

Queensland



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THURSDAY, 6 MARCH 1958

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"It can be seen that there has been no sudden decline. So far as 1957-58 is concerned, the September quarter was not abnormal, and the total for the year will depend mainly upon the influx during the June quarter, which usually shows a large excess of arrivals over departures. The last Census, held in 1954, shows that Queensland had received a greater share of migration than had been attributed to the State between Censuses. I am inclined to believe this is happening again, but it will not be disclosed until another Census is taken."

DISMISSALS FROM COAL MINING INDUSTRY.

Mr. WOOD (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads—

"(1) Is he aware that eighteen men have been dismissed from the Blair Athol open-cut coalfield because of a drastic cut in coal orders by the Railway Department, and that further dismissals are pending?"

"(2) Is he aware that 43 per cent. of the miners employed at the Acland, Willaroo, Sugarloaf and Balgowan coal mines in the Oakey district have been dismissed since last year?"

"(3) If so, what measures does he propose to take to safeguard the employment of the men involved?"

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

"(1.) Some weeks ago, the hon. member for Mackenzie, Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt, M.L.A., made urgent representations to me, regarding the critical position which was developing in the Coal Mining Industry in the Central West. Consequent upon this, a visit was made to the area, during which a deputation of Bluff miners was met by Mr. Hewitt and myself, and after hearing them, it was agreed to release a Main Roads job on the Rockhampton-Longreach Highway in the Bluff district. I have since been informed that recently 12 men employed on the Blair Athol coalfield have received notices of dismissal, and that a further three men have left their employment voluntarily. The dismissals have resulted almost entirely from reduced trade following adverse seasonal conditions delaying the commencement of meatworks operations in Central Queensland, and the falling off in Railway traffic and orders for the same reason. I am not aware that further dismissals are pending."

"(2.) Advices to the Coal Board from the collieries mentioned indicate that between 20 December last—the date of the close-down of the mines—and 15 February (the latest date in respect of which information has been supplied) employees were reduced from 118 to 98. The hon. member will appreciate that this reduction is far below the percentage which he quotes."

THURSDAY, 6 MARCH, 1958.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. A. R. Fletcher, Cunningham) took the chair at 11 a.m.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTS AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Assent reported by Mr. Speaker.

QUESTIONS.

COMMONWEALTH STATISTICIAN AND MIGRANTS FOR QUEENSLAND.

Mr. WOOD (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Premier—

"In view of a statement in 'The Sunday Mail' of 23 February, suggesting that the Commonwealth Statistician was not giving Queensland a fair go in his computation of the flow of migrants to Queensland, and the Premier's statement in 'The Courier-Mail' of 25 February, that he thought the whole thing 'cock-eyed', and would make a check,—

(1) Has he found the Commonwealth Statistician's statement that Queensland received only 2,113 out of 78,500 migrants for the year ended 30 September last to be inaccurate?"

(2) If so, what were the true figures?"

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough) replied—

"The figures quoted are as recorded and published by the Commonwealth Statistician. The Press report which quoted these figures referred to their effect upon Queensland's tax reimbursement grant. For tax formula purposes, however, the important figure is the gain by migration each financial year since the population figure used is the estimated level at 1st July each year. Queensland's recorded gains during recent financial years have been—

	Net Migration.		Qld. as Percentage of Australia.
	Queensland.	Australia.	
1954-55 ..	5,844	91,478	6.4
1955-56 ..	5,152	98,838	5.2
1956-57 ..	5,057	86,377	5.9

"(3.) The Government and the Coal Board are actively endeavouring to minimise dismissals of colliery employees during an abnormal season and are taking steps to safeguard existing markets and to investigate all possible local and overseas outlets for Queensland coals."

TENDERER FOR ROAD-RAIL SERVICE, BRISBANE TO TOOWOOMBA.

Mr. WOOD (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Minister for Transport—

"(1) Is it a fact that the person announced by him on 3 December last as being the successful tenderer for a co-ordinated road-rail goods service between Brisbane and Toowoomba, and who is now operating that service, was found to have systematically defrauded the State Transport Commission of £15,000 over a period of five years?"

"(2) If so, does the Minister consider him to be a fit and proper person to be awarded such a license?"

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer) replied—

"(1) Charles Allan Leybourne, who was the successful tenderer for the Toowoomba co-ordinated rail-road service, was issued with a road haulier's license in 1948 under the "State Transport Facilities Act" to provide for the carriage of goods between Brisbane and Gympie. In October, 1953, the license was transferred from Charles Allan Leybourne to Leybourne's Transport Pty. Ltd. Originally the license was for one trip each day, Monday to Friday. In June, 1953, the license was amended to 100 tons a week in either direction. In December, 1953, the license was again amended to 800 tons per calendar month in either direction. In 1953 Departmental inspectors, when examining records relating to the license during the period it was the sole responsibility of Charles Allan Leybourne, observed some small discrepancies. On 20 August, 1954, Mr. W. Shapowloff and his solicitor, Mr. Tingle, called on the Commissioner for Transport and made certain 'off the record' statements concerning Leybourne's Transport Pty. Ltd. On 2 September, 1954, Mr. Harry Bolton of Rawlings, Bolton and Coy., Chartered Accountant, interviewed the Secretary, Department of Transport, stating he was acting under instructions from the Directors of Leybourne's Transport Pty. Ltd. He disclosed that Mr. and Mrs. Leybourne had transferred their shares to Mr. W. Shapowloff and Mr. A. Tingle in August, 1954, and that those gentlemen were now the Directors of Leybourne's Transport Pty. Ltd. He claimed that the sale of shares had been negotiated on representations by Leybourne that the company had a license for 100 tons a week between Brisbane and Gympie, but that the

new directors had found that the tonnage carried was in excess of 100 tons, although revenue in respect of the excess was not paid to the Department of Transport. On behalf of the company he lodged a cheque for £4,000. On 19 October, 1954, Messrs. Rawlings, Bolton and Co. advised having inspected the books of Leybourne's Transport Pty. Ltd. and that there had been a deficiency in payment of license fees for the preceding 12 months of £3,971 19s. 9d. On 2 November, 1954, the name of the licensee company was changed from Leybourne's Transport Pty. Ltd. to Northern Transport Pty. Ltd. and about the same time it is understood Messrs. Shapowloff and Tingle retired and the company became one of the Cobb and Co. group under the managing directorship of Mr. W. R. F. Bolton. During the period already referred to Departmental inspectors pursued certain enquiries for the six years between 1949 and 1955 and ascertained that discrepancies in payments of fees totalled £11,383 0s. 6d. On 1 February, 1955, Mr. Leybourne called at the Department of Transport and made a full disclosure of the gross revenue received for the period he alone held the license and on 4 April, 1955, he submitted an audited statement with a cheque for £7,114 8s. 6d. Summarised, Charles Allan Leybourne and Leybourne's Transport Pty. Ltd. paid the Department of Transport discrepancies in license fees for the period 1 July, 1949, to 30 June, 1955, to the sum of £11,383 0s. 6d., which was accepted by the Department in full discharge of short payments during that period."

"(2) The train of events in respect to the discovery and subsequent investigations into the short payments was brought before the notice of the then Labour Transport Minister, Mr. J. E. Duggan, by Transport Department reports on 16 February, 1954, 21 February, 1955, and 1 June, 1955, and reference to short payments totalling £24,939 2s. 2d. by 21 licensees was recorded by the Commissioner for Transport in his Eighth Annual Report to the then Minister in 1955, and tabled in Parliament. On 7 June, 1955, Mr. Duggan endorsed the Departmental Report of 1 June, 1955, setting out that Mr. Leybourne's statement was to be accepted and that no legal action was to be taken against him. In view of such a decision being recorded in the files of the Department of Transport over the endorsement of the then Minister for Transport, Mr. Leybourne was left entirely free to again contract with that or any other Government department. He was, therefore, entitled to submit a tender for the Co-ordinated Service to Toowoomba, and as such represented what the Government considered to offer the best financial return to the Railway Department his tender was accepted. If the hon. the leader of the

Opposition insists on a reply to his question as to whether Mr. Leybourne is a fit and proper person to conduct the Brisbane-Toowoomba Co-ordinated service and if he is dissatisfied with what I have outlined—which information has been extracted from the files of the Department of Transport—then I suggest that he direct his enquiries to within the ranks of his own Party who saw fit in 1955 to settle the matter without legal action against Mr. Leybourne.”

PRICES ADVISORY BOARD AND RE-CONTROL OF COMMODITIES.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona) asked the Minister for Justice—

“(1) How many meetings of the Prices Advisory Board have been held?

“(2) Have any requests been made for re-control of any commodities? If so, what are the names of the commodities for which re-control was sought, and what are the names of persons or organisations making such application?

“(3) Has the Prices Advisory Board recommended re-control of any commodities?

“(4) Have their recommendations been put into effect? If not, will he please give the reasons?

“(5) Have any requests been made for de-control of any commodities? If so, what are the names of the commodities and what are the names of the persons making application for de-control?

“(6) Has the Board dealt with these applications, what were the Board's recommendations, and were the Board's recommendations adopted?”

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

“(1) The Prices Advisory Board has held five formal meetings, but I should explain that the number of meetings held does not necessarily indicate the extent of the activities of the members. Members of the Board may advise and consult with each other as the circumstances may require.”

“(2 to 6) The functions of the Prices Advisory Board are purely consultative and advisory. Under the provisions of Section 26 of “*The Profiteering Prevention Act of 1948*” the Governor in Council, and not the Prices Advisory Board, is the authority which may declare goods or services to be controlled, decontrolled or recontrolled. In this connection I may say that, in carrying out my Ministerial responsibilities, I do not rely upon advice from any one source but rather do I seek skilled advice from all such sources as may be suitable and appropriate to the particular matter. I do not regard it as being in the public interest that I should publicise the names of persons or organisations making requests to me, or the commodities referred to in those requests, or the nature of the advice given to me, or the reasons

relating to such matters. I must confess that I am somewhat surprised at the hon. member's intense, but somewhat belated interest, in the Prices Advisory Board, seeing that on the 20 March, 1957, in relation to the then Queensland Prices Board, he replied to a question in this House in the following terms:—The Queensland Prices Board acts in a purely advisory capacity, and the Commissioner of Prices is not bound to accept its advice even though he is Chairman of the Board. The Queensland Prices Board was helpful in the early stages when the control of prices was taken over from the Commonwealth Government, but with the determination of policies, formulae, and target schemes, together with the large number of goods and services decontrolled, its value eventually became negligible?”

QUOTA OF BUILDING TRADESMEN, HOUSING COMMISSION, DAY LABOUR SECTION, METROPOLITAN AREA.

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

“(1) Is it a fact that an arbitrary quota of 381 men has been fixed by the Housing Commission in respect of the employment of building tradesmen, day labour section, in the metropolitan area, irrespective of the amount of work in hand and the money available?

“(2) Are nine painters to be dismissed this week because the quota has been exceeded by nine?”

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

“There is a fixed labour force of 312 tradesmen and labourers engaged on day labour activity in the State Housing Commission. This was a deliberate policy which I introduced. It has resulted in developing a proper balance between the various trades and has helped to overcome the delays which arose under a varying labour force. Still further, it has avoided the mass dismissals which characterised the performance of the Government which the hon. gentleman supported. Under the policy of this Government there has not been, and there will not be, a black Friday such as that dreadful day in the Gair Government when 377 Housing Commission workers received notice. One of the results of this policy has been to greatly shorten the time between commencing and finishing a house and this has been of great benefit to the Commission. It did, however, produce a temporary surge of demand for finishing trades which included painters. Knowing that this demand was only temporary, the position was explained to the Secretary of the Painters' Union, who clearly understood that extra men would be taken on temporarily to overcome this peak of demand. He fully understands why three men are now finishing up and makes no complaint. It is a pity

that the hon. gentleman has so lost touch with trades unions' affairs that he does not know of these matters. Might I suggest that he divert the working days which he now spends at the dog races in regaining his lost touch in industrial matters."

FINANCIAL AID PENDING DEBENTURE LOAN RAISINGS, ROCKHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL.

Mr. GARDNER (Rockhampton) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

"(1) In view of the 1,300 unemployed in Rockhampton, and in an endeavour to afford immediate relief, would his Department give consideration to allowing the Rockhampton City Council to operate temporarily on their General Account pending the raising of Debenture Loans for the various approved loan-subsidy works, as per your memo. to me dated 3 March?"

"(2) If permission cannot be granted to operate on the General Account, would it be possible to grant Temporary Treasury Loans immediately to relieve the unemployed position pending Debenture Loan raisings?"

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

"(1 and 2) No exception is taken to a local authority temporarily financing approved loan/subsidy works from the General Fund pending the raising of the necessary loan funds, provided the temporary transfer of such funds is adjusted before the close of the financial year. If the works in question are included in those recently approved for the Rockhampton City Council for the relief of unemployment, I have already informed the hon. member in my letter to him of the 3 March, 1958, that, in emergent circumstances, consideration will be given to making available temporary Treasury loans should it be found that difficulty is being experienced in raising the debenture loan(s). Repayment of such temporary Treasury loans will be necessary as soon as the relevant debenture loan advances are received in 1957-58. If necessary, subsidy advances ahead of work will also be considered to enable the project to be commenced immediately working plans, &c., have been approved and, in the case of works other than contract, when the necessary resolution to borrow has been passed."

COMMONWEALTH SUPPLEMENTARY GRANT FOR HOUSING.

Mr. HANLON (Ithaca) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

"In view of information conveyed to the House, in answer to my question of 5 March, 1958, that the Liberal-Country Party Government will utilise only £100,000 in this State from the recent supplementary Commonwealth grant to boost home-

building, as against £1 million to be utilised by the New South Wales Labour Government, can he account for the disproportionate sums to be expended by the two States on this urgent work having regard to the respective supplementary grants from the Commonwealth?"

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

"In allocating the moneys recently made available by the Federal Government, this Government was concerned to apply it in directions where the immediate employment benefit would be greatest. A quick survey by the Housing Commission showed that the programme which they had in hand would not admit a sufficiently rapid expansion to absorb a greater sum than £100,000 which was allotted. It so happened that tenders were at the finalising stage for quite an extensive programme. On 3 March, Cabinet accepted tenders for 41 houses in all at a contract price of \$111,374. It accepted repainting tenders for 53 houses to cost £6,029. It let contract for land development for £32,130. In addition to that, tenders which have closed or are advertised to close by 1 April involve 418 houses. The amount of the contracts that will be let under those tenders will approximate over £1 million. The preparation for this programme has imposed such a load on the Architectural and Planning Sections that the greatest amount of additional spending which can be quickly accommodated is the sum of £100,000. The hon. gentleman can rest assured that had the Housing Commission been in a position to quickly use more money, more would have been available."

STANDARDISED TEXT BOOKS, PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS.

Mr. BURROWS (Port Curtis) asked the Minister for Education—

"Will he investigate the position in respect to text books prescribed for the Junior and Senior Public Examinations with a view to standardising as far as practicable and guaranteeing the availability of all books prescribed?"

