Esk have applied through the local C.P.S. to purchase them. That is the answer to the criticism levelled at the State Government that they are not doing anything to provide homes for the people.

Should any determination be made on the proposal submitted by the Prime Minister at the recent Premiers' Conference that the funds allocated to the State by the Federal Government for home-building should be reallocated through building societies, I urge that consideration be given to mutual benefit building societies. I have already discussed this matter briefly with the Secretary for Public Works and Housing. Some of these societies have operated in Ipswich for the last 50 years. They are non-profit-making organisations registered under the Friendly Societies Act. In Ipswich and Rosewood six of them are providing homes on similar conditions to those referred to in this House yesterday afternoon. They are mutual benefit societies in every sense of the term. Even their officers give their time and energy for the most part in a voluntary capacity. They get a small honorarium but that in no way

compensates them for their efforts and enterprise in obtaining homes for their fellow citizens. I commend to the Government and the Minister the activities and services to the people by the mutual benefit building societies now operating in this State.

I refer to the criticism that is continually levelled at the Government by members of the Opposition and their fellow travellers with regard to the quadrupling of the railway system between Brisbane and Ipswich. If the members opposite will pause to consider they will realise that the quadrupling of the railway system in this area will be as much an advantage to the people in the rural areas as it will be to the people who seek transport to and from their places of employment in the city. It has been stated by the Minister for Transport that, through no fault of the Railway Department, goods trains are held up along the road and much delay is caused. When the quadrupling of the rail system is completed there will be no delay in bringing the trains in, and primary industry will be able to send its products in much quicker, and sheep and cattle will not have to remain so long on the trucks. If members opposite viewed this matter from a State-wide point of view instead of trying to make political capital out of it they would be doing a better service to the people. Unless hon. members opposite adopt a different policy, despite all their boasting about this Government's being defeated, the results will show that all their prophecies will amount to eyewash and baloney.

(Time expired.)

Mr. PIZZEY (Isis) (12.8 p.m.): We have just listened to a dissertation from the hon. member for Somerset about all that he did in his electorate. He did not give credit where credit was due. He complained about lack of money. I did not hear him say that there were any unemployed or that there was a great shortage of material. I doubt if many more jobs could have been done even if men were available with the money provided by the generous Federal Government. (Government interjections). According to hon. members opposite it is all free money.

However, I have no time to digress. I wish to talk on education again as this is the last of the Sessions of this Parliament. Today being the anniversary of Elaroo I also think it is opportune to talk of our Queensland education system. I shall not point out what the Minister has done or has not done, but I shall make a survey of the history of education in this State. Let me say again that the framework and the sound principles on which our education system is based were formulated and enacted long before Labour came into office. The original Act of 1875 is still the basis of our education system. The five or six years before Labour came into power in 1915, in the words of Mr. Edwards, an ex-Director-General of Education, represented the period

of greatest progress that has ever taken place in the education system of Queensland. When Labour came in in 1915 the University of Queensland was already established. Ten Grammar Schools had been established many years before. High Schools had been established at Charters Towers, Gympie, Mt. Morgan, Warwick, Bundaberg, and Mackay.

High tops had been established at Childers, Gatton and Herberton. The Central Technical College had been established. The Gatton Agricultural College had been established. The Teachers' Training College had been established, and provision had been made for home science and manual training. Medical and dental services had also been established. Prior to 1915 a sound basis for our education system had been established by a non-Labour Government.

Mr. Robinson: Was the P.T. system in then?

Mr. PIZZEY: Yes, it was in then. We have a student teacher system today which is just as difficult as the P.T. system was. Since 1915 Labour Governments have added what might be called the cosmetics of education, the little frills and extras, music and physical training, art, and so on. The string quartet visited schools for a few years.

Mr. Collins: Do you put the University in that category?

Mr. PIZZEY: The University was established before a Labour Government came into power.

Mr. Collins: What about the Chair of Science and other faculties?

Mr. PIZZEY: Labour Governments have added to it, but the foundation was well and truly laid. Naturally, over a period of 40 years there must be extensions and the addition of new faculties. That would be the position whether the Government were a Labour Government or a non-Labour Government.

In this report for 1953 the Director-General stated that the major problem facing educational services today is the problem of teacher shortage. There is no question about that. It is the greatest problem with which the department in this State, and the Government are faced, and it is the greatest problem of Governments elsewhere. Because of the increased birthrate and population the number of children going to school in the last decade has increased enormously. While I admit that it is a difficult problem, I say that this Government have made a poorer attempt to overcome and deal with the problem than the Government of any other Australian State or even the British Government.

