Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 9 NOVEMBER 1956

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

QUESTION.

PACIFIC HIGHWAY, BRISBANE TO SOUTH COAST.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) asked the Minister for Transport—

"1. Has his attention been drawn to an article which appeared in most Queensland newspapers, including the Townsville "Daily Bulletin," on Monday, 5 November, wherein the Main Roads Commissioner (Mr. Williams) is reported to have enthusiastically dilated on the measures that have been, and are being taken, to make the road from Brisbane to the Gold Coast a motorists' paradise?

"2. If so, is he aware that scores of miles of the Rockhampton-Townsville road are little more than a bush track which becomes a succession of impassable quagmires after a light fall of rain, and all traffic must bog down until the road dries out, or be loaded on to railway wagons to complete their journey; as was the case, a week or so ago, with the Army convoy going North to accompany the Olympic Torch runners?

"3. If he is aware of these things, does he not consider that they justify the charges that have been made by several North Queenslanders that the Government discriminates in favour of the Brisbane area and against the North?"

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

"1, 2 and 3. The hon. member does a disservice to himself and to the people he allegedly represents in North Queensland by grossly exaggerating the position obtaining in regard to road construction in Queensland. I share with the Commissioner full responsibility for improving the condition of the South Coast Highway. Indeed, I requested the Commissioner to prepare plans for the progressive improvement of this highway about two years ago, following my observation of the density of traffic on this heavily used interstate highway and also as a result of perusing traffic count returns. In his Annual Report tabled recently, the Commissioner of Main Roads gave factual information regarding the operations of his department generally, which extend over the whole State. The coastal road from the Livingstone Shire boundary at the Styx River to a point just south of Carmila is not under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of Main Roads. The declared road from Rockhampton to Mackay and Townsville is in good order and is largely bitumen surfaced. It is used by many motorists, including large numbers towing caravans. The Government is aware of the need to pursue an energetic road construction programme in all parts of the State, and its resources will continue to be employed to the fullest extent in this direction."

PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Report of the Department of Harbours and Marine for the year 1955-1956.

Report of the State Electricity Commission for the year 1955-1956.

Report of the Commissioner of Housing for the year 1955-1956.

Report of Bureau of Investigation under the Land and Water Resources Development Acts, 1943 to 1946.

Report of the Department of Public Lands, the Sub-Department of Forestry, and the Superintendent of Stock Routes for the year 1955-1956.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Order in Council under the War Service Land Settlement Acts, 1946 to 1951.

Regulation under the Fish Supply Management Acts, 1935 to 1951.

Fifty-sixth Report of the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT.

BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL ACCOUNTS.

Mr. SPEAKER announced the receipt from the Auditor-General of his report on the books and accounts of the Brisbane City Council for the year 1955-1956.

Ordered to be printed.

ROMA STREET TO SOUTH BRISBANE RAILWAY BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. J. E. DUGGAN (Toowoomba—Minister for Transport): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill relating to the proposed railway from Roma Street to South Brisbane."

Motion agreed to.

SUPPRESSION OF GAMBLING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Suppression of Gambling Acts, 1895 to 1936, in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (11.6 a.m.): I move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Suppression of Gambling Acts, 1895 to 1936, in certain particulars."

This is a Bill to amend the Suppression of Gambling Acts, 1895 to 1936 in certain particulars.

It is introduced to correct an anomaly which exists in the Suppression of Gambling Acts. The law presently provides that it shall be unlawful to print, publish or exhibit any advertisement, sign or notice relating to any drawing of, or sale of tickets in, an unlawful lottery. The Bill extends this prohibition to radio broadcasting and television.

I gave consideration to this legislation some time ago but in view of the fact that prosecutions made in New South Wales were the subject of appeal to the High Court, I thought it might be better to wait for the decision of the High Court. The High Court made it quite clear that Section 92 of the

Commonwealth Constitution did not apply in the case of an unlawful lottery. I have taken the first opportunity to insert a provision to cover radio advertising.

The Bill defines the term "unlawful lottery" to include any foreign lottery within the ambit of the Art Union Regulation Acts, 1930 to 1956. A foreign lottery is one which is authorised and conducted outside the State. The Art Union Regulation Acts provide that the sale in this State of tickets in a foreign lottery shall be prohibited unless the permission of the Attorney-General has first been obtained.

The amendment to the law as set out in the Bill became necessary because of the extensive use of advertising by means of radio broadcast. At the moment there is no prohibition against it. The Bill brings radio broadcasting into line with the prohibition applying to printed advertisements. The opportunity has been taken to extend the prohibition to television and it will be operative if and when we can afford that luxury.

There are no new principles of law in the Bill; it merely extends the existing prohibition to the public service of radio broadcasting and television.

Motion (Mr. Power) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING.

Bill, on motion of Mr. Power, read a first time.

SECOND READING.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (11.12 a.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (11.13 a.m.): The Bill is an interesting one. It has been found necessary to take certain legal action in this State in respect of what may be termed "foreign" lotteries. The term "foreign" refers to any lottery outside the State. A lottery conducted in New South Wales is a foreign lottery under the provisions of the Bill.

Mr. Aikens: That is the legal interpretation of the High Court, too.

Mr. NICKLIN: That is so. The reason I make this point is that over the years there has been a growth of lotteries in Australia. Years ago the only lottery in Australia was the old "Tatts" in Tasmania, and as the years went by each State began to conduct its own lottery. Because of the keen competition between those respective lotteries it has been necessary to take action to protect State lotteries against what are termed "foreign" lotteries. However, I have no objection to the provisions of the Bill. After all, our own lottery, the Golden Casket, although from moral angles it may not be desirable, from the practical angle it certainly raises a good deal of money to help our hospitals.

Mr. Aikens: The Golden Casket is no more immoral than Tattersall's lottery.

Mr. NICKLIN: Of course it is not; I did not suggest that it was.

The first paragraph of the new clause is identical with the old section with the inclusion of the words "to publish or cause to be published by means of radio broadcast or television."

It might be submitted that the word "publish" covers all avenues whereby the originator brings a matter to the knowledge or notice of another person or persons, but it has been apparently thought advisable to bring the section into line with modern developments by including radio and television.

This Bill obviates future litigation on the implication of the word "publish." There was a case in New South Wales, and the High Court recently declared valid the New South Wales legislation prohibiting under certain conditions the sale of interstate lottery tickets in that State. The High Court held that the legislation did not contravene Section 92 of the Constitution. That is one victory against Section 92. Section 92 usually invalidates legislation dealing with interstate transactions.

The second paragraph of the Bill is new. It defines "unlawful lottery" as including, without generality of the meaning of the term, any foreign lottery within the meaning of Section 14A of the Art Union Regulation Acts, 1930 to 1956, unless that foreign lottery is permitted as prescribed by that section. Section 14A defines a foreign lottery as any lottery conducted or to be conducted outside Queensland, and whether legal in the place where it is conducted or not, or whether it is described as a lottery or given any other name or designation. Provision is made for the Minister to permit the sale of tickets in foreign lotteries.

The Bill does not completely prohibit the sale of tickets in legal foreign lotteries. If in his discretion the Minister considers that tickets in those lotteries or art unions may be sold in Queensland, he may permit it. I see no objection to the Bill.

Mr. Power: There may be a national disaster and it may be desirable to do something under the Charitable Collections Act.

Mr. NICKLIN: That is so.

In view of past litigation, the Attorney-General is justified in tidying up the position. I believe he has done that very effectively in this Bill.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah) (11.18 a.m.): On this occasion I find myself in agreement with the Attorney-General, but

for a different reason. His main concern is the Golden Casket and to keep the money in Queensland; my main concern is the interest of the public generally. There is no doubt that this is something that affects the ordinary men and women of the State. The average working people are those most interested in the lotteries including those advertised over the air. The question is whether these people can afford to spend this money. They are tempted by statements in the Press from time to time, particularly in recent weeks, about the winners of these big lotteries. It was mentioned that one man who won a big prize had taken tickets worth £100. Another case was quoted. This man won a lottery. He was an ordinary working man in poor health and not of good financial standing. He had invested many pounds in tickets.

Mr. Devries: We have decent hospitals.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Yes, but what of the thousands and tens of thousands of people who invest beyond their means in the desperate hope of helping themselves and who do not gain anything? Many people are tempted to invest much more than they can afford.

Mr. Aikens: You have no objection to gambling on the Stock Exchange?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I am not discussing that matter. I do not engage in such business myself.

Mr. Walsh: You disapprove of gambling on the Stock Exchange?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I disapprove of the general method of the Government in raising funds. I think it is a poor outlook for the Government if they have to run their State affairs by means of lotteries. I know that the Treasurer will say the money is used for hospitals. In every-day life we have to cut our cloth according to our means. I deplore the action of the Government in running the affairs of State along such lines. I know people in different walks of life associated with me who regularly invest a considerable sum every week in lotteries and I know very well that they have great difficulty in meeting their bills. The Government are increasing the tendency towards encouraging people to invest more and more and spend big sums in the hope of winning something. I have often mentioned the moral aspect of gambling. Union policy is for people to do as little as possible and get as much as possible for what they do. The training that people get through the actions of the Government is entirely wrong. It is a poor commentary on the Government that they have to get down to such measures to provide money for the instrumentalities they control. I am sure that the Attorney-General would not allow me or any other person to run a lottery to bolster up our business or any other business. He would say that it was not justified.

Mr. Devries: Hope springs eternal in the human breast.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: It is wrong to encourage people to hope along those lines.

Mr. Walsh: If I ran one to get money to balance the Budget, would you take a ticket in it?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I would not. I am sorry the Treasurer has that outlook. I emphasise that the policy is to run bigger and bigger lotteries and get more and more people to invest more money, money that they can ill afford to spend. Whilst I deplore the policy of gambling I support the measure to curb advertising of foreign lotteries.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (11.24 a.m.): The hon. member for Barambah is obviously quite sincere in his opposition to any form of gambling and particularly to those forms of gambling covered by the Golden Casket, Tattersall's, Tasmanian lotteries, and other sweeps, raffles or art unions. I remind him that it has been stated with considerable truth in and out of this Chamber and down through the years that you cannot legislate to protect the fool from his folly. I do not think the person who buys a ticket in the Golden Casket or any other form of lottery, provided it is well conducted and is genuine, is a fool.

It is obvious that the hon. member for Barambah thinks those people are fools. He is entitled to that opinion, but it is not for the Government to legislate to protect a fool from his folly. If we in this Chamber legislated to wipe out all lotteries in Queensland, the people who invest in lotteries would buy tickets in the southern lotteries. When I was a young man the Commonwealth Government put a restrictive clamp on the operations of Tattersall's, and anyone wishing to buy a ticket had more or less to sneak around the back door of a tobacconist shop that had a sign on its window, "I communicate with Hobart." That sign was an indication to anyone who wanted to buy a sweep ticket that he could get one there.

Mr. Coburn: Would that be in contravention of this legislation?

Mr. AIKENS: No. Contrary to the belief of most people, this legislation does not prevent people from buying tickets in so-called foreign lotteries. That is purely a matter for the Commonwealth Government. At one time they operated a restrictive practice through their Post and Telegraph regulations, which made it illegal for anyone to communicate with people in Hobart who sold sweep tickets. I can remember that when I was a boy working in the post office, every now and again a long list was issued of people in Hobart any letters addressed to whom had to be confiscated, because they were the Hobart representatives of Tattersalls

Ltd. The Bill will not prevent people from exercising their freedom to send to any other State for a lottery ticket there. It is to prevent those lotteries from advertising in Queensland.

Mr. Nicholson: It is doubtful whether it could be stopped because of Section 92.

Mr. AIKENS: It is not a question of Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution. The Commonwealth Government can stop it if they want to, but they no longer want to stop the operation of lotteries in any State. They could try to stop it as they tried to stop Tattersall's, that is, by refusing to accept any mail addressed to any lottery agent in another State.

Mr. Sparkes: That did not stop it.

Mr. AIKENS: As the hon. member for Aubigny says, that did not stop it. The urge of the Australian to gamble and take tickets in lotteries is so strong that he will get round, under or through any Government restriction that is placed upon him.

Mr. Graham: What about a pak-a-pu ticket?

Mr. AIKENS: You cannot stop them from running pak-a-pu, although that does not come within the ambit of the Bill.

Many people who take several tickets in the Golden Casket and other lotteries often wonder why it is that they rarely win a prize. However, the use of a little mathematics shows that you have about an 88-to-1 chance of winning a prize in any lottery. Those are very long odds. To show how small is the chance of winning a prize, according to the vital statistics of the country anyone who buys a ticket in a lottery has as much chance of winning a prize as a woman has of having twins.

Mr. MUNRO (Toowong) (11.29 a.m.): I had not intended to speak on the Bill as I felt that its principles had been covered adequately by the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Barambah. However, after having heard the hon. member for Mundingburra, I should not like any reader of "Hansard" to feel that the viewpoint of hon. members was along the general lines expressed by the hon. member for Mundingburra.

Mr. Aikens: Are you going to disagree with me today?

Mr. MUNRO: Through you, Mr. Speaker, I advise the hon. member that I propose to disagree with him today. He made it his main theme that we cannot legislate to protect the fool from his folly.

Mr. Aikens: And neither we can.

Mr. MUNRO: I disagree with that. Surely it would be tragic if the Parliament accepted that as a basic principle.

Mr. Aikens: We cannot stop thousands of dills going to the Brisbane Stadium to see those buffoons who masquerade as wrestlers. We have Gorgeous George coming up now.

Mr. MUNRO: I will keep to the subject of the Bill. There is too much complacency in the community about what the hon. member for Mundingburra glibly describes as the urge to gamble. He almost suggests that we should accept it and not worry about it.

Mr. Aikens: Will you tell us truthfully whether or not you gamble on the stock exchange?

Mr. MUNRO: I say quite truthfully that I do not gamble on the stock exchange or anywhere else.

Mr. Aikens: You merely "invest"; is that it?

Mr. MUNRO: I will go a bit further and say that in principle I object to gambling on the stock exchange.

Mr. Aikens: But do you "invest" on the stock exchange?

Mr. MUNRO: Yes, I invest on the stock exchange.

Mr. Aikens: That is a distinction without a difference.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to address the Chair.

Mr. MUNRO: Quite right, Mr. Speaker, and, through you, I should like to inform the hon. member for Mundingburra that I invest on the stock exchange. I am pleased he has raised the point. We have heard his attacks on the stock exchange before. The whole prosperity and economy of the State depend on the carrying on of large-scale industry and the stock exchange is one of the facilities provided.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to keep to the subject of the Bill.

Mr. MUNRO: I am merely pointing out that the idea of the stock exchange does not necessarily involve gambling and that I am opposed to such elements of it as may involve gambling. That is the view of other hon. members on this side.

Mr. Aikens: What about the recent scandalous gambling in oil shares?

Mr. MUNRO: I wish to address myself to the Bill.

Mr. Aikens: You won't answer that one.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MUNRO: Perhaps there is something in the remark of the hon. member for Mundingburra that in many instances it is not practicable to protect fools from their folly. Therefore we have to look to

other methods. Inadequate though the Bill is despite its high-sounding title, it is perhaps slightly a step in the right direction.

Mr. Devries: There is no reason why we should not try to protect the fool from his folly.

Mr. MUNRO: We must protect him if it is practicable but if, for any reason, it is not, there are two other things we must do, and we must do them a little more effectively than they have been done by the Government in recent years. First, we must discourage those things that have bad economic effects and that, if allowed to develop to a great extent, will ultimately impair, and perhaps destroy, the whole moral fibre of the community.

Mr. Aikens: Do you discourage people from joining the Liberal Party?

Mr. MUNRO: No, I would not. There is no gambling in that.

Mr. Aikens: That is a crowning folly.

Mr. MUNRO: There is certainly no gambling in that, and that has nothing to do with the matter. Still using the expression of the hon. member for Mundingburra, and I use it only in a colloquial sense, if we recognise a need to protect the fool from his folly we must accept it that we have a much greater obligation.

We must recognise that the person who is a little foolish and a little ignorant in these matters is in the position of someone who has not completely grown up. Just as we have to protect children and discourage young people from wrongdoing, so also must we take constructive action along educational lines that will discourage certain forms of gambling which might well adversely affect the growth of the community.

Mr. Aikens: The Bill will not discourage anyone from buying tickets in Queensland lotteries.

Mr. MUNRO: I do not want to take up the time of the House but I consider my protest necessary. I will make it again if I hear views expressed similar to those expressed by the hon. member for Mundingburra.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (11.36 a.m.), in reply: The Bill is a simple one, prohibiting the advertising of foreign lotteries by radio and television. Hon. members have taken the opportunity to express their views on certain phases.

The hon. member for Barambah opposed the Bill. He said that he did not think people should be allowed to buy tickets in any lottery. That is a matter entirely for themselves. They are not compelled to buy them. The freedom of the subject operates on this occasion. The hon. member has religious views which prompted his statement.

Mr. Sparkes: He is quite sincere.

Mr. POWER: I am not suggesting otherwise. If one religious organisation is opposed to lotteries it is a matter for the organisation itself. It has not the right to try to dictate to people with different religious views. A religious organisation has an unrestricted right to hold its own views but I hope the day will never come that because certain people have certain beliefs on certain matters that everybody must follow the same doctrine. The hon. member for Barambah said that people invest more money than they can afford. What evidence did he produce in support of that statement? I cannot agree with him. It is a reflection on the many thousands of people who buy tickets in the Golden Casket. I now refer to certain remarks made by the hon. member for Toowong. If we prevented the advertising of the Golden Casket or if there were no Golden Casket we would have to levy additional taxation to raise funds very badly needed by the Government to carry on their free hospital scheme and programme of assistance to charitable institutions and other social amenities from time to time. There are many church organisations that accept grants from the Government to carry out charitable work—providing homes for people, looking after people in the outback parts of the State and so on. I commend them for it. They receive grants from the Golden Casket. If the hon. member for Barambah had his way they would not get that assistance. He is entitled to his opinion but I do not subscribe to the view that because one section thinks something should be done that everyone else should follow its example. I do not subscribe to the belief that if a man wants to have a beer that he is not entitled to have it. That is his business. The hon. member for Mundingburra interjected that there was no protest about gambling on the Stock Exchange. I have not heard any protests about gambling on the Stock Exchange, but there are protests about the Golden Casket, the money from which is used to carry out Government policy. The hon. member said he felt sure that if he wanted to run a lottery I would not allow him to do so. Of course I would not. I would not allow anyone to run a lottery to make money for himself.

Mr. Aikens: I did not say that.

Mr. POWER: No, the hon. member for Barambah said it. Of course I would not give the hon. member or anybody else the right to run a lottery for personal gain. The hon. member is engaged in a very lucrative business and would not want a lottery. If I am correctly informed about the prices charged for work carried out there is exploitation of the people in many parts of the State. It is only the operation of price control that has prevented the exploitation of the people. The hon member is concerned about a few shillings spent on the Golden Casket but he is not concerned about exploitation by way of high charges.

Let us be honest from every angle. It has been suggested that we cannot protect the people from their foolishness. We can protect them. We do so by legislation. If a person is mentally unsound he is prevented from wasting his estate. If people consume too much liquor the Public Curator has power to take control of their estate. I do not want the public to be given the impression that we do not do anything for their protection. If we close the Casket thousands would be thrown out of employment. The people conducting agencies, the employees writing tickets, those carrying out printing and advertising would be thrown out of work. Most important of all, if we closed the Golden Casket our free hospital system would no longer exist.

Motion (Mr. Power) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

STATUTES AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (11.46 a.m.): I move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend certain Acts of the Parliament of this State."

The purpose of the Bill is generally to enable Regulations to be made to various Acts so that fees presently payable under these Acts may be altered or new fees prescribed.

The Acts dealt with by the Bill are—

The Aliens Acts, 1867 to 1952;

The Registration of Births, Deaths, and Marriages Acts, 1855 to 1948;

The Amended Registration Act of 1867;

The Marriage Acts, 1864 to 1948; and

The Friendly Societies Acts, 1913 to 1954.

The immediate object of the Bill is to enable the Crown to collect additional revenue by fees—new fees where warranted and increase existing fees to bring them more into line with present-day costs.

The Aliens Acts entitle an alien to be granted a permit which enables him to hold land. There is considerable cost to the Government in dealing with each application, and to date over 10,000 permits have been issued, yet no fee has been charged. The Bill will enable the Governor in Council, by Order in Council, to prescribe a fee on the grant to an alien of a permit to hold land in this State.

The Bill next deals with the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Acts. In this case fees have not been revised for many years. For instance, a birth certificate issued in Queensland costs only 2s. and that was the fee in 1856. This fee is the lowest of any State in the Commonwealth.

The Amended Registration Act will be amended so that the Governor in Council may, by Order in Council, alter existing fees and prescribe new fees. The alternative to that would be the introduction of a further Bill each time the Government wanted to vary the fee.

Mr. Aikens: To what figure is it proposed to increase it at the present time?

Mr. POWER: The Government do not disclose their intention on matters of this sort. That will be before Parliament when the Order in Council is tabled, and the hon. member will have ample opportunity to move if he so desires, for the disallowance of the Order in Council.

Mr. Aikens: I was thinking of the cost of your death certificate.

Mr. POWER: A lot of people would like to be able to buy that, but I am still hale and hearty.

The Bill next deals with the Marriage Acts. Here again it provides that a fee shall be payable on each marriage celebrated, and provision is also made to alter this fee or prescribe new fees under the Acts.

The Bill finally deals with an amendment to the Friendly Societies Acts. This Act presently provides that a special reduced fee of 1s. shall be charged to a Friendly Society for each birth or death certificate applied for, and where a number of certificates are applied for, the fee is 6d. each. The Bill repeals this rule so that Friendly Societies in future will be charged the same fee in respect of birth and death certificates as private persons.

The whole Bill is primarily a revenue Bill and it is based on the desirability of charging fees under the various Acts which are commensurate with present-day costs.

There has been no increase in a number of these fees for many years. The cost in administration has increased from time to time. I should think the cost to the Government was taken into account when the fees were fixed, but since then there has been a tremendous increase in costs to the Government.

Some action must be taken to see that these fees are brought up to a reasonable level, so that the actual costs to the Government will be recovered. Let us examine the procedure adopted under the Aliens Acts. A person makes application and a classified clerk on a salary of £1,000 a year with a

junior deals with it. At the time the Act went through I pointed out that before a permit could be granted close scrutiny would be made of the application to see that the applicant had no subversive tendencies. The matter then is investigated by the Security Section which submits reports. All this involves time and expenditure. The application comes back to the department and the clerk in charge of the section has a good deal of work to do. There is the typing of the permit which goes to the Attorney-General for signature. Since I introduced the Bill some time ago I have personally signed nearly 10,000 applications from aliens to hold land in Queensland. The Government feel that they are justified in charging a fee to cover the tremendous cost involved.

Mr. Aikens: Will the fee be retrospective?

Mr. POWER: No. It will operate from the date the Bill becomes law. The measure will give the Government the opportunity of receiving fees commensurate with the cost of the work entailed.

Motion (Mr. Power) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING.

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Power, read a first time.

SECOND READING.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (11.55 a.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. MUNRO (Toowong) (11.56 a.m.): The Attorney-General gave a very comprehensive outline of the Bill on the initiation stage, and it is unnecessary for me to deal with those points.

Mr. Aikens: The Bill is wrongly named. It should be called "The We Want More Money Bill."

Mr. MUNRO: I think it is wrongly named, but I shall come to that point later.

So far as it is possible to discern the principles of the Bill, there appear to be two main ones. It makes provision for increases in fees under a number of statutes to make them more commensurate with present-day costs. I do not think there would be any objection to that from this side of the House. We are sufficiently realistic to agree that fees fixed many years ago—there are instances of some having been fixed more than 100 years ago—should be reviewed. In fact, a little later I shall direct my comments to the inadequacy of the provision for review when fees of this kind are allowed to continue for as long as 100 years without attention.

The second principle of the Bill is also a good one. The Attorney-General apparently recognises that it is somewhat cumbersome to have to bring before the House numerous Bills dealing with minor matters. To obviate that necessity in future, he has wisely included a provision in the Bill so that further alterations can be made by Order in Council.

Mr. Aikens: Yet he contemptuously rejected a suggestion that he should do that in the case of badges issued by the R.S.S.A.I.L.A. and other organisations.

Mr. MUNRO: The point raised by the hon. member for Mundingburra might be quite a good one, but I should not like to express an opinion on it at the present stage. Most of us on this side of the House do not like government by regulation; we do not like power by the Government to deal with matters by Order in Council where any important principle is involved. But where the matter is more or less appropriate to the circumstances of the times and it is likely that it will need alteration within a few years, it is very much better to provide for the alteration to be made by Order in Council so that the business of the House will not be cluttered up with a multiplicity of Bills that involve no important principle, as in this case and the one mentioned by the hon. member for Mundingburra, which is at least a borderline case.

Some problems arise from a consideration of the Bill. I do not like its nature and its form. The Attorney-General has selected from a vast number of statute laws half a dozen or so covering fees in certain instances and he has brought forward a comprehensive Bill to amend those fees, or to make provision to amend them. That is not satisfactory from the legal viewpoint or from the viewpoint of building up a sound body of statute law. He has gone either too far or not far enough. If it were necessary to amend only one statute it would be sound to bring in a Bill to amend it and, among other things, to give the necessary powers so that minor matters of fees might be dealt with in the future by Order in Council. The Attorney-General has gone too far in including half a dozen miscellaneous amendments in one measure; but I should be more in favour of his procedure if he went even further. This is pertinent to my suggestion of a few days ago that there should be a statute law revision committee, or a statute law revision commissioner, to help the Attorney-General and the Crown Law Officers. Alternatively, some competent and responsible legal practitioner could be retained to investigate all these matters.

Mr. Power: Surely to goodness you would not want a statute law for me to deal with the fixation of fees?

Mr. MUNRO: This is only one matter. We get so many of these Bills. On the question of fees, I can call to mind—and I am sure the hon. member for Coorparoo can, too—many other instances of fees that were fixed many years ago under Queensland legislation and that still stand and need revision. All we have is this piecemeal attack.

Mr. Power: We can fix all the others by Order in Council. Those that were amended we cannot, and we are bringing them into line with the others.

Mr. MUNRO: If I can take that as an assurance by the Attorney-General that there are no other fees which are fixed by the legislation of the State, I am happy to know it.

Mr. Power: I asked the departmental officers to make sure that we had all cases where we could not fix fees by Order in Council, so that we might include them all in the one Bill and give ourselves the opportunity of putting them all on the same basis.

Mr. MUNRO: I should be happy to learn that this was a comprehensive measure dealing with the whole question of fixing fees by Order in Council.

Mr. Power: I do not want to mislead you. In my opinion, on the advice of departmental officers, it is. There might be one or two that we do not so fix.

Mr. MUNRO: If that is so, the Attorney-General should have said so in the Bill and it should have a completely different title. From my experience I should have some doubt about it. Before bringing in a Bill like this, the whole field should be covered. From the point of view of statute law the title of the Bill is either misleading or inadequate. It is described on the Business Sheet as "A Bill to Amend Certain Acts of the Parliament of this State."

Mr. Power: The Bill will cover all fees that come within the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice.

Mr. MUNRO: It is still inadequate because the Department of Justice is only one of 11 departments. The problem in relation to statute law concerns, not the statutes administered by one department, but the statutes of the State of Queensland.

Mr. Power: I cannot amend another Minister's Acts. It may not be necessary. Other departments may be in a different position.

Mr. MUNRO: I realise that but there is still the problem. It is not a matter of statute law revision in relation to the department mention administered by the Attorney-General but the problem of statute law revision in relation to the statutes of the State of Queensland.

The title of the Bill as set out in the notice paper gives no information. It does not indicate a thing. Every Bill introduced is a Bill to amend either an Act or certain Acts of the Parliament of the State. Looking a little further we see that Clause 1 of the Bill reads—

> "This Act may be cited as 'The Statutes Amendment Act of 1956'."

Every Bill introduced into the House is for the purpose of amending certain statutes. Again it does not give any information at all. Then we find that it is a Bill to deal with the revision of certain fees charged by the department administered by the Attorney-General, and to provide for certain other fees to be prescribed in the future by Order in Council.

Whilst I do not think that the method of approach has been completely sound from the point of view of statute law and a more comprehensive approach is desirable, nevertheless I cannot see anything objectionable in the terms of the Bill. I believe that it will be accepted by hon. members on this side of the House.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (12.8 p.m.): When I saw on the notice paper that the Attorney-General was to introduce a Bill for the purpose of amending certain Acts of the Parliament of this State, remembering his oft-repeated statement that he intended to amend about 69 Acts of Parliament in the near future, I thought he was going to do the whole lot in one fell swoop. However, it is not as I thought. The Bill is necessary and desirable for many reasons. It could be, and no doubt will be, used in the future to obtain additional revenue for the State.

Mr. Power: You have my assurance that it will.

Mr. NICKLIN: It must also be admitted that many of the fees charged at the present time are ridiculously low, not even paying for the service given. I have in mind birth certificates and things of that nature.

The hon. member for Toowong raised the matter of adjusting fees by Order in Council. I believe that is a wise procedure rather than introduce legislation from time to time. On many occasions I have suggested that this practice should be utilised in order to avoid the necessity to amend a figure each year. It will be necessary to keep this under review, not so much from the point of view of getting revenue but in relation to costs. In view of the financial position of the State at the moment, no doubt, in addition to bringing the fees up to the level of costs the opportunity will be taken to bring about additional revenue to the State. I notice that among the fees prescribed by the Schedule the cost of a certified copy of any birth, death or marriage is 2s. which is ridiculously low. It has remained unchanged since the original Act of 1855, over 100 years ago. That amount would have paid for the services then, but not now.

Mr. Power: We do not propose to increase by 100 × 2s.

Mr. NICKLIN: That is a wonder.

The fee for every search in any index is 5s. and every certified copy of an entry is 2s. I had to get a copy of my birth certificate a couple of years ago when I went overseas for the Coronation. I was born at Murwillumbah and I was charged 7s. 6d. for it.