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

"The Board of Post Primary Studies and Examinations obtains the advice of publishers of text-books before they are prescribed. In many subjects there is little change from year to year; in others, such as languages, it is necessary to alter the prescription. I shall, however, refer the matter to the Board for further consideration."

CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC.

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) asked the Minister for Education—

“(1) In view of the serious shortage of studios at the Conservatorium of Music has the Government any definite plans to build new studios, and if so, will work be commenced immediately as the shortage of accommodation must hamper the work of the staff considerably?

“(2) Is it a fact that there is a serious shortage of pianos at the Conservatorium? If so, will he make arrangements to have the required instruments supplied immediately?

“(3) What sum of money has been allotted for expenditure on the Conservatorium this year?

“(4) What expenditure is the Director of the Conservatorium permitted to incur without first obtaining the permission of a Government Department?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

“(1) The Government considers that though the very fine building provided for the Conservatorium may not always be adequate to its needs, the building does generally meet present requirements. The large proportion of part-time (evening) students makes it difficult to arrange accommodation at certain periods. The Department of Public Works has been requested to survey the possibility of providing additional accommodation to meet developmental needs. It will be recognised, however, that accommodation requirements at the Conservatorium must be considered in conjunction with basic needs of primary, secondary and technical education.”

“(2) The Conservatorium has been provided with seven (7) grand pianos at a total cost of £6,559. Any need for additional pianos will be considered as it arises.”

“(3) £16,000.”

“(4) In matters concerning expenditure the Director of the Conservatorium, like all officers of similar responsibility, is obliged to obtain the authority of the Director-General of Education.”

SCHOLARSHIP EXAMINATIONS.

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) asked the Minister for Education—

“How many children sat for the Scholarship Examination, and what percentage passed, in each of the following years—1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1955, 1956, and 1957?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

“The information required by the Honourable Member is as under—

Year.	No. Sat.	Percentage of Passes.
April—		
1927	2,937	64.21
1928	3,322	56.2
1929	2,917	60.98
December—		
1929	5,605	44.42
1930	5,962	48.1
1931	5,012	53.69
1955	14,889	80.32
1956	15,128	73.28
1957	17,703	69.9

INSTALLATION OF ELECTRIC FANS IN SCHOOL ROOMS.

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

“(1) Is it the policy of the Government to install fans in school rooms where the heat is oppressive, particularly where the construction of one part of the school buildings blocks the breeze from entering another part?”

“(2) If the Department will not install fans in these circumstances, would any subsidy be payable if the school committee installed them?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

“(1) It is not the policy to install fans in classrooms. The method of construction now used obviates the necessity for them. Where classroom ventilation in any school is poor the Department of Public Works will give attention to any request for improvement.”

“(2) Committees are not assisted by subsidy in meeting the cost of installing fans in classrooms.”

HOMES CONSTRUCTED AT WULGURU, TOWNSVILLE.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

“(1) Is it a fact that construction of homes at Wulguru, Townsville, for people, who have paid deposits on the ultimate purchase price and are eagerly waiting to enter such homes, has been suspended to allow the contractor to build houses for rental to service personnel. If so, who authorised the change of construction policy?”

“(2) How many homes have so far been completed at Wulguru?”

“(3) Is he satisfied with rate of construction at Wulguru?”

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

“(1) No, the construction of homes at Wulguru has not been suspended to allow the contractor to build houses for rental to Service personnel.”

"(2) None of the homes have been completed. At 24 February, 1958, 39 were under construction. Twenty of them had not been roofed, the remaining 19 being near completion, but the matter of the provision of septic systems to each of the houses at Wulguru, which I arranged as an additional amenity, has yet to be finalised."

"(3) The date for completion of the 135 houses is 30 June, 1959. The contractor is confident that he will meet the completion date. Last week he transferred extra employees to this work, increasing production by approximately 28 per cent., and at the end of this month intends transferring further employees to the work and thereafter progressively increasing production. Might I add that one of the first things I did after taking over responsibility for housing was to examine a pressing request by the Townsville City Council that these homes, contract for which had already been let, should have septs added. I am pleased to say that the Government acceded to this request. There is little doubt that provision of septs will add to the construction requirements and may be the cause of some slight delay in the early stages. In my judgment, even if it does involve some slight delay in the early stages, the decision was well worthwhile. I remain confident that the contractor will complete the entire contract by the due date."

BOOM GATES AT LEVEL CROSSINGS, DOOMBEN AND HENDRA.

Mr. KNOX (Nundah), without notice, asked the Minister for Transport—

"With reference to the recent Press announcement that it is proposed to provide boom gates at a number of level crossings, will the Minister please indicate when the installations at Doomben and Hendra will be undertaken and the respective costs involved?"

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer) replied—

"Orders for the supply of the necessary components have been placed with Messrs. Evans, Deakin & Co. Ltd., the firm being required to effect delivery by approximately mid-July, when the work of installation will be put in hand. The programme is to complete installation of these two sets of boom gates as well as those proposed at Sunshine and Geebung, during the next financial year. It is estimated that the total cost of materials and installation for Doomben and Hendra gates will be £9,500."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (11.28 a.m.), by leave: I thank hon. members for their courtesy and the opportunity to explain a statement I made to the House on Tuesday relating to

W. D. Scott & Co., transport consultants to the Brisbane City Council, which the Lord Mayor, Alderman Groom, has since been pleased arrogantly to describe as fantastic. His statement appeared in the "Brisbane Telegraph" yesterday.

On Tuesday, during the introductory stage of the Local Government Acts and Another Act Amendment Bill I stated that the manager of the Brisbane City Council Transport Department had recommended that the services of Scott & Co. be dispensed with but that the Council had ignored that recommendation. Far from being fantastic there is evidence to indicate that this was the case.

I believe that the expenditure of such a large sum of public money belonging to the ratepayers of Brisbane as is involved in the existing contract between the council and this firm is a matter of concern to the people. It involves firstly the payment of a contract fee of £88,000 to the company, plus the payment by the council of the salaries of several council engineers who have been seconded to Scott & Co. and miscellaneous and travelling expenses, bringing the total payments up to a figure in excess of £100,000. The Lord Mayor is alleged to have stated in reply to my statement, that the activities of Scott & Co. have saved the council some hundreds of thousands of pounds, but the council has not been prepared to release reports and the contents of files for public scrutiny. I should point out to the House that if any such organisation had been operating within the administration of the Government of this State it would be obliged to report annually to this Parliament. Why should Alderman Groom place himself beyond every other elected representative's responsibility to the people? Scott & Co. have now been retained by Alderman Groom's administration since September, 1955—

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. As I understand the Standing Orders, Rules and Customs and Procedure, a personal explanation can only be made in respect of some statement that has been made in the Chamber. It would appear that the hon. member for Kedron is making an additional speech in this House in respect of something published in the Press by Alderman Groom who is not a member of this Chamber. I should like your ruling on that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I must concede that for once I am of the same mind as the hon. member for Mundingburra. It seems to me that the personal explanation being made rather exceeds the purpose of a personal explanation, that it should be directly connected with the statement by the hon. member in the matter.

Mr. LLOYD: I agree that it is rather difficult to make a personal explanation without bringing in some of the matters referred to in the speech I made on Tuesday. I intend to quote letters in regard to the refusal of the council to make available reports of the

manager of the Transport Department. The Lord Mayor has declared that the statement I made under privilege in this House on Tuesday is fantastic—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I am afraid that this is a matter that cannot rightly be considered as a personal explanation, and I suggest to the hon. member that he conclude his remarks on a very brief note of personal explanation.

Mr. LLOYD: In doing so I should like to quote a letter which indicates that these reports from the manager of the Transport Department actually exist.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the hon. member send his statement to the newspapers.

SCREENING OF FILMS.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to inform you that two films will be screened in the Legislative Council Chamber at 6.30 p.m. today. They will be "The Great Barrier Reef," presented by Mr. Allan Campbell, and "Liquid Sunshine," a C.O.D. film dealing with the Queensland pineapple industry.

WANT OF CONFIDENCE MOTION.

MR. SPEAKER'S RULING.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable members: After careful consideration of Mr. Gair's Motion, I have decided to delete paragraph 6 and ask him to move his motion up to and inclusive of No. 5.

My reasons are:—

Members of the Judiciary are protected, and properly so, from criticism in this House except upon a substantive motion before the House.

It may be argued that the conduct of the learned Judge referred to was conduct as a member of the Bar and not as a Judge. However, it cannot reasonably be held that reflections upon a man's character who is acting in any one capacity are not an equal reflection in any other capacity. A reflection then upon the character of the Barrister Wanstall I hold to be equally a reflection upon Judge Wanstall. May, at page 374, dealing with matters to be dealt with by a substantive motion says—and this is the authority on which I rely to a great extent—

"Certain matters cannot be debated, save upon a substantive motion which admits of a distinct vote of the House."

That is the point on which I rest my decision—"admits of a distinct vote of the House." May continues—

"Among these may be mentioned the conduct of the sovereign, the heir to the throne, . . . the Speaker, the Chairman of Ways and Means, members of either house of Parliament and judges of the superior courts of the United Kingdom, including

persons holding the position of a judge, such as a judge in a court of bankruptcy and of a county court. These matters cannot, therefore, be questioned by way of amendment, or upon any motion for adjournment. For the same reason, no charge of a personal character can be raised, save upon a direct and substantive motion to that effect. No statement of that kind can, therefore, be embodied in a notice proposing to call the attention of the House to a stated matter."

The questions which arise are:

(1) Whether the charge is made upon a direct and substantive motion; and

(2) Whether the motion admits of a distinct vote of the House.

The motion is based altogether on six reasons. A member could cast his vote for the motion for one or more reasons. He could possibly be opposed to the motion for one reason but would vote for it for another. The passing of a motion, however, means that the House expresses its approval of the six reasons.

It would appear that where a person's personal conduct is concerned that it should be contained in a motion dealing with only that particular matter, otherwise it does not admit of a distinct vote of the House.

In my opinion the motion in respect of which Mr. Gair has given notice is a substantive motion but it is not drawn in proper terms to enable paragraph 6 to be discussed because it is not drawn in a direct form. It is indirect because it is included with five other matters. Moreover, it does not permit of a distinct vote because of its being so included. As I have decided not to allow any discussion in regard to the appointment of Mr. Justice Wanstall, I propose deleting this paragraph from the notice and therefore I ask the hon. member now to move his motion up to and including paragraph 5.

WANT OF CONFIDENCE MOTION.

Hon. V. C. GAIR (South Brisbane) (11.48 a.m.): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that you have seen fit to eliminate Item 6 of the motion of which I gave notice yesterday. However, I accept your ruling and, of course, will give consideration to completing my purpose in some other way.

I move—

"That the Government no longer possesses the confidence of this House for the following reasons:—

1. Despite its firm election promise to maintain the level of employment existing under the Gair Labour administration, the Government had failed to take decisive action to arrest the startling increase of unemployment to a figure in excess of 20,000.

2. The Government has failed to hold the price of basic commodities at a level necessary to maintain and improve the

high standard of living which the Queensland people had enjoyed up to the time of the defeat of the Gair Labour administration.

3. The failure of the Government, in its approach to rent control, to do justice to either the tenant or the landlord.

4. The disquiet which has been created in the public mind by the Government's administration of the Queensland Police Force and in particular—(a) The circumstances surrounding and the methods adopted in the appointment of the Commissioner of Police and the position of other senior officers. (b) The intervention of the Government in the ordinary procedures of the Police Appeal Board.

5. The arbitrary deprivation by the Government of the rights of certain transport operators in 'Toowoomba.'

I would like to say at the outset, Mr. Speaker, that I appreciate the action of the Premier in bringing on this motion so readily. However, I deplore the hon. gentleman's statement—or the statement attributed to him—which appeared in "The Courier-Mail" yesterday. The Premier is reported to have said this—

"We have decided not to put the motion on the bottom of the notice paper as was the practice of previous Governments."

That is not a statement that does the Premier any credit because it is not based on fact. The hon. gentleman who was a member of the Opposition in this Parliament for 25 years must know very well that his statement was a deliberate attempt to mislead the public of Queensland on this very important question, and to convey the impression to the public of this State that previous Governments feared no confidence motions and avoided them by putting them at the bottom of the business sheet. The Parliamentary records of this Parliament will show very clearly and indisputably that what I am saying is true, and that what the Premier intended to convey is not borne out by the records of this Parliament. In 1948-1949 there was a no confidence motion which was fully debated; again in 1951 there was a no confidence motion which was also debated; and in 1955 there was a motion of no confidence associated with the Chairman of Committees, but because the Opposition elected not to discuss the matter, and called "formal" the matter was not debated. If one had time to search the records of this Parliament one would find that it was many years ago—long before the Premier and I came here more than 25 years ago—that a Government avoided discussing a no confidence motion. I feel that it is only fair to previous Governments and to the people of Queensland that any wrong impression that may have been created, as a result of an attempt to create political propaganda and reflect on previous Governments, should be corrected and eliminated from their minds.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to move this vote of no confidence in the Country-Liberal Government of Queensland because the members of the Queensland Labour Party are conscientiously and very gravely concerned over the serious deterioration which has taken place during the last few months in the standard of Government administration in this State. Rarely in the history of Queensland has an administration—with the exception of the Moore Government—given rise to such a high degree of turbulence in the community life of Queensland. The problem of governing and coping with the tasks of striving for full employment, financing major development projects, attracting investment moneys and maintaining a high standard of living for the people of Queensland calls for leadership of the highest order.

Through long experience no section of Parliament has a more intimate knowledge of these difficulties of government than the Queensland Labour Party. Because of this knowledge and experience we of the Queensland Labour Party have been tolerant of the efforts of the Government which is comprised of members who have seen their best years on the Opposition benches. The hon. members of this section of the Opposition consider that the period of probation has long ended and that the mistakes of government should be fully aired to prevent painful repetition in future. We sincerely believe that the matters listed in my motion are matters of sufficient import and public interest to warrant discussion in this Parliament, and, if action on these lines had not been taken, no opportunity would have occurred in this section of the session, in which we are to deal entirely with legislation.

There is little need for me to say that many sections of our community, some very favourably disposed in the past to hon. members opposite, are seething with hostility and discontent. For the sake of these people and the tens of thousands of others who view the future with growing apprehension, we intend to tell the Government quite bluntly that Queensland can ill afford to suffer the penalties of continued bungling at a high level.

The Deputy Premier has made great capital out of his forthcoming overseas mission in search of investment money. I felt a bit sorry for him and those who are to accompany him when I read the statement of the Agent-General on his recent visit that they could hope for little success in attracting investment money from either England or America. Of course, at the conclusion of his tour the Agent-General wanted to soften it a little bit and he said, "Well, do not expect any results for at least two years or so."

Mr. Sparkes: To get over your era.

Mr. GAIR: The same gentleman, however, said that he was amazed at the startling development that had taken place

in Queensland since he left 6½ years ago, so he evidently had no complaint about what had taken place under the previous administration.