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Mr. PIZZEY: Look at the position in New South Wales, the Labour State next door to Queensland. It has a school population

of something like 2½ times the school population in Queensland. The average is about 420,000 children against 160,000 in Queensland. Despite the same problems, the Government in that State have been able to raise the school-leaving age to 15 years. Whereas we have 5,000 teachers, New South Wales has 15,000 teachers.

Mr. Collins: Are free hospitals provided in New South Wales?

Mr. PIZZEY: I do not know what that has to do with education.

Mr. Collins: It has a great deal to do with it.

Mr. PIZZEY: On a comparable basis, Queensland should have at least 700 or 800 more teachers.

Mr. Devries: Would it not be preferable to lift the school-leaving age voluntarily than by legislation?

Mr. PIZZEY: No. That is the responsibility of the Government, to some extent.

Whereas the average class in Queensland is 39, in New South Wales, despite the fact that the school-leaving age has been raised, the average is 30 per teacher. Of course, that average does not imply a great deal—

Mr. Devries: You know there is nothing in that figure. I gave a figure of 38.5 this morning.

Mr. PIZZEY: The average for the State is 39. We know that there are over 1,000 one-teacher schools and many of them have an enrolment of less than 39, and many two-teacher schools, where the average would not be 35 a class, so that there must be many classes well above 39.

Mr. Devries: That is the average.

Mr. PIZZEY: On a comparable basis, New South Wales has 700 teachers more than Queensland. The figure really would be nearer 1,000.

Mr. Devries: It is obvious that they would have more teachers with the population of that State.

Mr. PIZZEY: New South Wales has 10,000 more teachers than Queensland, and proportionately the Government in that State have done a far better job than the Queensland Government have as far as this problem is concerned.

Mr. Devries: Conditions are worse in New South Wales than in Queensland.

Mr. PIZZEY: It is not as if the Minister was born yesterday or the Government came into power yesterday. They were warned about it in 1946 or 1948 when the Director-General drew graphs and used other means of emphasising the increase in school attendances, and forecast the great problem that is now facing this department. I maintain that this Government have not tried sufficiently hard to overcome the problem. It is easy to say that every other State is in the

same position, and that it is common to all countries in the world and that we are doing our best, and that is all we can do. It is surprising to learn of the number of teachers who have left the teaching service over the last ten years. It averages about 500 a year in this State, but in New South Wales with three times the number of teachers, the average is only 750. They are virtually leaving at twice the rate in Queensland as in New South Wales.

Mr. Devries: They might believe more in marriage in Queensland.

Mr. PIZZEY: That might be so. The position is worse than it appears, because many hundreds of married women are coming back into the service. There was a time when comparatively few married women were allowed in the teaching service in this State. The re-entry of married women into the service brings all sorts of problems with it, particularly that of transfers.

The Minister has said that his department is making improvements, but the figures in the Director-General's report do not indicate that. In 1953 there were 5,119 teachers in the department, whereas in 1952 there were 5,149. There was a reduction in the number. I know that there has been an increase in the number in training, but the increase is not sufficient to overcome the shortage in the foreseeable future, let alone be a reason for raising the school-leaving age to 15 years.

Mr. Devries: What would have happened if we had changed the Senior level instead of going back to the Junior level? Nobody knows that better than you do. I want you to be fair to the department, and not worry about me.

Mr. PIZZEY: I am criticising the Government on their attitude towards education. In 1944 the then Director of Education in his annual report said that the best possible steps were being taken with the object of implementing as early as possible the decision to raise the school-leaving age. Ten years have gone by and nothing has been done in that regard. England, devastated by war with its schools destroyed by bombing and thousands of its teachers killed in action was able immediately after the war to bring in a new Education Act whereby over a period of years all local authorities—they control education over there—were obliged to extend the school-leaving age to 15 years within four or five years. New Zealand, New South Wales and war-devastated Britain could do it, but in Queensland, although the matter was spoken of 10 years ago, nothing has been done.

Mr. Devries: We do it voluntarily in Queensland.

Mr. PIZZEY: More and more children are attending secondary schools but still a large proportion of our children leave at 14 years. If a big percentage is attending voluntarily, it should not be difficult to provide for the others.