Mr. Power: They have gone up to 10s. now in New South Wales.

Mr. NICKLIN: It was 7s. 6d. a few years ago. It would have cost me 2s. if I had been fortunate enough to be born in Queensland instead of just over the border. It is necessary, as the hon. member for Toowong said, that we should revise these fees. I hope that the Attorney-General will not allow undue pressure to be put upon him by the Treasurer to use this provision to raise fees to such an extent that they would be a lucrative source of revenue. I commend the Attorney-General for his zeal, energy and industry in bringing Acts up to date but I am glad that he did not attempt to amend the 69 Acts that he threatened to amend in one Bill.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (12.13 p.m.), in reply: I assure the Leader of the Opposition that I shall not be influenced by any pressure group in regard to fees in these cases. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that we should try to base the fee on the actual costs, not so much on a profit margin. The desire is to cover the cost and not make a profit. In some cases the fees have been ridiculously low. It was unfair to the State and for that reason we are amending the law to provide for additional fees by regulation. As costs go up the fees will be increased by Order in Council which will be tabled and if any hon. member thinks the fees are too great he has the right to move that the Order in Council be disallowed. The hon. member for Toowong suggested that we might have a committee to deal with the fixing of fees. The only persons who can determine the fees are departmental officers who have a knowledge of the costs.

The hon. member for Toowong said the Bill indicated nothing. It indicates very clearly that the Government are going to recover the actual cost of services given under the Acts mentioned in the Bill. Fees will be determined in accordance with the cost.

He said that only certain Acts were being amended. It is not my province to amend Acts coming under the jurisdiction of any other Minister. I am satisfied that each member of the Cabinet is reviewing the Acts affecting his department. When I was Secretary for Mines I introduced Bills to amend Acts so that fees under those Acts could be altered by regulation. Those fees had not been altered for many years. I am sure that other Ministers will take similar action. They are equally competent to deal with matters affecting their departments. The great majority of Acts administered by other Ministers, if not all those Acts, probably provide for the alteration of fees by regulation and Order in Council. That is the position in regard to some Acts administered by the Justice Department.

Under the Acts amended by this Bill fees were charged in some instances and in other instances no fees were charged. Those fees may now be altered by regulation and Order in Council. It is not the policy of the Government to charge exorbitant fees. The fees will be in accordance with actual costs of administration.

Motion (Mr. Power) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 to 5, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

LAW REFORM (LIMITATION OF ACTIONS) BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (12.20 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

There is nothing further I want to add to what I have already said.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (12.21 p.m.): The Attorney-General certainly gave a lengthy explanation of this Bill which is of considerable interest to hon. members. The Bill is modelled on the English Law Reform (Limitation of Actions, etc.) Act, 1954. The English Act was based on recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on the Limitation of Actions which sat under the chairmanship of Lord Justice Tucker and reported in 1949. I have taken the trouble to look at the committee's report and I have taken out a number of the relevant portions of the recommendations dealing with the subject matter of this Bill. They are interesting. I should have liked to insert them in "Hansard" but they are lengthy, and as we are in the closing hours of the Session I do not propose to do it now. They would be of great value to people who read the debate on this important question.

However, I propose to look fairly closely at the various provisions in the Bill. The first is the general rule that the Crown is not bound by the provisions of any Statute unless it is bound therein expressly or by

necessary implication. This section specifically binds the Crown to the provisions of the Bill. It defines "personal injury" as including any disease and any impairment of a person's physical or mental condition. The same definition is used in the English Law Reform (Limitation of Actions, etc.) Act, 1954.

The next provision is interesting in that it deals with actions for damages for negligence, nuisance or breach of duty, which damages consist of or include damages in respect of personal injury to any person. It repeals the provisions of any other Acts or so much of them as are inconsistent with this Bill where, in cases of the above nature the action or proceeding is to be commenced within any particular time, or notice of action is to be given, or the defence is entitled to costs or the plaintiff is deprived of costs where the latter defaults in bringing his action or proceeding within any particular time or in giving notice of action.

A further provision permits all cases of the above nature to be commenced within three years after the cause of action arises, but not after such period, irrespective of any contrary provisions in any other Act or law or rule of law.

The committee I spoke of examined closely the question of the period in which actions should be permitted to be taken and made certain recommendations. The Attorney-General has taken advantage to write into this Bill many of the recommendations made by that committee as was done in the English Bill upon which this legislation is largely based.

A further provision amends Section 14 of the Common Law Practice Acts, 1867 to 1940. This section was inserted in the original Act of 1867 and has not previously been amended. Some very old Acts which stood for a long time are being amended, and I think the Attorney-General is to be commended in examining them and bringing them into keeping with modern conditions. In this case he has gone back to an 1867 Act. The provision falls within a number of sections dealing with the liability of persons for deaths wrongfully caused, the persons for whose benefit any action in this regard should be brought, and the method of bringing such action.

Section 14 will now provide that not more than one action shall be for, or in respect of, the same subject matter of complaint, and that every such action shall be commenced within 12 months after the death of such deceased person. This period has now been extended to three years in keeping with the general amendment. That provision also is in keeping with the recommendations of the expert committee to which I have referred.

Another provision amends sub-section (3) of Section 15D of the Common Law Practice Acts, 1867 to 1940. This section was inserted in the principal Act in 1940, and provides for the survival of all causes of action subsisting against or vested in a deceased person at the time of his death. Causes of action for defamation, seduction, and certain matrimonial troubles are excepted.

The new sub-section (3) provides that no proceedings in respect of a cause of action in tort which has survived against the estate of a deceased person shall be maintainable, unless the various circumstances outlined by the Attorney-General prevail.

All legal actions in our courts are subject to limitations on the period of time within which they may be brought. The Statute of Fraud and Limitations covers a wide variety of personal actions. The general rule for actions in tort between subject and subject is a limitation period of six years (if the parties survive for that period) from the date on which the cause of action arose, that is—in the words of a decided case—"The earliest time at which an action could be brought." Hence, when a wrongful act is actionable per se without proof of actionable damage—for example, assault, trespass to land or goods—time runs from the time when the act was committed. This is so even though the resulting damage does not eventuate or is not discovered until a later date; for such damage is not a new cause of action, but merely an incident of the old one. That was decided in an 1886 case. On the other hand, when the wrong is not actionable without actual damage—for example, negligence—the period of limitation does not begin to run until that damage happens. That principle was established in Thomson v. Lord Clanmorris, which was heard in 1900.

In the case of actions against the Crown, a variety of shorter periods is provided by various statutes.

The pecuniary liability of the Crown is also strictly limited by various statutes. The Bill does not deal with this aspect, although it has brought about a highly anomalous position at the present time. The Attorney-General could, with advantage, give attention to the pecuniary liability of the Crown, as was suggested by the hon. members for Toowong and Coorparoo during the introductory stage. A negligent subject is liable to unlimited damages, whilst the liability of the Crown is pegged at very low limits. A person injured by a negligent subject is entitled to unlimited damages, whereas a person injured by a servant of the Crown, acting in the course of his duties, can recover only a meagre sum. An example of that can be seen by a reference to the Railways Acts.

Mr. Power: I agree with you. That matter will have to be looked into.

Mr. NICKLIN: I am very pleased to have that assurance from the Attorney-General.

Section 121 of the Railways Acts provides that, in any action brought against the Commissioner for Railways to recover damages or compensation for personal injury, no

finding or judgment shall be given or entered for the plaintiff for any amount exceeding the following:—

	£
If the personal injury results in death	2,000
If the personal injury results in permanent disablement	2,000
If the personal injury results in temporary disablement	1,000

The glaring injustice of these pecuniary limitations can readily be seen when compared with awards given against private individuals, firms or companies. Moreover, the first limitation has remained unchanged since 1914, and the latter two limitations since 1902, despite the great intervening inflationary trend. Similar injustices can be seen in other statutes.

The effect of Clauses 4 and 5 of the Bill is to bring about uniformity in actions of the classes mentioned therein, irrespective of whether they be between subject and subject or between subject and the Crown. Hence the general limitation on such actions between subject and subject will be reduced from six years to three years, and that on actions by subjects against the Crown will mostly be increased from periods such as six and twelve months to three years.

This is a desirable step and it is based on Section 2 of the English Act of 1954 which was, in turn, based on paragraphs 22 to 25 of the Committee's Report of 1949. I mentioned that previously and it would have been of advantage to include it in "Hansard" but it is too lengthy. However, it will be noted that the English Act and the Bill now before the House fix the period of limitation at three years, although the limitation of two years, with a discretion in the Court, in exceptional cases, to give leave to bring an action not later than six years from the accrual of the cause of action, was recommended by the Committee. This is one of the instances in which the legislation varied from the recommendation of the Committee.

Clauses 6 and 7, which amend the Common Law Practice Acts, 1867 to 1940, are adapted from section 4 of the English Act of 1954 which was based on the recommendation of the Committee contained in paragraph 33 of its report. However, once again there was a departure in the English Act from the Committee's recommendation. While the Committee recommended only that the requirement as to the cause of action arising not earlier than six months before the death should be modified so as to extend the period of six months to two years with a discretionary power in the court to extend the period to six years, the English Act abolished the requirement altogether, without, however, affecting the requirement that proceedings must be instituted not later than six months after the taking out of representation.

The position now is that actions to which clause 6 relates, that is, actions by a deceased person's dependants arising out of his death, must be commenced within three years from the date of death. Actions to which clause 7 relates, that is, actions against the estate of a deceased wrongdoer, must be commenced within the period of three years from the date of accrual of the action, subject to any such action having been commenced before the date of death, or to the commencement of proceedings within six months after the personal representative of the deceased wrongdoer has taken out representation. It will be noted that the three years' overall limitation still applies in cases of damages for personal injury.

The Attorney-General has given one instance of the many injustices that could occur when the previous further limitation applied in the latter cases, that is, the limitation that the cause of action must have arisen not earlier than six months before the death of the wrongdoer.

The position still remains that, unless proceedings against the deceased were pending at the date of death, representation must be taken out before an action against his estate is commenced. Cases of refusal or procrastination to take out representation may be encountered in order to defeat a prospective action. However, in the case of in the Estate of Simpson (1936), it was decided that, if the person entitled to represent the estate refuses to take out letters of administration, the court may appoint as administrator a nominee of a person who wishes to take proceedings against the estate.

The following is an interesting passage from Salmond on the Law of Torts, in which the Queensland statutory provisions have been substituted for the English references in the original passage—

> "When the cause of action, as in the case of disturbance of the right of support (an ever-present possibility at present owing to the great amount of excavation work being done in Queensland for large building projects), does not arise until the damage has been suffered, the Act of 1940 (Section 15D (4)) expressly provides that if the wrongdoer dies before or at the same time as the damage is suffered, there shall be deemed to be subsisting against him such cause of action as would have subsisted if he had died after the damage was suffered. The beneficent intentions of this provision will be defeated by Section 15D (3) (b) if the damage is suffered more than six months after his personal representative has taken out representation. The injured party will then be without redress, for he probably cannot in such a case sue the present occupier."

Clause 8 contains the necessary transitional provisions to give effect to the Bill. It is analagous to the transitional provisions contained in Section 7 of the English Act of 1954.

Clause 7 applies to all causes of action in tort, except defamation, seduction or certain matrimonial troubles, which have survived against the estate of a deceased person.

There appears to be no objection to the Bill, except that it could have gone further in the matter of pecuniary liability of the Crown to injured subjects.

The Attorney-General agrees that it should have gone further and I trust that he will lose no time in introducing legislation to ensure that the pecuniary liability of the Crown is adjusted to be made more realistic in view of present-day circumstances. I commend the Bill.

Motion (Mr. Power) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 to 8, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

PUBLIC CURATOR ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (12.40 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

The Bill is purely machinery in character. As I gave a very full outline of it on the introductory stage, I do not propose to make a second-reading speech.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (12.41 p.m.): The Bill, although of a machinery nature, is particularly interesting. It has two important principles which will be of general benefit. I commend the Attorney-General for its introduction.

The first and perhaps the most important principle deals with the establishment of branch offices and the appointment of local deputy public curators. The Act has provided for the establishment of branch offices at Rockhampton in the Central District and Townsville in the Northern, with a local deputy public curator in each. For a number of years a local deputy public curator has been stationed at Cairns with a defined district within which to carry on business. It is a branch office in practice, but not legally, as the Act provided for branch offices at Rockhampton and Townsville only. No doubt the volume of business at the Cairns Office more than justifies the Minister in making it a branch office.

This Bill also affects clerks who may serve in a legal capacity in Cairns. Section 9 of the Legal Practitioners Acts Amendment Act of 1938, as amended in 1955 enabled a clerk in the office of the Public Curator, including any branch office, to qualify for admission as a solicitor under certain conditions. As Cairns is not a branch office, service in that office apparently is not considered as service for the purpose of the Legal Practitioners Act, whereas similar service in Rockhampton and Townsville is. This anomaly will now be cured. The Bill enables the Governor in Council to establish branch offices anywhere in Queensland, and appoint local deputy public curators to such branches. The Minister has the authority to define the area of business of any branch other than at Rockhampton or Townsville, which two centres will conduct the Public Curator's business for the Central and Northern Districts respectively, except in such districts where other branches are established. Officers serving in Cairns are doing the same work as similar officers in Brisbane at other branch offices. This Bill which will rectify the anomaly will no doubt induce the right type of clerk to go to a centre like Cairns. The Bill makes for an improvement in the wording and the setting out of the old provisions. It makes new provisions for the investment by the Public Curator of moneys held by him for mentally sick persons, protected persons—persons who or whose estates become the subject of a protection order made by the Court under the Act—or convicts undergoing sentences of imprisonment for three years or more.

The Bill permits the Public Curator in his absolute discretion to invest any such moneys held by him in any investment in which trustees are authorised by law to invest trust funds. Such investments are not to form part of the common fund, and any loss or deficiency in respect thereof is to be borne by the estate concerned. The moneys which form part of the common fund, may be invested by the Public Curator in approved investments and the interest payable thereon is at a rate determined from time to time by the Governor in Council. The various estates forming the common fund are credited with such interest at the prescribed rate.

Previously it was required that such interest should be credited to the respective trusts or estates half yearly on the first days of January and July in each year. This has now been altered so that interest is credited once yearly on the first day of July. There does not appear to be any objection to this change of practice, although up to 1945 interest was credited quarterly. It was then altered to half yearly and is now being altered to yearly. This has been done to lighten the office work of the department.

A further clause amends the marginal note to Section 39A. In 1954 the value of estates administered under this section was increased from £25 to £50, but the marginal note was not altered to conform with the clause. This has now been rectified.

The next clause deals with the making of protection orders by the court upon the application of the Public Curator. These

orders place the management of the estate of such persons under the control of the Public Curator. The class of persons in respect of whom protection orders may be made are persons who, by reason of age, illness, or mental or physical infirmity, are unable, wholly or partially to manage their own affairs, or are subject to influence, or likely to be so, in regard to disposition or control of their estates, or are otherwise in a position where the court considers it necessary that their estate or property be protected in their interests or the interests of their dependants. Protection orders may also be made in respect of persons who, by reason of addiction to liquor or drugs, are unable to manage their affairs, whether that inability is continuous or occasional.

The Attorney-General has given a full explanation of the reasons for this clause, which consists of the deletion of a prescribed form of protection order akin to an order which would be made in open court, and is not therefore in keeping with proceedings under the section that are commenced by originating summons and heard privately in Chambers. The next clause inserts sub-sections in Section 87 of the Act, which section deals with the powers of the Public Curator in regard to the property of convicts undergoing sentences of imprisonment for three years or more after conviction for indictable offences. Briefly, the powers given in the section are:—

Absolute power to mortgage, sell, or otherwise deal with a convict's property;

Pay expenses which a convict has been condemned to pay, and pay costs of convict's defence, and also costs of administration of his estate;

Pay or satisfy a convict's debts or liabilities or deliver over property to the rightful owner;

Pay money as satisfaction or compensation for loss of property or other injury alleged to have been suffered by any person through a convict's actions;

Make payment or allowances for the maintenance of a convict's wife or dependants.

Doubt has arisen as to the power of the Public Curator to take or defend legal proceedings for or against a convict, and the new sub-sections give the Public Curator express powers in this regard.

The Public Curator may institute proceedings for the recovery or protection of a convict's property or for the recovery of any debt or damage, and may also defend like actions brought against him or the convict in respect of any such property or debt or damage. He may also compromise, compound or otherwise settle any such proceedings, or consent to judgment or suffer judgment by default to be entered.

Power is also given to the Public Curator to compromise in his discretion any claims or demands made against the convict or his estate, or made by the convict prior to his conviction, or by the Public Curator himself. Such claims or demands can be submitted to arbitration.

All hon. members will agree that it is most desirable to give these powers to the Public Curator.

As the Attorney-General said earlier, the Bill is of a machinery nature. Nevertheless it is particularly important, as these matters needed attention. Anomalies existed and they have now been rectified. I commend the Attorney-General for introducing the Bill.

Motion (Mr. Power) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 to 6, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

MAINTENANCE ORDERS (FACILITIES FOR ENFORCEMENT) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (12.52 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

There is nothing further I desire to say, as I gave a full description of the Bill in my introductory speech.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (12.53 p.m.): Admittedly, the Attorney-General gives a particularly good and full explanation of any Bill he presents to the House and there is little need for him to say much at this stage. We have had a look at the Bill. Legislation in connection with maintenance orders has come before us on several occasions in recent years. The enforcement of maintenance orders is a very difficult matter and no end of difficulties crop up. Many provisions in the measure will be useful in facilitating the enforcement of them.

The definitions of "dependants," "Governor," and "reciprocating State" have been amended and definitions of "British Commonwealth" and "Minister" have been added. The first four definitions are necessary for the purpose of bringing the Act into line with the changes that have taken place in the British Commonwealth in comparatively recent years. The other definition is necessary because of the changed method of transmission and reception of maintenance orders brought about by the Bill.

The Bill adds a new important section to the Act. The Act was passed in 1921, and it followed the Imperial Act of 1920—Maintenance Orders (Facilities for Enforcement) Act, 1920 (Imperial). Section 12 permitted its provisions to be extended to any part of the British Commonwealth where reciprocal legislative provisions were in force, and by Order in Council in 1922 it was extended to Queensland. The greater part of the British Commonwealth has, for some time, operated under such reciprocal provisions, and it has thus been possible to enforce in Queensland maintenance orders made elsewhere in the British Commonwealth where reciprocal provisions are in force, and vice versa. Such legislation is highly necessary and has been of untold benefit to deserted wives and children. After all, they are the ones who suffer most if maintenance orders cannot be enforced. Most of us know of many deserted wives and children who have got maintenance orders but have been unable to have them enforced.

The present legislation requires maintenances orders (including provisional orders), both outgoing and incoming, to be channelled through the Governor of Queensland. As the Attorney-General has pointed out, this method calls for prolific correspondence and handling on the way to and from the courts. It has been aptly referred to by the Attorney-General as "rather cumbersome."

The Bill provides that the Governor in Council, by Order in Council, may permit maintenance orders under the Act to be transmited to or received by the Minister instead of the Governor, and also makes similar provision for naming a person in a reciprocating State, in lieu of the Governor thereof, to or from whom maintenance orders under the Act may be transmitted or received.

Sub-sections (2) to (6) of the new Section 13 contain supplementary provisions that are necessary and need no discussion.

There is no objection whatever to the Bill. The despatch and receipt of maintenance orders through ministerial channels will save much time and correspondence, and is therefore desirable.

It is interesting to note that New Zealand adopted this system when it passed its original Act in 1921. Sub-section (3) of Section 5 of that Act reads—

> "Where such an order is made the Magistrate shall send to the Minister for Justice, for transmission in the appropriate manner to the Secretary for State or to the Governor of the part of His Majesty's dominions in which the person against whom the order is made is alleged to reside, the depositions," etc.

Section 5 of that Act reads—

> "When a maintenance order has been made by a Court in the United Kingdom or elsewhere in His Majesty's dominions, and the order is provisional only . . . and a certified copy of the order, together with the depositions of witnesses and a statement on the grounds on which the order might have been opposed, has been transmitted to the Minister for Justice," etc.

It is also interesting to note that this legislation must be used if a defaulting husband or father absconds from Queensland to the Northern Territory.

Enforcement of Queensland maintenance orders in other States and in the Territory of New Guinea, and the enforcement in Queensland of orders made in those States or that Territory, may be undertaken under the reciprocal and comparatively simple provisions of the various Interstate Destitute Persons Relief Acts. Reciprocity in this regard was extended to Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania on 24 June, 1915, to the Territory of New Guinea on 27 February, 1936, and to New South Wales as late as 13 September, 1946. However, if the defaulter takes up residence in the Northern Territory, recourse must be had to the Maintenance Orders (Facilities for Enforcement) Acts to get enforcement.

The Attorney-General has revised the definitions to bring them up to date. He has amended the definition of "reciprocating State," but in Section 12, which gives the power to declare reciprocating States, the outmoded words "His Majesty's dominions outside the United Kingdom" still appear in sub-sections (1) and (2). As the opportunity now presents itself, why not amend these two sub-sections by omitting from both, the words "His Majesty's dominions outside the United Kingdom" and substituting therefor the words "the British Commonwealth"? The Attorney-General should consider that suggestion as the term "the British Commonwealth" is now more appropriate than the one used in the legislation. I commend the Bill.

Motion (Mr. Power) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (2.16 p.m.): This morning the Leader of the Opposition suggested that I consider amending the clause to clarify it. I accept his suggestion. I never hesitate to accept suggestions from hon. members opposite if they will improve a Bill. Therefore I move the following amendment:—

> "On page 2, insert the following new clause to follow Clause 2—
>
> '3. Subsection one of section twelve of the Principal Act is amended by repealing the words "His Majesty's dominions outside the United Kingdom" and inserting, in lieu of those repealed words, the words "the British Commonwealth outside England and Ireland" '."

Amendment agreed to.

New clause, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—New s. 13 added; Provision for transmission of orders—as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with an amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

PRIVILEGE.

IMPROPER USE OF PARLIAMENTARY PAPER.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (2.19 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. It has been urgently brought to my notice that parliamentary stationery is being improperly used by persons who are not members of Parliament and who are not members of the staff of Parliament.

I have in my hands a photostat of the ordinary notepaper that we use in Parliament.

Mr. McCathie: Have you the original?

Mr. NICKLIN: Yes. Naturally I will leave the name out, but it reads—

"Dear——

"With reference to the Sweep held in connection with the Melbourne Cup you have selected the horse——

"We trust that this horse will prove for you the lucky winner.

"With kind regards,

"Yours sincerely,

"C. Greenfield.

"(In ink) Mt. Gravatt A.L.P. Funds."

I also have in my possession the envelope in which that piece of paper was posted. It is a parliamentary envelope. It is a grievous breach of parliamentary privilege that parliamentary paper should be used for such a purpose by people not associated with this Parliament. It is bad enough to have it wrongly used, but if it is illegally used it is worse. I draw this matter to your attention, Mr. Speaker, and also to the attention of the Premier. I hope that action will be taken to see that this practice is immediately stopped and to ensure that such a thing does not happen again.

Mr. SPEAKER: Having had a look at the photostat it does appear to me as if there has been an abuse of privilege in the use of parliamentary paper by an unauthorised person. If the Leader of the Opposition is prepared to leave the matter in my hands I shall take steps to warn all hon. members of the Legislative Assembly that if it should occur again it will be the duty of the House to impose punishment.

Mr. NICKLIN: I shall be happy to leave it in your hands. I will show the Premier and yourself the originals to prove that what I say is correct.

Hon. V. C. GAIR (South Brisbane—Premier) (2.23 p.m.): This matter is sufficiently serious for me to express my attitude towards it. Recently I had occasion to speak about the need for economy. Because of the great increase in the cost of paper and printing, I exhorted members of Parliament to exercise normal economy in the use of stationery. I expected, as any leader of the Government would be entitled to expect, that irrespective of their political persuasion all hon. members should share with me the responsibility of making ends meet when it comes to the finances of the State. The very serious aspect of this matter is that somebody outside of this Parliament has used the stationery of Parliament. No-one outside this Parliament has a right to use such stationery; that is the privilege of hon. members of Parliament. Firstly, hon. members of Parliament have no right to use parliamentary stationery other than on parliamentary business. Secondly, no-one other than an hon. member of Parliament, not even a member of the staff has the right to use paper headed "Parliament House, Brisbane." What concerns me most is whether this is done with the cognizance of an hon. member of Parliament; if so it is more serious than if someone acted without the knowledge of an hon. member of Parliament

Mr. Sparkes: It would be possible to get the paper some other way.

Mr. GAIR: That is within the realms of possibility.

Mr. Sparkes: We had the case of Mr. Maher.

Mr. GAIR: We know the case in which Mr. Maher was concerned. At least it is something that should be investigated. How did this paper come into the possession of the man Greenfield who wrote the letter to somebody for a subscription to a sweep. How did he get possession of it? Did he come here and steal it, or was it given to him by an hon. member of this Legislature? If the latter is the case I am at a loss to understand how an hon. member of Parliament could be so irresponsible. It is a criminal offence for anyone to come to the precincts of Parliament House and steal stationery or anything. I want to make it very clear as leader of the Government that I do not condone the misuse of any Parliamentary privilege. I do not condone the use of our stationery by people for any business, let alone a Melbourne Cup sweep. We have a serious obligation to this Parliament. That does not only apply to Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition or myself, but to each and every hon. member

elected by the people under a very democratic system. Unless every one of us is prepared to accept our responsibilities and obligations in a responsible manner and do our job we can easily destroy the prestige of this Parliament and our own prestige, and destroy our democracy. I join with Mr. Speaker in saying that this is a matter that we cannot condone. It is a matter we have to investigate. If I thought for a moment that this stationery had been stolen from this Parliament I would not be slow in placing the matter in the hands of the police to find out who was the guilty party who stole the stationery and used it in this way. If inquiries reveal that hon. members of Parliament are supplying stationery to outside people to be used on matters other than those of a Parliamentary character, well, I think Parliament has the right to deal with the hon. member concerned.

CROWN REMEDIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (2.29 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

There is only one principle in the Bill. I dealt with it fully on the introductory stage and I have nothing further to say.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (2.30 p.m.): The Bill is desirable. It amends Section 2A of the principal Act, which makes provision for recovery of property of the Crown and for enforcement of rights and claims of the Crown. The Act was passed originally in 1874. This is another example of an Act being brought up to date by the Attorney-General.

Section 2 directs that all debts, damages, duties, sums of money, land, goods or liabilities may be recovered or enforced by the Crown as set out in the Act.

Section 2A, which was inserted in 1930, provides that, when the amount of value does not exceed £50, proceedings for recovery or enforcement by the Crown may be taken in the Magistrates Court. However, the wording of this section does not include "land," as in Section 2, so that claims to land of whatever value cannot be proceeded with by the Crown in the Magistrates Court. I refer hon. members to Section 4 (4) of the Magistrates Courts Acts.

The effect of the provision is to raise the permissible limit of proceedings by the Crown in the Magistrates Court from £50 to £600. This is in keeping with the 1954 amendment of the Magistrates Courts Acts which increased the limit of permissible actions in the Magistrates Courts from £200 to £600. However, it will be noted that when Section 2A was inserted in 1930, the £50 limit on Crown actions therein provided was not in keeping with the limit of £200 which had been in force in the Magistrates Courts since 1921 in respect of actions between subject and subject. There is no objection to this provision. Section 2A should have been made commensurate with the jurisdiction of the Magistrates Court from the outset.

While the Minister is adjusting the monetary limit in this section of the Crown Remedies Act he could also consider adjusting the fixed sum of £5 for costs where final judgment in the Supreme Court is obtained by the Attorney-General in the cases of certain fines and estreated recognizances. I refer hon. members to Sections 3 and 4 of the Act. This sum was fixed in 1874. If it was considered adequate 82 years ago to compensate for the work involved in having final judgment signed in those cases, surely a much greater amount would be required today.

The Bill is necessary and desirable. Hon. members on this side of the Chamber support it.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (2.33 p.m.), in reply: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his suggestion. I can assure him that I will give consideration to it.

Motion (Mr. Power) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 and 2, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

BUILDING SOCIETIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (2.35 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

There was considerable debate on this Bill on its introductory stage and many matters were dealt with. I have nothing further to say now.

Mr. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha) (2.36 p.m.): As I said in the introductory stage, there is nothing in this Bill with which I disagree. My only problem is that I feel that it is a monument of lost opportunity. I previously mentioned that I thought there had been an opportunity for the Attorney-General to make the provisions for other building societies much wider. I am glad to know that some members of the Government are hopeful of extending building societies in the State. I

am rather cheered by the manner of the Attorney-General; he seems to be in a very much happier frame of mind than he was yesterday. Hon. members will recall that towards the close of the debate he castigated me for not having read the Bill, but it had not been printed. Knowing that he is now in a better frame of mind I suggest that he bear in mind the fact that the House has been considering and will again be considering the agreement between the Commonwealth and the States as to housing generally. In that agreement there is provision for the extension of building societies and money will be made available to them. A substantial portion of the money to be made available this year will go to the Brisbane Permanent Building & Banking Society. My personal view is that this organisation has done an excellent job in Queensland for a long time, but there is room for more building societies, particularly co-operative or mutual societies that are not profit-making. The more we can reduce the cost of building the more the people will benefit. Mutual building societies and co-operative building societies will give that service to the people.

It could be argued, of course, that an extension of building societies may bring in organisations that are not able satisfactorily to cope with the work. However, I do not regard that as a valid argument, because under the Co-operative Societies Act any co-operative building society that is formed will be checked very carefully by the Government. The Registrar of Building Societies also would be able to watch the financial affairs of any building society.