I do not desire to cast any wet blanket or slur on those associated with the overseas mission. I hope they are successful and that their efforts will mean further investment money for this State. We must, however, be realistic. Money for investment is not hanging on the trees in London, or elsewhere in England or America, and the task of encouraging investment in Queensland is not easy, and certainly not as easy as the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha, the Deputy Premier, would have us believe by his repeated Press statements.

I recall that the same hon. gentleman immediately after he was sworn in and when the ink was scarcely dry on the Executive minute rushed down to Victoria to pick up all the investment capital that was available down there.

Mr. Morris: And, strangely enough, got some.

Mr. GAIR: We will wait and see.

Mr. Morris: If you read your papers you would have seen it already.

Mr. GAIR: If the hon. gentleman is gullible enough to believe everything he reads in newspapers, I assure him that I am not.

Dr. Noble: Can you read?

Mr. GAIR: I can certainly read, although I may not be able to read the hon. gentleman's prescriptions. A study of recent local registrations of interstate companies strongly suggests that the Minister's uninhibited canvassings stirred up scant interest among southern industrialists. The Press headlines and material he succeeded in getting in the Tory Press of the State after his mission to the South have not been borne out. The plain and unmistakable lesson which arises from these facts is that this Government must first put their own house in order before they can earn the confidence of shrewd overseas and interstate investors.

Mr. Sparkes interjected.

Mr. GAIR: Whatever Government are in power, the hon. member for Aubigny evidently succeeds in making a pretty good thing out of the State. Scant treatment was meted out to the State during the period of the Haulon and Gair Governments. When Messrs. Nicklin and Morris were in Opposition they used to rejoice in the fact that we failed to get sufficient to carry out our works programme in the State.

Mr. Sparkes: That is what you are complaining about on the Minister's visit to Victoria.

Mr. GAIR: Not at all. I have said that I hope he succeeds. If the hon. member would listen and strain his mind a little he might understand.

Our achievements on a "shoe-string" allowance were meritorious, and this is borne out by the statements of visitors from overseas, particularly those in a position to make a comparison of Queensland's development with that of 10 or 15 years ago. We succeeded despite the obvious financial handicaps to give this State a post-war measure of prosperity unparalleled by other States of the Commonwealth. With the change to a Government of the same ilk as that which has held office in the Federal sphere since 1949, I had hoped that additional assistance would be forthcoming to correct Queensland's current economic disorders and in particular to alleviate the plight of the unemployed. It is true that we discussed the unemployment position for 2½ hours in this Chamber yesterday. There is no-one who would not concede that such a question is vital to the life of this State.

(On being handed a glass of water by the Deputy Premier)—

Mr. Aikens: What did you put in it?

Mr. Mann: They would not put anything in it; they want to keep him alive. (Laughter).

Mr. GAIR: The hon. member would not want to keep me alive because he knows that whilst I am alive I will fight for the preservation of democracy and do everything possible to resist the inroads being made by people who do not subscribe to democracy in its full meaning. Anybody who adopts a Soekarno attitude in the political life of this country, or any other, will find me in opposition to him, fighting vigorously against his proposals.

The debate that took place on Tuesday gave scarcely sufficient time to deal with the problem of unemployment. With the exception of the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier, hon. members were given only ten minutes in which to speak, and the time of the debate was limited to 2½ hours. The present motion gives hon. members an additional opportunity to discuss unemployment, and I trust that they will avail themselves of it.

Surely there is no hon. member in the Chamber who has not been disturbed by the deterioration in employment that has taken place during the last few months, not only in Queensland but throughout Australia. Those of us who remember the tragic years of the depression are justified in having some apprehension at what could happen under a bungling Government who failed to recognise their responsibility to provide employment for the masses. It is the inherent right of every man that he should be provided with the means of livelihood and given the opportunity to

earn enough to maintain himself and those dependent upon him at a reasonable standing of living.

Most of us have vivid recollections of the poverty, the suffering, the vicissitudes and the adversities of the dark years of the depression, when unemployment was rife. It is a great tribute to the people of Australia that they accepted those adverse economic conditions in the late 1920's and the early 1930's with very little disorder or uprising. I hold the opinion that today the masses would not display the same patience and tolerance towards governments if they failed to grapple with the problems of unemployment and to provide work and wages for them.

"The Courier-Mail", in dealing with unemployment and referring to the debate that took place here on Tuesday, said in its leading article—

"Opposition parties . . . supplied little factual information about the actual state of unemployment in Queensland."

That is not in accord with fact. "The Courier-Mail", in its feverish desire to support the Government, can be depended upon to misrepresent what took place. A good deal of factual evidence on this very important subject was produced by hon. members in the limited time at their disposal. As I said when I was speaking, there was no need to go into a lot of detail on figures relating to unemployment, because it had been acknowledged that there had been an increase. It has been acknowledged not only by the Government of this State, but by Mr. Holt, the Minister for Labour in the Commonwealth Parliament. In fact, "The Courier-Mail" itself, in a recent article, exhorted governments to do something to relieve unemployment. So that it has been acknowledged that there has been a marked deterioration in employment in Australia.

If necessary I can go into greater detail. In any case I will give some figures later. Hon. members on both sides freely acknowledge the existence of grave unemployment. Government back benchers will acknowledge that the number of people seeking employment, and seeking their assistance to obtain employment, has increased since the elections in August last year.

Before proceeding with that, I want to reject any mistaken notion that the Leader of the Opposition and those who follow him had any great depth of sincerity when they moved the motion for the adjournment on Tuesday last on this important matter.

Mr. Lloyd interjected.

Mr. GAIR: The hon. member for Kedron said he did not sack them. Of course he did not. He had no responsibility and he has not any now. I do not think he ever will have it. How can we expect people to accept those gentlemen as sincere advocates and defenders of the unemployed when they, at the

dictation of their political boss, endeavoured to force the Government that I led to spend something in the vicinity of £1,000,000 to give people who had security of employment additional leisure at the expense of someone else who would be put off from the Forestry, the Department of Public Works and other Government Departments.

Mr. Graham: You never had any idea how much it would cost.

Mr. GAIR: That is a statement one would expect from the hon. member. On more than one occasion since the new Government took over, we have seen members of the Soekarno Labour Party rejecting, and voting against, legislation that they had supported and even reported on in the Caucus meetings of the former Government party. So we must accept anything they say on that merely as an attempt to gain some political advantage. It is now history that they were responsible for the downfall of a Labour Government. They crossed the floor from the Government side to the Opposition side and voted with the Country-Liberal Party to bring about the defeat of a Labour Government. There is no disputing that they did that. The unemployment evil or any other evil arising from the incompetence and inexperience of the present Government is due to their traitorous actions. Had we followed the dictates of those people the unemployment figures would be very much greater today than they are.

I charge the Government with wilful neglect of a crisis that has steadily developed since the end of October, 1957. At that time the Commonwealth Department of Labour and National Service claimed that 8,721 Queensland workers were registered as unemployed, representing a small increase of approximately 500 during the previous month. At the end of November the figure had climbed to 11,627, an alarming increase of 33½ per cent. On 24 December, almost a month later, the total of registered unemployed was 15,727, an increase of 80 per cent. over the October figure. Still there was no move by the Government to arrest this disturbing trend, and, aided by the seasonal movement, the figure mounted almost to 20,000 by the end of January, an increase of 127 per cent. over the October total.

In actual fact the figures I have quoted can serve only as a guide to the real position. It is far worse because it is a known fact that a great number of unemployed for reasons best known to themselves do not register. Reports I have had from all over the State bear out the contention that Mr. Holt's figures give an extremely conservative estimate of the real situation. A reliable local estimate of the idle work force in Townsville is 4,000. A Chinchilla resident told me only this week that the position in his district is worse than during the 1929-1932 depression.

The implication is plain. In spite of the indisputable signs of the growing depression from October onwards the Government refuse to adopt any positive measures to curb the unemployment spiral. The Government have to be condemned for glaring inconsistencies in their attitude to sectional groups of workers. On the one hand we find that they saw fit to transfer miners from Mount Mulligan to Collinsville. With that I find no fault. I do not know what effect it will have on Mount Mulligan other than to make it a ghost town. It is a different kettle of fish with the closure of the Port Douglas port, a matter which will be dealt with in greater detail by my colleague the hon. member for Cook. Then we come to the miners at Rosewood and West Moreton. They have been thrown out of work and little or nothing has been done to absorb them elsewhere. At the same time it is well known that money could be freely spent in the district by the establishment of a town water supply for Rosewood. Whether the money is available is a matter for the Government to determine.

It is due to a great extent to the negative approach of the Prime Minister, the Federal Treasurer and their officers in Canberra. During the time I was Premier and Treasurer I repeatedly warned the House and the people of Queensland that the negative approach of the Commonwealth Government to Queensland's needs and its development must of necessity bring about unemployment. While my colleague and I were advocating for greater amounts of money to carry out, not luxury jobs, but jobs indispensable to the development of Queensland, the Prime Minister's pet phrase was, "You want to do too much too quickly." Although we were supported by reports from the Co-ordinator-General that the State's labour and material supply was equal to its works programme he still said that we wanted to do too much too quickly. Surely the economy of the country is good enough and sufficient to maintain the people of Queensland in full employment.

Time is marching on, and I want to deal with some of the other points. The hon. member for Barcoona will deal with prices in greater detail. I feel that the Government have failed to hold the price of basic commodities at a level necessary to maintain and improve the standard of living enjoyed by the Queensland people up to the time of the defeat of the Government which I was privileged to lead. This Government did not take office till 12 August, 1957, consequently it cannot reasonably be argued that the advent of this Government had any bearing on the 1957 September quarter figures. An analysis of the contents of a bulletin issued by the then State Statistician, Mr. S. E. Solomon, on the "C" series retail price index gives a sound indication of the prices level which in turn is a yardstick of the cost of living.

Mr. Solomon reported that the price index for the September quarter was the most encouraging since 1939. It is significant also

that for the first time in 12 years the "C" series index number showed a fall over the 12-month period, the decrease being 1.1 per cent. Leaving out the erratic variations in the price of onions and potatoes, a study of the December quarter—the first full quarter in the life of the present Government—reveals the index figure rose by 1.7 per cent. A clearer comparison is provided by the food and grocery prices variations in the September and December quarters in the five principal Queensland cities, again excluding potatoes and onions. The figures are as follows:—

—	September Quarter.	December Quarter.
Brisbane ..	Rise of .3%	Rise of 3.6%
Toowoomba ..	Decrease of .6%	Rise of 2.9%
Rockhampton ..	Rise of .3%	Rise of 2.7%
Townsville ..	No change	Rise of 2.9%
Bundaberg ..	No change	Rise of 3.9%
Warwick ..	No change	Rise of 2.9%

In Brisbane alone, food prices over the period of 12 months ended 30 September, 1957, rose by 3.3 per cent., whereas in the December quarter the prices rose by 3.6 per cent.

The shocking lapse in the "C" series index after this Government assumed office contrasts with the stability of price levels maintained by my Government after the 1956 election, and is clear proof that the workers' living standards have been adversely affected. The present Government members when in Opposition were always opposed to the system of price fixation, and since they have become the Government they have given effect to some extent to their policy and have decontrolled many essential commodities; and of course the effect has been a steep rise in the price of these commodities which has affected the living standards of our people. I am sure that they have learned a lesson to the extent that they are commencing to hasten slowly in decontrolling commodities. Branding of beef has been discontinued, but the Graziers Association has said that that is valueless unless accompanied by abolition of price control. I predict that the Government will take the hint and that price control of beef will be abolished.

Mr. Aikens: It is practically abolished now.

Mr. GAIR: Yes, it is practically abolished. If it is abolished completely, the price of beef will be equivalent to the price that has operated in Sydney for some time. That will be the result of decontrol of this important commodity.

Recent heavy price increases of a wide range of groceries, bread, eggs, and increases of 6d. lb. for veal, with a prior rise of 6d. last December, and 3d. lb. for lamb, together with savage increases in rentals, pharmaceutical lines and chemists' dispensing fees, have been allowed without any attempt by the Government to check them.

The gloomy economic prospects facing Queensland families because of the Government's ineptitude or perhaps their deliberate

failure to maintain a decent standard of living for the wage and salary earners of the community are of such serious import to warrant a motion of no confidence. Accordingly, my party denounces the Government for allowing the galloping horses of inflation to race through this State unchecked, the galloping horses of inflation that are threatening the economy of the State and particularly the economy of the working-class families.

The next item of my motion deals with rent. We can see now the effect of the amendment of the Landlord and Tenant Acts introduced at the end of last year. The increase in rentals is eating further into the pay envelope of the workers.

I should never argue, and did not argue at the time the Bill was introduced, that the landlord was not entitled to a fair return on his investment.

Mr. Ewan: What would be the percentage of rental homes?

Mr. GAIR: I could not give that figure.

Mr. Aikens: You would be the only hon. member in the house who rents one.

Mr. Ewan: Would I?

Mr. GAIR: Rental homes are sufficient in number to cause a disturbance of the economy of at least those working-class families who are required to rent a home. The point that was overlooked is that from this month forward an increased rental of, say, £2 can be legally demanded for a home that has been rented and valued as at 1942, irrespective of the state or condition of the particular home. Some landlords, notwithstanding the fact that under the old system, and under the present system to a lesser degree, an allowance is given for repairs, do not expend nearly the amount allocated under that heading.

A case came under my notice recently where a decent citizen in my electorate was standing on the landing of a home that he had rented for a number of years watching some children playing on the opposite side of the road, and suddenly the beam or the joist under the landing collapsed, causing him to fall and break three or four ribs. He was badly bruised from the forehead to the waist and below and miraculously was not killed. The owner of the house, notwithstanding the repeated appeals by the tenant over a number of years, had not effected any repairs. Had any inspection been made by the owner it would have been found that the beam was in a rotten condition. According to information at my disposal the tenant had no legal right or claim upon the owner. That is a shocking state of affairs. When we have regard to rent we should have regard to the condition of the homes concerned.

Mr. Ewan: How long ago did this happen?

Mr. GAIR: Only a couple of months ago. The amending Landlord and Tenant legislation will undeniably have the effect of increasing rents in excess of what I consider to be justice in the circumstances. I do not have to be told that all landlords are not rich. Some people by living frugally have been able to save money to invest in small cottages and are today depending on a return from that source. They are entitled to a just return on capital investment.

Mr. Coburn: What do you regard as a just return? What percentage on invested capital?

Mr. GAIR: I could argue that from many angles. I have expressed a principle. A man who paid £200 or £300 for a house prior to the war—and such houses were available at that time, I understand—and received rent plus interest and sufficient to pay rates and the repair bills for repairs incurred from time to time, has not much of a grievance and cannot expect to get a rental commensurate with present-day values.

Mr. Muller: Supposing he bought after the war?

Mr. GAIR: If he bought after the war the same thing would apply.

Mr. Muller: No. He would have had to pay more money.