Mr. Devries: You are not going to compel them to go on to a later year if they do not want to?

Mr. PIZZEY: The Minister is insisting that they stay at school from 13 years to 14 years. His own Director-General's reports stress the desirability of the extra year at school. If there was an extra year at school, there would be greater facilities for the recruitment of teachers. I know it is not easy for parents to keep their children at school after 14. I take my hat off to those parents on the basic wage or in the lower income groups who deny themselves so much to enable their children to have a secondary education. We all appreciate the sacrifices made by parents to give their children the best opportunity in life. We are living in a rapidly-changing world. It will not be very long before we will need only a few labourers in the cane fields because of the introduction of mechanical harvesting. In Mackay bulk loading facilities are being installed and perhaps some 400 or 500 semi-skilled labourers will be thrown out of that employment. When the children of today grow up there will be very little demand for unskilled labour, and we are not being fair to them unless we give them every possible chance to acquire some skill or a trade. In a young country like this, with a small population, we must see that our children are educated to the highest possible peak of efficiency. We must make the maximum use of our available manpower. By skill, intelligence, and the use of machinery, we must make it possible for one person to do the work of two or three. We must have a very high output per person, and a high standard of workmanship and skill.

There is an obligation on the Government to implement the raising of the school-leaving age. There is some obligation also on the Federal Government to help parents in the lower-income groups financially so that they can give their children secondary education. Subject to a means test, of course, the maximum age at which child endowment is payable should be extended for another year so that parents will not experience financial difficulty in allowing their children to proceed to secondary education.

I could give the Minister the various reasons set out by his own Director-General for raising the school-leaving age, but I shall not do it now.

Let me now examine the relationship that exists between the Department of Public Works and the Department of Public Instruction. One of the main reasons why the Minister finds it difficult to recruit female teachers is their fear of being sent to small one-teacher schools in the country where they would find it hard to get suitable accommodation. The Minister has not taken sufficiently strong action to ensure that the Department of Public Works shall build enough school residences. Only half a dozen school residences are built every year! The Department of Public Works is virtually ignoring the Secretary for Public Instruction in the building of school residences. What do six

residences amount to, scattered over the whole of Queensland? If the Minister could insist that the Department of Public Works should build 50 teachers' residences a year, much of the difficulty of staffing one-teacher schools would be solved.

Let me quote the late Secretary for Mines and Immigration, Hon. E. J. Riordan. He agreed with what we on this side of the House say. In 1951 he said—

“A great deal has been said about removing the control of buildings from the Department of Public Works and creating a separate department to build and repair schools, under the control of the Department of Public Instruction. Hon. members opposite know that that is not possible and not workable. You have to get down to basic facts and you cannot have such a duplication of the Department of Public Works. I agree with much of the criticism that has been offered with regard to school buildings and repairs to schools. The treatment they have received from the Department of Public Works is shocking, absolutely shocking.”

Hon. members on this side of the House have suggested that there should be a separate branch of the Department of Public Works to attend to the building requirements of the Department of Public Instruction. I do not go as far as that, but if the Secretary for Public Instruction believes that school residences are necessary in some places, or that new classrooms are needed, the obligation should be on the Department of Public Works immediately to build what he requires. A request by the Minister should not be vetoed or placed at the bottom of the list. The Department of Public Works should not have the right to determine priorities for buildings that are educationally essential. If the Secretary for Public Instruction were to put his foot down in Cabinet and demand that the Department of Public Works do something about building teachers' residences, he would go far towards solving one of the real problems that face the staffing of one-teacher schools. Of course, it is quite probable that he has done it, and that the blame can be placed really on the Cabinet.

The Queensland Labour Cabinet is not very much concerned about education in this State. Of course, I attribute some of the blame to the apathy of the parents for taking without protest what is given to them. If they are satisfied that their children should remain in classes of 40, 50, and 60, and if they are satisfied to have their children taught in buildings that can be classed only as being highly undesirable, the Labour Government of this State will continue to say, “As long as the people are content, we will let them continue with what they have.” I know that there are ideal schools. I had the pleasure of attending the opening of the Pialba State High School, one of the best in the State. Still, many hundreds of schools in Queensland do not measure up even to the minimum requirements. While the parents are content to do nothing about it the Government will not act.