The Attorney-General said he had considered the operations of building societies in England, New South Wales and in other parts of the world. I commend him for the diligence with which he investigates the background of all legislation that he introduces. A tribute can be paid to him by all hon. members. However, we must keep prominently in our minds that over the years building societies in New South Wales have done a very big job in providing houses in that State. Unfortunately, this Bill will not give building societies in this State the opportunities available to those in New South Wales. I do not know very much about the English Act. I use New South Wales as an example. In that State the Government have been able to control building societies effectively, and very good work has been done by them. We could very well follow the pattern of New South Wales and increase the money to be made available to building societies from two-thirds to four-fifths.

Another principle of the Bill really gives unlimited opportunities to a few building societies in Ipswich. As I said before, I am very glad that it is in the Bill, because it shows that the Minister is of the opinion that a good building society needs encouragement. He has recognised that principle in the case of Ipswich and I hope he will be a little more generous to others.

The Minister expressed his dislike of the practice of purchasing old homes with money provided by a building society. Up to a point, I am in agreement with him. A building society is essentially what its name implies, a building society, not a financial organisation to provide money for the purchase of old homes. Other organisations, such as banks and insurance companies, cater for that. It is desirable that building societies confine their operations to new buildings.

I have two amendments, one a principal amendment and the other a consequential one. I hope the Minister will accept the main one. I shall have more to say in Committee.

Motion (Mr. Power) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Graham, Mackay, in the chair.)

Clause 1—Short Title, Principal Act, and Collective title—as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—Repeal of and new s. 26; Power to borrow money—

Mr. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha) (2.47 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

"On page 2, after line 9, insert the following paragraph—

'However, in the case of a Permanent Society registered under the Principal Act as a Co-operative or Mutual non-profit making Society, the total amount so received on deposit or loan and not repaid by the Society shall not at any time exceed three times the amount for the time being of the existing paid-up capital or subscriptions to the Society and the accumulations thereon or four-fifths of the amount for the time being secured to the Society by mortgages from its members, whichever is the greater.' "

Any elaboration of the amendment would merely be repetition of what I said earlier. It is substantially along the lines of the New South Wales Act and I commend it to the Minister.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (2.49 p.m.): The hon. gentleman said that I was in a much better frame of mind today than I was yesterday. I did not castigate anybody, as he suggests. I merely put him right on a number of matters. I cannot accept the amendment and I shall give sound reasons for my refusal.

First of all, people associated with the terminating building societies are quite happy with the Bill. When it was being drawn up, full consideration was given to the position in other States and in England.

In England, New South Wales, and other parts of the world, the upward limit on borrowing powers gives an alternative to the "three years' income." The alternatives vary between countries, but in England it is "two-thirds of the amount for the time being secured to the society by mortgages

from its members.'' In New South Wales the alternative is ''four-fifths of the amount secured, etc.'' New South Wales differs from England in that the English Acts require the society to adopt either of the alternatives for the whole of its active lifetime, whereas in New South Wales the society may adopt both and use whichever allows a greater borrowing at any given time.

Therefore, by selecting the most advantageous provision of both the English and New South Wales Act the present legislation has been framed to permit the terminating societies in Queensland to borrow up to either—

(*a*) three years' income on the shares; or

(*b*) two-thirds of the amount secured by mortgage,

whichever is the greater at any time. It is considered that this limit is still within the bounds of safety. As most societies only lend on sufficient security, and certainly do not lend to anywhere near the full value of the security, the assets of the society, which includes the moneys out on mortgage to members, should always be more than sufficient to cover a borrowing by the society up to two-thirds of those mortgages.

I referred to ''four-fifths of the amount'' in New South Wales. Therein lies the vital differences between the laws of the two States. Building society loans in New South Wales are guaranteed by the Government. Therefore they can take some risk in borrowing because the Government must accept responsibility if the building society fails. In Queensland the building society stands on its own feet. That is the vital difference. There must be a minimum margin of safety in all types of business, usually ranging from 25 to 30 per cent. The hon. member for Toowong and other hon. members engaged in business must know this. I do not think the risk involved in speculative business is the proper way to encourage home builders. For that reason I do not think the amendment is sound. Whilst I am always kind and generous to the Opposition this is one occasion I must say no. I cannot accept the amendment.

Amendment (Mr. Morris) negatived.

Clause 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—Special powers of certain Terminating Societies in respect of borrowing—

Mr. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha) (2.54 p.m.): Clause 3 makes provision for special powers of certain terminating societies in respect of borrowing. Having spoken on this several times, I feel that there is hardly any necessity for me to make my point again. In case there should be any misunderstanding, let me say that from what I have seen and learned about the operation of building societies that are receiving special provision under Clause 3, they are excellent examples of this type of organisation. If there is to be an extension of the principle of building societies throughout the rest of the State—as I believe there will be—they should take the existing societies in Ipswich as a model. There is another feature about the Ipswich building societies that is very desirable. I am given to understand that a number of people are giving voluntary service to these organisations.

Mr. Power: Are you stonewalling?

Mr. MORRIS: I am not. There is another Bill in which I am very interested but I felt that I should record my appreciation of the work that was being done.

Clause 3, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

MINING ON PRIVATE LAND ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Graham, Mackay, in the chair.)

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory—Secretary for Mines) (2.58 p.m.): I move—

''That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Mining on Private Land Acts 1909 to 1954, in certain particulars.''

The principal purposes of the Mining on Private Land Acts are—

(*a*) to declare the Crown's ownership of gold and other minerals, with a few specified particular exceptions; and

(*b*) to allow of minerals which are owned by the Crown and located on private land, that is land already freeholded or capable of being freeholded, to be searched for and mined, while at the same time providing reasonable safeguards to the freeholder for protection of his improvements and for compensating him for interference with his beneficial enjoyment of his freehold surface.

The first essential for any person who desires to enter on private land for any purposes of the Mining Acts is to secure from the nearest warden a permit to enter upon the private land specified, during the currency of which such person may search for mineral and peg and apply for mining titles.

With increased prices for rutile, there has been since late 1955 intense interest in the prospecting for and location of beach sands minerals, particularly in south-eastern coastal Queensland. As a result much work is performed by departmental officers in respect of permits to enter and search on private land in the direction of answering inquiries,

receiving and dealing with applications and in particular in searches at the Titles Office to check descriptions of areas applied for.

Whilst there has been no abuse by established mining operators of the provisions of the Acts referring to the application for and grant of permits to enter and search, large numbers of other people are now keenly interested in the search for rutile particularly, and there are strong reasons for believing that some applicants are not always bona fide.

A permit is tenable for 30 days and, whilst there is no provision for renewal, neither is there any prohibition of a subsequent application by the same person. In some cases the one applicant lodges a large number of applications for permits over parcels of private land and, after the expiration of the 30 days' currency of the permit, again applies for further permits over the same, or substantially the same areas, which in many cases are each less than an acre in extent and capable of being prospected for rutile in a comparatively short time. It appears therefore that certain persons are endeavouring to lock up, as it were, as much ground as possible for reasons best known to themselves. Whilst the entry of strangers upon private land must necessarily be authorised in respect of the Crown's minerals, the spirit of the Acts is that there should be a minimum of interference with the freeholder.

As will be known to hon. members, during the past 12 months or so there has been considerable publicity as to the anxiety and annoyance of freeholders in respect of the search for minerals on their private land.

In this regard it is perhaps apt that I make some pertinent comments on those lines. In view of the fact that the mineral in private land is the property of the Crown, there must be a procedure to enable such mineral to be searched for and exploited. At the same time due regard must be had to the rights of the freeholder, and interference with such rights must be only such as is necessary. My department will administer the Act in that spirit.

Some erroneous impressions are also held and I feel that I should correct a few of the more important. Insofar as freehold land which is improved—and within 50 yards therefrom—is concerned, no mining lease can be granted without the consent in writing of the freeholder. Similar provisions apply to any area of less than half an acre in a town, whether improved land or not. In such cases the freeholder himself makes the decision.

In respect of unimproved freehold land, no mining rights can be conferred unless and until compensation to the freeholder, the measure of which is provided in the Act, has been determined either by agreement between the miner and the freeholder, or, failing such agreement, by the warden's court on plaint and summons in that direction.

In any agreement between a freeholder and a miner as to compensation, it is competent to incorporate conditions on any aspect related to the mining, such as duration of mining and how the land shall be left at the conclusion of mining.

After a close review, it is clear that amendments in various directions are necessary to meet present-day conditions, and that when the Bill becomes effective the position will be satisfactory.

I propose to give a brief explanation of the Bill. Clause 1 is a machinery one.

Clause 2 inserts a new Section 10A to make it perfectly clear that a current permit to enter must be held by a person over private land when he pegs and applies for a mining tenement comprising that private land. This is necessary to remove all doubts on that point.

Clause 3 repeals Section 11 and inserts a new Section 11. In recent proceedings before the Full Court, the Court did not interpret that Section to decide whether a freeholder must himself take out a permit to enter in respect of his own freehold land before doing anything for the purposes of the Mining Acts, such as pegging and applying for a mining lease.

The departmental view is that the present Section 11 applies to the freeholder as well as to strangers as the mineral belongs to the Crown and the freeholder has no greater rights thereto than or preference over a stranger. As the Full Court did not determine that point, it is considered desirable to make it beyond doubt that the freeholder has no greater rights than the stranger. Otherwise, even if a permit is given to a stranger, as provided in the Acts, a freeholder can nullify the benefit of that permit by himself pegging and applying for a lease without first acquiring a permit.

The new Section also provides a penalty for breach of the Section—an omission or oversight to which attention was drawn by the Full Court.

Clause 4 deals with the effects of the amendments to Section 12 which are as follows:—

(i.) to require applications for permits to be for contiguous areas up to the same maximum of 640 acres and to require the applicant to furnish a plan and proper description.

Experience has shown that it is not desirable for one application to cover more than one separate area, and that applicants have been, to say the least, casual in the descriptions furnished, necessitating this department to search at the Titles Office to ensure that the permit when issued contains a correct and and proper description.

(ii.) In the case of simultaneous applications there is at present no machinery for determining priority. Obviously two persons cannot be given the same rights. The amendment will authorise Wardens, in such cases, to determine priority according to merit, or, where merit cannot be distinguished, by lot.

There are several cases now of simultaneous applications. Efforts made by the Warden by discussions with the opposing applicants to have them agree to either division of the area or a determining by lot have failed, and such stalemates cannot be allowed to continue.

It is to be noted that in Clause 8 it is proposed that this provision shall be retrospective so that those existing cases of stalemate can be determined further.

(iii.) to impose a fee of £1 on each application for a permit. There has been no fee previously but work involved in each case warrants a fee of £1;

(iv.) to increase the cash deposit required to be lodged for the protection of the freeholder from £1 to £5.

The present deposit of £1 was fixed in 1909 and whilst very little, if any, damage is done by test boring for rutile, it is desired to ensure that a reasonable sum is available to the freeholder if some damage is done again.

(v.) to give Wardens discretion to refuse permits to persons who have held a permit over the same area within the preceding 12 months.

Clause 5 amends Section 15 and is consequential to the amendment of Section 11.

Clauses 6 and 7 refer to the word "owner" meaning the freeholder, which is incorrectly used in Sections 16 and 17 where the holder of the mining tenement is clearly meant.

Clause 8 provides that the power to determine priority in the case of simultaneous applications on merit or by lot shall be retrospective. This is required to determine matters now pending on which efforts to obtain agreement amongst the parties have failed.

Motion (Mr. Devries) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING.

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Devries, read a first time.

SECOND READING.

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory—Secretary for Mines) (3.11 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. GAVEN (Southport) (3.12 p.m.): This is a very desirable Bill and I am sure it will be welcomed by all hon. members. The high prices being paid for rutile have resulted in greatly increased beach mining activities in some portions of Queensland, particularly the south-east. During the past 18 months or two years there has been a good deal of activity in the search for rutile, which is now bringing approximately £115 a ton.

The experience of people on the South Coast following the intensification of beach mining caused me to suggest in the House on a couple of occasions, particularly during the Address-in-Reply debate, the necessity for some amendment to the present legislation. I am very pleased, therefore, that the Minister, the Under Secretary and the Government have taken cognisance of my suggestions and have taken some action to help private landholders.

I could trace the history of the mining of rutile, zircon, ilmenite and other concentrates, but I do not desire to waste the time of the House. It is quite probable that we shall be sitting till midnight on other legislation, so that I shall be as brief as possible. At this juncture I shall content myself with commending the Minister, the Under Secretary and the Government for acceding to my representations on behalf of the people of South-eastern Queensland, in bringing in amending legislation that will be of great help to private landholders in many parts of the State.

Clause 2 of the Bill inserts a new Section 10A in the principal Act. The granting or registering of any tenement over private land is prohibited, unless the applicant holds a permit to enter that private land, which permit is current at the time of the application and, if a surface area of the private land is applied for, is current when the land was properly pegged.

Section 9 (1) of the Act provides that, subject to the Mining Acts, but only after application made under this Act, a mining tenement comprising private land may be granted or registered. Section 11 makes it unlawful to enter or remain on private land for mining purposes without a permit, and Section 12 deals with applications for permits to enter private land. It appears that the new section has been inserted to clear any doubt that applications for mining tenements must be made during the currency of a permit and that, where surface areas of private land are involved, the pegging of such area was done during the currency of a permit.

Clause 3 substitutes a new Section 11, which makes it quite certain that an owner of private land (as well as other persons) must obtain a permit to enter that land before he can use it for mining purposes. This point was raised under the previous provisions in the wardens court at Brisbane recently. That makes it very clear that the owner of private land has no ownership claim over minerals in the land or beneath the land, whether they be gold, rutile or anything else. They are the property of the Crown.

Clause 4 amends Section 12.

Paragraph (*a*) is substantially the same as the repealed paragraph, except that it is made clear that the maximum area of 640 acres under a permit to enter private land must consist of contiguous land, and also that each application for a permit must contain a plan of the land, as well as a correct

description which will enable the boundaries to be properly defined. Previously the provision applied to land broken up into different parcels in different areas but now the land must be consolidated or the provision does not apply to it.

In (*b*) a new provision in regard to simultaneous applications is inserted. Priority of such applications is to be determined by the warden according to merit, and, where the warden decides that they cannot be distinguished by merit, then by lot. It is difficult to see under what circumstances priority of such applications could be decided by merit, and perhaps the Minister can give some indication of any such circumstance. I have every confidence in the court warden but a ballot is the only way to decide measures such as these.

Paragraph (*c*) adds a new subsection (1A) which places a filing fee of £1 on each application for a permit to enter private land. No filing fee was previously payable, but there can be no objection to the imposition of a fee because of the work and time involved by wardens and registrars in connection with each application. Whereas once there were only a few applications in these matters, the department is being inundated with requests and it is only reasonable that a fee be charged. Paragraph (*d*) amends subsection (2). Paragraph (i) increases from £1 to £5 the maximum amount which the warden can require to be deposited with each application for a permit as security to compensate the owner or occupier of the land concerned for any damage likely to occur because of operations under the permit. Such deposits are returned to the permitees at the expiration of the permits if no claims for compensation are made by the owners or occupiers of the lands concerned, or paid over, in whole or part, to such owners or occupiers if damage is done.

There is no objection to this increase. Even at £5 it would seem a low-level security on present-day values. At least it protects the private landowner to some extent as to the damage that may be caused by testing for minerals.

Paragraph (ii) is in the same strain as the amendment in Clause 2, and clears up any doubt which may have existed in this regard.

The paragraph will now read—

> "During the currency of a permit no other permit shall be granted for the same land and it shall not be competent for any person other than the holder of that permit to apply for any mining tenement of any of the private land the subject of that permit."

Paragraph (*e*) inserts new subsection (4A). It empowers the warden to refuse to grant any permit to any person who has held a permit in respect of the same land within 12 months preceding the date of the last application.

Section 4 gives the warden discretionary power to grant or refuse a permit, and the only avenue of appeal from his decision in this regard is to the Minister. It would appear that the new insertion is covered by the warden's general discretionary power, but no harm is done by particularising as to his discretion, and hence there is no objection to this part of the Bill.

In my association with the Ministers, Under Secretaries of the Department of Mines and court wardens we have had to iron out many difficulties. They have visited my area on many occasions. In the exercise of their discretion they have adopted a common-sense approach at all times. Our relationship has always been a happy one.

Clause 5 is consequential on the amendment to Section 10. Clause 6 amends Section 16.

Previously the first paragraph of Section 16 read—

> "The grant or registration of a mining tenement for the purpose of seeking for gold or mineral on private land shall confer upon the owner—(then follows certain rights in connection with mining)——"

In view of the fact that the term "owner" is used elsewhere in the Act in relation to the owner of private land, and the obvious fact that the reference in this section applies to the holder of the mining tenement (whether he be the owner of the land comprised in the tenement or some other person), the amendment is necessary to place the term, as used here, beyond doubt.

Clause 7 amends Section 17. It involves an amendment similar to the amendment to Section 16.

Clause 8 makes provision for simultaneous applications subsisting at the time of passing of the Bill. There is an obvious error in this clause. The reference to Section "Three" in line 15 should read as a reference to Section "Four."

I am sure that there will be no objection to the Bill. I am very interested in mining and consequently welcome it wholeheartedly. I am sure the Bill will receive the blessing of every hon. member.

Mr. HILEY (Coorparoo) (3.23 p.m.): The fact that the Bill is brought forward reflects two things. First of all it indicates that after following a somewhat desultory course of activity in Queensland for several generations, mining has really come to life. Secondly, it has come to life in closely built-up areas. When the mining laws were originally framed, particularly in their approach to mining on private land, no-one could have forecast that mining activity would take place in other than the remote, less accessible parts of the State. It was never dreamed that there would be intensive mining activity in places which were ultimately to become areas of intensive settlement like so many of the coastal beaches. Because of the recent development, particularly in the beach sands

field on the South Coast, some of the weaknesses of the previous approach have become apparent. The Bill unquestionably takes a material step forward to meet the problem of mining on private land. However, it is not the complete answer to the difficulties of mining in built-up areas. It has been made clear that the owner of the surface land must take all the steps, as if he were a stranger, because he does not own the minerals in the land. I am certain that that is the strictly correct interpretation in law. In tidying that up the Government are doing the right thing. Although you are clarifying the areas of contiguous lands than can be applied for, and amending the fees and increasing your demands in the way of proper plans and descriptions, one thing has to be faced up to sooner or later, but I do not think it is tackled in this Bill. Let us take a well settled street in any of the areas fringing the South Coast. Let us take a street fronting 32-perch blocks where there are 20 houses in a row. In due course mineral is found to follow in a tunnel that crosses the street, and a number of applications are made for permits to enter on that mining lease. The whole framework of the law provides that before a lease is granted total and full compensation must be secured for the occupant of the block of land on which the mineral is found. No mining lease will be granted until his interests are safeguarded. In addition to that there is the provision which restricts mining within a certain limit of the area.

Mr. Devries: That is within 50 yards.

Mr. HILEY: That is 150 feet. There is a well developed suburban street on the South Coast in which there are 20 houses. They find a strip of rutile running up 50 yards in width and running across the street. That 50 yards is taken and you have a protection of 50 yards on either side. The occupants of houses in the street, although they are concerned with the mining activity because the noise is destroying the peaceful content of the area, have no rights.

Mr. Devries: Would not the mining warden have to take all those things into consideration?

Mr. HILEY: I do not think he could. He can merely apply the Act and the Act says that he must give adequate compensation to anyone whose land has to be taken for a mining lease. There is no doubt about the people on the lease, there is no doubt about the people 50 yards on either side, but once you go 51 yards from the area of operation those people have no rights, yet they would be affected by the conduct of mining operations so close to their neighbourhood. I had hoped that in reviewing this matter the Minister would have had regard to the problems of mining operations in these intensely settled areas, and had some review of those areas to ensure that the people who got these leases did not merely have to protect the people on the land subject to the lease and on the 50 yard strip on either side, but also the people on the fringes who would be affected by the mining operations.

Mr. Hilton interjected.

Mr. HILEY: The hon. gentleman can imagine what the position would be in a closely settled built-up area when mining operations were carried out 51 yards away from one's residence.

Mr. Hilton: It would only be of temporary duration.

Mr. HILEY: That may be. That would affect the amount of compensation. A person within the 50 yard limit has all the rights in the world, but a person 51 yards away has no right. The fact that this matter is not covered does not spoil the Bill. I approve the Bill. The problem I have mentioned in my opinion merits consideration.

A person who wants to mine or search for minerals on private land must obtain a permit to enter and pay a certain fee. I understand that the currency of the permit will not be varied. It is unduly short. This criticism is common in mining circles in Queensland. I understand the period is one month.

Mr. Devries: Thirty days.

Mr. HILEY: That does not permit a proper search. The currency of permits in New South Wales is unduly long, 12 months. The land is tied up for too long a period. If a person is permitted to search on private property, he should be given sufficient time to make a reasonable search. I do not suggest that the time should be sufficient to make a most minute search.

Mr. Gaven: Many do not want to search.

Mr. HILEY: They should be dealt with in a different way. I should not object to the right to apply for an extension after a month if the person making the application could show he has worked during that month, and I should not object to the payment of a real fee for that privilege. The fees of £1 and £5 are trifling fees. I make that suggestion because prospecting is very necessary in the interests of this State and it should be properly and adequately carried out. The fee could be in accordance with the fee charged for a mining lease of the same area, in proportion to the period of the extension. The Minister knows that my office does a tremendous amount of mining work. Having got an authority to enter, we have to get to work feverishly. We may not be able to get the geologist we want, and the job may have to be done with any plant that can be got together, as the work has to be done in 30 days. That is not the most desirable approach.

I have no sympathy for the person who takes out an authority to enter and, as mentioned by the hon. member for Southport, does not make any effort to find

minerals, but the genuine searcher who is prepared to carry out a proper programme should be given a reasonable time. The initial fees are £1 and £5.

Mr. Devries: They are nominal.

Mr. HILEY: And they should be nominal. As a matter of principle, it is undesirable that the State should hamper prospecting by people of slender means.

Mr. Devries: We do not want to kill the goose that may lay the golden egg.

Mr. HILEY: Exactly. Whilst it may be argued what is £1 or £5, somebody might do hundreds of pounds worth of damage and pay only £5. He has only got to be a bit careless in the use of fire and hundreds of pounds worth of damage could be done to fencing. If he is careless with his fracturing when doing a bit of shooting, heavens above, he could soon damage many times more than £5 worth of property. I still say that you have a perfect right to keep the fees nominal because the history of mining shows that it is sometimes the poor chap with hardly a thing in the world but his hammer and his dolly pot and his swag on his back who makes history. He succeeds the hard way in making worth-while discoveries of minerals. It would be foolish for a young country like Australia to make prospecting only available to people with money. I hope that the Government will always make it possible for the poor man to have a "go" at prospecting. I approve of the £1 and the £5, but the Minister might examine the question of the month and see if he can make it an automatic extension. But on the extension, do not hesitate to charge a reasonable fee.

I welcome every provision in the Bill. My only doubt is that my heart bleeds a little for the chap outside the 50 yards radius who sees his neighbour over the fence getting all the consideration when he himself gets none. I will not be told that he is not affected. His access might be cut off and if mining operations are crossing a street, instead of being able to cross it he has to go the long way round. Then there is the question of noise and interference with trucks flying up and down. The man 51 yards away is not affected. I leave with the Minister the matter of 30 days in the hope that he will go part of the way his colleagues in the other States have gone in providing a longer period. I say to the Minister, do not hesitate to put on a worthwhile fee.

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory—Secretary for Mines) (3.38 p.m.), in reply: The hon. member for Coorparoo referred to the 50 yards. It is known that we cannot give a mining title unless it is agreed to by the freeholder of the land.

Mr. Hiley: Of the land in question?

Mr. DEVRIES: I have no information before me to lead me to believe that people just outside the area are interested. There has been no demand except in the cases referred to by the hon. member. We are faced with the drawing of a line of demarcation; there must be a starting point somewhere, but how we can attack it, I do not know. I shall be happy to have my officers look at that point.

As to the permit to enter expiring in 30 days, it is mandatory under the Act. In smaller mining ventures, there is the man who enters upon a half-acre allotment. I feel, with due deference to the hon. member, that 30 days would be quite sufficient for him to make up his mind whether to apply for a mining tenement or a license to prospect. If the period of 30 days is altered, it might have an adverse effect on the small man. I agree with the hon. member for Coorparoo that with a large mining concern it might be a different matter, but at this stage I am loth to give any assurance that I shall interfere with the present period. Of course, anything done in that direction would have to be by legislation. I shall have my officers investigate the hon. member's suggestion.

I thank the hon. member for Southport for his contribution to the debate. He really made a second-reading speech for me. Following his suggestions on Section 12A of the Act, after consulting with my officers I find that an error has been made and I shall move an amendment in Committee. I thank the hon. member for drawing my attention to the error.

Motion (Mr. Devries) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Turner, Kelvin Grove, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 to 3, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—Amendments of s. 12; Permit to enter—

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (3.43 p.m.): I am interested in the point raised by the hon. member for Southport about simultaneous applications and the determination by the warden either by merit or lot. How will the warden determine the merit of an application? I should like to know the reason for the provision and what method the warden will use to determine the relative merits of various applications. If he is satisfied that they are equal in merit he will decide by lot, but what yardstick will he use to determine merit?

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory—Secretary for Mines) (3.44 p.m.): It is not easy to decide what constitutes merit. I presume that the warden would consider an applicant's mining knowledge, financial position, industry, and so on. If he cannot make a decision between the applicants on merit, they will have to agree to a decision by lot. I think I can see what is passing through his mind. If all things were equal, I suppose the human element would enter into it.

Mr. Hiley: Our worry was whether it was the merit of the application or the merit of the applicant.

Mr. DEVRIES: It would depend entirely on the merit of the person.

Dr. Noble: If it was a very good show, they could form a partnership.

Mr. DEVRIES: That is so. I do not know whether it would be possible. There might be two conflicting interests then. There might be three with simultaneous applications and a fourth might say, "You can get over the position by forming a partnership." That would be a matter entirely for the applicants.

Mr. Hiley: Is that a completely new doctrine in mining application practice?

Mr. DEVRIES: I do not know that it is absolutely new. I think the hon. member must allow the warden some discretionary power apart from what he already has. After all, we must have faith in the warden, the man responsible for granting the permit. The whole thing depends on the bona fides of the applicant. I suggest the financial position would be taken into consideration.

Mr. Smith: Many freeholders might apply and keep the genuine prospector out.

Mr. DEVRIES: They could not now but they might try.

Mr. Hiley: It has to be simultaneous.

Mr. DEVRIES: The applications must be lodged at the warden's office. On Monday morning, say, six people may call at the warden's office, wait for it to open, and walk up to the counter and produce an application. Then the warden would first of all try to determine the applications on their merits and, if all things were equal and he did not apply the human element, all he could do would be to suggest that they either form a syndicate or decide by the toss of a coin.

Mr. Pizzey: If he decided on the financial standing of applicants, they could never be equal.

Mr. DEVRIES: No. The financial position of the applicants would play a part in the merits of the thing. If he had the finance and no knowledge, it could not be decided on that score.

Mr. Pizzey: How could you prove he had no knowledge?

Mr. Hiley: I think you would be wiser to decide it by lot. I can picture all the difficulties in the world on merit.

Mr. DEVRIES: That would be a matter for the warden. He must exercise that power. I should hate to direct him in any way. I agree that casting lots would be the easiest way out.

Mr. Hiley: The only safe way out.

Mr. DEVRIES: But would they agree to it?

Mr. Hiley: They have to. The provision already says that when he determines that any such applications cannot be distinguished by merit, then they shall be decided by lot.

Mr. DEVRIES: One or two things may be done. All I can do is explain the way it is laid down. We cannot go beyond that.

Clause 4, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 5 to 7, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 8—Subsisting simultaneous applications—

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory—Secretary for Mines) (3.50 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

"On page 3, line 15, omit the word—
'three'
and insert in lieu thereof the word—
'four'."

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 8, as amended, agreed to.

Bill reported, with an amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

ACCLIMATISATION SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND TRANSFER BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon—Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation) (3.52 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

I explained the nature of this very simple measure when I introduced it. I have nothing further to add.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (3.53 p.m.): I am particularly interested in the Bill because I have had a long association with the Acclimatisation Society. Although the action taken under the Bill is more or less inevitable and the society's assets will be used to great effect one does not like to see a voluntary organisation of this nature wind up. It has served a very useful purpose in carrying out the objectives for which it was originally established.

The purpose of the Bill is to transfer the lands and other property of the Acclimatisation Society of Queensland to the University of Queensland. The preamble sets out—

(1) The manner in which the society's freehold land at Redland Bay is held.

(2) The fact that the functions of the society (agricultural development) have largely passed to governmental and semi-governmental organisations, and that, as a result, further perserverence does not hold any prospect of worth-while achievement.

Many of the society's activities are now being carried on more effectively by the Department of Agriculture and Stock because of their larger ramifications, greater finance and other factors, and by the C.S.I.R.O. The preamble further sets out—

(3) The fact that the society resolved on 12 April, 1956, that the best method of ensuring that its assets are devoted to the furtherance of its objective would be to hand over such assets to the University of Queensland.

(4) In handing over its assets the Society expressed the desire that they be used for the furtherance of the study and teaching of applied botany and zoology and Queensland agricultural problems.