Mr. GAIR: It does not matter how much he paid provided he held it sufficiently long and the asset was earning money. Having redeemed the capital investment and got income from it he had no great squeal or cause to squeal if a just arrangement is made on those lines. Some of the owners, of course, expect to be able to charge any rent at all. At a time like this when homes are in demand it is dangerous to place the working-class people in the hands of the usurer or the unscrupulous landlord. Legislation is introduced on the basis that not all landlords are unscrupulous, and for the purpose of protecting the honest tenant against the greedy landlord. I hold the opinion that the Government have fallen down on the job. If they pursue the policy that they have put in train many evictions will take place and they will be obliged to build accommodation for people who have been forced into the parks and the highways and byways of the cities and towns. People will again be living in half-tanks, as they were in the depression years, in Dutton Park, Davies Park, Victoria Park, and all the other parks in the metropolis.

Mr. Windsor: They have been there for some time now.

Mr. GAIR: My friend says that they have been there for some time now. That is only because of my Government's inability to do better because of the niggardly approach to our problems by the inept and incompetent Menzies-Fadden Government. Any common-sense parliamentarian will realise that under

the present Commonwealth Financial Agreement, the States have very little to do with the raising of finance. The present State Government, even if they have not already realised that—and I think they have already had a little taste of it—will soon discover that it is so. They will have to go cap in hand to Canberra for their tax reimbursements and their loan allocations to enable them to carry out the projects that they plan from time to time. Although it may be said that a State Government have fallen down on housing, or in some other way, I remind hon. members that any State Government do their best within the limits of their financial resources. Although the present Government when in Opposition failed to realise the difficulties of the State Government under the existing financial arrangements, they will soon realise just what the true position is.

I shall proceed now with paragraph (4) of the motion, which deals with the Government's administration of the Queensland Police Force, and, in particular, the circumstances surrounding the termination of the services of the former Commissioner of Police, Mr. Harold, and the appointment of the present Commissioner. I say very definitely that the means adopted to terminate Mr. Harold's services as Commissioner of Police were disgraceful and did no credit to a responsible Government. In addition, it showed great discourtesy on the part of the Government when the Commissioner of Police—and this would apply with equal force to a constable of the police—read in the Press the result of his examination by the medical board before he had received official advice from the Minister controlling his department.

Indeed, we read in the Sunday papers of Mr. Harold's visit to the Medical Board before he himself had been informed of the course that would be adopted. In the "Truth" newspaper of 22 December we read—

"The Queensland Police Commissioner, Mr. T. W. Harold, who recently suffered a heart attack, and left the Intermediate Hospital only a fortnight ago, will likely appear before a Police Medical Board tomorrow. This would lead to a decision as to the bearing of his health on his official future."

When questioned on that the Premier, Mr. Nicklin, said he had no knowledge of the matter. He said—

"I know that Mr. Harold has been sick, of course, but I was not aware that he would be going before a Board."

Yet the public could read about it in "Truth" before Cabinet had decided that he should go before a medical board. Mr. Nicklin denied that Mr. Harold's condition had been discussed with Cabinet. He said—

"Odd items of police administration had come up for attention, but nothing very serious, nothing considerable, has been before Cabinet."

I do not think that is the treatment that an officer who has given excellent service to the State and to the people should receive. After he went before the Board their finding was published in the "Courier-Mail" of Tuesday, 24 December, Christmas Eve, under the heading—

"Police Chief is retired 'forthwith' because of ill-health."

The report said that the doctors who were responsible for his examination considered that it would be dangerous for him to carry on in his condition. It added—

"At his Camp Hill home last night, Mr. Harold said he had not yet been officially advised of the result of his Medical Board and had no comment to make at this stage."

I repeat, that is very poor and shabby treatment of a man occupying such an important position as Commissioner of Police of the State. If Mr. Harold was in an indifferent state of health was he not entitled to a period of convalescence or sick leave the same as any other officer of the Crown? We have had judges, members of the present judiciary, away on protracted illnesses; they have continued to receive their salaries and there has been no move to send them to a medical board. Surely Mr. Harold's services merited some consideration on those lines. Any humane Government would have at least given him the opportunity and time to see whether he would repair sufficiently to resume his duties. But no, he was directed to a board!

Mr. Morris: Did you say he was directed to a board?

Mr. GAIR: Yes, he was directed to submit himself to a board. I say very definitely that I am very suspicious that there were other reasons why Mr. Harold's services were terminated other than his indifferent health.

Mr. Aikens: Could you hazard a guess at some of those reasons?

Mr. GAIR: I am not a very close individual, I am open and above board in all things I do. I think that the Minister found Mr. Harold somewhat difficult in the sense that Mr. Harold was prepared to stand by policy, by the rules and regulations of the Police Force, and was not easily moved to depart from them. I think that the Minister found that Mr. Harold was not to be a yes-man and consequently the Minister said, "Well, this fellow is not in very good health. We shall take the opportunity of moving him out to make room for someone else who will probably give effect to our bidding." I would not mind that so much—I am sufficiently realistic as a person engaged in public life and a Parliamentarian to know that high public servants are susceptible to a little hint or a nod from many directions, and that would be all right with me—but there is a difference between that and being a yes-man, particularly when it is represented to the Press that under the new regime there is not to be any political

influence in the administration of the Police Force. That is just so much humbug and hypocrisy because we already know the representations that have been made by hon. members opposite through their Ministers to gain some advantage or other for some of their constituents and friends. As it was in the beginning, so it shall be to the end.

Mr. Aikens: Are you suggesting that the present Commissioner was appointed because they think he will be a yes-man whereas Harold will not be one?

Mr. GAIR: I have nothing to say against the new Commissioner, he is a man for whom I have some personal regard, but I say that if he is to succeed he shall be required to be a yes-man for the present administration or he might be found wanting and dispatched to the Medical Board. The record of previous Governments will show that we sent no Commissioner to the Medical Board. They served out their time and most of them, if not all of them, are very happily alive living on their pensions. They are living in successful retirement after having served very successful terms of office under a common-sense, sane and sympathetic Government.

(Time expired.)

Mr. ADAIR (Cook) (12.49 p.m.): I welcome the opportunity of seconding the motion so ably moved by the hon. member for South Brisbane.

Since the Nicklin-Morris Government assumed office no electorate in the State has been more adversely affected than mine. As all hon. members know, I represent one of the most remote electorates in Queensland, from Cairns through to Thursday Island. In the short time they have been in office, just seven months, the present Government have made the Moore Government in 1929-1932 appear to be novices. Already in the Far North the Government have created two ghost towns—Mount Mulligan and Port Douglas. During the election campaign the Premier promised to carry out the agreement already entered into by the Gair Government to establish a cannery at Cairns, thus creating a secondary industry that would absorb the unemployed in that area.

Mr. Muller: Why didn't the Gair Government do it?

Mr. ADAIR: I have already said that the Gair Government promised to do it. They reached an agreement with the C.O.D. that as soon as the production of pineapples reached 4,000 tons £500,000 credit would be made available for the cannery. The Premier in his Policy Speech in Brisbane said that his supporters claimed he was too honest to be a politician. In the area from which I come a man's honesty is gauged by his ability to keep a promise. According to a report in the "Cairns Post" of 16 July, the Premier made the statement that if his Party were returned to power he would honour the agreement entered into by

the Gair Government for the building of a cannery at Cairns, and that the money would be made available by means of a guarantee. I know too well that the cannery will not be built at Cairns. We have not a ghost of a chance of getting a cannery built there, because if they built one in Cairns the cannery down here would have to close. There is a large area of excellent pineapple-growing country in the Far North; thousands of acres are available for the growing of pineapples, papaws, and other fruits that are suitable for canning. The cost of production of pineapples in the North is only half as much as it is in the South. Production cost down here is £25 a ton, whereas we can produce pineapples at a cost of £12 to £15 a ton. The Premier told the people up there to grow rough leaf pineapples instead of smooth leaf pineapples. That means we will not have the cannery in that area. The Premier's party was very anxious to win my electorate. He promised that if a Country-Liberal Government were returned they would build a road from the Daintree River to Cooktown. The previous Government already granted £31,000 for the construction of this road.

In the "Cairns Post" of 16 July the Premier stated that if his party was returned to office it would build this road through to Cooktown. He said that a Country-Liberal Government would continue the Bruce Highway through Daintree to Cooktown and further to the north. What has happened? The Government have wiped the project. Having used the statement during the election campaign in an effort to win my electorate for the Country Party, the Premier then stated that he was wrongly informed on the cost of such a road. I should have thought that he would ascertain the cost before promising the people of the Cook Electorate that it would be built.

Mr. Ewan: Do you think he may have learned something from previous Premiers?

Mr. ADAIR: Yes, probably Mr. Moore.

The recent closure as a port of Port Douglas is the most callous action I can imagine. The people of the town were not forewarned of it. At Port Douglas there are 29 waterside workers, the majority of them being married men with families and their own homes. They could have been given 12 months' notice of this step. There is now no work for them. It may be said that they are merely waterside workers, but they are human beings and entitled to decent treatment. In addition, there are 21 men working on the tramline over which the sugar from the mill was transported to the wharf at Port Douglas. The shire council owns 26 miles of this tramline, for which it obtained £64,000 from the Government by way of loan. The Council's annual commitment is £6,000. No notification of the decision was sent to the Council. The only people who were informed of it were the officials of the milling company in Mossman.

Mr. Aikens: Is it not a co-operative mill?

Mr. ADAIR: Yes.

Mr. Aikens: Did not the farmers know?

Mr. ADAIR: Only those in charge of the mill knew of it. There are farmers on the council at Mossman, but they did not disclose to the Council that this move was afoot.

Mr. Nicholson: The Board stopped it.

Mr. ADAIR: Yes, the Sugar Board, backed up by this Government.

I asked a question on the suitability of the road for heavy transport. I think several hon. members have been over the Cook Highway.

Mr. Aikens: I went over it at my own expense. That is unusual.

Mr. ADAIR: There are several places on the highway where it is virtually impossible for vehicles to pass. To say, as the Minister did, that the road is suitable for heavy transport, is ridiculous. If two semi-trailers met on the sharp and narrow curves, there would be no possibility of their passing.

The Government have promised the people of Mossman that they will construct this road or will spend a lot of money on the widening of it. Judging by the answer to my question yesterday, I think people of the area will be sadly disillusioned. I do not believe the Government will spend any money on the widening of the road.

Mr. Aikens: It will be a very expensive job.

Mr. ADAIR: It would cost over £1,000,000. There are cliffs 100 feet high that would have to be pulled down to widen it. Why have the Government closed the port so suddenly? Surely they could have given 12 months' notice to waterside workers and men employed on the tramline to seek other jobs and shift their homes. Port Douglas will become a ghost town and will not be of any use. Let the Government make sure that they can transport the sugar by road to Cairns for I tell them that as sure as I am here there will be serious accidents on the Cook Highway. The callous method adopted by them in the closure of Port Douglas demonstrates their attitude towards the workers of Queensland. In his reply to a question the other day the Minister said that the closure of the port was because of the sinking of the Wortanna. I have a copy of a letter from the manager of the Adelaide Steamship Company stating that company would be able to lighter all the sugar produced in Mossman this coming season. That is in contradiction of what the Minister told us when he said that owing to the sinking of the Wortanna the company would not be able to carry Goondi, South Johnstone and

Port Douglas sugar. I do not know where the Minister got his information. It is not correct.

Bulk handling will operate at Mourilyan when the harbour is completed in about two years' time and about 130,000 tons of sugar will be lightered to Cairns in the meantime. The Port Douglas area produces about 32,000 tons of bagged sugar and the Government have told the people that that will have to be carried over a road which is not suitable for heavy transport.

Mr. Muller: You are condemning your own party. It is a straightout condemnation of the Gair Government.

Mr. ADAIR: I cannot see where the Minister gets that from. We all know that the Cook Highway is not suitable for heavy transport. Any member going over that road today would make the same statement. There are members in this House who will tell you that the road is not suitable for heavy transport and it was not built for it. The Mossman Shire Council is paying about 30 per cent. of the maintenance cost of this road. The farmers will be gaining 1½d. or 2d. on transport by road—the money saved will go into the sugar pool—but extra maintenance costs will have to be met. There will be a lightering of 130,000 tons of sugar from Goondi, South Johnstone and Mourilyan mills which could easily be transported by road. The Sugar Board could save more a ton of sugar from that area than they would from the Port Douglas area. There is a longer haulage, but the Sugar Board claims that it can save £2 a ton against lighterage and road transport.

If the Sugar Board wants to save money for the industry, why does it not transport the Innisfail sugar to Cairns by road? The attack has been on Port Douglas alone. I lay the blame on the Minister for Development, Mines and Main Roads. He is behind the closure of Port Douglas. I cannot see any reason for it. It will be two years before bulk-handling facilities are installed at Mourilyan. As I say, if the Sugar Board wants to save money for the sugar industry it could transport the sugar from the three Innisfail mills to Cairns by road. Road transport of sugar would not affect Mourilyan to nearly the same extent as it will Port Douglas, which is now a doomed town. The Government took this action at short notice as they did when they closed the Mt. Mulligan coalmine. Although they shifted the miners' homes from Mt. Mulligan to Collinsville, I am sure they will not do the same for the people of Port Douglas.

I shall deal now with the construction of the road from Daintree to Cooktown, known locally as the missing link. Again I have a quarrel with the Minister for Development, Mines and Main Roads, who is taking his directions on this issue from the Department of Main Roads. I have been seeking the construction of this road for almost four years, and right at the end of the term of

the previous Government I was successful in having an amount of £31,000 allocated for it. The Minister claims that the road cannot be built for £31,000. Before the election the Premier promised that the road would be built if his party was returned. Now, however he says the road cannot be built because he was wrongly informed about its cost. A contractor named Jack Brennan—

Mr. JESSON: I rise to a point of order. The motion before the House deals specifically with unemployment, price control, rent control, the administration of the Police Force, and the rights of certain transport operators in Toowoomba. Is the hon. member for Cook in order in working the parish pump on a motion such as this?

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not able to anticipate the conclusions that the hon. member for Cook will draw. However, I hope they are more obvious to him than they are to the rest of the House.

Mr. ADAIR: My purpose in bringing up the matter is to point out that the construction of the road would create employment for many who are now unemployed. Many men would be needed for its construction and because of it many timber-getters would be in work. The hon. member for Hinchinbrook knows little about his own area but he knows nothing about mine. He has been the adopted member for Southport for years.

Mr. Jesson: I am doing a good job down there, too.

Mr. ADAIR: I know how important the construction of the road is to the area.

Mr. Dewar: How did you get on when you asked the last Government about it?

Mr. ADAIR: I got the money for it. Since the new Government came into power it has been refused despite the Premier's election promise to the people in the area that it would be built.

Mr. Dewar: If you got the money what did you do with it?

Mr. ADAIR: They withdrew it when they got in.

Mr. Watson: Why do you not tell the truth?

Mr. ADAIR: That is the truth.

Mr. Watson: It is not right.

Mr. ADAIR: It is right. The Government's attitude is clear. They have not one Cabinet Minister from north of Mackay. The people of the Far North can look forward to a raw deal in the future; there is no doubt that they will be neglected.

I turn now to the bauxite deposits at Weipa in the Cape York Peninsula. At the end of the last session we heard a great deal of nonsense about what was going to happen at Weipa. It was said that 6,000 people

would be in the area and that the company would build homes and indeed build a whole township.