Let us consider the Scholarship examination, which has been part of the Queensland education system almost since its inception. Mention of the Scholarship was omitted from the 1875 Act and there was talk then that perhaps there would be no more Scholarship examinations. However, they were continued. In recent years the examination papers have been made easy, more in conformity with the normal standard of work required of 8th grade pupils. As a result, more and more students are passing the examination. The question of the abolition or retention of the Scholarship is tied up with the policy of post-primary education. It is generally admitted that a child of 11 or 12 undergoes a glandular change, a change in temperament and outlook. In most progressive States and countries children round that age are taken from the primary school and sent to a post-primary school for three, four, or five years. I think it is time the Government made a complete survey of the educational system to find out whether Queensland is lagging behind the rest of the world. By constructing intermediate schools in various parts of the State an attempt has been made to take the children away from the primary schools, but we have not gone far enough. I am firmly of the opinion that sooner or later—and it will be very much later if Labour remains in power—the day must come when we will follow the progressive lead of other States and move our children to post-primary schools at the age of 11 or 12, so as to give them an education up to 15 or 16 without the necessity of passing a Scholarship examination.

I am very pleased that the Minister and his Cabinet adopted a suggestion I made at the Country Party Conference. I had a resolution carried unanimously the purpose of which was to ease the means test so as to increase eligibility for scholarship allowance. Previously, hardly anybody in receipt of much above the basic wage was entitled to the Scholarship allowance, especially the living-away-from-home allowance. They took £572, I think, divided that by 5 and multiplied by the number of dependants to determine whether the parents were eligible for the allowance. The amount of £50 for each child over the basic wage will help greatly to make boarding schools available to children in remote country areas without facilities for post-primary education. On the average, 500 or 600 parents each year have availed themselves of the Scholarship allowance to send their children away.

Let me here pay tribute to the grammar schools, the boarding schools and the church schools for the work they have done over the last 50 years in catering for children who otherwise would not have had an opportunity to secure secondary education. I am referring not so much to those that exist side by side with the State school as to those that provide boarding facilities.

Mr. Aikens: Don't you think boarding establishments should be set up alongside our State high schools?

Mr. PIZZEY: They should be, but of course they are not.

Mr. Devries: Who should set them up?

Mr. PIZZEY: It is the Government's responsibility.

Mr. Devries: Do you believe in State enterprise?

Mr. PIZZEY: What nonsense.

Mr. Devries: Do you agree with the statement of the hon. member for Mundingburra?

Mr. PIZZEY: Providing boarding facilities is not a socialist enterprise any more than Gatton College is. These boarding schools have provided a very useful service over the last half century; they have enabled thousands of children to get their secondary education. The State Government have neglected to provide similar facilities. Let me remind the Minister that Gatton College was established long before Labour came into office. Although various Ministers have boasted about how much Queensland contributes to our overseas reserve, I point out that 80 or 90 per cent. of it comes from the land, yet all the time Labour have been in office they have not established another Agricultural High School in Queensland. They have not done anything about it. In New South Wales they have three, but we still have only one.

Mr. Devries: There is only one University in Queensland.

Mr. PIZZEY: And there are two in New South Wales.

Mr. Devries: You have one University in Brisbane.

Mr. PIZZEY: The Government know very well that the demand for accommodation at Gatton exceeds supply. It is high time that the Government took steps to establish an Agricultural High School in North Queensland. We know that there are additional agricultural courses at Nambour and other places, but they should be extended. We ought to be planning now, getting teachers and training them so that in a short time agricultural high tops can be established in many areas. Nothing at all has been done since Labour came into office. The Minister mentioned that the Director-General of Education had said—

“We have been always handicapped as far as our teachers are concerned because of the lack of a suitable place for a Teachers' Training College.”

After forty years of Labour in office we still have a makeshift Teachers' Training College. Year after year we talk about it and year after year the Minister says, “We are planning; we will get it soon.” We may see the foundations laid before the next general elections if we are lucky. I doubt if we will see them before 1956. We hear much about schemes and decisions but we seldom hear about the implementation of

them. In New South Wales at the end of 1952 they had six teachers' training colleges in various parts of the State. That probably explains why they have been more successful in their teacher improvement. The Minister must be aware of the fact that last week in Victoria and New South Wales they had what they called “Education Week.”

Mr. Devries: We will probably follow suit in Queensland.