The property is a very valuable highly improved farm at Cleveland valued at £5,560 and worth every penny of it. There is also £10,000 invested in Commonwealth bonds. The society was first established in 1862 and its first activities were at Bowen Park near the site of the General Hospital. As its activities grew it moved to Lawnton which was in my electorate when I first became a member of this House. It had a good property at Lawnton on the banks of the Pine River, but it was not a particularly fertile piece of land and had many limitations in regard to the work of the society. It sold that property and purchased the present property at Cleveland. I wish to make reference to one gentleman associated with the society who did a tremendous amount of work for it. I refer to Mr. W. Ewart, who was secretary for many years. Mr. R. Allsop, who did much work on the practical side, has unfortunately passed away. He was the farm manager and experimenter in charge of the practical activities of the society. Since his death shortly after the society transferred its activities to Cleveland the committee had great difficulty in finding anyone with the necessary qualifications to carry out the practical work on the farm and to do the experimenting, grafting and budding that was necessary. Since its establishment in 1862 the society introduced tea and many tropical products such as cotton and kapok with the object of establishing those industries in Queensland. Unfortunately it did not get very far in that respect. Some of the early work done by the society in regard to tropical sugar-cane imported from various parts of the world, in conjunction with officers of the Department of Agriculture and Stock, made a material contribution to the quality of the sugar-cane that we have in Queensland today. It was also responsible for raising several good varieties of cow cane which is grown in various parts of Queensland, particularly in the Pine Rivers district where the dairy farmers use fodder cane. The society brought some of the early strains and varieties of avocado pears to Queensland from Central America. Those strains were crossed and improved. The result is that in Queensland we now have an important industry, a valuable industry in the growing of avocado pears.

The pecan nut was also introduced by the Society. The nut is becoming more popular each year and is now being grown more extensively in this State.

A considerable amount of work was done on the typing and crossing of the Queensland nut to eliminate undesirable varieties. Mr. Allsop was also responsible for the grafting of the Queensland nut. It is a particularly difficult type of plant to graft. It took many years of experiments. That was necessary to fix strains, which cannot be done if the trees are raised from seedlings. Mr. Allsop evolved a technique of grafting. He also did grafting work on mango trees and fixed the types of mangoes. Many of the varieties which were evolved by the Acclimatisation Society are growing in many parts of the State. The soya bean was another valuable plant introduced into Queensland. It is an important oil, food and fodder crop, particularly in Asian countries, and is not grown in Queensland as extensively as it should be grown. Early varieties were introduced by the Society.

A considerable amount of work was done by the Society in fixing a good eating variety of sweet potato. There are many dozens of varieties, many being suitable only for pigs. Others are excellent table vegetables. Very good varieties were introduced from other parts of the world and were raised and crossed and then distributed throughout Queensland by the Society.

Some of the early pasture experiments were carried out on the farm at Lawnton by the Department of Agriculture and Stock with the co-operation of the Society.

The Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation will be interested to know that the Society co-operated with his department and established a small area of exotic pines, the type that has been introduced into Queensland.

Having in mind all the achievements of the Society, and the useful work it has been able to do in furthering the various agricultural activities of the State, it is a pity it is passing out of existence. Nevertheless, the beautiful farm at Cleveland will now be used to the fullest advantage to further the work done by the Society in this State.

In view of the many practical problems with which it was faced, the Society decided wisely to give their assets to the Queensland University. They will now be used in the training of agriculturists, who will be able to work on the many varieties of products planted on the farm.

The Bill is to be commended. I trust that with these assets the University will be able to do something of benefit to the State by introducing new varieties and new crops and better methods of agriculture.

Mr. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha) (4.5 p.m.): In a previous debate a little while ago I spoke about some work being done by the University of Queensland in relation to research and I said that the University had been engaged in research on some 120 projects. Naturally it can be assumed that I am particularly interested in this Bill as the University will be carrying on the very good and outstanding work done for the State by the Acclimatisation Society. For that reason, if for no other, I strongly support the Bill.

I do not suppose any Bill has been introduced this Session that has caused me so much pleasure as this one. I thank the Minister for its introduction. I made some research and in browsing in the Parliamentary Library I came upon an early report not only of the Queensland Acclimatisation Society but of the formation of the first society in England in 1860. Immediately after the formation of that society the Secretary wrote to our Governor, Sir George Bowen, and when he received the letter, a copy of which is enclosed in this report—and I commend it to anybody who has the time to read it—he signified his intention of forming such a society in Queensland. He did it with much success and that is acknowledged in the comments by the Leader of the Opposition. He told us of the many things introduced into Queensland by the Acclimatisation Society, more than I had seen in the report. However, the humble choko was another achievement by the Acclimatisation Society. The society did excellent work that will now be carried on by the University.

In the course of my reading I noticed that one of the first depots held by the society was called Yorke's Hollow. I had quite a problem in discovering just where it was, but eventually I found that it was where the present Exhibition Grounds are.

Mr. Rasey: Actually the Victoria Park Golf Club, down towards the Exhibition.

Mr. MORRIS: Yes. I wanted to make these comments because we get argumentative at times and it is pleasing to have an opportunity of saying something pleasant about the early days.

Mr. HERBERT (Sherwood) (4.9 p.m.): I have a family association with the Acclimatisation Society and I have early memories of the old gardens at Lawnton. My father was a member of the society until the date of its winding up and so there is a certain sentimental reason for my speaking. The property is valued at approximately £5,000. It consists of 9 acres of irrigated land in the best part of Redland Bay and there is a good residence on it. I should say that the valuation is particularly conservative. In actual fact, the University is acquiring an asset worth approximately £20,000.

I make the suggestion that in future the property could carry the name of the society, or one of its founders, as a permanent record of the source from which the University acquired it. After a time, the memory of many of these things fades away and nobody knows where they originated.

The property will be of great value to the University, particularly to the fourth-year students in the Faculty of Agriculture. They are at present using a rather unsatisfactory property at Moggill. It is not irrigated and is nowhere near the standard of the property at Redland Bay. The University will probably derive revenue from the property for some time, because its requirements will be met by a couple of acres of the irrigated land. The house and the remainder of the property could be used by a share-farmer. Rather than being a cost to the Faculty, therefore, the property will probably bring in revenue. The University has done very well out of the gift, in that it is getting a substantial sum of money and an asset that will require no financial outlay. I commend the Bill.

Motion (Mr. Hilton) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 to 4, both inclusive, schedule and preamble, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

BURDEKIN RIVER TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon—Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation) (4.15 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

This simple measure was fully explained on the introductory stage and no doubt it will meet with the approval of hon. members.

Mr. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha) (4.16 p.m.): Though the Bill is a simple one of only two clauses, it provoked an interesting discussion which should help the Minister and his officers just as it will help those who know little of this work in the State. I do not propose to traverse the ground again.

I shall confine myself to the principles of the Bill. It amends the definition of "Works" in the principal Act. The existing definition reads—

> "The term includes the whole or any part of any works project, undertaking, or other matter or thing whatsoever undertaken and/or maintained under this Act for the purpose of repairing as far as may be damage occasioned to the banks of any river within a benefited area prior to or after the passing of this Act by flood or cyclone and/or of preventing as far as may be the future occurrence of such damage;
>
> "The term also includes any trees, grass, or other plants planted and/or maintained for any of the aforesaid purposes."

The important part is the use of the phrase "the banks." It will be noted that the definition is confined to the repairing and prevention of damage occasioned to banks of rivers. The Solicitor-General has given the opinion that the definition is not wide enough to cover the removal of trees, silt and other obstructions from the beds or banks of rivers. It might be argued that works for the prevention of future damage to the banks of a river could be extended to the channel of the stream itself to cover the removal of obstructions in the stream channel. Such work would prevent the diversion of water against the banks with consequent damage.

However, if the matter is at all open to doubt, it is as well to clarify it, and the Bill serves that purpose.

The definition includes the clearing and removing of trees, debris, silt and any other obstructions from the bed and/or banks of any river. As such work has already been done by various river trusts, the Bill is made retrospective by declaring that such clearing and removal of obstruction has always been included in the definition of "Works" under the Act.

Although the Bill may not be necessary, it is desirable to remove any misunderstanding and we have no objection to it.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (4.20 p.m.): This is a very important Bill, although I cannot expect metropolitan members, people who have not been more than the proverbial five yards away from a tramline, to realise its importance. I was member for the district when the Burdekin River Trust Bill was introduced following serious erosion of the banks. I realise that the problems there confront people in many other parts of Queensland. We have a particularly serious problem in Townsville. Ever since the tremendous flood of 1946, instead of flowing almost straight to the sea from the vicinity of Aplin's weir, the Ross River has taken a very wide curve between Aplin's weir and the bridge at the Ross River meatworks. Year after year the river has been carried into the curve, so that today it traverses twice the distance between Aplin's weir and the mouth that it did 10 years ago. Because of the distance the river now has to travel, naturally the speed of the water has been slowed down. Anyone who knows anything about these matters knows that slow-running water deposits much more silt and sand than fast-running water. When I was on the council in Townsville we embarked on a scheme to arrest the sweep that has developed between Aplin's weir and the bridge. Unfortunately we were defeated in 1949 and the new council still holds office.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to connect his remarks with the Bill.

Mr. AIKENS: I will. That council decided that they would not go on with the scheme. They spent the money we had provided for the purpose on other projects. All we have in regard to the serious flooding of the Ross River is a mud map at the University in Brisbane. It would be a good idea if the Ross River could be brought within the ambit of the Bill and a Ross River Trust set up.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in order. I ask him to confine his remarks to the principles contained in the Bill.

Mr. AIKENS: The present council intends to do nothing about it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! We are not dealing with the Ross River. We are dealing with the Burdekin River Trust.

Mr. AIKENS: The Ross River will break through at Sheriff Street. The new high level bridge built over the Ross River at the meatworks will be spanning dry ground, whereas Hermit Park will be completely divided by the river. It could result in a tremendous amount of damage and loss of life.

Mr. Dewar: You will have to start another Labour Party.

Mr. AIKENS: Whether we do or not, the fact remains that death and damage will result from it. There are many ways in which this problem could be tackled. I had hoped that I might have the opportunity on the second reading of the Bill to deal with some of the measures that should be adopted in order to prevent such a tragic and catastrophic happening to the people of Townsville.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member knows that he should make those remarks on the introduction of the Bill. We are dealing with the principles of the Bill at this stage.

Mr. AIKENS: Something will have to be done urgently to prevent a catastrophy in Townsville. In view of your ruling I will resume my seat.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) (4.24 p.m.): Hon. members will remember when the Bill was introduced I expressed fears of what

might happen if the area were greater. I have not the same knowledge of the Burdekin River as I have of the Condamine. I am reminded of what was said by a man who has taken a great deal of trouble to investigate the flooding of rivers over a period of years because of silting. The felling of timber along our rivers has helped to bring about the blockage of the streams. The clerk of the Wambo Shire went to a lot of trouble to prepare a case. He thought that the matter could be dealt with more effectively by the councils whose areas the river flows through. On the introductory stage I said that the Hunter River Trust had become too cumbersome. The Wambo shire clerk's idea was that the river should be dredged to allow the water to get away as quickly as possible and not spread over the land. As the Minister has decided to have the trust there is nothing much we can do about it. Rather than extend the operations of a trust, it may be more effective to take the matter up with the local authorities through which he river runs. The Huner River in New South Wales has probably caused millions of pounds worth of damage. When I was a boy I swam in it, and in the places which were deep holes in those days the water would not reach above one's knees today.

Mr. Aikens: Cutting timber on the headwaters of the river causes a lot of damage.

Mr. SPARKES: Yes. One of the principal causes of trouble on the Condamine are the willow trees. The willow tree tends to lean over and timber and debris pile up against it, silt is built up and the water is forced out over the banks.

Mr. Devries: That is happening in the rivers in the West.

Mr. SPARKES: The western rivers are more subject to that than any other rivers. In that area the country is low lying and when the water gets out of the river it can go anywhere; it may form a completely new channel. I am sure that the hon. member for Gregory knew places in the rivers a few years ago where there were deep holes and today he would hardly be able to fill his quart out of them. We are endeavouring to devise ways and means of preventing this siltation. I am wondering whether our objective could not be achieved much more easily by action by the councils through whose areas the river flows.

Mr. Hilton: You made that suggestion on the introductory stage.

Mr. SPARKES: I realise that. It is never too late to make a good suggestion.

Mr. Aikens: You cannot repeat it too often.

Mr. SPARKES: You cannot repeat it too often.

After all, we have not done anything in regard to the many rivers the hon. gentleman mentioned. The position in those rivers is not satisfactory. I hope the trusts will be a success.

I was in the Hunter Valley within the last month. That trust has not been the success it was hoped it would be. One of the worst floods in the history of white men in this country occurred in that river less than two years ago. Opposition members hope that these trusts will be a success. The hon. member for Cunningham is vitally interested in the problem. As his people are interested, he is naturally interested. No one hopes more than the hon. member for Cunningham that the trust will be a success.

Not long ago I visited a place called, Cunningham, outside Warwick. I was shown what happened on that river. The channel looked as if it had been blocked deliberately. It was filled with logs, willow trees and heaped-up silt.

If my memory is correct, when I last saw the Burdekin River the sand in the middle of the river was nearly as high as the banks.

Mr. Aikens: In big islands.

Mr. SPARKES: Yes. That is the position in most of our rivers.

I have suggested that the work should be done by shire councils, because they would have the machinery, not necessarily expensive machinery, and would be in a better position to have it done under the supervision of their engineers than a trust.

As a boy I can remember sailing up and down the Darling River. We were always looking for the "Florence Annie", or as it was affectionately known, "Flying Fanny", a boat that used to transport bullocks. Today that river is full of silt.

Mr. Devries: That is the position in the Thompson River at Longreach.

Mr. SPARKES: That is another example. When we were boys those rivers were big waterways.

It is a big problem. I hope the trusts will be a success and will overcome the floods that are occurring and will continue to occur in the rivers of this State.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (4.33 p.m.): This is a particularly important Bill. The provisions have been needed for some time.

Trusts formed under the Burdekin River Trust Act have done very valuable work, but their effectiveness was limited because they were unable to deal with blockages, trees, grass and other plants. This Bill will enable trusts to protect the bank of the streams and keep clear the channels of streams.

Through the courtesy of the hon. member for Burdekin I had the opportunity of inspecting the work on the Burdekin River. Valuable experience has been gained by that

trust. It has done excellent work. The hon. member for Burdekin with myself and other hon. members were accompanied by Mr. Ford the chairman of the shire, and were shown over the works to preserve the banks of the river. We saw all the bamboos and other types of vegetation grown in places to stop the rush of the flood and prevent erosion and damage to property. It is to be admitted that the Trust has done a mighty job in obviating serious floodings in certain parts of the Burdekin and it has prevented damage to the banks. One knows that if the many obstructions in rivers were not removed a lot of the work would be wasted and the work of the Trust upset. There was a weakness in the Act and this Bill will enable the Trust to clear streams and protect banks.

There are two different problems in this State regarding river control. There is the coastal river and the inland river. The coastal river usually floods very quickly and runs rapidly whereas the western rivers, where the fall of the land is slight they rise comparatively slowly and spread out. They do not run quickly. We still have the common problem of blockage of river beds and if we do not clear river beds we accentuate the flood problem.

The hon. member for Aubigny mentioned a scheme put forward by Mr. Darcy Armstrong the chairman of the Wambo Shire. That was before the Burdekin River Trust was formed and before trusts were thought of. The idea was to keep the stream beds of western rivers clear to enable the water to flow freely. The suggestion was that each shire council should be responsible for keeping clear the streams within its area. Because of the State-wide importance of the scheme the idea was that the shires should get help from the Government on a subsidy basis, as the Government subsidise roads and other local authority works. Personally, I thought it was an excellent idea. The purpose behind the Bill is to give power to trusts to clear river courses. Unfortunately the limits of the trusts are small when we consider the Condamine River. The trust will operate on a small portion of a river that runs for many miles through Queensland. When we clean up one section we do not clean up the river further down and when we have disastrous floods, such as the one at Texas, we accentuate the obstructions by diverting the water. The Minister should give consideration to the extension of the trust activities to enable it to control all of the river. The scheme propounded by Mr. Darcy Armstrong was to clear rivers of obstructions, to make them capable of carrying a considerable body of water, instead of mere gutters. All that is left after a couple of weeks is a string of waterholes filled with logs and sandbanks. I hope the trusts throughout the State will be of greater service than previously because of the increased powers being given to them.

I commend the Bill, and hope that before long we shall see more trusts to protect the rivers and streams.

Mr. KEYATTA (Townsville) (4.41 p.m.): The Burdekin River Trust, and similar trusts, are of vital importance not only to Queensland, but to the Commonwealth generally. They have been set up to provide a quick getaway for flood waters in the various rivers. Trusts should be formed in all river areas with the respousibility of removing obstructions. I do not agree with the suggestion that local authorities should control the work. Trusts should be vested with power to carry out work that they think fit.

Siltation in rivers and streams is a much greater danger than many people realise. It lifts the level of the water and in flood-time causes the stream to overflow much sooner than would otherwise be the case. Both the Ross River and the Burdekin River have changed their courses following siltation, and have left a series of waterholes in the original courses. Flooding resulting from siltation endangers dams, bridges, and even homes.

This is really a national matter. We have not enough active trusts to enable a quick getaway of flood waters. I refer particularly to the Lismore area and areas in Victoria and South Australia that recently suffered immense damage through flooding. The creation of more trusts would tend to eliminate much of the serious damage that is caused by floods at present. The straightening of streams will help to remove the great curse of siltation. I compliment the Minister and support the Bill.

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon—Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation) (4.46 p.m.), in reply: These trusts are formed at the request of the local authorities concerned and, while some of them may be limited, there is nothing to prevent their being enlarged if the people concerned wish it. Otherwise legislation would have to be brought in making it mandatory for local authorities or trusts to carry out the work. I do not think the Local Government Act precludes any local authority from undertaking work in a stream in its area, with the permission of the Irrigation Commissioner.

I think the scheme propounded by the Wambo Council shire clerk, as mentioned by the hon. member for Aubigny, came about because he was impressed with the excellent work done by the council at Goondiwindi. Of course, no trust operated there. The council took the initiative. It was granted a loan and subsidy and it went ahead and de-snagged and de-silted the stream. It showed him what local authorities could do once they decided to tackle the job. Any other local authority would be allowed to do the same without the need to form a trust. If it does not wish to undertake the work and if it asks the Irrigation Commission to have a trust formed, the Act gives that power. The Bill will clarify the position as to any type of work.

I remind the hon. member for Mundingburra that the Burdekin River Trust Act was passed in 1940, I think, before he became a member of this Assembly. While he is deeply interested in the Trusts operations, his enthusiasm must have confused his accuracy in political history.

Mr. Aikens: It never really got going until I got into Parliament.

Mr. HILTON: I am speaking of the Act.

Motion (Mr. Hilton) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Turner, Kelvin Grove, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

COMMONWEALTH AND STATE HOUSING AGREEMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. C. G. McCATHIE (Haughton—Secretary for Public Works, Housing and Immigration) (4.51 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

All hon. members have had an opportunity to study the Bill. I gave full details of its contents in my introductory remarks so there is very little for me to add at this stage. I stress, however, that under the 1956 agreement houses can be sold at a minimum deposit of £250. The old agreement still applies. The conditions of sale therein remain mandatory and the terms and provisions of the 1945 agreement still apply.

Mr. DEWAR (Chermside) (4.52 p.m.): I agree that the Minister fully outlined the Bill on its initiation. It is a very long Bill containing a mass of detail. It was impossible to absorb all the information when the Minister introduced the Bill. I am still uncertain about the 1945 agreement which was amended last year. It made provision to sell homes to persons occupying them on a rental basis on a deposit of 5 per cent. of the first £2,000 and 10 per cent. of the balance. I do not know whether that will still apply to homes built prior to June this year.

Mr. McCathie: That is right.

Mr. DEWAR: It will not apply to houses built for rental under this agreement? It terminates with the 1945 agreement?

Mr. McCathie: That is the position.

Mr. DEWAR: I was not sure. There is very little that we can do to amend the Bill, even if we wished, because it is an agreement with the Commonwealth and already the legislation has been passed by the Commonwealth Government. We attempted to amend the agreement last year and got nowhere. I have studied the Bill, and there is nothing we desire to amend. It provides for the encouragement of home ownership, which we, on this side of the House, desire at all times. The opportunities are restricted at the moment because of the limitation of finance.

The Bill provides that building societies will get 20 per cent. of the allocation to the State for the first two years and 30 per cent. in the subsequent three years. It also provides that 5 per cent of the State moneys is to be used for building homes for serving personnel. If the State uses the 5 per cent. to build homes and sells them to serving personnel in the armed forces the Commonwealth Government will immediately reimburse the State to make up the 5 per cent. The rate of repayments is the long-term bond rate, less three-quarters of one per centum per annum, if the long-term bond rate does not exceed 4½ per cent. per annum, or 1 per cent. per annum if the long-term bond rate exceeds 4½ per cent. per annum. The repayment period is still 53 years. Flats may be built provided they do not exceed three storeys, which is a step in the right direction. Hon. members will recollect that I have advocated the building of flats, particularly when building controls operated and the Government decided to conserve materials. There was a limit of 1,250 square feet. They would provide family units for the expenditure of less material. It would be suitable accommodation for childless and aged couples, bachelors and spinsters. Under present circumstances it is almost impossible for them to secure adequate accommodation because the policy has been to build only family homes. I applaud the building of family homes, but some flats should also be built. I trust that the Government will consider the building of flats to provide a number of home units for people who need them. Hawkins and Nelson House on the Thames in London accommodates hundreds of families. There are swimming pools and parks incorporated in the layout.

I am pleased that there is provision in the Bill for the construction of flats. The new agreement provides that the money to be made available to the States may be used for forming, making, paving, kerbing or draining of streets, roads or thoroughfares for the purpose of the dwellings, and for draining or otherwise making suitable for the purpose of the dwellings, land upon which the dwellings are to be erected. That is a sound provision. As I said on the Introductory stage, the land utilised by the Housing Commission was not always suitable. When I was driving out to the aerodrome in an A.N.A. bus in Townsville this

year I saw water lying underneath the homes on the Housing Commission area at Garbutt, although there had not been flood rains. Land not entirely suitable for residential purposes has been utilised by the Queensland Housing Commission not only in Brisbane but in other parts of the State. I discovered that to my sorrow in the Chermside electorate. The hon. member for Sherwood may have something to say on that subject. He has often discussed with me the drainage problem at Inala. I am glad that some of the money may be utilised for draining land and I hope the Housing Commission will take advantage of that provision. Homes are urgently needed, but the health of the occupiers of those homes must be taken into consideration.

Unless the State is informed by the Commonwealth that a dwelling erected for a serving member of the Forces is not for some reason required by a serving member, that dwelling shall be let, at the option of the State, to a serving member of the Forces nominated by the Commonwealth, or to the Commonwealth, and not otherwise.

The Bill also provides that as far as possible 50 per cent. of the dwellings shall be allotted to members of the Forces, dependants of members of the Forces, and widows of deceased members of the Forces.

An ex-Service man who is eligible for assistance under the War Service Homes Act may purchase a home, and that home will be purchased by the War Service Homes Division. The purchase price will be credited immediately to the State. If a home is sold on terms over a prescribed period, the State has to pay interest on that money during the amortisation of that dwelling. If the purchaser is an ex-Service man eligible for assistance under the War Service Homes Act, he can borrow that money from the War Service Homes Division and the State will be relieved of the responsibility of interest on that money.

The Bill covers advances to approved building societies, the Brisbane Permanent Building and Banking Co. Ltd., and the Queensland Housing Commission. The rates of interest are set out in the Bill, ½ per cent. more than the rate charged by the Commonwealth to the State for building societies, ¼ per cent. for the Brisbane Permanent Building and Banking Co. Ltd., and the same rate for the Queensland Housing Commission as that charged by the Commonwealth to the State.

Building societies may loan up to £2,750 if that advance represents 90 per cent. of the value or purchase price of the house and the land, and in excess of £2,750 and up to £4,000 if the loan does not exceed 66⅔ per cent. of the value or purchase price of the house and land. Building societies may charge interest of not more than ¾ per cent. more than the rate charged by the State to the building society, the Brisbane Permanent Building and Banking Co. Ltd. a rate not more than ¾ per cent. more than the rate charged by the State, and the Queensland Housing Commission a rate not more than ½ per cent. more than the rate charged by the State.

As the Minister said, the deposit is 10 per cent. and, as far as building societies are concerned, the loans, together with interest, must be repaid in a period not exceeding 31 years.

The agreement measures up to our idea of the agreement that is needed. I agree with the Minister that more money could be made available. I discount 99 per cent. of the propaganda from Government members in the 6½ years I have been in this Chamber as to the niggardly treatment of this State by the Federal Government. I point out, however, that the Commonwealth Government are using revenue not only to finance loan works but also to wipe out part of the national debt of this country. That is something we applaud. I suggested yesterday an approach to the Commonwealth Government for a special educational grant. A similar, sane approach by State Governments for a housing grant may result in more money being made available by the Commonwealth Government. Housing is important to a community, it is the fundamental basis upon which a community must live. Happiness and contentment in the home is essential to a sound society. Education and housing should be the subject of a special approach to the Commonwealth Government for money now being used from revenue to wipe out the national debt. Some of it should be available for housing.

I agree that there should be a lower rate of interest. It is not much use making millions of pounds available if the rate of interest is such that the average man cannot pay off his home in a reasonable time. If the interest rate is high he will not be interested in home ownership but he will look for a rental home. The Bill encourages home ownership. Hon. members opposite claim that Queensland has the highest percentage of home owners of all the States and they take credit for being the champions of home ownership. In the past six years I have been able to point out that the legislation of the Moore Government for workers' dwellings was really the introduction of home ownership in Queensland. A Labour Government provided for home ownership on a leasehold tenure and precious few homes were built. Last evening I delved into statistics and my investigations lead me to say quite definitely that the record of the present Labour Government or Labour Governments since the war discloses that their desire was not to promote the sale of homes to workers but to perpetuate the rental scheme. The figures I am about to quote prove my

point conclusively. They are taken from the census of 1947 and 1954. These are the figures:—

State.	Year.	Percentage of Population Owning own homes.	Increase Per cent.
Queensland ..	1947	61·2	
	1954	69·3	8·1
New South Wales..	1947	48·1	
	1954	59·2	11·1
Victoria	1947	52·7	
	1954	64·2	11·5
Tasmania	1947	52·9	
	1954	62·1	9·2
South Australia ..	1947	56·5	
	1954	65·7	9·2
Western Australia..	1947	56·6	
	1954	64·9	8·3

Queensland has the lowest increase in home-ownership of any State in Australia. Victoria's increase was the highest at 11.5 per cent., and all the other States exceeded Queensland's percentage of 8.1.

The following figures show how the populations of the various States increased through immigration between 1946 and 1951—

	Increase per 1,000 of population.
Queensland	6.83
New South Wales ..	7.93
Victoria	10.25
Tasmania	14.44
South Australia ..	13.37
Western Australia ..	15.68

During that period of five years the intake of migrants in Queensland was lower than that of any other State and, as I have already pointed out, the increase in home-ownership between 1947 ad 1954 was also lower in Queensland than in any other State. Victoria's population increased through immigration at the rate of 10.25 persons per 1,000 compared with the Queensland figure of 6.8 persons, and Victoria's increase in home-ownership was 11.5 per cent. compared with Queensland's 8.1 per cent.

In the increase in population brought about by immigration and the natural birthrate over the 7-year period, Queensland's figure is the second lowest. Victoria's increase was 397,000, Queensland's was 211,000 and South Australia's was 151,000. South Australia's figure represented an increase of 28.06 persons per 1,000, compared with Queensland's 22, and 20 in New South Wales.

There is nothing in the figures I have quoted to substantiate any statement by the Government that since the war they have done everything possible to promote home-ownership. If the present trend continues, the other States will not only overtake Queensland in home-ownership but will leave it well behind. If Queensland wants to retain its record of having the highest percentage of home-ownership in Australia it had better get busy and do what was done in pre-war years, and probably what was done before Labour became the Government. Although I cannot substantiate what I am about to say, probably one of the main reasons why Queensland leads the other States in its percentage of home-ownership is that in the days before Labour assumed office—the early days of this century—Queensland's population was composed mainly of small business men, farmers, graziers, sugar-growers, wheat-growers and men engaged in industry in their own right, all of whom would be home-owners. Probably the main reason why Queensland is still at the top of the list is that those people gave an impetus to home-ownership during the early years of this century. However, Queensland's position is gradually worsening. It has certainly declined in comparison with the other States in the last seven years. The Bill will encourage home ownership in Queensland and replenish sources that have been drying up in the past so that private enterprise may get on with the job of building homes. I have always said, and I will always believe, that private enterprise can do more than Governments, particularly in housing.

Mr. ROBERTS (Whitsunday) (5.16 p.m.): I have studied the Bill; it is very good in most respects, but a few matters cause me concern. For a start, the rate of interest for the building societies may be an obstacle. I do not believe in high interest rates but the provision is for ¾ of 1 per cent. for the terminating societies and I am not sure of the rate for the Brisbane Permanent Building and Banking Co. Ltd.

Mr. McCathie: Three-quarters of 1 per cent.

Mr. ROBERTS: It is still ¾ of 1 per cent. for them.

Mr. McCathie: And only ½ of 1 per cent. for the Housing Commission.

Mr. ROBERTS: That is so. Many of the organisations we are hoping to use may find it uneconomic.

I understand that the money to be made available cannot be used for the purchase of homes already erected.

Mr. McCathie: A new home that has not been occupied, such as one constructed by a "spec." builder.

Mr. ROBERTS: That is the same as the Commonwealth Bank provision. Mushroom building societies might spring up, perhaps sponsored by estate agents, and they will be more concerned with making a profit on the sale of houses than with interest. Real estate is very dear now because it is hard to get money.

Basing the calculation on an allotment of, say £100,000, if the amount is in use for the whole of the year it will mean that the society will receive £750 in interest. As all loan amounts are redeemed during the year, the actual interest is likely to be nearer £650. In the second year, it would, of course, be less, and so on in each succeeding year. However, the cost of taking care of the accounts and all other administrative expenses would continue at about the same level each year and, while the position would be slightly improved in the second year, if a further issue of loan money were handled, I am inclined to think that with today's high wages and rentals, with this form of administration, an organisation will be struggling to break even on ¾ of 1 per cent. It may defeat its purpose.

Mr. McCathie: That is why there is provision for an early review of the interest rate. I pointed out to Senator Spooner that I did not think ¾ of 1 per cent. would cover it.

Mr. ROBERTS: I can quite understand that. I know that the Minister is conversant with these problems.