Mr. Watson: Give them a chance.

Mr. ADAIR: It is not going there now. They have decided to put it in Central Queensland.

Dr. Noble: How do you know? You have been reading the papers.

Mr. ADAIR: I know. We hear now that the alumina plant will be built somewhere in Central Queensland; therefore the bauxite deposit will be of very little benefit to the Far North. Hundreds of thousands of tons of the deposit are only 16 feet above sea level so the top 10 to 15 feet will be transported by boat to St. Lawrence or somewhere like that for processing. We thought that probably the alumina plant would be at Weipa and give work to all the unemployed in the area. The number of unemployed there is as high as it has ever been to my knowledge. When I asked the Minister a question in the House I said it would be easily two years before there was mass employment on the Weipa section. He asked me where I got the information and said it would be only four to six months. It is obvious that it will be at least another six months before there is any mass employment in the area. The Government have been blowing up a big balloon about what they were going to do in Cape York Peninsula. It is just all hokey! I can see that the southern parts of Queensland will receive all the advantages.

Let me say a few words about the Japanese divers coming into Thursday Island. They are going to throw Islanders out of work who have been employed in the pearl industry all their lives. Irrespective of what the Minister says, I know that the Islanders will lose employment. About 170 Japanese divers will be signed on shortly and they will displace many Islanders, returned servicemen who fought for Australia in the last war. The Japanese divers represent cheap labour. They are paid £21 a month and receive only the roughest food—a tin of bully beef and that type of thing. They will replace the Islanders who have been there all their lives.

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry) (2.33 p.m.): I have listened to the hon. member for Cook talking for threequarters of an hour but with the exception of about five words I heard nothing relevant to the debate in his remarks. He said he was going to speak about the missing link. The only missing link was between the motion before the House and the comments that he made.

I say to all new hon. members in the Chamber that they have heard the beginnings of the most amazing no confidence motion that has ever been presented in this House. So far the debate has had virtually no relevance whatsoever to the terms of the

motion. It pains me to say that the exhibition by the Queensland Labour Party so far has been probably the most pathetic example of debate that we have ever seen in the Chamber.

Although as yet there is nothing in the debate that requires any answer I intend to reply rather fully to the actual terms of the motion. I might say that in the pages of one of last Sunday's newspapers there is infinitely more that is relevant to the terms of the motion than there is in anything that has been said today. I shall speak on one or two of these matters later.

First I have a word or two to say about the comments of the ex-Premier, the hon. member for South Brisbane, in regard to the overseas delegation. I shall touch on it cursorily. The hon. member tried to make out that the Agent-General had somewhat different ideas to those that I or members of the Cabinet or the Government have in relation to this overseas delegation. Nothing could be further from the truth. But the Agent-General himself and all of us are trying to convince people that it is stupid and childish to expect any delegation to go overseas and speak to business men in the U.S.A. or the United Kingdom, and may be because they like the cut of our jib or because we may be persuasive talkers that these business men will pack their bags and say, "We like Morris", or "We like somebody else and we will develop business in Queensland." That is arrant nonsense.

Mr. Burrows interjected.

Mr. MORRIS: The hon. member made a big enough fool of himself yesterday. I had a certain amount of sympathy for the hon. member, but I am afraid that he is rapidly deteriorating. The real purpose of the mission overseas is to try to bring to the attention of the business people of the United States of America and the business people of the United Kingdom that this State is rich in its potential.

Mr. Graham: Do you not think they know it?

Mr. MORRIS: No, they do not.

Mr. Graham: They do not?

Mr. MORRIS: I suppose the hon. member is very sorry that a firm such as the would know it. The reason why they do not know it is because the people that the hon. member supported in power so long did nothing to try to bring to the knowledge of the people of America and the United Kingdom the real potentialities of this State.

Mr. Burrows: What do you think you will do?

Mr. MORRIS: I think I will do a lot more than the hon. member does by talking over there.

Mr. Hanlon: You are attacking the Agent-General and saying that he has not done his job.

Mr. MORRIS: I am not attacking the Agent-General. I believe that the prominent business men of this State can do a great deal to help the Agent-General; and he himself admits that. I repeat that if, at the conclusion of this delegation overseas, we can persuade people from England or America to come here and see for themselves what the opportunities are that we will have succeeded. Any suggestion that I shall come home with a brief bag full of the names of people who are prepared to start industries in Queensland is just a childish approach to a very difficult and very important problem which confronts this State. Of course I recognise that there are some people—let me not name them—who hope most profoundly that this delegation will fail.

Mr. Wood: We hope it succeeds.

Mr. MORRIS: You do. I admit you do, but there are some members on that side who hope it will fail.

Mr. Power: Name them.

Mr. MORRIS: The hon. member for Port Curtis.

Mr. BURROWS: I rise to a point of order. I assure the Minister that I sincerely hope the delegation is successful. I sincerely hope also that the hon. gentleman will do Queensland a greater service still by never returning to it.

Mr. MORRIS: I am now infinitely more happy and contented than ever before. In a cursory manner the hon. member for South Brisbane spoke of the failure of the Government to attract any industry to Queensland. I am paraphrasing his statement. May I remind him, and these figures can be obtained from many quarters, that in the five months ended 31 January of this year 128 new businesses, new companies, were registered in Queensland. In the corresponding period last year 46 companies were registered in Queensland. I admit quite frankly that in itself that is not conclusive proof of the development of the State, but at least it is a very healthy sign.

Mr. Power: Where are they operating?

Mr. MORRIS: Some in Brisbane and some outside Brisbane in various parts of Queensland.

Mr. Power: That is today's very funny story.

Mr. MORRIS: I suppose the hon. member is very sorry that a firm such as the Kaiser company has decided to assemble jeeps in Queensland. Apparently he is disappointed at the acceleration of development of Queensland.

Mr. POWER: I rise to a point of order. I take exception to the statement that I am desirous of retarding Queensland's progress. I assure the House that that statement is entirely incorrect. I am more interested in the development of Queensland and employment for the community than the hon. gentleman.

Mr. MORRIS: I accept the hon. member's apology.

To those hon. members elected for the first time last year I say that this is the most pathetic motion of its type that they will probably ever hear in this Chamber. I shall illustrate the reason for that statement. The mover, although he spoke for nearly an hour, addressed himself almost entirely to a matter that was discussed in this Chamber only two days ago. I shall speak later about the initiation of that. It is apparent that the mover of the motion had great difficulty in getting anyone to second it, because finally he had to turn to one of the newest members of his own Party, who spent the whole of his time working the parish pump and not addressing himself to the terms of the motion.

It was impossible for the mover to get an ex-Minister to second his motion because of the extravagant and ridiculous terms of it.

I shall discuss the motion paragraph by paragraph. The first two paragraphs deal with unemployment generally. Unemployment is a matter of very considerable gravity, and it is regarded as such by this Government, but hon. members on this side of the Chamber are making very splendid efforts to overcome difficulties that face Queensland as a result of the ineptitude of the previous Government. We shall overcome those problems.

Mr. Jesson interjected.

Mr. MORRIS: Is the hon. member supporting the Gair Party?

Mr. Jesson: I would not support you anyhow.

Mr. MORRIS: I should not expect the hon. member to support me, but I did not know that the hon. member has become a follower of the Gair Party. However, the key to this portion of the resolution is that the Opposition in this Parliament expressed itself two days ago on this subject not as a result of action by an ex-Minister in Opposition but by the action of a man who was a back-bencher only seven months ago. That not one former Minister was able to initiate such a discussion illustrates very clearly why the former Government were so inept as to fail to look after the interests of this State in the past. The unemployment we have at the present time is the result largely of that inept Government. I propose to quote something that was said in this House on 19 March last year. I have quoted this statement before, for here is the key to the problem we are facing today. The statement was

made by the former Treasurer, the present hon. member for Bundaberg, less than 12 months ago. He said—

"I might add, for the information of hon. members, that in addition to the 400 building workers about to be dismissed, . . ."

That is to say by the Gair Labour Government last year—

"... since 1 July last it has been necessary, owing to shortage of funds . . ." and I say owing to their inability to govern properly—

"... to effect the following reductions in the number of Crown employees—

Forestry	416
Irrigation	408
Public Works	300
Railways	500"

The total is over 2,000. It is to the credit of the present Government that all pending dismissals by the previous Government were arrested by the Ministers who are now in office. It is to the eternal credit of the Premier and those of his Ministers concerned with the administration of these departments, that the dismissals were not proceeded with.

When it is recognised that the whole of this trouble was caused by the ineptitude of the Gair Government, we realise how difficult it must have been for the hon. member for South Brisbane, the former Premier, to get somebody to second his extravagant motion. The very slender hold he has on the minority group in this Parliament has become perfectly obvious. I go further and say that rumour hath it—and of course I do not know how true it is—that one of his members will shortly be leaving the ranks of his party and possibly a second one.

Mr. Power: Would it affect you very much if there was a settlement? (Laughter.)

Mr. MORRIS: An embarrassing question should not draw such a ready and quick response and I am led to the conclusion that I doubt if the rumour is wrong. The slender hold that the hon. member for South Brisbane has will be demonstrated in the Flinders by-election; I suggest it will be seen in the very near future. There are other things which also point to this.

Dealing with the background of the matter I recall that when you, Mr. Speaker, called this particular motion yesterday morning, how very slowly the hon. member for South Brisbane responded. Indeed, I believe that he remained in his seat for as long as possible in the hope that we would call "Formal" and permit him to evade this debate. However, he was compelled to go on with it and we have seen the sorry exhibition that he made of himself.

The third and fifth paragraphs of the motion, which deal respectively with rent control and the arbitrary deprivation by the

Government of the rights of certain transport operators in Toowoomba, will be dealt with adequately by my colleagues.

Another part of the motion fills me with disappointment. I cannot understand how a former Premier of the State could disregard to such an extent the necessity for confining himself within certain limits in the House. He went outside those limits, and I fail to see how his action could have been anything but deliberate. I am reminded that some little time ago when he was on this side of the House he stood aside and allowed one of his Ministers to deal with a subject similar to this in complete contravention of Government rule.

I come now to the fourth paragraph of the motion, the preamble of which reads—

“The disquiet which has been created in the public mind by the Government’s administration of the Queensland Police Force.”

Mr. Davies: The hon. member for South Brisbane made some serious charges in that connection.

Mr. MORRIS: If he did, they did not line up with the motion. He failed completely to deal with the main part of the fourth paragraph. I shall reply not only to the charges that the hon. member for Maryborough says were made by the hon. member for South Brisbane, but also to the insinuation in paragraph (4).

Mr. Mann: The hon. member for South Brisbane said you sacked Harold because he would not be a yes-man.

Mr. MORRIS: Does the hon. member for Brisbane want me to tell the story in my own sequence?

Mr. Mann: Yes.

Mr. MORRIS: On the allegation that there is disquiet within the Police Force, I have received a host of letters from people in all walks of life expressing in clear and unmistakable terms their very great relief that at last the Police Force of Queensland has been freed of political patronage, political interference, political victimisation, and intimidation of all kinds. I was amazed to hear the hon. member for South Brisbane say that high public servants are susceptible to a hint or a nod. What a damnable thing for a former Premier of the State to say! No high public servant worth his salt would be susceptible to a hint or a nod. The men in my department always say what they think, whether I like it or not. They always give me their honest opinion, and I do not think they would be worthy of their salt if they did not. But I am disgusted to recognise that a man who was until recently Premier of the State would suggest that high public servants should be susceptible to a hint or a nod. I think such a statement is a

damned insult to those people who have served the State for the whole of their working lives.

The hon. gentleman went on to say that if the new Police Commissioner is to succeed he will need to be a yes-man. Again, I resent bitterly such a statement. Immediately after Mr. Bischof’s appointment as Commissioner of Police he was interviewed by the Premier and subsequently by me. The first thing he was told by each of us was, “You are the Police Commissioner and you will not be subject to political interference or any other interference.” I would be ashamed of myself if such were not the case. At last police officers know that they will not be called upon to subscribe to the funds of any political party at the behest of any superior to secure any favours, and senior officers of the force know that the making of collections for any political party if it comes to the knowledge of the Premier or my colleagues or me, would merit instant dismissal. I do not say that lightly. I say that in the full knowledge that has come to me as Minister in charge of the force for the past seven months and I say it very definitely.

Mr. Davies: Do you say previous Ministers have—

Mr. MORRIS: The hon. member heard what I said and if he has as much intelligence as I believe he has he will have understood it.

At last hundreds of rank-and-file members of the police force recognise that their future depends not on their political views, whatever they may be, but on their merit within their own calling. Why, the hon. member for South Brisbane spoke about disquiet within the police force! After seven months of the new Government’s administration members of the police force view the future with confidence and pride rather than with fear and trepidation. They know, as do most hon. members on both sides of the House, that the new Commissioner will administer the Force without fear or favour and without any consideration of political interest or anything else, in the interests of all members of the force.

Let me turn to sub-clause (a) of Clause 4 of the motion—

“The circumstances surrounding and the methods adopted in the appointment of the Commissioner of Police and the position of other senior officers.”

Perhaps I should reply to some of the statements made by the hon. member for South Brisbane about the Medical Board and the ending of Mr. Commissioner Harold’s services. Let me give the full history so that all will know as much as I. Hon. members opposite have asked for this and here it is. I have the file in my hand and the Leader of the Opposition is perfectly entitled to have a look at it. On 3 December I received from the Commissioner’s office the following notice bearing the same date—

"To the Medical Officer—

"Please examine and prescribe for Commissioner Harold . . ."

and so it goes on with the printed document. Here is a medical certificate signed by Dr. Ferguson as Assistant Medical Officer, a man whom I have never met but I understand he is a very fine doctor. It reads—

"Certificate of Medical Officer—Angina pectoris—Period of sick leave recommended, 2 weeks from 4.12.1957."

And so the Police Commissioner entered hospital. I did not know anything about his illness until the Saturday morning prior to his entering hospital. On 4 December I received the following letter signed by Mr. Donovan as Deputy Commissioner of Police—

"I have to report that the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Harold, has been granted two weeks' sick leave commencing today by Dr. Ferguson, Acting Government Medical Officer. The medical certificate is attached for your information, and the period of sick leave will cover the period from 4 to 17 December 1957, both dates inclusive. Your approval of this sick leave is requested."

That letter is dated 4 December and I have signed it as approved on 5 December.

The next document is dated 20 December following the previous Commissioner's discharge from hospital. It is confirmed here that when he came out of hospital he was very much better. But within three days of coming out of hospital his symptoms returned, the symptoms of high blood pressure and the other symptoms described here which I shall read as I proceed.

Mr. Walsh: I could imagine that if he had to work under you.

Mr. MORRIS: Could the hon member? At least I can say that from the time he worked under me he was not subject to the interference of the many other Cabinet Ministers who were not even in control of his department. The hon. member for Bundaberg should be uncomfortable when I say that, as should be his cobber on his right.

Mr. Power: I shall tell you what I have to say when I get up.