Mr. PIZZEY: We are always following suit. Do we ever get in the lead? We will probably follow suit a long time afterwards. An attempt is being made to bring the parents into the educational system to let them see what is going on, to familiarise them with the schools and the conditions under which their children are educated. I was wondering whether the Government are afraid to let them see the crowded schools and classrooms and the old-fashioned forms and seats that are a feature of many of our schools. It is important that the parents should be brought into the picture far more than they are today. An “Education Week” conducted on the same lines as in New South Wales and Victoria last week would do much to bring to the parents a greater awareness and understanding of the problems of their children.

Mr. Aikens: Bring the public down and let them have a look at Parliament.

Mr. PIZZEY: If everybody would come and look at Parliament there would be nobody left on the other side of the House. I have suggested before that the department should compile an education gazette, after the style of the gazette published by the Department of Agriculture and Stock. I suggest it should be a quarterly gazette, not one such as is sent out now. It could include interesting stories of progress and advances in education, not only in this State but in other places where something new and worthwhile is introduced. The story of Educational Week could be told in it. It could include photographs of some of our new school buildings; descriptions of the courses taken, and there might be contributions by some of the brighter school children. Such a journal is published by the Department of Mines and Irrigation and the Department of Agriculture and Stock. An education journal would be of great use and interest to the teachers and the people of this State.

What Queensland needs urgently is a new Education Act. A good survey should be made of our educational system. What has been good enough for 80 years since 1875 is not good enough today. The system evolved and expressed in the original Act is the system that operates today, with modifications and embellishments.

The Minister said a moment ago that Queensland would probably follow New South Wales. It is high time that Queensland followed that State in giving urgent consideration to

the complex set-up of our post-primary education. Consideration should be given to the abolition of the Scholarship examination. With that would come the framing of a new syllabus, in a new direction as far as the work of our children is concerned, a matter of great importance to our pre-adolescent children from 11 to 15 years. No new Act or great change in our system should be made until parents, educationalists, teachers, and all who are interested have been consulted at an exhaustive inquiry. Having been in this Parliament for five years, and having watched the progress of the department, I say that criticism from Opposition members has done much to improve the lot of teachers and children in this State. It is only in the last five years that education has come more and more into the limelight as far as Parliament is concerned. That is apparent from a perusal of the debates. The Minister has been compelled to take notice of the suggestions and criticism of Opposition members, and in many instances he has given effect to those suggestions.

Mr. Aikens: Give him credit for that.

Mr. Devries: I should have been foolish if I had not taken cognisance of suggestions.

Mr. PIZZEY: I suggest that the Minister urge other members of the Cabinet to adopt a similar attitude, and take cognisance of suggestions made by hon. members on this side of the House. Those suggestions in regard to the teaching service have made the lot of the teacher in this State much happier. The yellow card system has been abolished. The attitude of inspectors to teachers has changed entirely. The attitude of departmental officials to teachers is now entirely different. It is only a few years ago that a teacher who wished to interview a departmental officer had to sit on a hard board outside his office in a draughty corridor. At the present time an attractive room has been provided, containing comfortable chairs and reading matter. Departmental officers are more human. The Director-General is more human.

Mr. Devries: And I think the Minister is becoming a little more human.

Mr. PIZZEY: The Minister is human as far as our country children are concerned. I think he stretches a point to give country children a fair go. The overall picture, however, is not the same. The Government have failed to meet the problems with which the department is faced. They have failed in regard to the important aspects of education. They have failed to keep in line with and match the progress of other States in Australia and other countries in the world, and it is my opinion that as long as this Government are in power with a Cabinet such as the present one not very much interest will be taken in the progress of education. The present attitude of Cabinet is, "Let sleeping dogs lie. We do not want to face any difficulties. The Minister is doing a quiet job and keeping us out of trouble."

Mr. Collins: Go back to 1929-1932 and analyse what a non-Labour Government did for education at that time.

Mr. PIZZEY: That Government did a great deal more for education than Labour Governments.

Mr. Collins: The people and the children of those days have never voted for you since.

A Government Member: A non-Labour Government were responsible for educating all members sitting in the Opposition benches.