I understand that the loan is for a period of 31 years, or "not exceeding 31 years." If a project is financed to the extent of, say, £1,000 or £2,000 by a society, and the owner should win the Golden Casket and be able to pay the money back in five or 10 years, what would happen? Is the money then to be returned to the source from where it was secured or will the society have the money available to lend over the balance of the 30 years?

Mr. McCathie: My understanding of it is that it goes back to the home builder's account and can be reloaned.

Mr. ROBERTS: Whilst discussing another Bill yesterday I mentioned the Cairns Starr Bowkett Building and Investment Society. I know that the Minister is conversant with their work. I mentioned that under normal circumstances a project is cleaned up in about 10½ or 11 years. An organisation like that could handle the money three times in 31 years. Over a period they could do a much better job than anyone who can only handle the money once. This organisation is particularly keen. They would have to alter some of their rules slightly to fit in with the scheme. If they could secure a sum of money to finance homes there are people who have already got subscriptions in the Starr Bowkett scheme, and if in one or five years they could secure money by ballot from another source they could redeem that money and carry the loan interest free. Although "Cairns Starr Bowkett" is the name of the organisation there is a branch office in Brisbane and agencies in most parts of the State. They have done an excellent job in supplying people with homes. Over the last 10 years they have been instrumental in financing the construction of at least 600 homes. There are never fewer than 30 homes under construction. There are never fewer than six houses under construction in Brisbane for which they are providing the finance. Their loans last financial year totalled £161,000. Yesterday I said that the society's assets were approximately £1,000,000. I have checked with the balance sheet just released and it shows its assets at £939,424. They are great believers in the owner-builder. Therefore they are not causing any severe drain on the building pool the Minister referred to. From 25 to 50 per cent. less finance is necessary to erect a building of the same size, which means that they can virtually build two buildings for the ordinary cost of one. There are many banks and other organisations that will not touch the owner-builder, but this co-operative organisation does. It has its own architectural branch which provides plans and specifications at a cost of 1 per cent. I hope that the position will be clarified, whether the finance will be left with the organisation for that period, provided they are using it, or whether it will have to be returned to the pool, and they will have to apply for further allotment. In New South Wales there are a number of terminating societies, most of which are allowed a working fee. I do not think there is any provision in the Bill for a working fee. In New South Wales the working fee was based on 3s. 6d. per £50 share per year and there was an agitation to increase that to 5s. per share per year. At the rate of 5s. per share per year, a loan of £1,000 would mean £5 spread over a year which would be the equivalent of 2s. a week. I cannot see any such provision in the Bill.

Mr. HERBERT (Sherwood) (5.29 p.m.): I support the Bill and the remarks of the hon. member for Chermside who has similar housing problems in his electorate to those in mine where there are more Housing Commission homes than in any other electorate in the State. The Bill is of great interest to people in my area. Under the Bill money cannot be used for sewerage purposes unless there is such an arrangement between the relevant Federal and State Ministers. I should like the Minister to state if the Government have to make representations to the Commonwealth Government to use some of the loan for sewerage works.

Mr. McCathie: The matter was discussed at the Loan Council meeting. Senator Spooner said that if a scheme was put to the Loan Council the Commonwealth would consider it.

Mr. HERBERT: There is a serious problem in the Inala area. The Brisbane City Council are unable to provide sewerage works. It should be pointed out to Senator Spooner that there is not in Brisbane as in other cities a water and sewerage board, and that the Brisbane City Council is not able to provide services for the buildings being erected. It is doubtful if dwellings at Inala will be sewered in the span of the loans for those homes. I suggest an approach by this

Government to the Commonwealth Government for permission to use money for sewerage purposes in areas where a large amount of money is being spent on Housing Commission homes.

The Bill provides for expenditure on drainage to make land suitable for dwellings.

I have previously spoken about drainage at Inala. I have received a report from the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply to the effect that the water running through gullies from Inala into Oxley Creek is pure sullage. The land between Inala and Oxley Creek is a menace to the health of the people. Some of the funds should be used to overcome this health problem. A drainage system capable of catering for the existing dwellings and the other dwellings that will be erected there is needed. The construction of more concrete gutters and channelling will mean the diversion of more water into Oxley Creek.

The advance to building societies will mean an increase in home ownership, which is to be desired. I commend the Bill.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (5.33 p.m.): The Commonwealth Government and the supporters of the Commonwealth Government are parading themselves as paragons of political virtue in presenting this agreement to the States and saying in effect, "Take it or leave it." All the endeavours of the States to have the Housing Agreement amended to meet the wishes of the people have proved futile and fruitless.

There is one principle with which I heartily disagree. The Commonwealth Government have passed the buck to State Governments. They have forced on State Governments the responsibility of providing homes for serving personnel. Not only have the Commonwealth Government made available a smaller amount of money than that needed to provide homes for the people of the State, but they have deliberately dodged their responsibility to provide homes for serving personnel by including in this agreement a proviso that a certain percentage of the money shall be devoted to the erection of homes for serving personnel. When he was challenged on this matter in the Federal House and asked why he was passing the Commonwealth's responsibility on to the States and why he could not find out of the tremendous £200,000,000 defence vote sufficient money to provide homes for military serving personnel, he got out of it with the arrogance and contempt for which he is becoming notorious by saying, "Do you think the Commonwealth Government should also provide homes for post office employees?" In other words, he places the problem of providing homes for defence-serving personnel on exactly the same plane as he places the responsibility for the Commonwealth's providing homes for post office employees. That was his reply to a suggestion to him in the Federal House that the Commonwealth should provide money out of the huge defence vote, most of which goes down the drain, as hon. members opposite, if honest, will admit. Instead of providing homes for service personnel, most of the defence Vote will go down the drain in buying obsolete aircraft, broken-down warships and paying shiny pants to sit in offices, in providing them with luxurious motor-cars and coctail parties, and goodness knows what else. Instead of providing the homes the Commonwealth Government are making the States supply the money for the homes for Commonwealth military-serving personnel, and if the Leader of the Opposition can agree with that I suggest he might be able to agree to anything.

I should like the Minister to advise me on this. The Commonwealth Government have deliberately thrown the age pensioners, the invalid, the widows and the indigent people overboard, deliberately excised from the new Agreement any provision for rebate rental for pensioners and indigent people and passed the buck from the Commonwealth to the States. Senator Spooner, the father of the Bill, said in the Federal House, that the States, if they liked, could continue the rebate system—apparently out of their own pocket. I should like the Minister to tell me how the unfortunate pensioners and the poor people, for whom I am mainly concerned, are likely to get on under the Agreement. Will they be asked to pay the full economic rental for houses constructed under the Agreement or are they to camp on the banks of creeks or in bag and bark humpies?

Mr. Nicklin: The basis of the economic rental is adjusted according to the income of the people.

Mr. AIKENS: It was written into the old Agreement but cut out of the new Agreement by the cold, callous action of Senator Spooner, who defended it in the Commonwealth House by saying, as the hon. member for Yeronga read out the other night. By the way, he only read part of his remarks and I suppose we can give him credit for political expediency for doing that. Senator Spooner said that the Commonwealth Government had decided to exercise that particular humanitarian provision from this Agreement, and he said, further, that if the States wanted to be humanitarian towards the pensioners, the poor, the indigent, the widows with children, the States could do it on their own responsibility. I hope the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha will not deny that. The Leader of the Opposition said that under the old Agreement a person was not required to pay more than 20 per cent. of the total income coming into the home as rental for a Housing Commission house. That humanitarian clause was put in the old Agreement by the Chifley Government. By saying that, I am not seeking political kudos for the Labour Government or any other Party. Many pensioners, widows with children, and poor people are living in comparitive comfort in Housing Commission homes and paying only the maximum of 20 per cent. of the income coming into the home. I do not know what the

figures are. If the Minister could get the figures in time, I should like to know how many people are living in Housing Commission homes today and paying only the rebate rental instead of the full economic rental. That would give us some idea of the tremendous amount of good that was done by the inclusion of the rebate clause in the old agreement.

Mr. Nicklin: I suggest there would not be a very great number.

Mr. AIKENS: Let us assume there is not. I believe there is a large number, but even if there are only 100 or 200 they should have extended to them all the consideration and help we can possibly give them.

I have in my electorate a big Housing Commission settlement at Armstrong, and it is getting bigger. I have made representations that some tenants there should be brought under the rebate clause of the old agreement to relieve them of their financial burden. They cannot pay the economic rental of the homes they occupy and at the same time adequately feed and clothe themselves and their children. Not only has Senator Spooner passed the buck in the provision of homes for serving service personnel, but he has also passed the buck in providing homes for pensioners and people who are in indigent circumstances and cannot afford to pay the full economic rental. If the State is to accept the responsibility that has been deliberately dodged by the Commonwealth Government, who have thrown overboard pensioners and indigent people, I am prepared to give it full credit for its humanitarian action.

I should like now to deal with a matter that the Chairman of Committees refused to allow me to speak on the other day. Quite recently the Townsville City Council belatedly —as they do everything belatedly, if at all— wrote to me—and I have no doubt they wrote to other hon. members representing the city of Townsville—and asked me to support a suggestion they had made for the erection of an additional 300 Housing Commission homes in Townsville. I wrote and told them that I would be happy to do so, but that their estimate of the housing needs of Townsville was much more conservative than mine. I think Townsville needs at least double 300 homes. It is true that Townsville is progressing, although not as quickly as it should. It is certainly not progressing as fast as Brisbane. Nevertheless, because it is being thrown a few crumbs from the well-laden Brisbane banquet table, a fair amount of development is going on. A few industries have sprung up, despite the efforts of the Government to stop them. Despite the implied threats and blackmail directed at anyone who wants to set up an industry in Townsville, a few industries have demonstrated a little fortitude and have set themselves up in that city. Because of the development of Mt. Isa and Mary Kathleen, because perhaps of closer settlement in the sheep areas in the West, and for other reasons such as the increase in sugar assignments and mill peaks, Townsville's population is increasing. I repeat, it is not increasing as fast as I should like to see it increase, and not as fast as it would if the Government would only give North Queensland a fair go.

Because of the development in Townsville, I am prepared to say that we have there a more pressing housing problem than has any other part of the State. However, I think the Minister, who represents an electorate that embraces a fair amount of Townsville, will do what he can to see that Townsville gets a fair go in the allocation of new homes. Of course, the Minister is only one member of a Cabinet of eleven, so that he has only one voice and one vote out of eleven.

I should like the Minister to answer a question. On what basis or what system is a decision made to erect houses anywhere in the State? Why is it that although approximately 10,000 houses have been erected in Queensland, the whole of North Queensland. including Mackay, has not even got 1,000 houses since the Housing Commission was set up?

Mr. Evans: More than half the number of houses are built in Brisbane.

Mr. AIKENS: Oh, more than half. I should say 80 per cent. of them are, though Brisbane has only 40 per cent. of the State's population. Is there any sound basis for it or is it because there are 24 electorates in Brisbane whose representatives work the parish pump and co-operate to form a block vote in Caucus or a pressure group in Caucus or a pressure group in this Assembly.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is getting out of order. The Bill relates to an agreement between the States and the Commonwealth and it has nothing to do with the building of homes anywhere in the State.

Mr. AIKENS: Yes, it has. I disagree with you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Bill relates to an agreement between the Commonwealth and the State so that the State might build houses throughout Queensland.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Quite right.

Mr. AIKENS: It can build the houses through the State Housing Commission; it can lend money to co-operative societies, and it can do other things in accordance with the agreement to provide homes for the people of Queensland, either for rental or ownership. When the Government decide to carry out the agreement and when they decide where the homes will be built and where money will be allocated to allow prospective home-owners to build homes, will there be a set system or any way by which, at least under the new agreement, North Queensland will get a fair deal

which it did not get under the old agreement? I have read the Bill. It is purely an agreement and I cannot see any basis for believing that it will. Apparently it is the sole responsibility of the State Housing Commission, the sole responsibility of the Minister, and, of course, the sole responsibility of the Government. If under the new agreement another 10,000 homes are to be built in Queensland and 8,000 to 9,000 of them in Brisbane and only 1,000 in the rest of the State, then the implementation of the agreement will be as lopsided, as unfair and as unjust as that of the old agreement.

I will not put up a particular case for Townsville. The Secretary for Public Works and Housing knows the position as well as I do. He is just as interested as I am in acquiring a piece of land in Townsville suitable for a big housing settlement. That is the Q.M.E. land known as Jang's farm, near the old power station at Aitkenvale. Until recently the Minister could not do very much about it because Jang had the lease and naturally he wanted a payment for what they call his implements or his crop growing on it and so forth. I understand Jang is now off the land; he no longer holds the lease. So it is a question of direct negotiation between the Housing Commission and the Q.M.E. The Q.M.E. is a private concern.

Mr. Sparkes: A very good one.

Mr. AIKENS: Is the hon. member a director of the Q.M.E.? It is now owned by Vesteys. I think Vesteys bought the Q.M.E. out. Nevertheless it is a big foreign meat-packing company and naturally it will want the best price it can get. I see no reason why the Government should not acquire that land in exactly the same way as they acquired Jones's land at Cluden, in the electorate of the Minister. Why should they not resume it from Vesteys just as they resumed land from Jones?

Mr. Sparkes: They still have to pay.

Mr. AIKENS: Yes, but if they resume it they will not have to pay Vesteys' price. If Vesteys appeals to the Land Court, they will have to pay only the price determined by the Land Court. I know why the Minister has not been able to do anything about it so far. He is just as anxious to get the land for the purpose as I am and as other people in the area are.

We hear a great deal about the need to make money available to people at the lowest possible interest rates to build homes for tenants to occupy at low rentals. With the present financial system in Australia, that is not possible. The other day the hon. member for Kedron suggested that the rental should be as low as 2 per cent. That was agreed to in part today by the hon. member for Chermside. But it is obvious that if we are really going to help the people we want to help, the young married couple with a young family, to get into their own home on time payment, furnish it, look after it, and make it their own home so that they can raise their family in reasonable modern comfort, we have to reduce the cost consequent upon their buying and entering the home. If they are not able to buy their own home but merely want a home for rental, we have to see that they get a home on a rental so reasonable that after paying the rent they will at least have enough to live on, enough to clothe themselves and educate their children in accordance with reasonable standards of modern education. They cannot do it under the present system.

I am not going to recapitulate what I said the other day. I am not going to tell the House again that any young married couple who buy a £3,000 home—and you will not get much for £3,000 today—by the time they enter into the agreement to buy it on the terms of this agreement and by the time they get a reasonable amount of furniture, they have to set aside £6 to £7 of their wages every week to meet basic commitments. Even on £15 a week, £1 or £2 over the basic wage, a young couple and their family would have only £9 a week left for food, clothing, entertainment, education and a little to put aside for a rainy day. Anybody who knows anything about the struggle to live among the working classes will know just how much food, clothing, and education you can get for £9 a week.

Mr. Pizzey: Would tenants be paying that?

Mr. AIKENS: Tenants pay up to £4 a week in rent. I like to see young people buy their own homes but how can they put aside £6 or £7 a week? Many of the houses are merely little butter boxes.

Mr. Pizzey: Broom cupboards.

Mr. AIKENS: A very apt description! Some of them will be paying over £4 a week for a broom-cupboard type of house.

Mr. McCathie: Not quite.

Mr. AIKENS: Is it not £4 1s. 3d.?

Mr. McCathie: Some could go up to that.

Mr. AIKENS: Out in the Garbutt area under the old agreement we have people paying nearly £3 a week for houses that look just like several butter boxes put together. What will have to be paid for new houses built under this system with all the rising costs tacked on? The whole matter could be got over very simply.

I know that what I have to suggest is revolutionary. I am sure that the hon. members for Toowong and Coorparoo would blanch if they were in the House to hear me make my suggestion. But it was the accepted policy of the Labour Government

when the Labour Government was a Labour Government before it became a political plaything of adventurers and careerists——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: It was the policy of Labour's greatest financier, the late E. G. Theodore, that you could always find the money for an urgently needed scheme simply by making a fiduciary issue of credit.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: I am not concerned about the birth of the North Queensland Labour Party at the moment.

If it means the provision of reasonably priced homes for purchase or for rental by the people who need them I would be in favour of a reasonable amount of fiduciary issue.

Mr. Nicklin: Unfortunately the effect would be to double the cost.

Mr. AIKENS: No, it would not. During the depression years the late E. G. Theodore advocated a fiduciary system to raise £18,000,000. I am not sure of the exact amount but the Leader of the Opposition will remember.

He was ridiculed and scorned, and they said instead of curing the depression it would make it worse. The same remark was made by the Leader of the Opposition to me a moment ago. Yet after the depression recessed somewhat, after the clouds cleared away, the bankers, the economists and the financiers who had criticised him and scoffed at him admitted that perhaps the depression might have ended earlier in Australia than it did if the fiduciary issue had been made.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is getting away from the Bill.

Mr. AIKENS: In those days he only wanted to raise £18,000,000

Mr. Pizzey: You would not say that we are in the depths of a depression now.

Mr. AIKENS: No, certainly we are not in the depths of a depression now, but, if something is not done to readjust our financial and economic structure we soon will be in the depths of a depression.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: I was led astray by an irresponsible interjection from the responsible member for Isis. Money can be got. Anyone who knows anything about finance, anyone who possesses an elementary knowledge of finance knows that money can be created and destroyed by the banks and financial institutions. I am not going into the whole question and work myself into a frenzy like the late Frank Barnes on the matter, but anyone who has any sense at all does not believe the silly old fairy story that used to be peddled out by the banks that some person deposited money and the bank lent that money to someone else at so much interest and made its money that way. The banks create and destroy money every day simply by the stroke of a pen; and the hon. member for Isis and anybody else cannot deny it. Governments can destroy money and create money by a stroke of the pen.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to get back to the Bill.

Mr. AIKENS: I am on the Bill.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I rule that the hon. member is not on it.

Mr. AIKENS: If you rule that I am not, you are the man who is driving the coach, and consequently I shall have to get back into it. Here is the position: the whole sum and substance of this agreement is the alleged shortage of loan money that the Commonwealth can make available to the States under this agreement. A similar agreement is in the process of being passed by every State Legislature in Australia. They claim that they have not the money to increase the allocation to the States for housing. If they have not the money under the old hide-bound banker-created money system let them adopt a new system for this purpose. I am not suggesting that the fiduciary issue should run wild. Let them produce a new system. Let them adopt the fiduciary system to make available to the people of Australia the money they so urgently need not only for the erection of houses for themselves, but for the erection of houses by State instrumentalities to be tenanted by the people who need them.

Mr. Pizzey: Have you any unemployed carpenters of builders in Townsville?

Mr. AIKENS: I have noticed many of them advertising in the Townsville "Daily Bulletin" from time to time. It is not the shortage of tradesmen or materials that is causing the shortage of houses. I know that Mr. Deputy Speaker will not allow me to get into the timber and hardware ring. They do not come within the provisions of the Bill. If you make the money available under this agreement from the Commonwealth to the States you will get the houses built. Do not make any mistake about that.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (7.15 p.m.): The Bill incorporates the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. In this Agreement, as in many other Commonwealth-State matters, Queensland seems to be the odd man out.

Mr. McCathie: We are looking after the people.

Mr. NICKLIN: I should not say the Government are looking after the people. They acted detrimentally by the people in putting up conditions which are not of benefit to Queensland. The bone of contention between Queensland and the Commonwealth was co-operative building societies.

This Government did not want anything to do with building societies, and the hon. gentleman cannot tell me that that attitude benefits the people of Queensland. Every State in the Commonwealth where co-operative building societies are formed has undoubtedly benefited from additional homes.

As I mentioned earlier, in New South Wales, more homes have been built by co-operative building societies than by any other building authority, including the State authority and the New South Wales branch of the War Service Homes Division. The delay in the implementation of this Agreement was caused by the arguments between this Government and the Commonwealth Government on co-operative building societies. And that was definitely not to the advantage of Queensland.

Is it not better to have more home owners than home renters? The policy of the Government seems to be not to encourage home ownership but to continue renting homes.

Mr. McCathie: We have to provide for both sections.

Mr. NICKLIN: Yes, but the bigger proportion of the homes are rental homes.

The Government policy on home building under the Agreement has been inequitable in that the City of Brisbane has received more than a fair share of the total homes built in the State. Consequently many country districts have suffered. Although there have been housing problems in country districts, there are some in which not one home has been built under the Agreement. Compare that with the collections of homes being built at such places as Inala, on the outskirts of Brisbane. It will possibly be said that the demand was greater in Brisbane. That is so because people know they can get homes in Brisbane and are attracted here. This table shows the position to 30 June, 1956—

—	Rental Homes.	Home Ownership.	Total.
Brisbane (Metropolitan) ..	7,086	5,160	12,246
All other areas	1,990	1,406	3,396
Total	9,076	6,566	15,642

The percentage of homes built in the metropolitan area of Brisbane is 78.3 and in all other areas 21.7.

Mr. Devries: We would have had a lot more homes built outside if the contractors had given us a decent price.

Mr. NICKLIN: There are ways and means of overcoming that if the Government had shown a desire to build homes in country districts. What has happened at Mt. Isa? Have they had to depend on the Government?

Mr. McCathie: If we had to build homes and charge the economic rental the people could not afford them.

Mr. NICKLIN: The Mt. Isa Company is an excellent example of what can be done by co-operative building. I admit that the homes built up there are "pricey." Hon. members opposite speak disparagingly of the progressive attitude of so-called Big Business. We have the best scheme in Australia at Mt. Isa and it is the most advantageous to workers.

Mr. Sparkes: Who was responsible for that?

Mr. NICKLIN: The Mt. Isa Company.

Mr. Sparkes: Private enterprise.

Mr. NICKLIN: Yes. Notwithstanding the cost of building, a co-operative building society operated there. Some persons are owning their own homes in 10½ years, but the average period is 13½ years. Where could one point to a housing scheme where the worker could own his home in 10½ years? This has been possible because of the progressive and forward policy of the much-maligned private enterprise.

Mr. Devries: They had to do it to hold their men there.

Mr. NICKLIN: The company is giving the best conditions possible to its men.

Mr. Collins: Is there anything to stop private enterprise from building anywhere in Queensland?

Mr. NICKLIN: Private enterprise is building more homes than anybody else, and if it stopped building homes there would be few built.

Mr. Collins: Why have they not done as Mt. Isa has done?

Mr. NICKLIN: Big concerns are interested in housing projects for their employees. The Minister does not want to recognise that. He is more concerned about the policy of his Government in building so many rental homes for the city of Brisbane, although he represents a far-away electorate. We find that Brisbane with 38.1 per cent. of the population got 78.3 per cent. of the homes built, whereas the rest of Queensland, with 61.9 per cent. of the population, got only 21.7 per cent. of the homes built. In other words, on the last census figures, one home was built in Brisbane for every 41 of its population, whereas for the rest of Queensland only one home was built for every 240 of its population. That is the housing record that the Government are proud of.

Let me turn to the answer given by the Minister the other day regarding the rent outstanding on rental homes. The information shows that this is not a good business proposition, and I suggest to the Government that they concentrate more on fostering home ownership rather than building rental

homes. They can best do that, and best get people into their own homes, by fostering the co-operative building society movement in the same way as other States.

We can realise the relative weakness of the building society movement in Queensland when we compare the allocations for building societies under the recent Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. Of the £32,150,000 provided under that agreement, £6,430,000 is to be available to building societies and will be divided among the States as follows:—

	£
New South Wales ..	2,160,000
Victoria	2,000,000
South Australia ..	720,000
Western Australia ..	600,000
Queensland	550,000
Tasmania	400,000

It will be seen from those figures that Queensland has the lowest allocation to building societies. It is not to be compared with the encouragement given to building societies in other States, particularly New South Wales and Victoria, where the authorities realise the value of home-ownership and foster it by giving bank guarantees to co-operative building societies.

The report of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies in New South Wales for the year ended 30 June, 1955, has this to say about Government guarantees to building societies—

> "During the year under review (1954-1955) guarantees were issued by the Colonial Treasurer pursuant to the Government Guarantees Act, 1934 to 1948, in respect of 53 new building societies—in all, overdraft accommodation amounting to £7,740,000 was guaranteed during the year.
>
> "Since the first guarantee of this type was issued in 1937 no less than 984 terminating co-operative building societies have had guarantees provided in respect of repayment of their borrowings on overdraft to a total limit of £111,438,825. Of societies registered prior to the war those adopting the short terms of 14 and 15 years have terminated successfully. The position has now been reached where some of the 21-year term societies have terminated after attaining their objective sooner than their due dates for termination, whilst many others are entering into their final stages."

The next part is very important—

> "No call has been made on the Government in connection with a guarantee furnished in favour of a terminating co-operative building society."

Notwithstanding the tremendous sum of money involved—£111,000,000—not one call has been made on any Government guarantee. What a tremendous contribution those societies have made to home building in that State, and what a shame it is that we have not had those societies operating here!

Mr. Adair: They have done all right out of it.

Mr. NICKLIN: The hon. member says, "They have done all right out of it." That shows how much he knows about it. If he advocated the building of more homes in his area we would not be experiencing the present unbalance in the building of homes in Queensland. No-one gets anything except his own home out of co-operative building societies. Home builders get their own homes within 14, 15 or 21 years.

The report of the Registrar of Co-operative Housing Societies in Victoria for the year ended 30 June, 1955, is also interesting for the purpose of comparison. It shows the following:—

> "Government guarantees at 30-6-55:
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Number of guarantees executed .. .. | 264 |
> | Aggregate amount of guarantees executed | £44,953,000 |
>
> Government indemnities at 30-6-55:
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Number of societies to which given .. .. | 227 |
> | Number of indemnities given and subsisting | 2,627 |
> | Aggregate amount of indemnities subsisting | £315,456" |

The first advance under the Act was approved in March, 1946. The following table shows the position at 30 June, 1955:—

Number of dwelling houses completed	18,830
Number in course of erection ..	4,945
Number of societies financing such dwellings	263

That shows what can be done in Victoria, where they get houses built and where they prefer to have people owning their own homes. We too, should encourage them to own homes rather than rent them.

Mr. Devries: All congregated within a very small area in Victoria.

Mr. NICKLIN: Yes, because Victoria has not a very big area.

Mr. Sparkes: Victoria is only about as big as a cattle station up here.

Mr. NICKLIN: We could have done much the same if the Government had adopted the same policy as New South Wales and Victoria. The Governments of other States, whether they be Labour or Liberal, all favour the building-society method of building homes but Queensland is the odd man out. The success of the building societies in New South Wales has been achieved mainly under a Labour Government and that in Victoria under Labour and Liberal-Country Party Governments. The Queensland Labour Government prefer to have people paying rent all their lives. The £550,000 available under the agreement could be doubled or trebled if they did not insist on handling all the money made available for home-building in the State.

No serious objection can be taken to the Agreement. We simply object to the Government's continued policy of preventing the extension of the co-operative building movement.

It is pleasing to note the provision for a minimum deposit of £250 on a home costing about £2,500. That is a reasonable figure and quite within the means of any thrifty young couple despite the wild statements of the hon. member for Mundingburra.

Provision is made in the new agreement for the erection of blocks of flats, particularly in densely populated areas. With plenty of space to build homes, single units are preferable, but there is a place for flats in any housing scheme in the more densely populated areas. That is recognised in the agreement. Huge blocks of flats are constructed in other parts of the world but we should limit ourselves to the type of flats envisaged in the agreement, three storeys high unless otherwise agreed to.

I have nothing further to say about the agreement at this stage except that it is regrettable that we have not had the advantages of co-operative building societies operating throughout the State. The undoubted benefits have been illustrated at Mt. Isa. If the Queensland Government had been prepared to handle the matter in the same liberal way as the Government in New South Wales there would be no housing shortage in Queensland. There would be many more houses than could possibly be provided under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement.

Hon. C. G. McCATHIE (Haughton—Secretary for Public Works, Housing and Immigration) (7.37 p.m.), in reply: The position is not as stated by hon. members opposite. They realise and I realise that nothing can be done to amend the agreement or schedules but they have still taken the opportunity to attack the Queensland Housing Commission. In the short time I have been in charge of the administration of the Commission I have been more than pleased with its work. I will indicate why some of the figures might appear to favour the metropolitan area.

The hon. member for Chermside pointed out that it was necessary that we look after pensioners and those on low incomes. Provision has been made for the construction of multi-unit dwellings at Inala. The idea is to erect them as close to the civic centre as possible so that pensioners and others will be handy to the facilities and amenities provided at a civic centre. Under the new agreement there is no provision made to assist people on low or moderate incomes by rental rebate. The Commonwealth Government will no longer share losses on rental rebates. The sharing was formerly on a 60/40 basis.

The hon. member for Mundingburra sought some information on the number of people who received rebates. Page 11 of the report tabled today says—

> "Rebates of rent are allowed in accordance with the formula laid down in the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement, i.e., according to the relationship which the family income bears to the basic wage. During the year 1955-1956, rebates of rent totalling £43,078 were allowed to 1,196 tenants. Some of these allowances, however, applied only in respect of part of the year. Every six months the family income of a tenant to whom a rebate has been granted is subject to verification and where necessary the rental rebate is re-assessed. To 30 June, 1956, rebates of rent granted totalled £150,532."

The provisions of the 1945 Agreement will be continued as far as those homes are concerned. Rebates will still apply under that Agreement. Our problem is to have enough accommodation in homes built under that Agreement to meet the needs of those pensioners and people on low or moderate incomes. Who is to say who is most entitled to such a home if a re-let does come up for allocation? Should it be given to the pensioner or the basic-wage earner with a large family? That is something that has to be determined, and I can assure hon. members it will be determined very efficiently by the Housing Commission. We have established priorities, and as far as I am concerned, as the head of the department, they will be followed. I have the firm conviction that if the allocation of homes became a matter of political patronage the prestige of any Government is lost. I shall follow the priorities as far as possible. If there is a variation it will only be because of some particular person who is suffering from a sickness which necessitates his being given accommodation following on medical certificates being produced in his favour. Apart from such an instance priorities will be followed. And they have been followed.