Mr. MORRIS: Let not the hon. member worry about that! I fully realise that both the hon. members for Bundaberg and Baroona were afraid to get up before I spoke because they knew I would demolish any of their stupid arguments. They remained in their seats. They would not second the motion because they wanted to follow rather than precede me. I am perfectly aware of that but I am not afraid of what they may say.

The Commissioner came out of hospital on approximately 18 December but within three days he was ill again. He came to see me and told me that he felt that he could not proceed with the work of Police Commissioner

and that he would like to have a Medical Board. The hon. member for South Brisbane suggested that he was directed to have a medical board but rather Mr. Harold said that he would like a medical board. Let us see if the correspondence confirms what I say. On 20 December I wrote to the Government Medical Officer as follows:—

"Following upon the illness of Mr. Harold, Police Commissioner, recently, I had a discussion with him today in relation to future activities and the increasing tempo of the work of Police Commissioner. As a result it was mutually decided that it would be desirable for a medical board to investigate the state of his health. In view of the coming period, when little work can take place over the Christmas and New Year vacation I would be most grateful if you could arrange for a medical board, consisting of Dr. Hayes, Government Medical Officer, and Dr. D. Lynn Walters, Mr. Harold's family physician to examine his health from the above point of view at the earliest possible opportunity.

"I would be grateful if you would then advise me as soon as possible of your opinion of his condition."

At the same time I sent this letter to Mr. Harold:

"For your information I forward copy of letter sent by me to Dr. Hayes, Government Medical Officer. I understand this appointment has been made for noon Monday 23 December."

On 23 December I received this letter:

"Government Medical Officer,
"51 Herschell Street,
"Brisbane.

"Report of Medical Board on Mr. T. W. Harold.

"At the request of the Minister for Labour and Industry and with the consent of the examinee.

"Letter from Minister of Labour and Industry refers dated 20 December, 1957, Dr. G. S. Hayes, Government Medical Officer.

"Mr. T. W. Harold was examined by Dr. Hayes on 30 November, 1957, when he was complaining of some chest discomfort and mild diabetes. He was referred to Dr. L. D. Walters on 2 December, 1957."

Not by me, but the Government Medical Officer.

I continue—

"The examination revealed some hypertension, cardiac embarrassment and an anxiety re-action state. An electrocardiogram was normal and he was admitted to the Brisbane Intermediate Hospital on 3 December, 1957, and discharged on 10 December, 1957. He rapidly settled on treatment and his symptoms disappeared and his blood pressure returned to normal. His diabetes was mild.

"Examination on the 16th December, 1957, revealed that he had recovered greatly and he was advised to resume light duties only.

"It is apparent (by the letter from the Minister) that the tempo of the duties as Commissioner of Police will increase and the examinee feels that he would not be able to cope with the exacting and increasing demands of office in view of his recent cardiac and anxiety episode."

This is not written by me but by the Government Medical Officer.

Mr. Walsh: You were the cause of it.

Mr. MORRIS: You are not suggesting that the Government Medical Officer would make a statement according to what I wanted.

Mr. Walsh: The cause of his condition.

Mr. MORRIS: You were insinuating it but you have not the guts to say it. The report continues—

"The examinee feels that in the long-term interest of his health he would be wise to relinquish his office at this stage rather than incur further exacerbations of his symptoms.

"The Board members have examined Mr. T. W. Harold today. The clinical findings indicate hypertension (210/120) and as his medical advisers we concur with his decision believing that the increase in tempo of office would be prejudicial to his future health, and that a breakdown under these conditions appears inevitable. We advise that he be retired from his duties on medical grounds."

There is the history. So I was faced with the question of what to do in relation to this. I had to make a decision and to refer that decision to Cabinet. Before making that decision I made sure I knew the background financial circumstances of the Commissioner. I do not mean the money he had personally, but his financial background in the Police Force. I should hate to see a man retire and have no future. I had to consider that, if he was retained in his job, in the light of that medical report the Government could be held responsible for his premature death.

Dr. Noble: He would probably have had a coronary thrombosis.

Mr. MORRIS: I have not the slightest doubt that it was a grave danger. I asked for particulars and I discovered that if he was retired immediately he would receive in back-pay, leave and so on, a lump sum of £4,600 and in addition would receive a pension of £960 a year. I put it to any hon. member: if you were faced with a report that you were liable to die from heart disease and you could get that payment what would you do? The hon. member for South Brisbane made the stupid suggestion that Mr. Harold read in the newspaper of his retirement and

the decision of the Medical Board. From the material I have read hon. members will realise that that is so much arrant nonsense. Mr. Harold initiated his own examination and we concurred with that examination. I think it was the humane thing to do, the only thing to do.

I think that adequately covers it. The Leader of the Opposition may look at the file if he desires to do so.

The next step was the appointment of a new Commissioner. In his motion the hon. member suggests that the circumstances surrounding the appointment of the Commissioner and the methods adopted have caused disquiet. Let us consider the circumstances. I had to decide what to ask Cabinet to do to overcome the problem. I suggested and Cabinet unanimously agreed that the position of Commissioner of Police should be advertised. If some hon. members opposite had been in charge of a department such as this, they would probably have liked to adopt hole-in-the-corner methods, but the Government do not believe in that sort of thing.

Mr. Power: Why did you appoint the Secretary of the Liberal Party to your office?

Mr. MORRIS: Because he is a most efficient officer.

Mr. Power: You talk about hole-in-the-corner methods.

Mr. MORRIS: Is there anything wrong if an ex-Public servant is appointed secretary of the Liberal Party? That is not the proper designation, but is there anything wrong with it? What has it to do with the hon. member for Baroona or anybody else? What a ridiculous thing to say. I will not be diverted from this statement.

Mr. Walsh: We give the Premier credit for re-appointing the defeated members of the Q.L.P.

Mr. MORRIS: It is funny to hear the hon. members for Baroona and Bundaberg talking about the appointments of people, when we know that the son of the hon. member for Baroona was at the hon. member's instigation appointed to his office.

Mr. Power: As private secretary. He was in the same position as Tom Hope and any of the others.

Mr. MORRIS: I do not like hitting people on tender spots but, if they ask for it, I think it is their own fault if they get it.

Mr. Power interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I warn the hon. member for Baroona not to interrupt.

Mr. MORRIS: The hon. member for Baroona is stinging under well-merited cuts. I asked, and Cabinet agreed, that we should advertise for applications for the position of Commissioner of Police because we wanted

to get the very best man we could in Australia to fill this important office. We advertised, and got a large number of applications. I went to the Premier and requested that as the appointment was a matter of importance to every department he appoint a Cabinet sub-committee to look into the applications I had received.

Mr. Aikens: Did you go to the Premier or did the Premier come to you?

Mr. MORRIS: I went to the Premier. In the process of selecting a Commissioner—

Mr. Aikens: The story we got up North was that the Country Party put you on the spot.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MORRIS: It amuses me to know that a man who has travelled the hard road for so many years should be so gullible. I think it is possibly a good thing that he is hearing the truth for a change. Cabinet appointed a sub-committee which decided on certain basic requirements for a Commissioner of Police—that he should be of an age whereby he could continue to be the Commissioner of Police for a reasonable length of time, the second qualification required being experience as an administrator and the third honesty and reliability. We examined every application we received on that basis and with those points as the yardstick. We had some excellent applications from all over Australia and indeed, from outside Australia. I believe that most of the members of the Opposition agree with me that we have secured as Commissioner of Police the very best man available.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Walsh: It is not your fault.

Mr. MORRIS: That is a lie, and you know it.

Mr. Aikens: That is not a Parliamentary term.

Mr. MORRIS: I withdraw the word and say that the hon. member is as well aware as I am that what he said is not the truth.

I come to the unofficial record of the Queensland Labour Party. Members of that party did not have the courage to say these things but I assume they incited them to be said. I refer to the Press of last Sunday when there was an article which referred in general to the circumstances surrounding the cases of McArthur and Murray and their connection with the Police Force. Knowing that I will not be able to speak again I shall tell the story before hon. members raise it themselves.

The first point with which I shall deal is the reference in the article to the withdrawal of Mr. Casey from the case. I did not know that Mr. Casey was in the case, nor did I

have anything to do with his association with it or his ceasing to have any association with it. I do not expect the Minister for Justice to have regard to anything I might say on the running of his department. That is his job, and he does it quite well without my interference. If there is anything to be said about that, he will say it.

There are some things related to the case of McArthur and Murray that should be said and that can now be said, because the case is concluded.

Mr. Wood: If there is anything to be said, it should be said now.

Mr. MORRIS: I think it should be, because I want the matter cleared up. Nobody on the other side has raised it, but as it is included in the motion it is my duty to raise it. I can do it in the most satisfactory way by reading a letter that I have received from Mr. Bischof, the present Commissioner of Police. It is dated 3 March. All this correspondence is available to the Leader of the Opposition if he cares to read it.

Mr. Bischof's letter reads—

"I have the honour to inform you that after taking up duties as Commissioner of Police, and knowing that appeals by ex-Constables McArthur and Murray were pending, I, when circumstances permitted, endeavoured to bring myself abreast with all evidence taken at the inquest held in the Coroner's Court at Mount Isa between the dates of 25 June and 13 July, 1956."

Mr. Bischof says, "when circumstances permitted". I wish to elaborate on that. He took over as Commissioner in the teeth of all the work that had to be done on the visit of the Queen Mother, and since his appointment has been working long hours because of it.

He continues—

"In the light of the attached joint opinion given by the Solicitor-General, Mr. Ryan, and the Crown Solicitor, Mr. O'Driscoll, dated 8 October, 1957, I came to the conclusion, having in mind certain other cases which afforded strong precedent, that the punishment of dismissal imposed on Murray and McArthur was excessive in the circumstances. I have also read the report on the investigation made by the Deputy Commissioner.

"As you are aware, therefore, when the appeals by these constables against dismissal came up for hearing by the Appeal Board on the 26th ultimo, I instructed Mr. Seaman, counsel for the Commissioner of Police, to announce that I opposed the appeals on all grounds set out in the appeals of the two constables, except the

ground in relation to the punishment imposed. As a result, counsel for the appellants'—

I do not know who they were—

“—withdrew all other grounds set out in the appeals, and the Appeal Board allowed the appeals in respect to excessive punishment, and recommended that each appellant be reprimanded by the Commissioner.”

Mr. Power: Without hearing any evidence.

Mr. MORRIS: The hon. member has been the Attorney-General, has he not?

Mr. Power: Yes.

Mr. MORRIS: Has he not assimilated what I have said?

Mr. Power: You cannot pull the wool over my eyes.

Mr. MORRIS: Both parties accepted the previous decisions prior to which evidence had been given. The only point on which they differed was punishment.

Mr. Power: The magistrate had not heard the evidence.

Mr. MORRIS: The magistrate had heard the evidence before, and it was not disagreed with. Surely the hon. member for Baroona has enough intelligence to see that.

Mr. Walsh: Did you say that you did not know the counsel for the appellants?

Mr. MORRIS: I said earlier that I had nothing to do with counsel for the appellants. Even at this stage, if the hon. member asked me who he was, I could not tell him.

Mr. Walsh: I can understand how you are running your department so inefficiently. Everybody else would know who the counsel for the appellants were.

Mr. MORRIS: That has got nothing to do with me. I know who our counsel was, the counsel for the Commissioner. It was Seaman. That is all that interests me. What interest is it of mine who the counsel for the opposing side is? No interest at all!

Mr. Walsh: It shows your ignorance of of the case.

Mr. Aikens: Are we ever going to find out who kicked Jorgensen to death?

Mr. MORRIS: If the hon. member will wait till I finish I will answer all the questions. This goes on—

“As a result, counsel for the appellants withdrew all other grounds set out in the appeals, and the Appeal Board allowed the appeals in respect to excessive punishment, and recommended that each appellant be reprimanded by the Commissioner of Police. The Appeal Board's decision has since been confirmed by the Governor in

Council. Constable Murray and Constable McArthur were reinstated as members of the Police Force on and from 27 February 1958. In coming to my decision . . . and in further acting upon it in the manner indicated, I did not cut across or in any way interfere with the finding of any earlier tribunal; and on instructing my counsel in terms of my decision on the day prior to the hearing of the appeals by the Appeal Board, I caused negotiations to be made to ensure that an announcement would be made in the Appeal Court by counsel for the appellants if no evidence was needed to be heard, that any allegation or implication of impropriety or unfairness against any police officer or any other person connected with the investigation or hearing of evidence, would be unreservedly withdrawn.”

I think the Commissioner leaned over backwards to be fair.

Mr. Power: Will you answer me this question: how could an appeal board uphold an appeal without hearing evidence as to whether the punishment was justified or not?

Mr. MORRIS: I think the hon. member will get all the answers to his questions when the Minister for Justice speaks. I will even make the file available to the hon. member for Baroona, though I doubt that it would be of any value to him because I do not think he could understand it in view of his questions. This continues—

“These undertakings were given and the withdrawals were made in open court when the appeals came on for hearing. Attached hereto is a brief resume of chronological order in connection with the Mt. Isa case together with a copy of the finding of Mr. Fowler, Stipendiary Magistrate, who found that the charges of unfitness and misconduct against the two constables had been proven;”

And we did not deny it, nor did the appellants' counsel. It continues—

“The copy of charges preferred against the two constables, at the direction of Mr. P. Glynn, the Commissioner of Police at the time the charges were formulated; as well as copies of grounds of appeal by the two constables against their dismissal.”

The hon. member interjected about Jorgensen so let me read this to him—

“Jorgensen was arrested about 4.30 p.m. on 7 February, 1956, at the Hotel Boyd, Mt. Isa, by Constables McArthur and Murray on a charge of inciting a man to resist arrest; Jorgensen was placed in a cell at Mt. Isa police station by the two officers mentioned, and on the morning of 8 February, he complained of severe stomach pains while he was in the custody of the police.”

He was then liberated at 11 a.m. on the same day but he was admitted to the Mt. Isa district hospital two days afterwards on 10 February and he died in the hospital on 13

March, over a month later. He had an abdominal operation on 17 February. Chief Inspector Donovan went to Mt. Isa on 19 March to investigate Jorgensen's death. Subsequent to his investigation a coroner's inquest was held in Mt. Isa. The coroner's inquest was held between 25 June and 13 July by Mr. Monaghan who committed McArthur and Murray for trial on a charge of unlawful killing. Constables McArthur and Murray were suspended from duty on 13 July, 1956, by the Commissioner of Police on a charge of misconduct, namely a breach of Section 303 of the Criminal Code—unlawfully killing one Jorgensen.

The two constables came up for trial at the Criminal Court at Cloncurry on 25 September, before Mr. Justice Jeffriess. After legal argument and without calling any evidence the Crown Prosecutor, in view of comments made by the presiding judge, entered a *nolle prosequi* and the constables were discharged. McArthur and Murray were reinstated on 26 September, but they were not allowed their salary and allowances for that period of suspension. McArthur and Murray were transferred from Mt. Isa to Roma Street by Commissioner's memorandum dated 26 September, 1956. They were suspended again from duty on 13 November, 1956, and on that date the Commissioner of Police charged them under the Police Acts and Rules as unfit to be members of the Police Force by reason of certain conduct at Mt. Isa. The conduct was untruthfulness. It was not in relation to the manslaughter charge. They were acquitted of that charge and this charge was unfitness because of untruthfulness.