Mr. PIZZEY: It was a non-Labour Government before 1915 that laid the foundation for education in this State.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (12.48 p.m.): The hon. member who has just resumed his seat succeeded in showing what the Minister in charge of education in Queensland had done in providing as much education as possible for the people, but at the same time he endeavoured to tell us that the Government have failed to provide enough education for the people. It is always amusing to listen to hon. members opposite who are so viciously anti-Socialist in their approach to all matters, whether education, hospitalisation, or electricity reticulation. Rising in their places and endeavouring to convince us that the Government have failed to go as far as they would have liked the Government to go. Although we are introducing what they term Socialism, they say that we should extend such socialistic proposals to suit them.

I have pleasure in associating myself with the sentiments expressed by the hon. members for Fortitude Valley and Mulgrave in conveying our expressions of loyalty and devotion to the Throne. I also join with them in voicing my appreciation of the way in which His Excellency the Governor, Sir John Lavarack, has undertaken his duties as representative of Her Majesty the Queen in this State. The Throne of England is an integral part of the British Commonwealth of Nations and its influence has spread to all the nations that comprise the Commonwealth. There are some who say that the military might of the British Empire has been lost, and to a great extent it may be so but from the military weakness of England there has grown a new line of thought, a more tolerant and greater understanding of the problems not only of our own people but of all nations, particularly the coloured nations. It is not more than 18 months ago that we in this country and in every other country believed that we were being drawn irresistibly towards another war. None of us, particularly those who had served in a war would relish the thought that we should once again be plunged into the horrors and ravages of another war. This new line of thought which is gradually spreading throughout the western democracies and indeed throughout all the great nations of the world is that we can live peacefully together or in co-existence. That is an expression coined by a very estimable Conservative in the person of

Sir Winston Churchill. When speaking in America he said that unless the world got together in a spirit of conciliation the world itself would be drawn irrevocably towards another war and the destruction of the present civilisation. That was an expression of the new line of thought that has developed throughout the British Empire over the last few years. Another indication of the new line of thought was the very much criticised visit of the English Labour Party delegation under the leadership of Mr. Attlee through Communist-controlled nations. The visit of Mr. Attlee and his Party was criticised not only by members of the Liberal and Country Parties but also by members of the Australian Labour Party.

Mr. Aikens: Some sections of it.

Mr. LLOYD: Perhaps. Mr. Attlee had the courage of his convictions and imagination for he saw that the visit he made into China could result in nothing but good. It resulted in easing the suspicious state of mind that existed in Asia at that time towards the white races of the world. The easing of that suspicion assisted the democracies in their attempts to conciliate and bring about a state of affairs whereby we could live together in a world of peace. His description of his visit was that of a fair-minded man, and it was an unprejudiced survey of the conditions in those countries as he saw them.

Without doubt, one of the most important developments in world events during the past decade has been the upsurge of the Asiatic nations. They have rebelled against domination by the white races, and their claim to supremacy over the coloured races. During World War II the Japanese coined the phrase, "Asia for the Asiatics," and that has had a very deep effect on the Asiatic mind.

I do not think that the democracies of the world can do anything to stop the upsurge of Asian thought. It has been sown in the minds of the Asiatics and nothing that we can do will prevent them from trying to get an independent form of government and the responsibility for administering their own affairs. It is not more than 100 years since there were slave markets throughout Europe. Children were sacrificed to enable industry to make profits. That state of affairs now prevails in Asiatic countries. However, as the result of gradual education, the peoples of Asia are wanting to institute their own forms of Government.

It is necessary that the British influence that has been brought about by the efforts of Winston Churchill, the Conservative, and Mr. Attlee, the Labour man, should gain greater strength, not only throughout the democratic nations but also throughout the Soviet nation. The spreading of that influence should result in the easing of fear, suspicion and hatred, so essential if civilisation is to avoid suicide. Wars can no longer be regarded as a means of settling disputes and of establishing who shall be supreme.

Much can be done as the result of modern scientific discoveries. We are only on the threshold of discovering how far we can go in utilising the power that scientists have unleashed. It can be put to the purpose of providing mankind with subsistence for everybody; the starving nations can be fed by the surplus products of those that have the necessary land to produce food. We must reach that stage in the next 20 or 30 years, but we can do it only by an easing of the private-enterprise system in the democratic nations, and of the communistic system in the other nations. The nations of the world must get together and discuss the important issues that are at stake; they must try to bring about a position where hunger, starvation, disease and poverty will be no more. From what I have seen of the conditions that can exist in war-time, we must do everything possible to stop ourselves from being drawn into a struggle in which we cannot hope to survive.

(Leave to continue speech tomorrow granted.)

The House adjourned at 1 p.m.