I point out further to the hon. member for Chermside, who talked of acquiring land in good positions, that while under my direction, the Housing Commissioner will not acquire land that is not considered suitable. We know the problems that have arisen with drainage on some of the estates where we did not have the help that we might have had from the local authorities. We have learned by the mistakes we might have made, and in future the acquisition of land will be such that those problems will not arise again. The hon. member also said that it appeared the State wanted to remain in the position of a landlord. That is far from the thought of the Government. We feel, as we always felt, that home ownership is very desirable. The record of the Government through the workers' dwelling scheme and the workers' homes scheme

indicates that we wanted the people to own their own homes. After the cessation of hostilities in 1945 it became very evident that unless the State stepped in as a constructing authority to provide accommodation there would not be sufficient accommodation for the people of Queensland. Even today, when we have put every effort into it we still have hundreds of applications which cannot be fulfilled. I point out to many of those who apply to us quite frankly that they cannot hope to secure accommodation from the Commission because of their low priority and that they should seek accommodation somewhere else. It is not that we want to tell them that, but we have to face facts. We cannot meet every demand with the limited accommodation available.

The hon. member for Whitsunday made mention of the ¾ per cent. and expressed the opinion that it would not meet administration costs. I agree that it will not meet the costs of administration. In a discussion with Senator Spooner I pointed that out to him. One of the last matters of conflict between us was that we felt if there was any loss because of the excess cost of administration the Commonwealth should reimburse the Home Builders' Account with that figure. He pointed out that there would be a build-up in the Home Builders' Account because of the repayments from the building societies. He agreed it was necessary to review it again after a 12 months' period of operation. I have been told that some of the building societies propose to operate on the reduced interest rate at which they receive their money. Representatives of the building societies at Ipswich told me that on a loan at 4½ per cent. their rules provided for a fee per share per annum to cover costs of administration. If the rules of the society provide for a working fee, administrative costs may be met in that way. Our only requirement is that building societies be registered under the Building Societies Acts or by the Registrar of Co-operative Societies and that their rules be approved by the Registrar. Once approval is given, those societies will be able to participate in the allocation which for this year is £300,000.

The hon. member for Whitsunday mentioned the 31-year period of repayment. My impression at that time was that the money would be repaid to the pool. I have looked further into the position and find that the State can determine the conditions. That matter will have to be closely scrutinised. If it is practicable to allow the societies to retain the amount, that may be arranged between the Treasurer, the War Service Homes Divison, as agent for the State and the building society.

The hon. member for Sherwood raised again the sewerage and drainage position at Inala. By way of interjection I said that it did not seem possible at this stage that we would be able to secure any additional money from the Commonwealth to meet the cost of this work. I have here notes taken at the Premiers' Conference, including Senator Spooner's reply to the Premier's question on Clause 12 (*b*) of the Agreement, whether subject to approval, the Minister could pay advances to any local authority from the housing allocation to provide services such as drainage, sewerage, water, electricity, etc. Senator Spooner said that the purpose of this was to provide services from the main system up to the house; it would not cover erection of mains of any kind, but if in a district like Chermside it was decided to put up some scheme to the Loan Council which required an undisclosed amount of money, the Commonwealth would consider it, but they may dig their toes in. He said they had put that clause in to cover general cases. As I indicated earlier, I feel if an approach was made at this stage we would be told to take it from our allocation. The allocation is not sufficient to cover our requirements. The allocation to building societies in this State should have been in addition to that amount of £2,750,000. When the agreement is working and we see what building societies will do, we will certainly make an approach to the Commonwealth under Clause 12 to secure an additional allocation for that work.

The hon. member for Mundingburra was curious to know how we arrived at the programme of work in any particular year, and how we arrived at allocations for the metropolitan and country areas. In country areas where there is no district housing officer, the clerk of petty sessions acts as agent for the Queensland Housing Commission, and those officers, the district housing officer and the clerk of petty sessions, indicate to the Commissioner the requirements of their localities. In addition, representations are made by members of Parliament, and from all that information we estimate the number of houses required in particular areas. When we have arrived at the tenative figure, we ask for a further check to see if the applications lodged are by applicants urgently in need of homes. Having secured that information, a programme is prepared. I have with me the programme for this year. The position is in direct contrast to the suggestion by the hon. member for Mundingburra that the programme is determined by Cabinet, influenced by Caucus, and influenced by metropolitan members.

The programme is submitted to me by the Commissioner. I go through it and check the points that I have mentioned to the Commissioner. I consider the allocation and if I consider it is not sufficient I alter the figures. I have my programme with me which indicates that where there has been a call for houses we endeavour to meet the demand. Against the whole picture must be taken the financial allocation from the Commonwealth Government. In the overall picture we might have to reduce the allocations of homes in the light of the money available.

When it is mentioned that the number of homes built favour the metropolitan area, might I point out that we have not reached the stage of regimentation in that we can direct people where to live. If work is available in Brisbane there is a demand for houses there. There is a big demand in Brisbane. On page 5 of his report the Commissioner points out—

> "Population figures and the number of houses and flats for each statistical division of the State as at 30 June, 1956, are not yet available. However, the latest figures available from the Government Statistician disclose that at 30 June, 1955, there were 342,125 houses and flats in Queensland with a then population of 1,344,572. These figures for the whole of the State give an average of 3.93 persons per dwelling or 25.44 dwellings per 100 of population, which average compares with the average for each division of the State as follows:—"

Strangely enough the Brisbane division is not at the top of the list. The Moreton division, excluding the metropolitan area heads the list with 3.41 persons per dwelling and Moreton is followed by Maryborough, Rockhampton, Mackay, and the Brisbane Metropolitan area comes next with 3.95 persons per dwelling or 25.3 dwellings per 100 of the population. On those figures Brisbane, which is increasing rapidly in population, has not been particularly favourably treated. In answer to the Leader of the Opposition who laid great stress on the failure to build in country areas, might I give him some typical examples of what we strike in country areas. In April of this year we accepted a tender for the construction of homes at Longreach. An Executive Council minute for £52,000 was passed. The contractor who had built for us before was a reputable man and he was not asked to lodge a deposit. From his first progress payment we would hold sufficient money to look after the needs of the subcontractors. He did not go ahead or give us notice in writing that he did not propose to sign the document. He advised the C.P.S. that he was not going on with the contract. He said that he could get more remunerative work at some of the stations surrounding Longreach. I point out that we accepted that contract in Longreach—we knew that there was a need for rental homes—the figure was £325 a square, which figure is in excess of what I felt was fair and reasonable. Knowing the demand I agreed. The matter was discussed with Cabinet who said that the demand was there and we would attempt to get the homes built. Subsequently we called tenders again and the lowest tender we received was for approximately £350 a square. I rejected it. We approached the lowest tenderer and suggested to him that he might be interested in coming down to a figure of £325 a square. So far we have not had an answer. I am required by my oath of office to spend money wisely and fairly and I should say, equitably, throughout the State. I will not accept nor would the Housing Commissioner recommend any tender at a fantastic price. I quote another instance in regard to Home Hill in the electorate of the hon. member for Burdekin. We had attempted to get contractors to build there over several years. At the last attempt the lowest tender was £300 a square. I felt the price was not reasonable, and it was rejected. That applies in many country areas. We cannot get people to tender at a reasonable price. In fact, in many country centres we get no tenders at all. As I told the hon. member for Whitsunday recently when he approached me with some gentleman from Collinsville, we got a fantastic tender for homes in that centre. I told the hon. member that if we could get contractors who would build at a reasonable price, we would build homes at Collinsville or anywhere else in the State. We have even been discussing the possibility of taking some homes from the allocation for the metropolitan area, where we can get them built, and giving them to country areas.

The hon. member for Mundingburra referred to the housing shortage at Townsville, a large portion of which is in my electorate. Over the years the Government have tried to acquire land for housing in Townsville, and during the past 12 months we have acquired some at Cluden, in my electorate. Resumptions were set in train by my predecessor, and when I was in Townsville a fortnight ago I inspected the area. I am pleased to say that all the clearing has been done and it will not be long before we call tenders for homes in that area. For the information of the hon. member, there are 84 homes on this year's programme for Townsville. We will need about 300 homes to meet the present demand, and the demand that will follow industrial expansion in the area.

The efforts of the Queensland Housing Commission are directed towards the building of homes in country areas, provided we can get contracts at a reasonable figure. And I am not unreasonable when I seek a reasonable figure. I always give full consideration to freight, cost of materials, wages, and every other item. Frequently my head says, "The price is a little too high," but my heart recognises the housing needs of country areas. Knowing Queensland reasonably well, I am prepared to accept some rather high contracts.

I have here a programme of home-building starting at Alpha and finishing at Yungaburra, in North Queensland. Where there has been a request for homes, we have tried to meet the demand. As I pointed out by interjection while the Leader of the Opposition was speaking, we must be guided by the ability of the tenants to pay. That is something that enters largely into consideration when the cost factor is being considered.

Mr. Roberts: I suggest that you advertise in local newspapers for builders who might be interested in building homes for the Housing Commission, and ask them to get in touch with the local member of Parliament. In areas where you have trouble getting contractors, the local member of Parliament might be able to get them.

Mr. McCATHIE: I am always ready to accept representations from hon. members. If they can find builders, we are prepared to try to interest them in building homes for us.

Mr. Roberts: I will guarantee that I can find a builder to erect homes at Collinsville at a reasonable price.

Mr. McCATHIE: My final comment is to reply to the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition on co-operative building societies. There is no reason why those societies should not function as successfully in Queensland as in other States. The hon. member said Government guarantees were provided for the societies in other States. While the Bill was being prepared I had a discussion with Mr. Burke, who is one of the directors of the co-operative movement in New South Wales, and he kindly gave me their reports and full information on what is being done down there. I said earlier that I could not see any need for a Government guarantee. If the lending authority has first call on the assets of the society, why in heaven's name should it want one? It merely means lazy banking. Why would anyone who has a lien on the assets of the society ask the Government to guarantee the lending authority? Cabinet discussed the matter fully and agreed there was no need for it. I cannot see why the new savings banks, which are required under their charter to lend a certain proportion of the deposits in the State of origin for housing purposes, should not be able to do it without a Government guarantee.

We are not averse to home ownership; we encourage it. By fixing the minimum deposit at £250 we indicate our desire to sell homes to those who want to purchase them. It would please me if every home available for sale under the agreement was purchased. But even with the 5 per cent. deposit under the 1945 agreement, we have not had much success with selling homes to tenants. The reason is doubtful. However, I will suggest to the Commissioner that the officers in the field be asked to impress on tenants the desirability of owning their own homes and to point out all the advantages of the scheme. When the House goes into recess I will set out in detail the Housing Commission's terms and conditions of purchase and have them roneoed and sent to every hon. member so that he may have exact information for inquirers.

The Leader of the Opposition had much to say about Victoria. In recent months a conference of State Housing Ministers was held in Brisbane and we were told what was being done in Victoria. If rents are in arrears for a week down there, they begin to chase the tenants. If they are in arrears a fortnight, they consider eviction. We are much more sympathetic. Those in arrears are mostly on low incomes and we merely insist that they pay their rent regularly and attempt to reduce the arrears by a reasonable sum each week. If they do that, we will not issue eviction orders against them. They are entitled to our protection because they have not been able to save up enough for a deposit. Whatever may be said against the Queensland Housing Commission, it has done and is doing a great job in providing homes for the people.

Although the agreement cannot be amended now, hon. members have had an opportunity to consider it and discuss it fully.

Motion (Mr. McCathie) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 to 8, both inclusive, Schedules I. and II., and preamble, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

TRAFFIC ACTS AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. A. JONES (Charters Towers—Secretary for Labour and Industry) (8.8 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

It is not my intention to cover all the ground I did on the initiation of the Bill, when I spoke for nearly an hour. Hon. members will agree that I gave detailed information on that occasion. They have had an opportunity to read the Bill and I do not think there will be any serious objections to its main provisions.

There are only three main provisions. The first is the control of motor vehicle reliability trials on the road. All we suggest is that before a reliability trial is held in the State permission must be obtained from the Commissioner of Police. New South Wales passed similar legislation within the last two months. At the present time, under the Traffic Act, we have control of speed trials on roads, racing and that sort of thing. Permits from the Commissioner of Police are necessary under those circumstances. We are now suggesting that before a reliability trial can be held the controlling authority must apply to the Commissioner for permission. I think that is desirable. There may be some reasons why the route selected is not

altogether satisfactory. All these things have to be taken into consideration. By way of interjection the Leader of the Opposition referred to the damage to roads in wet weather, and asked whether we were doing anything about it. We have not, but the Commissioner will have some authority in a matter like that. If there is a likelihood that the roads will be damaged we think the Commissioner should have some authority in connection with these reliability trials. We do not want to be narrow-minded. We know that these trials create much interest and are important from the point of view of the motoring public and automobile firms. We are not adopting a dog-in-the-manger attitude.

Regarding the provision of parking meters and owner-onus, hon. members will agree that the Bill is reasonable and that we have not gone too far. To a degree it is experimental. We make provision that if necessary we can apply the prinicple of owner-onus to all types of parking outside meter areas.

Mr. Morris: It will not be long before you do.

Mr. A. JONES: I think that is right. I have collected much information in connection with meter parking from American publications. They have had much experience over a number of years. One American publication is entitled "Parking Meters" and contains some very interesting information. Having read this publication and others, I am astonished at the attitude adopted by the Lord Mayor in connection with this matter. According to him it is all right with the exception of one thing. He thinks that the police may not be able to do the job satisfactorily and he wants a provision in the Bill to provide that the Council can take it over if the police do not do it satisfactorily. That is not satisfactory from our point of view. If the Bill contained such a provision it would be easy for the Council in two months' time to say, "We do not want the police; our own officers can do it." As I said during the initiation my information is that the police control the traffic in every city.

Mr. Nicklin: It is universal.

Mr. A. JONES: It is virtually universal. I think the Lord Mayor is very short-sighted. I got some figures from Sydney relating to this matter. On 29 October they opened 135 meters. The takings the first week were £343, averaging 50s. per meter. That was £4 12s. 6d. less than the total earning capacity which was £347 12s. 6d. If the whole of the meters had been operating all the hours they were open they could have only taken another £4 12s. 6d. The parking fee is 6d. for half an hour. The meters cost £42 10s. each, and the City Council, on the present rate of takings, expects to pay for the meters in 17 weeks. That is not a bad proposition. These statements appear in an article in "Parking Meters," an American Journal published in Washington. This is the 1954 edition—

> "In general, it may well be concluded that the parking meter is no longer an insignificant gadget which can painlessly extract pennies and nickels from parker-motorists. It has become an American institution of great moment to municipalities.
>
> "Both the number of parking meters and the revenues derived from their use have reached astonishing proportions and are likely to continue to increase. It is estimated that there were approximately 1,113,000 parking meters . . ."

I am told that the figure is now well over 2,000,000.

> ". . . in the United States, as of January, 1952, in over 2,800 localities, with a total estimated gross revenue of about $76 million. There were proposals for installation of more than 90,000 additional meters. If you are skeptical as to the future of the parking meter, just bear in mind that only 16.4 per cent. of the urbanised areas of the country now have meters.
>
> "The use of the parking meter is no longer confined to the kerb; the number used in off-street-parking facilities is constantly increasing. In 124 of the incorporated localities surveyed in the United States, it is reported that over 18,000 meters are in use in off-street areas, and that an even greater total is planned for use in the near future."

I draw hon. members' attention to that statement that meters are now installed in off-street parking facilities. The article continues—

> "The estimated average annual revenue per meter was $70.48 for 1951. Per-meter revenue varied significantly with population: The lowest figure was $42.28 per meter for places having under 2,500 persons; the highest was $89.67 per meter for localities of a quarter to a half million persons. In general, the larger the place, the greater was its average annual revenue per meter in 1951."

That is interesting. If meters in the city of Brisbane were used to a similar extent it would appear that the Lord Mayor is missing something. The article continues—

> "It is estimated that in excess of $16 million was collected during 1951 as fines for the violation of meter regulations. This was the equivalent of approximately 21 per cent of the gross revenue collected from the meters themselves."

If the Lord Mayor gave some thought to it he would satisfy himself that the funds collected for breaches would at least compensate the Council for the amount of money paid to the police. The revenue of the meters would be more or less grist to the mill, as far as the City Council is concerned. The Lord Mayor apparently has not given serious thought to it.

If the Brisbane City Council decides that it will not operate parking meters under this Bill, the Government intend to go ahead and install parking meters in the city. I do not want anyone to think that parking meters will not be installed if the City Council decide not to go ahead with the scheme. The Government are serious about this and will go ahead with it.

Mr. Nicklin: If the Government install meters, where will the revenue go?

Mr. A. JONES: Into a fund, in the same way as if the money had been paid to the Brisbane City Council. It must go into a special fund, and the money would have to be utilised by the Government in the same way as it would have to be utilised by the Brisbane City Council if it operated the meters. I still think that the Brisbane City Council might give favourable consideration to it; I have not lost faith. I think when it looks at the thing fairly it will realise that the Government are attempting to assist it in this matter. We do not want to adopt a dog-in-the-manger attitude. We are supported by most people who have a knowledge of traffic that the meters should be policed by our own police. There should not be two sets of officers on the streets. We are supported by the R.A.C.Q. and by leading articles in the Press. I do not want to over-emphasise it but owner-onus is one of the most important principles in the Bill together with the policing of parking meters. Apart from those principles there are only two or three simple matters than can be discussed in Committee.

Mr. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha) (8.22 p.m.): During my speech on the introduction of the Bill I stated that I agreed with the broad principles of it as outlined by the Minister. Since obtaining a copy and studying it, I reiterate that I still agree with the principles, some more than others, but there is at least one matter which was not mentioned by the Minister in his introductory speech with which I violently disagree. I shall mention it in the course of my speech.

Mr. Walsh: Tell us early so that we shall know what it is.

Mr. MORRIS: I will tell the Treasurer in good time. This Bill provides machinery by which an outstanding improvement can be made in our traffic problems, but it depends more than most Bills on the effectiveness with which it is administered. It will be agreed that the most important principle is parking meters, and what we might call ancillary matters. Anyone with any real appreciation of developments in this field of traffic matters will recognise that they are essentially a vitally important adjunct to control of parking. I was quite interested to notice that the Minister quoted from a booklet issued by the Highway Research Board entitled, "Parking Meters" which is a study of their number, revenue and use, and contains a great deal of very interesting and important information. From it I have discovered that parking meters have been in operation for a matter of up to 20 years and during that time they have become constantly more popular and more of them are in use particularly in America and in latter years in Australia. The statistics in this booklet indicate that the parking meter is here to stay. I am firmly of that opinion. Because I think we have to face up to this question of traffic we must realise that it is absolutely imperative to get parked cars off the street. One might say that there are car parks in Brisbane where it is possible to keep cars off the street, and to a large extent that is right. There are car parks close to the heart of Brisbane—they are not right in the heart of Brisbane—but strangely enough they are losing money. People will not use car parks unless they are really in the heart of the city. There is one at the corner of Albert and Charlotte Streets, and it is invariably full. As a matter of fact, it is often so full that people who pay 4s. or 5s. to have their cars parked there often find them out in the street when they come back to get them. That parking station does very well, but there are others not quite in the centre of the city that are rarely used. I was discussing this matter with the Leader of the Opposition this afternoon, and he knows of some that are, as I say, rarely patronised, solely because they are not really in the heart of the city. People will not bother about parking a mile or so from the centre of the city when they can park their cars in the street right in the city with a good chance of getting away with it. Very seldom do you have any trouble if you park your car in a city stret. When I say that, of course, I am not criticising the policing of our present parking regulations. We would need a police force the size of an army division to cope with the parking problem in a town such as Brisbane unless we adopted a different principle, and I am very glad that we are now doing that by making it possible for either local authorities or the Government to provide parking meters. With that, I am very much in accord—it is a progressive step—but I do not think we can stop there. Unless the parking meters are effectively operated, their usefulness will be negligible. It would be tragic if we installed parking meters in this city and failed from the outset to police them properly. At first people would be very careful to abide by the time limit and all the other regulations, but as soon as they saw that the parking meters were not being properly policed and that they could get away with paying 6d. for an hour or an hour and a-half they would build up a resistance to them and to their own self-discipline.

And so I say it is vitally important that parking meters will have to be effectively policed from the beginning. Further, you cannot police them effectively without the policy of owner-onus. I told the Minister during the introductory stage that I was

very much in favour of the policy of owner-onus but, as I said by interjection a little while ago, the time will quickly come when it will be neecssary not only to have parking meters, but to deal with other parking problems in Brisbane. I shall enlarge on that in a moment.

Not having owner-onus has made the job of the Police Department in policing "No Parking" and short-term parking areas almost impossible. Unless the police officer can pin down the driver and find him, he cannot prosecute. In any case the delay and expense of prosecution are considerable. Many channels have to be followed. The owner must be found, the summons served, and all the other processes of law followed. When the case comes before the court the police officer has to attend, whereas he could be much better employed controlling traffic in the street. I venture to say that it costs the department £20 for every £1 it gets from prosecutions.

Under owner-onus the officer has a book of summonses, or whatever they are called, printed in quadruplicate. All he has to do is put one copy in the car, or give it to the owner if he is there, deliver one to the prosecuting authority, have the third posted to the offender, and keeps the fourth in the records. Nine times out of 10 the offender will not waste his time and money fighting a case when he knows he cannot win it. No time is lost, and the prosecution probably costs the department a little more than 1s.

Mr. Walsh: There will be many more fines, too, won't there?

Mr. MORRIS: My word there will. If a man parks his car in the street he should pay for the use of the street. If he breaks the law and leaves it there all day, he should be fined.

We wholeheartedly accept the principle of owner-onus. When the Bill becomes law it will be necessary to have the name of the owner prominently displayed on the windscreen or some other part of the car. Owner-onus calls for more than the mere number of the car to be known. The Minister can confirm or deny this, but I understand it will work the same way as it does in America, where the name of the owner must be prominently displayed on the car.

Mr. A. Jones: It will not be obligatory upon the owner to display his name. That is not intended. The police will take the number of the car, put it in the hands of the Council and the Council will check with the Main Roads Department for the name and address of the owner.

Mr. MORRIS: I am interested in that explanation. I know that in some parts of the world they do adopt the method of having the name of the owner displayed on the car. Probably the method to be used here will be just as effective and in some ways better.

Mr. A. Jones: There will be only a small percentage of the thousands of cars registered in Queensland that will ever use metered parking. If the name and address of owners had to be typed on registration labels it would cause a considerable amount of work over 12 months.

Mr. MORRIS: In view of that, the method to be used here will be better.

Mr. A. Jones: Names and addresses must be displayed on utilities and trucks, of course. There is provision for that in the Act.

Mr. MORRIS: There must be effective police control in the early stages. If meters are not properly policed right from the start staying beyond the limit with impunity will develop into a habit and it will almost be regarded as an occupational risk. Therefore I reiterate the vital necessity of very effective control from the beginning.

It has been debated in the Press whether it is desirable that we should have police officers or a force loosely referred to as Brown Bombers policing meter parking. Again I express my belief that there is only one possible way to handle it. It must be handled by police officers. The authority handling the policing of meters must be the traffic authority and no other. I cannot see that it would work in any other way. In practically every place where a system of parking meters operates there is only one control, not divided control.

If it is to be controlled by police officers, it must be a job on its own. If there were any attempt by the Police Department to say to a police officer, "Your beat is between George Street and Edward Street. You are on general duty in Elizabeth Street but while you are on that general duty keep an eye on the meters too," the whole scheme would fall down. It needs to be a special job for special men engaged on that job alone.

I referred to the system operating in Melbourne. The report I have here refers to Melbourne's traffic officers. I understand they are police officers but it does not definitely say so. It says that Melbourne's traffic officers mounted on red motor scooters now patrol the lines of parking meters. I will have more to say about that later. There they specialise on the job. If you want to make a success of this you cannot have a policeman doing ordinary patrol work as well as looking after the meters.

Mr. A. Jones: I agree with that.

Mr. MORRIS: I thought that was the Minister's opinion. It has been argued that if you make a special job of it it would be very expensive and the economy of the meter would make it unsatisfactory. All experience disproves that argument. The Minister quoted figures from the publication entitled "Parking Meters" relating to income from meters. I have some figures that are a little more up to date which were taken from a news review

of September this year. Parking meters in Melbourne are bringing in the sum of over £50,000 each year. In addition to the fee itself, as a result of officers looking after these meters they are bringing in another 20 per cent. in addition. There are 2,000 meters in Melbourne and there would be about the same number here, and the income is £1,000 a week. The fines that they pay for overstaying is one-fifth or 20 per cent. of the income from the meters.

Mr. A. Jones: They are are very similar to the American figures.

Mr. MORRIS: Almost the same. How many meters can one police officer look after? I do not know whether the Minister has any figures on that.

Mr. A. Jones: Yes, I have.

Mr. MORRIS: As a result of research I found that much depended on the size of the city, but one officer could look after approximately 300 meters in a city the size of Brisbane.

Mr. A. Jones: In Auckland one officer looks after 250 meters, in Wellington 200 meters and in Christchurch 200 meters.

Mr. MORRIS: Those cities would have a smaller population than Brisbane.

Mr. A. Jones: Yes.

Mr. MORRIS: The figures range from over 200 in a small city to 320 in a city of the size of Brisbane. We can assume that looking after 300 meters would be a pretty good day's work. It is only a matter of simple arithmetic to ascertain that the people who overstay their leave in parking meters will pay for the whole of the cost of the police officers controlling the meters. I was amazed when I discovered that. I went further and searched for figures that might disprove that but I could not find any. That is the position. The Minister may later confirm or deny that statement, but I think he will agree with me. The income from meters, therefore, will be almost clear profit after the meters have been paid for. That is a very important point.

The reports I have received indicate that one very vital matter must be recognised, that there shall be no discrimination in regard to cars parked in metered blocks. I have sufficient confidence in the Police Force and the officers who will be doing the job to believe that there will be no discrimination. I have considered it. I believe we can be confident that there will be no difficulty in that way.

I suggest that it may be desirable to have graduated charges for different areas. If meters are installed in Elizabeth Street and on the street near the gardens, a visitor to town who wanted to do shopping in Queen Street would rather pay 1s. for the space in Elizabeth Street than 6d. for the space in this other street. This is a novel approach, but I think it is desirable. Space which is nearer to the heart of the city and businesses normally visited by people is worth more than space away from the city. It may be desirable to graduate the meter charges.

There should be a classification of streets by the authority supervising the installation of meters—metered streets, no-parking streets, parking streets not metered, for which the period of time would have to be determined, and streets with no restriction on parking. If that was done not only would owner-onus apply in metered areas, but it must also apply in those areas where there was a limited time for parking. The problems of keeping the road clear and removing the nuisance man who parks for long periods would be simplified. It would mean more buyers for metered space. I should say that fines will have to be graduated according to the severity of the breach. If a person over-parks for a reasonable period of time, his fine should not be as great as the fine of a person who makes a hog of himself and stays for four or five times the permitted period.

The Treasurer wanted to know the principle I opposed bitterly. It is the indiscriminate towing away of vehicles. I oppose that as being against fair play and the reasonable freedom of the individual. I do not believe in license, but I believe in reasonable freedom. I think the towing away of vehicles is a most iniquitous practice.

Mr. Walsh: How would you get the car away?

Mr. MORRIS: Under certain circumstances I would not. I would fine the man. I do not quarrel with that.

Mr. Walsh: Leave your car there all day and there would be no earning capacity of the meter.

Mr. MORRIS: What nonsense. The matter is in the Government's hands entirely. Penalise the man, of course. Fine him double what he would have paid on the meter. I am utterly opposed to the policy of indiscriminate towing away.

Dr. Noble: You can destroy a car by doing that.

Mr. MORRIS: I will develop that point. This is a grave issue. It operated here up until 25 April. There was a policy in operation where cars were towed away by some firm who had, I presume, a contract for the job of towing cars away on the instruction of the police. There is a member in this House whose car was towed away after he had overstayed his leave by some few minutes.

Mr. A. Jones: I know of three members.

Mr. MORRIS: Perhaps the Minister does. The car that was towed away was damaged considerably by the people who did the towing. First of all I believe that this hits at the liberty of the individual unduly. I remind the Minister that in April of this year he said that the system of towing

vehicles away had proved a failure. I quote from ''The Courier-Mail'' of 26 April as follows—

> ''From today extra police will patrol city streets to detect parking offences.
>
> ''The Minister in charge of police (Mr. Jones) said that last night.
>
> ''He warned that parking offenders would be prosecuted in the future without previous warning. This action followed the decision to abolish the 'towing-away' system, Mr. Jones said.
>
> ''He added that the 'towing-away' system had been experimental and had not proved as successful as hoped. It was being adandoned.''

We are now introducing a really modern method of controlling traffic; it is a very good method, but we are reverting to the wretched system of towing away after we had tried it and proved it to be unsuccessful.

Mr. A. Jones: Suppose we put nothing in the Bill relating to that? We still have the power.

Mr. MORRIS: Yes, under Section 44. I am registering my objection to the fact that the Government have specifically included power in the Bill.

Mr. A. Jones: I will tell you why—because we checked on what was done in Sydney and Melbourne. They are doing exactly as we are doing in this Bill.

Mr. MORRIS: But that does not make it right. The system was tried here 12 months ago. Sydney and Melbourne are starting to try it now. We are years ahead of them. We have proved that it does not work. Why go back to a policy that does not work? Why are we following them back to the old method of towing away when it proved undesirable?

Mr. A. Jones: We believe that you cannot operate meter parking unless you have power to remove vehicles.