Mr. Power: I am not concerned about any of that.

Mr. MORRIS: But I am. Mr. Fowler, stipendiary magistrate, conducted an investigation of the charges on 10 December, 1956. He gave his decision on 7 November, 1957. The Commissioner of Police, Mr. Harold, dismissed them on 15 November, 1957. It was the Commissioner's decision, not the Governor in Council's decision. During the period of suspension they were paid neither salary nor allowances. They then lodged their appeal and hon. members know the result. There is the history I wanted to put before the House.

Hon. members may ask whether the Commissioner did the right thing in treating them leniently after all they had gone through. Let me show you that he did. The Commissioner's letter continues—

"I am also attaching brief particulars of 11 cases occurring since 1948 in which members of the Queensland Police Force have been charged departmentally in connection with circumstances involving unfitness in three cases and eight other cases of misconduct. In each instance these officers in the line of their duty apparently quite wilfully committed acts on which the respective charges were based.

In the Mt. Isa case which involved Murray and McArthur the circumstances appeared to be less grave because it can be quite fairly said that at the time they made the prevarications alleged they were under suspicion and also had been interrogated in connection with the death of a man. In none of the earlier cases where in each instance the officer was found guilty was there a penalty of dismissal imposed."

I will quote the attached list—

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

Mr. MORRIS: I thank my colleague and the House generally for permitting me to continue. I do not want to go into this detail but in justice to the present occupant of the office and these two men I consider that these particulars should be given. I believe that these are the reasons why I think the Commissioner did the right thing in treating these men leniently. I shall now give the House the precedents.

Mr. Wood: Could you give us the cases without citing names?

Mr. Aikens: Why not cite the names?

Mr. MORRIS: I did not intend to mention the names. This report in 1949 refers to a sergeant 1st class and reads as follows:—

"In appearing to Commissioner by matter set forth in judgment of Supreme Court, that Sergeant So-and-so was unfit to be a member of the Police Force."

This sergeant was called upon to show cause why he should not be dismissed from the Police Force because of the unfitness disclosed by the judgment.

The action arose out of alleged misconduct when acting for the Public Curator and handling affairs of an old woman who was not capable of understanding the nature and effect of a contract of sale which she signed transferring a property including a dwelling house to this sergeant and his wife.

Mr. Walsh: He was actually acquitted by a jury.

Mr. MORRIS: He was found guilty.

Mr. Aikens: And he was promoted to Comptroller-General of Prisons.

Mr. MORRIS: Nothing of the sort. He was found guilty and reduced to the rank of sergeant 2nd class.

Here is another case. A sergeant was found guilty in regard to statements made against a certain person which were not wholly true. He was disrated to the rank of senior constable, and subsequently on appeal found not guilty of unfitness, but guilty of misconduct, and he was fined £5. In 1956 a constable was involved in a similar case and was found guilty and fined £5. In 1955 another constable was found guilty and fined £5. All of them are more serious than these other cases.

Mr. Walsh: You have read the pink elephant case.

Mr. MORRIS: The next case was one of misconduct and the officer was fined £3. There was another one for misconduct and the fine was £5. Another constable was found guilty of misconduct and reprimanded. In another case the person found guilty of misconduct was fined £2. Another found guilty of misconduct was fined £3. Those are the precedents on which the Commissioner acted in regard to Murray and McArthur. These men have been through two years of hell. They were found not guilty of manslaughter by a police magistrate. The only charge remaining was one of untruthfulness. They have been through two years of hell and now they have been reinstated.

Mr. Walsh: On what you have said you will have to correct your proof.

Mr. Aikens: On your own argument there was a violent difference of opinion between the present Commissioner and the past Commissioner on the punishment to be inflicted on these two men.

Mr. MORRIS: Maybe there was; I am not suggesting there was not.

Mr. Aikens: You said the previous Commissioner was too harsh.

Mr. MORRIS: I never said anything of the sort.

Mr. Aikens: What else can we infer?

Mr. MORRIS: The hon. member's judgment and mine are different. I believe that my judgment is always better than the hon. member's judgment. There may be some misguided people who think the opposite.

I was asked whether we would ever discover who was responsible for the murder at Mt. Isa. The Sunday newspaper highlighted the fact that I did not reply to a letter from Jorgensen. On 18 February of this year I received a registered letter from Jorgensen dated 14 February. I have here the envelope bearing the registration mark. 18 February was the day of the visit of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. We were all very busy, but notwithstanding that, on the same day at noon I sent this letter to the Commissioner of Police—

“I am forwarding herewith for your advice to me a copy of a letter received from J. C. Jorgensen of Biggenden. I would point out that the letter was forwarded to me by registered mail arriving at 12 noon on even date.”

That letter was sent immediately to the Commissioner of Police, and the Commissioner has already spent countless hours studying the whole background of the Mount Isa case. It is at this very moment under most active investigation.

There is in the file much evidence that I believe must be studied and sifted. It is interesting to note that in the police files

there is a statement alleged to have been signed by the murdered man, Jorgensen. He does not refer to Murray at all, and to McArthur only slightly. He says in the statement, “I saw McArthur in the passage of the hotel.” McArthur had made an arrest prior to arresting this man. This is a further passage from the statement—

“When in the cells a constable who I think is called . . .”

I shall not mention his name, but it was not McArthur or Murray.

“but whom I could identify then punched me in the stomach.”

He made that charge against somebody other than McArthur and Murray. Although this is a serious statement, I am not satisfied that the matter has been thoroughly investigated, but I am satisfied that the present Commissioner will see that the matter is investigated very thoroughly.

Mr. Aikens: Your statement is a serious indictment of the Deputy Commissioner, who went to Mount Isa and allegedly investigated the matter.

Mr. MORRIS: I am not making any insinuations; I am merely giving the plain facts of the case. The hon. member is just as entitled to draw his conclusions as I am to draw my conclusions. I am giving the facts and nothing else.

I say finally that this case is by no means finished. Before it is finished there will be very extensive, further investigations.

I think I have answered everything it is possible to answer. Nothing was said which called for a rebuttal, but I have tried to answer all the insinuations which were in the newspapers or implicit in the motion. I think I have proved definitely that at least I can say we have every reason to be proud of the administration of the Police Force.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona) (3.44 p.m.): I shall reply first to the statement that the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party had difficulty in getting somebody to second the motion. That is entirely incorrect. There were many hon. members ready and willing to second it. Hon. members of the Queensland Labour Party have the courage of their convictions and are prepared to present a case in support of the motion. The Minister by innuendo endeavoured to imply that there was a break in the ranks of the Queensland Labour Party, because I stated some time ago I would move heaven and earth to bring unity in the Labour movement. There can be no suggestion that I am going to leave the Queensland Labour Party, but I repeat I want to see unity in the Labour Party. I have had no quarrel with the Labour Party but I do not agree with the actions of some of those who control it. That was the filthy innuendo of the Minister, but I throw the lie back in his teeth. I support the motion. I am firmly of the opinion that

the Government have not honoured their election promises. The Government have been guilty of maladministration, have practised victimisation and introduced class legislation of the worst kind.

Mr. Aikens: You have chased your leader and deputy leader out of the House.

Mr. POWER: Do not worry about the Leader of my party; he has the right to handle his own affairs. If the noisy hon. member for Mundingburra will only be quiet I could state my case. The Government by many administrative acts have shown their utter and callous disregard for the rights of the workers and the useful people. Despite their promises to keep prices down and control commodities and see that inflation was arrested, what have they done? They have set out to destroy the price-fixing machinery and take away from the Commissioner of Prices all his power by legislation appointing a Prices Advisory Board. During the election campaign the Deputy Premier said that he was totally opposed to price control and it is well known today that the man in charge of the Price Fixing Branch is not the Minister who was appointed to that office but none other than Mr. Ken Morris. The Commissioner of Prices is being by-passed because of the strings that the hon. member for Mt. Cooth-tha is able to pull within the Cabinet. Mr. Fullagar had been doing an excellent job with price fixation but with the advent of the Government he was shorn of many of his powers. The Government have decided what formula shall apply in price fixing and have put men with no idea of costing or price control in a position to supersede the Commissioner of Prices and shear him of all his functions.

Let us examine the callous acts of the Government. They decontrolled the prices of fruit, fish and vegetables. I brought into this House and placed on the table some articles of fruit that had been bought and I mentioned the prices paid for them.

Mr. Wood: We thought they were marbles.

Mr. POWER: Yes. I said that 10s. a dozen was being asked for apples and 6s. a dozen for oranges. When I brought the fruit in here and produced evidence that the oranges cost 6d. each and that the bananas were costing 6d., I was accused of being caught by certain people. I said that my wife had bought those articles at the corner shop. I am on a reasonably good salary, but what opportunity has the worker, the man on the basic wage, of getting fruit for his table? He is denied the opportunity because of the callous action of the Government in removing certain commodities from price control. What has happened in regard to fish since it was decontrolled? Fish is the staple diet of invalids and recommended to patients by many doctors. What chance has the pensioner, or the widow, or those on the bread-line, of paying the high prices

being demanded for fish since the Government removed it from price control. The Government said they would not worsen the conditions of the workers. I feel sorry for the Minister for Justice; he is a kindly gentleman. But he is being pressed hard by the Minister for Labour and Industry, who is meeting various organisations round the town. Some of them have told me that the Minister for Labour and Industry has said to them, "Don't worry about price control. It won't be long before it has gone by the board."

This morning I asked the Minister for Justice a question, but he did not have the courage to answer it. He skirted round it and tried to ridicule me. He knows very well that when I took over control of the Prices Branch the Prices Advisory Board had ceased to function. Another board has now been created, simply to enable the Minister to pass the buck. I know that he has received requests from large cartels and institutions within the State for the de-control of certain commodities. I ask the Minister now whether the Prices Advisory Board has met. I cannot go behind his back and ask an officer of the Prices Branch. I am above doing that. I should also like the Minister to tell me whether any applications have been made for the re-control of commodities. Why does not the Minister answer that?

Mr. Munro: I will tell you a good deal more about it presently.

Mr. POWER: I know that the Minister is not bound to accept the recommendations of the Board, but if he has not accepted any of them, what are his reasons? I frequently buy steraudent at a chemist's shop, and in the last couple of weeks it has risen in price by 5d. a bottle. I am not blaming the chemist for the increase; I blame the cartels. They say to the chemists, "If you do not sell at our fixed price, you will not be supplied with any of our products." What is the Minister doing about that? I lay these charges, and I have evidence to support them.

Nobody can tell me that there have not been applications for the de-control of commodities. I know there have been. People have told me that they have applied for the de-control of commodities and that the matter is still being considered. The Minister was not prepared to tell me that.

Why is he afraid to tell us whether an application has been made, whether it has been dealt with, what the position was, and why he would not accept it? He tried to score from the fact that I told him some time ago that the board had gone out of existence. It went out of existence long before I became Minister in charge of prices. The Commissioner for Prices and I each accepted our own responsibility. He accepted responsibility for the fixation of prices; my Government and I accepted the responsibility for the control and de-control of commodities. I am sorry that the Minister, having been forced to appoint the board, is not prepared to tell us what it is doing. Surely we as members

of Her Majesty's Opposition are entitled to know what is happening and surely the workers of the State are entitled to know the reason for the steep increases that take place from time to time! The Minister has side-tracked the question; he will not answer it.

One of the first actions of the new Government was to abolish the grading of beef. Why? It was abolished because certain vested interests that the Government represented approached them and asked for it.

Mr. Sparkes: Why did not your Government do something about it?

Mr. POWER: I wish I could abolish the hon. member for Aubigny. The reason for the abolition of the grading of beef was that vested interests with which the hon. member is associated were very active in working for its abolition. And what is happening today? The grading of beef is being carried out by the wholesalers. Any genuine retail butcher will tell you that. The argument advanced by the Minister for Agriculture and Stock was that the ordinary housewife would know whether the beef was good, bad or indifferent.

Mr. Ewan: They are the best judges of all.

Mr. POWER: What a ridiculous statement! Everybody knows that the average housewife does not know anything about the grading of beef. Because it is being done by the wholesalers the housewife has to pay top prices for third-grade beef.

An Opposition Member: Cracker beef.

Mr. POWER: Yes, cracker beef. The period for holding off the re-introduction of grading has been extended until 30 June of this year. A deliberate attempt is being made to hold it off altogether. I ask the Minister what he has done about the prosecution of butchers for overcharging. I ask him what he has done about those butchers who deliberately disregard the requirements for the issue of dockets. Throughout the city and suburbs you will find very few butchers who give a docket, but what are the Government doing about it? Again the workers are being exploited while the Government stand idly by and do nothing. They have no answer to my charges.

Let us look at the oil companies in Queensland. During my term as Minister in charge of prices petrol was sold cheaper in Queensland than in any other States. The price of petrol was increased following the closure of the Suez Canal, but only minor reductions have taken place following its re-opening. No attempt has been made to take the oil companies on. The oil companies decided when the reduction would take place. The Minister cannot deny that. He cannot deny that today millions of pounds are sunk on one-brand petrol stations. He cannot deny that in the calculation of the price of petrol allowance must be made for a return on the capital investment. In the vicinity of

£27,000,000 has been spent which should never have been expended but upon which the companies get a return. Everybody knows the difficulty of checking the stocks of oil companies in Queensland. It is evidence of the failure of the Government to act in the interests of the people of the State.

The Minister for Justice evaded my question today. He realised how serious it would be if he gave an untruthful answer which I am sure he would not do. Rather than give an untruthful answer he got around the issue by evading the question. It will not be long before price control in Queensland will fade out altogether.

Mr. Sparkes: A good thing.

Mr. POWER: The hon. member for Aubigny says "A good thing". He is another representative of the exploiters who have no concern for the useful people of the State. By their occupation the useful people, the workers of the State, are responsible for the greatest development in the State. Capital is of no value unless labour is applied to it. All the wealthy people and all the money in the world will not develop the State unless there is the application of men's brains and brawn.

I forecast that in the very near future bread and meat will be decontrolled. Some time ago the Government introduced a Bill, more class legislation, that made provision for the granting of a bonus, or subsidy, as they termed it, of 1s. per bushel of wheat. What was the effect? An increase in the price of bread. You cannot say a good thing too often so I shall say it again: under the system adopted the price of wheat has been fixed on the basis of 6 or 7 bushels to the acre when the old horse-plough was in use whereas the yield now is up to a maximum of 40 bushels. There is no justification at all for the increase. Because of their action the Government have brought about an increase in the price of bread to the people of the State.