Mr. MORRIS: Let us be clear about it. There are two places in the Bill where the question of towing away of vehicles is dealt with. I do not oppose the first provision in the Bill for towing cars away. I cannot refer at this stage to specific clauses, but the Minister says that towing away should be permitted in a case of emergency. I fully agree that it should be permitted in a case of emergency or if a danger is being created. But if a car is in a parking lot and the owner can be penalised for staying there too long, unless of course he is doing some harm to parking there, the Minister is taking unto himself a power that is undesirable if he has the car towed away. In short, I do not object to the power on page 5 of the Bill, but I definitely object to that on page 6. I know I must not mention clauses, but I want to make my meaning very clear.

Mr. A. Jones: On what you are saying, we could tow cars away from the unmetered areas but not from metered areas.

Mr. MORRIS: As I say, I agree with the towing away of cars in a case of emergency or if they are likely to cause a danger. I am not now speaking as one who has been personally annoyed by the towing away of vehicles. I have disagreed with the policy for years. I do not want to keep on talking about Mr. Dorsey, but when he was in Brisbane in March or April last I asked him what he thought about the towing away of cars, and told him I regarded it as a wretched principle. He said, ''In all traffic legislation there must be provision for towing away vehicles in cases of emergency. We in Los Angeles have always had that provision and I always advise other people to have it. But the circumstances must be very grave and unusual before we permit the towing away of a vehicle.'' If the Minister applies the provision on that basis, I have no complaint. But if he uses it in the manner indicated in the second provision, he will be reverting to the old pernicious practice.

Mr. A. Jones: If a motorist parks his car from 9 o'clock in the morning till 2 or 3 o'clock in the afternoon, what happens? Do we have to wait until he returns?

Mr. MORRIS: Under the policy of owner-onus, the Minister has police patrolling those areas.

Mr. A. Jones: But a motorist cannot park his car in one place for half a day. He has to get out and make room for others.

Mr. MORRIS: The Minister has police patrolling the areas, and they must know that the car has been over-parked before it can be towed away. Under the policy of owner-onus, the motorist could be prosecuted on the scale of charges laid down, and the Government would be getting more out of it than they would from the parking fee, and they would not be affecting the freedom of the individual.

Mr. A. Jones: In the first place the Brisbane City Council submitted a draft Bill to the Government. and it contained exactly the same clause as the one you are now objecting to.

Mr. MORRIS: Surely I have made it abundantly clear that I am not speaking on behalf of the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. A. Jones: No, I am not suggesting that.

Mr. MORRIS: I do not think hon. members opposite have had any illusions about that. When I spoke on the introductory stage I saw the smiles of delight on the faces of many hon. members opposite.

Mr. Walsh: We were disappointed.

Mr. MORRIS: At me?

Mr. Walsh: Yes.

Mr. MORRIS: I know. But the Bill is not confined to the area controlled by the Brisbane City Council. It will no doubt operate in Rockhampton, Townsville and other big centres. Because the Brisbane City Council's draft Bill included that clause it does not follow that it is right, or, if it does, why has not everything else in it been included? I am not asking the Minister to include it but, on that argument, why is it not there? At all events, I am utterly opposed to the policy. In certain cases there should be severe penalties for the man who makes a hog of himself and stays too long.

Mr. Walsh: I am sure some of us would like to tow you away now.

Mr. MORRIS: I know that, but I have a job to do and I am doing it. However, I shall be as brief as I can.

The next principle relates to the use of the funds. The Bill suggests that all the money from fines and parking meters should be devoted to off-street parking and the elimination of bottle-necks. While I agree with that, I do not agree with the order of priority. It is a matter of self-preservation for private enterprise to provide parking areas if it wants to attract customers to its stores. If I had more time I could quote statistics from America to prove that the businesses that provide off-street parking are prospering more than those who do not. I believe the City Council is including in its by-laws for new buildings a provision that people erecting them shall make arrangements for parking areas. So off-street parking should take second place to the elimination of bottle-necks. The huge income from parking meters will, of course, help eliminate many bottle-necks in the city.

I wanted to say more about off-street parking and to speak about the leasing of land to private enterprise but time is against me.

The matter of taxis is not very important. One of my colleagues will speak about reliability trials.

The Bill includes a provision that if the local authority will not accept responsibility for meters, the Government will. Good luck to the Government! I am glad that that is in the Bill. I cannot imagine any local authority leaving such a rich plum, such a boon for the development of the city and the elimination of traffic bottle-necks, to anybody else.

If I were in any local authority I would say, "It is our job to eliminate bottle-necks. Here is a method by which we can do it out of revenue." I would be happy to do it.

I am happy about the Bill but I do hope the Minister will accept an amendment to the pernicious clause making provision for the towing away of vehicles.

Mr. KEYATTA (Townsville) (9.6 p.m.): It is rather amazing to find hon. members opposite agreeing to the principles of the Bill and then saying that its effect will not be satisfactory. Here is a Bill created for the specific purpose of eliminating serious congestion and possible danger. We have had advice from world-wide and local experts. The traffic section of the Police Department has given the whole matter much serious thought. After a great deal of consideration the Government have decided to implement the scheme in an effort to eliminate traffic congestion. The Council will reap the benefit of the revenue. They will use it for the provision of off-street parking facilities. There is nothing wrong with that. If the scheme works we will eventually have much of the traffic off the streets.

Traffic congestion creates many dangers. Cars double-park. They cause trouble by parking at intersections. They park across laneways for lengthy periods. As much as we dislike having to tow vehicles away it must be done. In the past we have fined but what good did it do? We have imposed fines on drivers under the influence of liquor, but has it had any salutory effect? None whatever. There is only one alternative—shift the vehicle if it is a danger and a menace.

There is no better authority to implement the scheme than the Queensland Police Force. The Brisbane City Council and the Opposition should be pleased that the Government have decided to give effect to such a worthy scheme. All other schemes have failed. This is something new. Experience is the best teacher, and we will profit by experience. It is no use crossing our bridges before we come to them. We will iron out any difficulties as we find them. Let us put the scheme into effect and I am confident that our zealous traffic police will make it work. Hon. members opposite have apparently been upset about the provision to tow away vehicles. I know that it is unpleasant to have your vehicle towed away. If an owner locks his vehicle and it is necessary to move it, it has to be towed away. When owners bring vehicles to the city they should not park them on each side of the street and leave them there for hours. When vehicles are parked on each side of a street there is not much room for the incoming and outgoing traffic. It is essential to have the right to tow away these vehicles and so remove a potential danger to traffic.

Mr. NICHOLSON (Murrumba) (9.12 p.m.): Government and Opposition members have dealt fully with this Bill to deal with the installation of parking meters, but apart from the Minister's remarks, very little was said regarding reliability trials. I commend the Bill which is long overdue. I support the provision to bring intrastate or interstate reliability trials under police supervision. The police should at all times work in conjunction with the local authority. During his second reading speech the Minister said that the local authorities would be considered. That is most desirable. The Leader of the Opposition, by way of interjection, referred to the great damage done to country roads just

after or during wet weather by competitors in these trials. We must keep an open mind on the value of reliability trials. In the past they were reliability trials in the true sense of the word. The schedule laid down had to be maintained and if a competitor arrived either before or after the scheduled time points were automatically deducted. I took part in a number of these trials in my younger days and we had to stick strictly to the rules and regulations laid down by the organisers.

Mr. Moore: Do you think they serve any useful purpose?

Mr. NICHOLSON: I shall refer to that point.

Mr. Rasey: We are suffering a trial now.

Mr. NICHOLSON: The hon. member need not stay here if he wants to go home. I listened patiently to him when he spoke on this matter and for once in my life I thought he had sound ideas. I have something to put forward which may help to solve the problem regarding speeding in reliability trials. What is achieved by these trials? A great deal of publicity is obtained for certain makes of cars, the people who drive them,, the people who organise the trials, oil companies or other companies, and the people who advertise chocolates, spices and so on on the car bodies, but in my opinion the only benefit of trials is the entertainment value for the public. We must respect public opinion. As the Minister pointed out, consideration has been given to the complete banning of trials. I believe that strict control of trials is better than the complete banning of them. It is difficult to maintain control, however, by setting speed limits. If the first prize is £1,000, £2,000 or up to £4,000, the mere fact that they may be fined £10 or £20 in a police court for speeding will not deter certain drivers. They put it down to experience and list the fine on their expense sheets. They will again commit the breach in the next area. The organisers are also worried about lack of control between check points. Under the present system, trials are not a test of the reliability of the car as much as a test of the endurance of the driver and the standard of the service organisation along the route.

Mr. Moore: They are a danger to the general public.

Mr. Sparkes: And of no benefit to anybody.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. NICHOLSON: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. When I was so rudely interrupted——

Mr. Moore: You were not rudely interrupted. Tell us about the excess profits made by the people who sponsor these trials.

Mr. NICHOLSON: The organisers are definitely trying to get complete control and keep the speeds of cars to the speed limits.

Mr. Moore: They could not care less.

Mr. NICHOLSON: The sponsors get a certain amount of publicity.

As I have said, these are trials of the endurance of the driver and the organisation on the trial route. They are not true tests of the cars. Admittedly some of them take a terrific pounding and, as the Minister said, some are driven at speeds of up to 80 miles an hour. I have no brief for the man who drives at excessive speed. He is endangering the public and property, including local authority roads. I believe police control alone would not be effective. I know that trial organisers would welcome the provision of some attachment to the car in the way of a speed control which would definitely stop motorists from driving at excessive speeds. It has been suggested by some people that the fitting of a governor would have the desired effect, but it depends on what type is fitted. A governor fitted to an engine is a definite danger because it does not allow the driver full control of the engine. He is only using about a quarter or half bore of the engine and if the time comes when he wants the full bore he cannot get it. This is likely to lead to an unfortunate accident. But there is a control that can be fitted to a car that will have no effect whatever on the efficiency of the engine but will definitely stabilise control of the car to the maximum speed required. If the maximum speed required was 50 miles an hour you could allow a tolerance of 5 miles an hour by setting the control cut-out at 55 miles per hour. I have taken the liberty of bringing with me a type of governor so that I may describe it. This control or the speed governor as it is called is fitted to the speedometer cable of the car and it operates in such a way that it has no detrimental effect so far as the engine power is concerned. One end is fitted into the speedometer cable and the other to the speedometer and one wire connected to the horn and the other to the ignition. I would prefer this to be called the speed control rather than a "governor". This is a prototype of a control and very simple in its working. It is worked by centrifugal action and the faster the speedometer cable goes it automatically brings the control into action by pressing up on two points inside. These points have springs. There is a coil spring and the two sets of points. This type of control can regulate speeds at 10, 50 or 60 miles an hour. The strength of the springs is definitely the control within the unit which controls the cut-out speed.

Mr. Sparkes: How would it work going up a hill?

Mr. NICHOLSON: If you were doing 50 miles going up a hill the control would operate.

Once the control comes into action, it closes the points. It automatically short-circuits the ignition and, if so desired, it gives a sound warning that the speed limit is being exceeded. In the first place, the car horn starts to blow or a slight missing in the engine is felt at a speed of about two miles an hour before it cuts out. As soon as the maximum speed is reached the running of the engine becomes so erratic that even a crack-pot driver would not try to continue at that speed. Consequently, he is forced to drop back to less than the maximum speed. The adjustment of the speed depends on the weight of the spring and the gap between the points. There may be other types of controls better than this, but this is the only one I know of that is fitted to the speedometer cable and that has passed a test by the inspector of motor vehicles.

I shall read briefly the report on the control by the officer of the department—

> "Briefly, it (the device) consists of a flyweight type of centrifugal governor working against two springs, the first a coil type compression spring, and in addition a blade type contact point spring. When the centrifugal force generated by the flyweights is great enough to overcome the opposing force exerted by the two springs previously mentioned, the gap between two contact points is closed, and as these, when closed, earth the primary circuit in the ignition system, the magneto is short circuited. It will be apparent that the maximum road speed (M.P.H.) attainable by a motor vehicle fitted with this control unit is dependent on—
>
> 1. The strength of the coil type compression spring, plus
>
> 2. The strength of the blade type contact point spring.
>
> 3. The gap between the contact points."

Further on, the report reads—

> "Careful observation of the control unit while under test, and consideration of the results obtained, led to the following conclusions:—
>
> (*a*) The control unit positively limits the speed of the vehicle to a pre-determined maximum, and any speed in excess of the latter is impossible, except down a very steep hill, or when travelling down hill in neutral."

If a motorist is travelling downhill in neutral to gain a little speed and this device is connected to the horn, it will blow all the time. That will make it obvious to the officials or the other competitors that he is travelling beyond the speed limit.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I do not want to interrupt the hon. member, but I hope he will connect his remarks with the principles contained in the measure.

Mr. NICHOLSON: My remarks are on the speed of cars in reliability trials. The report continues—

> "(*b*) Any attempt to operate the vehicle at a speed in excess of the pre-determined maximum, results in such an unpleasant state of engine 'rough running' that such an attempt at speeding would be quickly abandoned.
>
> "(*c*) Despite the effect mentioned in the previous paragraph, it was particularly noticed that the governor assumed control gradually, and did not come into operation suddenly or without warning. The first effect noticed was a slight, barely perceptible miss in the engine. Any further increase in road speed resulted in a progressive and substantial increase in engine roughness. By the time that the road speed had risen to about 3 or 4 miles per hour above the speed at which the first slight miss was noticed, the effect was so pronounced and unpleasant that a reduction in speed would automatically be made by any rider."

The principle is simple. The operation is similar to that of a governor fitted to constant-speed airscrews on aeroplanes and is considered sound.

Many improvements have been suggested. The Minister asked who would set the control and how would it be fitted. The only answer is that the authorities conducting the trial or the police would set it. Each would be predetermined and set. If the device goes into production the adjustment on the points will be made by either a small cam or a screw instead of springs as in the prototype. It would be shielded, armour-plated, so that it could not be cut or tampered with. All points would be sealed and also the connections to the speedometer. The part that unscrews, containing all the adjustment, would be sealed and the breaking of the seal by the driver would automatically lose whatever points the people conducting the trial cared to specify. In some instances competitors lose up to 1,000 points for tampering with, or removing, any part of the car that has been sealed or marked. The device would be excellent for use in a reliability trial and it would not be a bad idea to fit it to some of the motor-cycles around the town, particularly to the bikes of learners until they have been riding 12 months or long enough to acquire some road sense. It has been submitted to organisers of road reliability trials and they would be happy to use some such control.

Any control or governor fitted to the engine is out. I would not put one on my own car. If the speed is to be limited to 50 miles an hour, the device should be set to a tolerance of 55 and it would ensure safe and sound control over what are alleged to be reliability trials but are in truth speed trials. As they are conducted today they are definitely a danger to the public and to property and local authority roads.

The device I have with me is purely and simply a prototype, hand-made. It is the only one that has been made and it is fairly rough. If it went into mass production it could probably be produced at a cost of about £3 and the total cost fitted to a motor vehicle would not exceed £7 or £8. Apparently, expense does not worry competitors in reliability trials. The cost is not important, particularly as it might mean a life saved. I am not a spoil-sport by any means. I took part in motor trials when they were really controlled. We definitely had to obey instructions. In today's reliability trials drivers may arrive 2 hours early at a control point. They stay 10 yards outside or go to their own service organisation for a complete check-up. Right on time they drive through the control point, punch the bundy, and everything in the garden is lovely. You could not do that in the old days. If you arrived anywhere in sight of the control point you had points deducted. Nowadays, it is a case of the survival of the fittest. In many ways the best-serviced organisation, not the best car or the best driver, wins the trial. I am not here to give the manufacturer of this article any publicity but he is prepared to demonstrate it to the Minister or the Police Department. If the Minister so desires we will fit one to his car. Speed can be set for anything from 20 to 60 or 70 miles an hour. I believe it is the only answer to control speeding in reliability trials.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (9.37 p.m.): On the whole, the Bill is an excellent one. It efficiently copes with the problems it has set out to deal with.

The hon. member for Murrumba put forward a very useful suggestion for reliability trials. There is another matter to be considered. I refer to the issue of permits, particularly for the local trials throughout the State. There is provision in the Bill to give a permit under certain conditions but there is no provision to withdraw a permit because of a change in the weather. Recently the motor club in my own district organised a week-end trial. It rained and what they did to the roads was nobody's business. The roads had just been graded but after the trial they were not worth two shillings. The shire council will be required to spend between £1,500 and £2,000 to repair the damage. There should be power to cancel a permit in the event of bad weather.

Mr. A. Jones: We had an application recently to close two streets in Gympie for the kiddies to run a soap-box derby.

Mr. NICKLIN: Yes, the hon. gentleman mentioned that when he introduced the Bill. We do not want to ban the trials completely but we do want to prevent this senseless damage to roads which costs the local authorities much money to repair. In most country districts you are lucky if you get the roads graded once a year, and when they are graded it is very annoying to have them cut about by reliability trial competitors. The local authorities have no surplus of funds and if the roads are damaged after being graded they have to remain in that condition till the following year.

I believe that meter parking is essential in any city. Its suitability has been proved all over the world. The number of parking meters is growing all the time in the United States, and it it pleasing to know that we are going to have this common-sense method of parking control in this city. It certainly is a money-maker. The Minister mentioned the takings in Sydney, and in Melbourne they bring in £1,000 a week to the city council, £850 from meter fees and about £170 a week in fines. As the number of meters grows the income from them will grow. In addition to helping to solve the traffic problem the meters will bring in hard cash to provide off-the-street parking areas which will facilitate the flow of traffic through our city.

I join with the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha in tendering a protest against the indiscriminate towing away of cars. When cars are a danger to traffic, tow them away by all means, but why tow them away from a parking area? If they stay over their time they can be fined. The Minister said that the only reason why they were towed away was because revenue would be lost from the meters. The charge is 6d. per half-hour. If a car was left there for 10 hours the meter fee would be 10s. If the car is left there for four hours, fine the owner 10s. and the revenue would show a profit.

Mr. Devries: The trouble is that usually nobody else can get in.

Mr. NICKLIN: That is a problem. You will not find many cars overstaying.

Mr. A. Jones: The idea of meter parking is to ration the time, giving everybody a chance.

Mr. NICKLIN: I realise that. I do not believe that there will be many who will hog motor parking times. If it is made too expensive they will not do it too often. I do not see why we should tow them away just because they tow them away in Sydney and Melbourne. The hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha pointed out that a car may suffer £50 or £60 worth of damage while being towed away. It is not necessary to do that to solve the problem. It is a foolish and senseless thing to do. If a car is a potential danger then tow it away. If the fines for overstaying are heavy they will not do so.

In conclusion, I refer to the unfortunate argument between the Brisbane City Council and the Government. I believe with the Minister that reason will prevail, and that the difficulties will vanish. I can see no reason why the Lord Mayor should be upset by the provisions of this Bill. His main objections seem to be overcome by the Bill. The Council would certainly get a considerable

amount of revenue from meters and, as a result, would be able to improve parking facilities and the flow of traffic.

Throughout the world the authority that controls traffic also controls meter parking. Dual control is undesirable. The police have training in the control of traffic and parking, they are ready to commence the job and are the most efficient authority.

Mr. Devries: A motorist would give less cheek to a policeman.

Mr. NICKLIN: And that is important. It has been stated that the inspectors in Sydney, known as the "Brown Bombers" have many arguments with motorists, and in some instances have to send for the police.

I agree with the suggestion of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that the police controlling these meters should be special police doing that job only.

Mr. A. Jones: I agree.

Mr. NICKLIN: That is the position in Melbourne. Those police are supplied with red scooters, although I do not know the reason for that. They police meters very effectively.

The principles of the Bill have been covered very adequately by the Minister and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I think the Bill is an excellent one and will make a major contribution to the solution of the traffic problems of this city.

Hon. A. JONES (Charters Towers—Secretary for Labour and Industry) (9.48 p.m.), in reply: I shall not detain hon. members very long. During the speech of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition I said by way of interjection that the Brisbane City Council included in the draft Bill submitted to the Government a clause providing for the towing away of cars. The Brisbane City Council went into this subject very thoroughly. As a matter of fact, the draft Bill was similar to the Bill now before the House, except on the points on which there is disagreement. The Council included the towing clause in the draft Bill. It was apparent the Council had studied the legislation in other States and countries. I do not know the position in America, but in the southern States, New South Wales, Victoria and Hobart, and I understand in New Zealand the Acts contain sections covering the towing away of vehicles illegally parked in metered areas. I do not think meters could be effectively policed without that power. The Leader of the Opposition said that a motorist may stay in the area for 4 or 5 hours, that the meter charge would be, say, 6d. for each half hour, and that if he paid 10s. the position would be met. That may be so if only one motorist did that, but there is another apsect, the rationing of time. Many other motorists want to use that space in order to go to a bank or a business house for 10 minutes or a quarter of an hour. The idea of course is to keep the vehicles moving all the while. The hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha said that there would have to be a classification of roads and streets. That is true. In the busy part of the city you would probably have half-hour parking and the time might increase the further you went out of the city. These are all matters to be decided between the police and the Brisbane City Council if it comes in under the scheme.

In reply to the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha, the money received will be paid into a fund which must be utilised for matters appertaining to traffic only. There is the specific purpose of providing for off-street parking, and there is actually no priority as to how the money will be used. The hon. member said that I had not said anything about the number of police required. I will not deal with it at great length. The proposal by the Council was to install 500 meters by June, 1957, and another 1,500 during the following financial year. The number of police required for supervision and enforcement of the law and related matters cannot be determined at this stage. I have particulars of police required in other places. In Christchurch and Wellington one officer controls 250 parking meters; in Auckland one officer controls 250 meters, and in Hobart, Tasmania, there is one officer to 150 parking meters. As hon. members realise, the number of police is determined by the size of the city involved. Information from the U.S.A. indicates that there are 94,630 parking meters installed, supervised by 342 officers or one officer for each 277 parking meters. In a city the size of Brisbane one officer could manage between 250 to 280 parking meters.

Mr. Morris: That sounds pretty reasonable.

Mr. A. JONES: I again stress a point raised by an hon. member opposite. It is intended that permanent police will be doing this class of work. It is not the intention that police should be put onto street work and to look after meters as well. The officers who will do the job will have specific duties and it will be their job only. The number of vehicles to be used by the police and other other associated matters will have to be determined. All factors will be taken into account.

Motion (Mr. A. Jones) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 to 8, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 9—New ss. 44C, 44D and 44E inserted; When metered parking permitted—

Mr. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha) (9.56 p.m.): Further to my comments during the second-reading stage, I move the following amendment:—

"On page 6, lines 26 to 32, omit the paragraph—

'(3.) Any member of the Police Force may seize and remove any vehicle and/or horse parked in a metered space in contravention of this section and the provisions of section forty-four of this Act shall apply and extend in respect of any vahicle and/or horse so seized and removed. Furthermore any such horse shall be deemed to be straying upon the road and may be impounded.' ''

I dealt with this matter at some length during the second-reading stage, and do not intend to do so again. However, I point out that a paragraph of this clause on page 5 of the Bill reads as follows:—

''(2.) Any member of the Police Force during any temporary obstruction or danger to traffic or in any case of emergency, or the District Superintendent in his discretion in special circumstances of which public notice shall be given if practicable in some newspaper generally circulating in the locality concerned, may—

''(*c*) Where the owner or driver of a vehicle and/or horse parked in a metered zone or metered space cannot be readily located, or, if located, fails to remove such vehicle and/or horse from such metered zone or metered space when directed to do so in pursuance of this subsection, remove or cause to be removed such vehicle and/or horse from such metered zone or metered space.''

I agree with that provision; it should be there. If there is a temporary obstruction, it is right that the police should tow the vehicle away. If there is any danger to traffic or any emergency, again the police should have power to tow the vehicle away. I thoroughly agree with that provision, but it is the provision on page 6 that I want omitted. It is far too sweeping, and it is undesirable. I shall not pursue the argument any further, because I am hoping that the Minister will accept the amendment.

Hon. A. JONES (Charters Towers—Secretary for Labour and Industry) (9.59 p.m.): I cannot see any reason for objection to the provision. As I said previously, the power contained in it is already in the Traffic Act, so that even if the provision was removed from the Bill there would be nothing to prevent the police from removing a car.

Mr. Morris: But the point is, what is the basis on which the decision is made to tow it away?

Mr. A. JONES: The car might have been parked for some hours. I do not think for a moment that the police would tow away a car that had been over-parked for only 10 to 15 minutes.

Mr. Morris: They did that before.

Mr. A. JONES: It was considered previously that some action would have to be taken to prevent cars being parked all day in certain city streets and we did what was done in other States. I have to admit that I said I did not think it was altogether successful. The Government gave thought to it after testing it for a considerable time. Nevertheless a similar condition is included in the legislation of the other States. I cannot see how metered parking could be successfully policed unless the police had power to tow vehicles away. A wealthy businessman would not hesitate to leave his car alongside a meter all day and would be prepared to pay £1 or £2 for it.

I agree with hon. members that it is no use doing anything about metered parking unless it is thoroughly policed, and I cannot come to any other conclusion than that this is one of the powers essential to its policing. I should be reluctant to drop it.

Mr. Aikens: It is obvious that they must have some punitive power.

Mr. A. JONES: I think so.

Mr. MUNRO (Toowong) (10.2 p.m.): I support the amendment and I ask the Minister to consider it a little further. The principle that should be applied is that we should let the punishment fit the crime. I shall say more about that later.

The Bill amends the Traffic Act of 1949, Section 44 of which gives the police power to seize and remove vehicles in certain circumstances. It is very well framed and covers all circumstances in which under existing law it might be necessary for a member of the Police Force to seize and remove a car, and it includes adequate safeguards. In the light of our experience in the last year or two I do not think anybody could reasonably suggest that it was not adequate. Previous speakers have indicated that it has been found that even that power may be rather dangerous to apply fully. As I understand it, it has been decided administratively as a matter of policy that the Police Force will not apply the powers they already have under the Section, yet the Bill, designed primarily to deal with metered parking, includes two more clauses giving more powers to the police to seize or remove vehicles. On basic principles, I suggest that all that is necessary is to have a short provision in the Bill to preserve the applicability of Section 44 of the 1949 Act notwithstanding any of the new provisions on metered parking. Something like that may be necessary otherwise it might be held that there is conflict between the provisions of the Bill and the original Act and the police would have no power at all to remove a car which had been meter-parked. That is sufficiently covered by the provisions on page 5 of the Bill, section 44c of the amended Act, if the Bill becomes law. It adequately covers the necessary power for police to exercise the powers they already have under Section 44 of the Act, notwithstanding that the vehicle is meter-parked.

Mr. Walsh: A competent lawyer might argue otherwise.

Mr. MUNRO: I do not think so. The hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha has been very moderate in the amendment he suggests. He said, "All right, we will accept that." The clause he asked to have omitted is the third power to remove and seize.

Mr. Aikens: Do you not think it is safer to lock a door with two locks than one?

Mr. MUNRO: It might be, but that is not a correct anology at all. This clause creates a new offence, a very minor offence, for which it also creates a most drastic and dangerous penalty. Here is the wording of sub-paragraph (3) of clause 9.

> "Any member of the Police Force may seize and remove any vehicle and/or horse parked in a metered space in contravention of this section."

I do not want to go into lengthy legal argument but suffice to say once a vehicle has overstayed its time to the extent of five minutes it is parked in a metred space in contravention of this section. That is the power you are giving to any police officer yet five or ten minutes ago the Minister said, "Well, of course, you would not do this just because a vehicle was parked there for an extra ten of 15 minutes." He assured us this would not be done and yet at the same time he is insisting on retaining the clause in the Bill that gives that power.

Mr. A. Jones: When dealing with traffic there must be a certain amount of give and take. You drive a car and coming in in the morning you probably travel at 35 or 38 miles an hour. If you do you commit a breach of the Traffic Act.

Mr. MUNRO: That is a different question.

Mr. A. Jones: I do not think you travel that fast, but you could.

Mr. MUNRO: That is not an analogy. The Bill necessarily creates an entirely new type of offence. It is an offence if a person leaves his vehicle in a metered parking space in excess of the maximum time. It may be only five minutes but that is an offence.

Mr. Aikens: There must be some line of demarcation. Where would you draw the line?

Mr. MUNRO: So far as defining liability to a penalty is concerned I would put the line exactly where it is in the Bill. If a man puts in a coin to park his car for 60 minutes, I agree that there is a contravention when he has left it there for 61 minutes. That is a crime. Let the punishment fit the crime. But are we going to say because he leaves it there two or three extra minutes that any member of the Police Force can come along and tow it away?

Mr. Aikens: One man may say that he left it there for 10 or 12 minutes and another may say he left it for 18 or 20 minutes.

Mr. MUNRO: I do not want to take up the time of the Committee on that.

Mr. Walsh: We will tow you away directly if you are not careful.

Mr. MUNRO: Come and try. I shall put up as vigorous a defence of my right to argue this point as I am putting up in defence of the rights of the motorist who may inadvertently have left his car there for two or three minutes over the permitted time. I am not pleading for undue leniency. I agree with what the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha has said. I feel it is absolutely essential that if this parking-meter scheme is to be successful the law must be strictly applied. I think every time there is an offence there should be a penalty sufficiently heavy to be punitive in its action and to prevent a recurrence. That does not say that there should be the extreme power of towing a car away with the possibility of great damage to it and great inconvenience to the party concerned. The penalty is inappropriate to the circumstances. If the offence is that the car has been left in a metered space for more than the time paid for, the penalty should be a punitive one and sufficiently severe to ensure that that type of offence is reduced to a minimum. I do object to a penalty which is, by its nature, inappropriate to that contravention. I remind the Minister that already the police have adequate powers under Section 44 of the original Act.

Mr. A. Jones: You say they have the power under that section to remove a car if they so desire. As I said, it does not matter under what section they remove the car if it is your car.

Mr. MUNRO: Under section 44 they have power only under circumstances set out in it, but by this clause power is given to them without any reference to Section 44. It is a straightout statement that once there is a contravention a vehicle may be towed away. The only superficially sound argument of the Minister was that they have this power in Victoria or somewhere else. I do not think that we can take that assurance. I am sure that the Minister does not claim that the Traffic Acts of Victoria are identical with ours. I think that in Victoria they probably have not got a section that corresponds with our original section. Our Traffic Acts of 1949 are a fine piece of legislation. I have it here. It contains 94 pages. The Bill was printed only yesterday and I have not had time to examine it carefully. I should say that the Traffic Acts are comprehensive. It would appear that the Bill is comprised of provisions copied from provisions in other Acts of other places. Those provisions are applied to circumstances in Queensland which may be different from the circumstances in those other places. I have seen this done on other occasions. The Minister now has the opportunity to state that the power is superfluous.

Mr. Walsh: He has a very judicial mind.

Mr. MUNRO: The Minister is quite likely to say, "I realise that the power is something more than we require, but, of course, it will not be used." It is a bad principle to give to the police or any other officer of the Public Service powers which are not necessary, powers not intended to be used. It is a bad principle in law and I therefore ask the Minister to consider whether he really wants to have use made of this power. If he believes that vehicles parked five or 10 minutes more than the permitted time should be seized by the police and towed away, let him retain the clause by all means, but, if he does not want that done, I think he would be wise to accept the amendment.

Hon. A. JONES (Charters Towers—Secretary for Labour and Industry) (10.17 p.m.): I think the hon. member was wrong when he said that if this clause was taken out of the Bill there would be no power to remove a car. There would still be power under the Act.

Mr. Munro: That is what I pointed out.

Mr. A. JONES: The hon. member objects to cars being towed away in any circumstances.

Mr. Munro: You are widening the circumstances.

Mr. A. JONES: I am always a good listener. I accept the amendment.

Amendment (Mr. Morris) agreed to.

Mr. MUNRO (Toowong) (10.18 p.m.): The Minister is not only a good listener; he is a good Minister, too.

Mr. Walsh: Do not spoil it.

Mr. MUNRO: When a sound case is put forward, it should receive consideration, and it is to the credit of the Minister that he has considered the case on its merits and has accepted the amendment.

This clause contains most of the meat of the Bill. As I did not speak on the second reading, I think I will be permitted to say by way of introduction that I agree with the statements of the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha on this Bill. I regard it as a very good Bill. It is a very constructive approach to this problem.

Mr. Aikens: You are at cross-purposes with the Lord Mayor.

Mr. MUNRO: Possibly, but our duty is to state our views. I do not think I am as much at cross-purposes with the Lord Mayor as the hon. member for Mundingburra might think. I shall say something later about that.

There are one or two points of the clause worthy of comment. I am persuaded to draw a comparison by the Attorney-General's recent statement of his intention to simplify our laws and to remove such expressions as mutatis mutandis. There is a very good objective and one which would have the support of all the members. I think the introduction of this Bill and the Act itself is an indication that we must all recognise——

Mr. Walsh: It looks as if we will get another £100,000 a year into Consolidated Revenue out of these meters—200,000 meters will earn that in a year. Once they surrender the franchise they will not get it back.

Mr. MUNRO: It is necessary to refer back to the Act in quite a number of respects. I had intended to make further remarks but as I am reminded by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that the hour is getting on I shall refrain from doing so.

Clause 9, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 10—New ss. 44F and 44G inserted; Notice of alleged offence—as read, agreed to.

Clause 11—New ss. 44H, 44I and 44J, inserted; Liability for offences in respect of metered parking—

Mr. MUNRO (Toowong) (10.22 p.m.): I realise that many hon. members are looking forward to getting home but as I have not spoken on the second reading of the Bill I want to speak to this clause now. I regard this Bill as the most important before this Chamber this Session with perhaps the exception of the financial measures brought forward by the Treasurer. I do not think we should refrain from discussing the Bill in Committee. This clause deals with what one might regard as the financial consideration between the Government and the Brisbane City Council or any local authority which might be interested. The relevant part of the clause is—

> "(44J) The Commissioner may, with the approval of the Minister, enter into an agreement with the Local Authority whereby the Local Authority shall pay to the Commissioner an annual or other periodic sum in respect of the costs incurred in the carrying out of duties under this Part by members of the Police Force."

In response to an interjection by the hon. member for Mundingburra I rather feel and hope that notwithstanding certain reports in the Press the Brisbane City Council will see fit to give favourable consideration to the exercise of its rights under this Bill and that there will be full co-operation between the Government and the Council in finding a solution to the grave traffic problem. I do not think any final decision can have been made; there might have been some misunderstanding between the head of the Government and the head of the Brisbane City Council. It may be that even at this stage, before the legislation has been enacted, we may in some respects have got off on the wrong foot.

Mr. Walsh: In what respect would you say there was any misunderstanding?

Mr. MUNRO: I merely said it seemed to me that there may have been some misunderstanding. That seems to be the position.

There is a responsibility on both parties to examine the matter further, and this clause is very relevant to that further examination. The Lord Mayor and the Brisbane City Council might very well be apprehensive at the effect of the clause. It seems to be all right as far as it goes—it provides for an agreement to be entered into—but it does not indicate what is to be the position if the parties do not see fit to enter into an agreement. I do not intend to move, or even suggest, an amendment, but the matter should be dealt with completely free from a political atmosphere.

Mr. Walsh: The Government certainly have not introduced politics into it.

Mr. MUNRO: I am saying that I hope the problem will be dealt with free from a political atmosphere. There are only two essentials, and both the Government and the Brisbane City Council should have the same responsibilities on both of them. It is in the interests of both the Government and the Council that these new provisions should be enforced effectively. As I gather it, that is one of the main points on which the Lord Mayor may have some little disquiet.

The second point is that the Brisbane City Council, or any local government body that may enter into an agreement in the terms of this clause, may naturally be concerned about the cost. I am speaking now to make a suggestion. I do not think the application of Section 44J is a matter for either the Premier or the Lord Mayor, nor do I think it is a matter for disputation through the columns of "The Courier-Mail." It is a matter on which the financial experts of the Traffic Department, the Treasury if necessary, and the Brisbane City Council should get together and work out a satisfactory arrangement, and enter into an agreement that will be reasonably satisfactory to both parties. I think that action should be taken before the Brisbane City Council is expected to incur the expenditure of capital moneys in installing parking meters. In other words, whilst I regard this as a good Bill, I agree that the Lord Mayor has some cause for a little disquiet in his mind.

The preliminary questions should be ironed out by the financial experts of the two parties concerned. The difficulties that have arisen may well be removed. If that is done, out of the Bill we may get all that we want, that is, a considerable improvement in the solution of our traffic and parking problems.

Clause 11, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 12 to 15, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with an amendment.

THIRD READING.

Bill, on motion of Mr. A. Jones, read a third time.

PRIVILEGE.

IMPROPER USE OF PARLIAMENTARY PAPER.

Mr. SPEAKER: Hon. members, I wish to inform the House that I have received from the Deputy Premier a report from the Commissioner of Police, who had inquiries made by direction of the Hon. the Premier into the matter raised by the Leader of the Opposition in the House this afternoon. I have read the report and, in my opinion, there are no grounds to justify any further action being taken by this House. I invite the Leader of the Opposition to read the report at his convenience.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Dr. DITTMER (Mt. Gravatt) (10.32 p.m.), by leave: I wish to make a personal explanation.

Would it be coincidental or accidental that the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Francis Nicklin, for whom I have the greatest respect, brought up this matter. He was not supported by any member of the Liberal Party, even though his Deputy Leader tonight spent a great deal of time on the measure that has just been before hon. members. I take it he had given great attention to the Bill.

Mr. NICKLIN: I rise to a point of order. Is this a personal explanation or is it a veiled attack upon me?

Mr. SPEAKER: I would say it is not an attack upon you because I will protect your interests in this Chamber.

Mr. NICKLIN: I hope you will, Sir.

Dr. DITTMER: Frankly, I have no intention of making an attack on the hon. member for Landsborough because I appreciate the excellence of his character, but I think I am entitled to make a personal explanation in the House.

Mr. Nicklin: Well, make your explanation, then.

Dr. DITTMER: I propose to do so and without the help of the hon. gentleman.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Dr. DITTMER: But I thought it was particularly mean, and I do not know which——

Mr. NICKLIN: I rise to a point of order. I object.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to withdraw that remark about being mean. The hon. gentleman, like any other hon. member, has the right to bring any matter of privilege before the notice of the House.

Dr. DITTMER: I will withdraw it. I did not intend to offend the Leader of the Opposition because I did not propose to

traverse the breach of the privilege of the House in relation to sweeps or anything else, and the way hon. members have acted. All I wanted to do was justify myself.

Quite frankly, I accept full responsibility and I propose to make a statement in relation to the statement made, whether by connivance or otherwise, about the so-called letter, which incidentally is not signed. I am told that it arrived anonymously.

I appreciate the tolerance of the hon. members and I think I should in fairness, for their information, give particulars of the statement I gave the police about the statement made earlier today. This is the statement, in their own handwriting—

> "Doctor Dittmer states: That he accepts full responsibility in relation to this stationery pending inquiries and it would appear to the Doctor that the stationery was not stolen.
>
> "Further, in relation to the utilisation of Parliamentary stationery paying due regard to the previous part of my statement I am informed that the utilisation of Parliamentary stationery is a matter for the member concerned."

That is the end of the statement the police received.

In my absence, certain responsibilities I entrust to my staff, and I accept full responsibility in my absence for the actions of my staff or acting staff. If my party or Parliament think I have abused the privileges of Parliament in relation to my actions compared with the actions of other members of this Parliament, irrespective of which Party to which they belong, I will resign my seat, and if my Party deems fit I will re-contest the electorate of Mt. Gravatt. I say that without any proviso at all if anyone of you is prepared to challenge me. What concerns me and the decent members of Parliament is how low and ignorant and mean other members of Parliament can get.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not reflect on any hon. member in this Assembly.

Dr. DITTMER: I will withdraw it. I am prepared to leave my political future in the hands of the decent men in this House.

RAILWAY PROPOSAL.

DEVIATION, NORMAN PARK–MORNINGSIDE.

APPROVAL OF PLAN, ETC.

INITIATION.

Hon. J. E. DUGGAN (Toowoomba—Minister for Transport): I move—

> "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolution:—
>
> 'That the House approves of Plan, Section and Book of Reference of the proposed deviation from the existing railway line between Norman Park and Morningside, such deviation being 62 chains long.'"

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Hon. J. E. DUGGAN (Toowoomba—Minister for Transport) (10.38 p.m.): I move—

> "That the House approves of Plan, Section and Book of Reference of the proposed deviation from the existing railway line between Norman Park and Morningside, such deviation being 62 chains long."

I do not think it is necessary to elaborate very greatly on the information already tendered by way of the documents furnished by the Commissioner for Railways. As mentioned in the report by the Commissioner the need for the deviation has been brought about because of the necessity to improve the alignment and make provision for increased traffic which is required because of the development of industries in the section of Brisbane served by this line. The matter has been fully set out in the notification referred to.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (10.39 p.m.): We approve of the railway works covered by this motion. They are necessary and desirable for the improvement of the suburban system. I called "Not formal" so that I could bring before the notice of the Committee the estimated cost of the work. It may be possible to construct this deviation at a lesser cost than the estimate. It is claimed that the deviation will represent 52,000 cubic yards, and I understand the estimate of the cost of that excavation is about 54s. a yard. Hon. members on this side who have had experience in earth moving consider that cost is excessive and that it could be done for a lesser amount. I ask the Minister to have the matter examined with a view to seeing whether it cannot be done cheaper than the estimate. We need to be very businesslike in our approach to these questions and to see that the work is carried out at the cheapest cost. Money is hard to get and we do not want to spend too much if it can be avoided. I should like the Minister to go into the matter, and indicate that he will have the position examined further to see whether it can be done at a cheaper cost than the estimate.

Hon. J. E. DUGGAN (Toowoomba—Minister for Transport) (10.42 p.m.): I appreciate the interest shown by the Leader of the Opposition who has exercised his right to draw attention to the need for vigilance in the expenditure of public moneys. I assure the hon. gentleman that the matter will receive very full consideration. I think one of the points which the hon. gentleman

was influenced by was the anticipated excess amount of earth work involved. The reason for this is it is proposed to remove a substantial portion of the soil to Murarrie to improve the bank and the roads there because of the increasing flow of traffic serving the S.E.A. at Murarrie. We have not made up our minds whether the work will be done by day labour or by contract. That will be examined. The work will be done in the most economical and advantageous way. At Redbank we were faced with costly repairs to a railway bridge. There is a shortage of bridge carpenters and suitable bridge timbers. We called tenders from private contractors and the prices submitted were in excess of our estimate. I asked the Commissioner, without letting other senior officers know, to keep a close check to see whether we kept to our estimated cost. So far the figures reveal that the departmental cost has been less than the price tendered by the contractors. I mention that to indicate that the position is being closely watched.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (10.44 p.m.): This is one of two Bills dealing with railway improvements costing a lot of money in Brisbane. I know that there is no dearth of members who are prepared to stand up at any time and support the expenditure of any amount of money in Brisbane and if necessary advocate that more money be spent than is provided for in the Bills before the House. While on the question of railway extensions and the proposal to spend money on railway works I ask the Minister right now—what is going to happen about the proposed railway workshops at Stuart? Some years ago land was obtained in the Stuart area.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is out of order. I ask him to deal with the proposed deviation between Norman Park and Morningside.

Mr. AIKENS: When it comes to spending money in and around Brisbane by the Railway Department or any other Government department, the sky is the limit. I tell the Minister for Transport right now that the people of North Queensland are beginning to believe that we are never going to get the railway workshops at Stuart.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is out of order. We are dealing with the deviation between Norman Park and Morningside, and I am not going to allow the hon. member to depart from that.

Mr. AIKENS: If more pig wagons were being constructed, I would be supported by the hon. member for Fassifern who is always talking about his beloved area in the South-east corner of Queensland.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: Because I am talking about North Queensland and the rough spin we are getting up there——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to resume his seat.

Motion (Mr. Duggan) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

RAILWAY PROPOSAL.

ROMA STREET–SOUTH BRISBANE CONNECTION. APPROVAL OF WORKING PLAN, ETC.

INITIATION.

Hon. J. E. DUGGAN (Toowoomba—Minister for Transport): I move—

> "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolution:—
>
> 'That the House approves of Working Plan and Section and Book of Reference of the proposed railway connection from Roma Street to South Brisbane'."

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Hon. J. E. DUGGAN (Toowoomba—Minister for Transport) (10.48 p.m.): I move—

> "That the House approves of Working Plan and Section and Book of Reference of the proposed railway connection from Roma street to South Brisbane."

This needs some further elucidation. It is necessary to make adequate and suitable forward provision or forward planning of railway development in Brisbane. Incorrect views have been expressed on occasions by people who believe that the expenditure of large sums of money in Brisbane is for the particular benefit of people living in the metropolitan area. The facts are that because of increasing density of traffic we have not availability of lines for clearing trains that come in from country areas with produce and that an adequate network of suburban lines is of equal importance to country interests and passengers using the suburban rail service. On my trip overseas some years ago I saw the problems confronting railway administrators generally throughout the world because they had not anticipated sufficiently the growth of population and the increased density of rail traffic, and their inability when that occurred of getting adequate room to plan facilities for this increased traffic. The only way that could be done would be by expensive resumptions. Hon. members who have considered the position in New South Wales will probably realise the tremendous cost to the New South Wales authority for the construction of the Circular Quay line. It was necessary to demolish a very expensive building of several storeys. The resumption cost, from memory, was approximately

£500,000. We want to avoid that sort of thing. I took the opportunity of taking the Commissioner, Chief Engineer, and several senior officers over the proposed route. I do not know of any place in the world with a population as large as Brisbane where there is an opportunity of designing a rail route at a relatively small cost such as that which exists in regard to the section between Roma Street and South Brisbane. It is an old part of Brisbane and contains many old properties and it became evident to us that there was an awakening of interest by people to build in this area. We are taking advantage of the comparatively economic cost of resuming properties in the area before the erection of modern buildings on the land. We thought it appropriate to take action at this time. The Government feel also that the people of South Brisbane are not receiving a very good service from the Railway Department at the present time. It is not reasonable that the railways should dump passengers at South Brisbane and leave to them the responsibility of making their own way across the city. There would be tremendous advantage when electrification comes about in enabling, particularly during the peak hour periods, the transport of people from the southside who wish to go through to the city. The places of those who detrain in the city would be occupied by others wishing to go to other suburbs. It is interesting to relate that at present the estimated time for the conveyance of passenger traffic from the Valley to Salisbury during the peak hour is one hour whereas with a rail connection it would be possible to take those people to their destination in only 25 minutes, and it can be appreciated that when you are shifting thousands of passengers time is of tremendous importance.

Mr. Nicklin: Would it take 25 minutes?

Mr. DUGGAN: That is the maximum time according to the steam schedule. The rail service to Manly and Kingston are the Cinderellas of the suburban service. There are several aspects of railway administration that I should like to accomplish in my term as Minister for Transport and they are some greater progress in the electrification system, some provision of modern carriages in the metropolitan area, and the provision of improved rail-motor services on country lines.

This measure is largely one of forward planning and I hope in the years that lie ahead someone will bless this Parliament for agreeing to the proposal. The amount of money involved is infinitesimal compared with what it would be if we delayed action till later. There is no suggestion of discrimination in favour of Brisbane. I hope that the House will approve of the proposal.

There is a further aspect that may be mentioned at this stage. All too frequently we see crowds of people waiting at North Quay for 15 or 20 minutes to board overloaded buses on the way to Manly. If there was a connection from the city with an electrified service we could reduce costs of transport and as far as possible remove from the streets a tremendous volume of passenger transport by way of buses and trams. We would have to give consideration to tunnels in some parts of Brisbane in future. It is so much cheaper to build above than below the roadway. Without labouring the matter any further I think I have said sufficient to take the House into my confidence.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (10.55 p.m.): I am sure hon. members appreciate the Minister's full explanation of the proposal under consideration. I agree with him that it is essential to plan ahead, particularly for a rail link across the river between the southern and main rail systems. I commend him on the step he has taken to set his plan in train, particularly as resumptions are necessary. Undoubtedly there is a missing link in the railway system of the Brisbane area. Although it is in the city of Brisbane, it affects more or less the whole of the State, and the present gap between the southern and main rail systems should be filled as soon as it is humanly and financially possible.

As the Minister has said, it is wise to take this step now, when resumptions will be relatively inexpensive. It is probable that if resumptions were not made now, expensive buildings would be erected on the land that would make resumption very costly. The south side of the river has been under a cloud for many years; it has been termed the flood area of Brisbane. It was under water in 1893 and in subsequent floods, and consequently there has not been much development there for many years. However, as Brisbane is now running short of industrial and workshop areas, there is a growing interest in that part of the city, and if steps were not taken now to resume land for the proposed connecting link, it would be a very expensive proposal before long.

The south side of Brisbane has had a very raw deal in its railway service for years, and from what has been said by the Minister it looks as if the residents of that area can look forward to some improvement.

The construction of this connection will link the interstate railway line with our main system, which is of great importance to many of our primary industries. It is surprising how much produce is transported interstate by rail, and the better the connection between the interstate service and our main service, the better will be the facilities for those who use it to market their products.

In envisaging the electrification of Brisbane's suburban railways, it will be necessary to have a link across the river. The Minister is taking a very wise step in asking Parliament to approve of the connection, and we give the proposal our blessing.

Motion (Mr. Duggan) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

ROMA STREET TO SOUTH BRISBANE RAILWAY BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Hon. J. E. DUGGAN (Toowoomba—Minister for Transport) (11 p.m.): I move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced relating to the proposed railway from Roma Street to South Brisbane."

The Bill complements the approval the Parliament gave earlier to the construction of an inner city rail link between Roma Street and the South Brisbane station. This authority is required, of course, for the construction of the proposed rail link.

I will not elaborate on the particular sections of the Railways Act. They are available to anybody interested. They vest in the Commissioner the right to resume land and to determine the conditions of resumption.

We have been anxious to avoid any serious dislocation of those who will be affected by the resumptions. We have tried to make provision for their accomplishment with the minimum of disturbance and we have been very fortunate in that the survey discloses that the link can be achieved with a minimum of inconvenience, particularly to road and bridge traffic. The levels permit us to give adequate clearance where it is necessary to cross Coronation Drive and, because of the angle of ascent, it is possible, too, to comply with the various navigation provisions and obligations of the Department of Harbours and Marine. In the design we are able then to come in on the curve approaching South Brisbane Station.

Unfortunately, resumption costs on one or two buildings will be high but in the main the route traverses an area where establishments have been occupied by the present owners for some considerable time. We propose to leave them in their present premises as long as possible. We will work on a rough basis of what the resumption might be and we will then determine an amount, on some acceptable interest rate, roughly the bond rate plus a certain percentage on administration, and let the people retain their properties until we are able to go ahead with the proposal. I do not envisage that we will be able to complete it in under 15 to 20 years. I do not believe in being unduly pessimistic nor do I believe in promising things without an indication that they can be carried out. If the present owners know the proposed route, they will be able to plan accordingly. If only part of certain premises is to be resumed, they can make arrangements to sell, or offer for sale, the parts not required for railway purposes.

At this stage the design contemplates having an approach as far as possible basically of concrete to prevent disfiguration and to avoid making the area, or any part of it, an eyesore. Moreover, it is cheaper to have a concrete base wall and then to build up the metal to the required height than to have a steel structure design, and it also avoids disfigurement aesthetically.

We have done all that we possibly can to minimise inconvenience and to help property owners remain in possession to the latest possible point. I do not think I need add anything to that. There was an increasing buyer interest in the area, and I think values there have been relatively static for some time. All in all, we believe that it was a wise measure for everybody concerned.

Motion (Mr. Duggan) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING.

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Duggan, read a first time.

SECOND READING.

Hon. J. E. DUGGAN (Toowoomba—Minister for Transport) (11.7 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha) (11.8 p.m.): On behalf of hon. members on this side of the House we consider that the Minister has taken very desirable action in introducing this Bill to plan for the future. If similar plans for the future had been made in the past we would not have some of today's troubles. We are very happy about the Bill.

Motion (Mr. Duggan) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING.

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

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

Hon. J. E. DUGGAN (Toowoomba—Deputy Premier): I move—

"That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until 11 o'clock a.m. on a date to be fixed by Mr. Speaker, in consultation with the Government of this State. Mr. Speaker shall, not less than seven days prior to the meeting date so fixed, give notification of such meeting date to each member of the House."

Motion agreed to.

VALEDICTORY.

Hon. J. E. DUGGAN (Toowoomba—Deputy Premier) (11.9 p.m.): I move—

"That the House do now adjourn."

It is customary at this time to express one or two thoughts that are appropriiate at the end of a session. I accordingly take this opportunity first of all to express my thanks, as acting head of the Government, for the way in which you, Mr. Speaker, have discharged the responsibilities of your office. You have exercised a very strong rein over the affairs in this Parliament during this Session, and because of your experience you have been of incalculable benefit at times when little differences occurred when tempers became frayed.

I should like to pay my thanks to Mr. Dunlop, the Assistant Clerk and the other officers serving with him for the very splendid work they have done. It is surprising that after a long association with Parliament how many small points and details we seem to overlook, and the extent to which we are dependent on the experience, knowledge and advice which these officers make available so freely and courteously at all times. I sometimes feel that we overlook the work of the Parliamentary Draftsman and his assistant. It is not easy for the Parliamentary Draftsman in the time available to him and with the tremendous demand on his services to have the Bills available in time and framed in a way that not only expresses the wish of the Government but conform to any requirement to establish the validity of law if challenged in the court. To Mr. Seymour and his staff I express my very sincere thanks. I have know him for many years. He is most approachable and he has a wealth of experience. His first loyalty is to the Premier but I think all hon. members know that he is happy to make available to them his great fund of knowledge at all times. I do not want to go through the whole range of staff but it is sufficient to say that I do wish to thank all the staff—the "Hansard" staff, the Library staff, the Refreshment Room staff, the telephonists, the messengers, the police officers and all officers of the House for the way that they have played their part. They are all necessary elements in the machinery of Government and without their services and help this Parliament would not function so smoothly and efficiently as it does. I specially thank the Leader of the Opposition. As Deputy I am not personally obliged to deal as closely in relation to the work of the House with the Leader of the Opposition as the honourable the Premier is. I have some appreciation of the relationship that exists between the Leader of the Opposition and the Opposition as a whole. I have a long appreciation of the personal calibre and integrity of the Leader of the Opposition. I think we are fortunate that we have a gentleman who is able to present the point of view of the Opposition with vigour and at the same time do it without any personal animosity. I know he is actuated solely by the desire to present the Opposition view to the House. I appreciate the cordial relationship that has existed on the official level between the Leader of the Opposition and Opposition members. The Deputy Opposition leader I thank for his co-operation in the various matters that are his responsibility. This session has not been a particularly heavy one for legislation, nor have we had an opportunity or need, for that matter, to discuss very controversial matters, but certainly this session has been held at a time when the State and the Parliament have been faced with very serious problems. For the first time since the culmination of hostilities in 1945 we have reached a stage when there has been an acknowledged deterioration in the financial affairs of the State. There is increasing evidence day by day of a marked deterioration in the economic affairs of the Commonwealth, and for the first time in a long time we see raising its ugly head the spectre of unemployment in certain sections of industry. We can see the cycle of events that history records as taking place at regular intervals, and might well take place again, unless we as a Parliament and the Australian people, a resolute, strong and determined people, make a stand and see if we cannot by co-operation of all the elements of all the Parliaments of the land evolve a plan which will obviate this matter of grave national concern.

Superimposed on these financial and economic problems, we have the very serious and worrying problem of an impending third World War, and that indeed over-shadows every other consideration. One would have thought that there would be ample evidence available of the destructive nature of modern war, and that those who control the destinies of the nations of the world would have acknowledged the wisdom of trying by reasonable counsels to solve the problems that seem to have been worrying mankind through the centuries, but we still seem to have failed in that task of achieving a formula to establish relationships, one with the other, that will enable us to prosecute our primary task of improving the living conditions of our people and strengthening the economic and financial ties of our respective countries. If we pause for a moment and think what could be done in all the countries of the world if the tremendous sums of money involved in the prosecution of a modern war were applied to peaceful aims, we would realise how much happier the countries of the world would be.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. DUGGAN: I can only express the hope and anticipate that wise counsels will prevail and that we will not be forced to see unleashed all the fury of modern war. If that takes place, I think we can safely prophesy the doom of western civilisation.

We are confronted with the problem of the coloured races of the earth. Feeling that they have thrown off the yoke of national imperialism and colonial imperialism they think

they have a right to give vent to their national aspirations. When we think of the teeming millions. looking with envious eyes at the actions of the white races, I think it is stupid, silly, and nonsensical of the white nations not to realise the folly of some of them in what they are trying to secure at the present time.

I hope as 1956 draws to a close that sane counsels will prevail and that we will have the opportunity to see parliamentary democracy and the machinery of government for many years in this country and in other countries where it is established, for the benefit of those countries and the citizens of those countries.

I thank you once again, Mr. Speaker, and the officers of Parliament for the great co-operation you have extended to hon. members during the year. I think hon. members on both sides of the Chamber will go away feeling that they have played a part in preserving the machinery of government and helping the development of the State. I hope they will have an opportunity of associating themselves with the various public functions that take place at this time of the year.

Although it may be premature, I extend to you, Mr. Speaker, and all hon. members and officers of Parliament the compliments of the season.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (11.19 p.m.): I take this opportunity on the adjournment of this part of the session to express to the Deputy Premier our appreciation of his remarks. May I say on behalf of the Opposition that we appreciate very much the many courtesies and assistance we have received from the Premier, the Deputy Premier and all the Ministers during the course of the session.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN: There has been a close liaison between the Opposition and the Premier and his Ministers right through the session which, I believe, has led to more efficient and more effective working of the Parliament. That spirit of co-operation has kept the House moving and has meant expeditious handling of business. To you, Mr. Speaker, I express our appreciation for the manner in which you have conducted the affairs of this House. At all times you have been particularly fair in your rulings and your actions have added to the dignity and decorum which we like to see associated with a meeting of this Parliament. I say "Thank you" to the Chairman of Committees, for his ready assistance and co-operation at all times. With the Deputy Premier I join in extending thanks to all officers and members of the staff associated with the House who have co-operated in keeping the affairs of Parliament moving smoothly. They have been particularly courteous and helpful towards members at all times.

The session we are concluding has been a rather unusual one. It has been a busy one and an interesting one but as the Deputy Premier remarked it has not been marked with a good deal of controversial legislation notwithstanding that at times quite a few controversial subjects have been discussed. If one looks through the history of this Parliament one would be hard put to it to find a session in which so many varying things have come before us involving lengthy debates.

We have brought this part of the session to a close. I hope that the legislation will have made some contribution towards the better government of this State. As we go into recess and look around the world to-day we do not find a very inspiring picture, indeed a worrying one. I hope as this year draws to a close so also will the dark clouds internationally disappear and with the dawn of a new year we will have lengthy peace throughout the world so that we can devote our energies to improving the conditions of our people and our land rather than devoting so much energy and wealth and inventiveness to destroying not only ourselves but to bring about the destruction of civilisation. I hope that the trouble which is disturbing the world at present will eventually clear and that it will lead to an era of prosperity in the world.

Although we are adjourning not as near to Christmas as we usually do, I join with the Deputy Premier in wishing all hon. members a happy Christmas and the very best for the coming New Year.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. SPEAKER (11.24 p.m.): I wish to thank the Deputy Premier and the Leader of the Opposition for the compliments paid me on the manner in which I have conducted the business of this House. I feel that I have been greatly honoured in being elected Speaker of this Assembly. I endeavour to conduct the debates with the decorum that an institution such as this deserves.

I join with the Deputy Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in extending my thanks to the Chairman of Committees, the Temporary Chairmen of Committees, the officers and messengers of the House, Miss Doyle and the staff in the Refreshment Rooms, the telephonists, typists, "Hansard" staff and officers of the Police Force all of whom have assisted in the smooth running of this Assembly. I also take the opportunity of extending to all hon. members the Season's greetings.

Motion (Mr. Duggan) agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.27 p.m.