There is no doubt about it that because of the Deputy-Premier's desire to abolish price control the Minister for Justice has not got very much say in his own department. The Deputy-Premier has made that quite clear, as has the hon. member for Aubigny. They would not have him in the Cabinet as they said he was too unreliable. The Board was created and the Deputy-Premier is the man who cracks the whip while the Minister for Justice dances to the tune. The Deputy-Premier has always been opposed to price control. He is still opposed to price control as is every other member of the Government party. What has happened in regard to prosecutions for breaches of prices regulations? I have watched the Press closely but I have not seen a record of any prosecution. The Minister must approve of the recommendation for a prosecution and perhaps he is putting them aside and saying, "We will not deal with them just now."

Mr. Sparkes: Your own mates have gone.

Mr. POWER: I am not worried about my mates.

Mr. Sparkes: They kicked you out.

Mr. POWER: Nobody kicked me out. I have more guts than the hon. member has and more heart too. I did not get my living by flogging people for 9s. a day. An attack has been made on the standard of living of the workers of this State. The amendment of the Landlord and Tenant Acts conferred a benefit on one section only. The cost of living has been increased and rents have increased by 20 per cent. Many notifications have been given that it is proposed to make that increase. The other day the Minister said that there were 207 applications before the court. I point out that some of these premises contain eight flats and several tenants. A reasonable average would be four, so that the number of applications would be over 800. We have been told by the Menzies-Fadden Government that we should look after the State and prevent inflation. I point out that we have inflation as a result of the actions of the Government in allowing these increases in rents.

Mr. Sparkes: Your mates have gone.

Mr. POWER: I am able to stand on my own feet. I do not want anybody to back me up. Evidence was submitted to me this morning showing increases of £1 to 3 guineas a week. There are many people who are increasing their rents without any authority to do so. What action is the Government taking in connection with the matter? These increases are affecting the economic life of the workers of this State. We were told by the Minister when he introduced the amendment that there would be increases of 20 per cent. We now find that the increases have been as much as 40 per cent and 60 per cent; and magistrates dealing with the cases have increase the value of properties by approximately 84 per cent.

It has been stated that the landlord did not get a fair deal from the previous Government. Take the case of a house of 10 squares erected in 1937 for £450. That is what it cost and that was the statement made when the rent was fixed under the National Security Regulations. It was fixed on the value of £450 plus the land, but I shall not deal with the value of the land. The rental was fixed for those premises on a value of £650. In other words, the value of the house was increased by £200 more than it actually cost. Can anybody say that that was unfair? Under the new Act it will be increased by a further £178. In other words, the house which in 1937 cost £450 will now have its rental fixed on a value of £828. That legislation must adversely affect the workers of the State. The Minister sits smugly on the front bench, probably saying to himself, "I can justify that." But how can it be justified? The

Minister tried to justify it in answer to a question asked by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday. The amendment of the Act is an indictment of the Government. They have shown callous disregard for the workers and have broken the promises made prior to the last election. How can they justify a rental fixed on a value of £800 when the house cost only £450? How can the Government contend that a landlord was unfairly treated in being allowed to charge a rent based on the value of £650? I have referred to this matter previously in the House. Before the election Blocksidge was able to tell everybody what they were going to get if the present Government were returned, and what Blocksidge asked for he got. I shall not mention the name of another person in that connection. A landlord recently withdrew his application to the Court and said he would be satisfied with an increase of 20 per cent., but in some cases the increases were much greater. Landlords previously did not suffer an injustice. One of them said to me recently, "How much more money am I going to get in rent because the value of my property has increased?" I said, "You are not entitled to any more. You are entitled to a return only on the capital invested."

An allowance is made for the rates of a property. I introduced legislation to provide that when rates were increased all the landlord had to do was to take the rate notice to the Registrar of the Fair Rents Court, and the rent was increased by the amount of the increase in rates. It is useless to say that a person paying rent does not pay rates, because rates are part and parcel of the formula for rent fixation. The Government should keep that in mind if they are thinking about tampering with the electoral laws and altering the franchise.

The Government have shown callous disregard for the workers. Many old people will have to vacate premises and live in institutions as they will be unable to afford the increased rents now being fixed by the court under the recent amendment of the Act. It is sad to think that the pioneers of this country who have worked hard and have reared large families will in the near future be unable to occupy rented premises because of the unwarranted and steep increases in rent they will be called on to pay as a result of the legislation introduced by the present Government. My case is irrefutable no matter how the Minister tries to justify his statements. I can bring evidence to prove it.

The Commonwealth Government have decided that there will be no rental rebates in regard to Queensland Housing Commission homes, other than those already in operation. I give credit to the Commission for wherever possible it endeavours to get homes for invalids and pensioners where rebates on such homes are allowed which are few in number. Increased rents will become a further hardship on the large army of unemployed in Queensland. The Government have shown callous disregard for

the unfortunate unemployed. What have the Government done? Up to date certain moneys are coming from the Commonwealth Government, but the sum constitutes a drop in the bucket. Certain moneys must be raised by local authorities, but they might have great difficulty in filling their loans. The Government have been creating a number of highly paid positions within the Public Service. For instance, there are appointments to the Licensing Commission drawing salaries, one of the appointees being a very important supporter of the present Government. The Minister for Labour and Industry made an unwarranted attack on me when I twitted him about the appointment of Mr. Hirst who resigned from the department because he was not appointed Migration Officer. He immediately got the job as Secretary of the Queensland Liberal Party. The Minister referred to my son being appointed my private secretary. That is so. He came in to the department in 1947 from the Railway Department, where he was admitted after having qualified by examination. I hope members of the Government will not get down to the gutter level by attacking persons who cannot defend themselves. I do not mind them attacking me but for God's sake don't attack my wife and family. Let the Minister see what other people got into the Public Service from the Railway Department. It has always been the practice for any Minister to appoint whom he desired as his private secretary.

Mr. Munro: Do you mind if I ask you one question?

Mr. POWER: No.

Mr. Munro: Is this supposed to be in support of a motion of no confidence in this Government or the previous Government?

Mr. POWER: If the hon. gentleman does not understand what I am saying he should have the decency to resign and make room for somebody who does understand. My son came into the Public Service in the same way as many other people, through the front door, and he had the ability to do the job. The Premier even thanked me on his thoughtfulness following an occasion when he rang the former Leader of the Opposition at his home at Caloundra and give him information he obtained with regard to an election which he could not give the Premier before he left Brisbane. I resent any attack on my son. I would not have raised the appointment of Mr. Hirst if he had come into the department as a private secretary. He came in as a liaison officer, and he came in through the back door. He was appointed to a position that other people within the Public Service were qualified to fill. However, they were not given the opportunity.

The Government have done nothing to arrest unemployment, which has increased by 127 per cent. since October of last year. When the motion of the Leader of the Opposition was being debated on Tuesday, members of the Cabinet said, "What suggestions have you to make?" Let the Government honour

the Deputy Premier's promise of full employment. Instead of staying here and trying to relieve unemployment, the Deputy Premier is going overseas. I hope his mission will be successful—I support anything that will help the development of Queensland—but a more competent man than the Deputy Premier should go. The Premier should go overseas and, as I say, the Deputy Premier should stay here and try to solve the unemployment problem, which is daily becoming more acute.

Mr. Sparkes interjected.

Mr. POWER: I have never been opposed to the A.L.P. I am opposed to the hon. member for Aubigny.

On the subject matter covered by paragraph 4 of the motion, in my opinion the Government acted very hastily in retiring Mr. Harold. He should have been asked if he would like to take some leave so that he could recuperate. I have had two heart attacks and on the advice of my doctor I stayed away from my parliamentary duties for three months. Thank God I am restored to health and can fight once again. Judges have been granted sick leave when they were ill, and I am in full agreement with that. Why was not Tom Harold given the opportunity of taking sick leave so that he could recuperate? He was "oozled" out, and very quickly. I make it quite clear that I have nothing personal against Mr. Bischof, but Mr. Donovan has had much longer service in the Police Force than has Mr. Bischof. He has carried out the duties of Deputy Police Commissioner and has done his job well. Why was he passed over? The Minister for Labour and Industry said that the Government wanted as Commissioner of Police a man who still had some years of service left to give the department. Mr. Donovan has seven years to go. The Minister's argument is destroyed by the appointment of Ted Anthony over Inspector Martin as the Commissioner's Inspector. Again I make it clear that I have nothing personal against Ted Anthony. He is a kindly gentleman and a good officer. However, he has only about 12 months to go and he was placed over Inspector Martin. The Government cannot have it both ways. I repeat that I have nothing against Mr. Bischof's appointment. My relations with him have always been friendly and he has always been decent. But if the reason for his appointment as Commissioner was that he was the younger man, why was it necessary to bring in a man on the verge of retirement and put him over Mr. Martin? I repeat it. Donovan was the senior officer with all the qualifications.

Mr. Ewan: If anyone asked you when you were a Minister why you appointed someone you would tell him to mind his own business.

Mr. POWER: The old hue and cry again! Always something highly irrelevant. We are entitled to know about this. If there is anything wrong with Donovan, put him on

the mat; bring him out and charge him. He would welcome it. If the Government have anything against Martin let them not act on unsigned letters that are sent in but rather bring him out and charge him too, in the interests of the Force.

I am concerned about the methods adopted in dealing with the reinstatement of two members of the Police Force who were dismissed. Let me again make my attitude clear. I accept all that was said by the Deputy Premier about their acquittal of various offences and I am not complaining about their reinstatement in the Force. I always like to see leniency extended where possible. I am concerned about the methods that have been adopted. The Deputy Premier need not think I will swallow all that he tried to put over. I am well informed, too. I know about the conversation between the Secretary of the Police Union and the Deputy Premier some time ago when Mr. Harold was Commissioner of Police and when he said, "Get in touch with the Commissioner and if he likes to put them back it is all right with me." My informant tells me that Mr. Harold said, "I will wait for the decision of the magistrate investigating the case," and on his finding he said, "I cannot put them back." They went to the Appeal Court, which was the right place to go.

But this is what I am concerned about: why was Casey taken off the case? The Minister for Justice made a very lame excuse when he said, "Oh, there had to be a change. The work must go round." Without being personal or mentioning any names in the Chamber, I want to know why a certain gentleman, who has been doing work for the Government, who was doing it at the time I was Attorney-General, and who is a prominent member of the Government party, did not have the work taken away from him on the last case and distributed around? If it applies in one case, if it applies to Casey, why does it not apply in other cases? I am not concerned about the individual.

Mr. Mann: That is why he is better off, he is a member of the Queensland Labour Party.

Mr. POWER: Why take him off and leave the other gentlemen on? There must be fairness about the whole business. If it applies in one case why does it not apply to members of their own party? Why say that it was a matter for the Solicitor-General? Let us be honest and fair. That is what concerns me and many other people. I am not unhappy about the reinstatement of members of the Police Force but I am concerned about the administration of justice, proper procedures and proper methods. How could Mr. Mansell make a decision that the punishment was too great without hearing the evidence?

Mr. Aikens: Was it not mutually agreed between the two parties that the punishment was excessive?

Mr. POWER: But then they upheld the appeal without any evidence being heard at all. It was improper for the Crown to have any discussion with the legal representatives for the appellants when the matter was before the Appeal Court. The matter should have been decided by the Appeal Court. The Commissioner of Police could have settled it. The Board could only make a recommendation. He could have said, "I do not agree with the recommendation of the Board that the men should be dismissed. I recommend that there be a reduction in the punishment." How could a magistrate decide whether they were fit to remain members of the Police Force without having the facts stated before him? As I say, I am not concerned about their being reinstated but the methods adopted. Simple Simon, the Deputy Premier, would like us to believe that he knew nothing about it. I am not going to fall for that because I am informed he knew a great deal about it. Then there is the suggestion that there must be no political interference. Representations are constantly made by members of the Government Party. Representations were made about transfers for members of the Police Force. I know there is nothing wrong in making representations but he said it should not be done. I am told that the Promotions Board will sit concerning an appointment to a place not very far away from here, but a certain hon. member who sits on the front bench of the Government Party has already informed the policeman concerned that he is going to get the position.

Mr. Burrows: Do you think it will take place now that you have mentioned it?

Mr. POWER: Of course it will take place. Surely any hon. member is entitled to see the Commissioner of Police about a matter if he thinks it necessary. If I want a safety zone in my electorate, surely I can interview an officer of the force in connection with it. I am not concerned about the reinstatement of the men, but I am concerned that there should have been a conference between the representatives of the Crown and the appellants. I want to know how the magistrate could properly uphold an appeal without having heard the evidence. It will be most difficult for some people to answer that question. I have nothing personal against the Commissioner of Police. The man who was passed over had equal qualifications; he was a senior officer and had never been charged with any offence. There is no incentive for men to do their best if they think that at any time they may be passed over for someone junior to them.

Mr. Aikens: You have nothing against Bischof but you do not think that he should have got the job.

Mr. POWER: I think Donovan should have got the job. He was the senior man. It was said that I appointed somebody outside the service to a position. I appointed

a police inspector to a position, but I am not going to go into that matter. The hon. member for Aubigny did not complain when I appointed another police officer to a position? The man who was appointed is doing a very good job. I was responsible for his appointment to a lesser position. He was not appointed to his present position before because he was not recommended. There was a suggestion that a man from the South would be appointed as Controller. The present appointment of Superintendent is a good one.

I say that the Government have lost the confidence of the people because they have shown a callous disregard for the unemployed of this State. By their action in withdrawing a number of commodities from price control the living conditions of the people have been worsened. The amendment of the Fair Rents Acts has worsened the conditions of the people. Owners are now able to put people out on 28 days' notice. The Government have brought about a sad state of affairs for the workers of this State.

Finally, I say that the action of the Government in having a conference between the Crown representatives and the representatives of the appellants, and the action of the magistrate in making a decision upholding the appeal without hearing the evidence is a condemnation of the Government and an indication they are unfit to remain the Government of this State.

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Justice) (4.39 p.m.): The further the debate proceeds the more I believe that my colleague the Minister for Labour and Industry was correct when he said that as the debate proceeded it became more and more irrelevant and was unworthy of the name of a debate on a motion of want of confidence in the Government. The motion of the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party contains five reasons and, as they are stated in the printed notice, it is necessary that they should be replied to, notwithstanding the fact that very little in the nature of evidence has been put forward in support of them.

I naturally intend to devote my time mainly to those reasons which affect the workings of the Department of Justice for which I am responsible. I shall not deal with anything that has been dealt with fully by the Minister for Labour and Industry, but there are one or two minor points raised by the hon. member for Baroona on matters a little outside my department. I think I should deal briefly with them before I proceed to my main submissions.

First of all, on a personal note, the hon. member for Baroona referred to his son who is a member of the staff of the department. I think it is rather a pity that his name should have been mentioned. I shall say merely that I have seen a little of the work of Ken Power, not much of it, but I am very much impressed by it. I think he is an efficient and conscientious officer, and quite a likeable young man.

Although it is not a matter affecting my department, I think I should deal with another point raised by the hon. member for Baroona, the recent selection and appointment of the Commissioner of Police. I think I should tell the House that there were well over 100 applications. A Cabinet committee reviewed very carefully a large number of those applications. We interviewed many of the applicants and I have no doubt that there were some good men among those who were not appointed. I say very definitely in regard to Mr. Bischof, the appointee, that the whole Cabinet take responsibility for his appointment. We considered all the applicants very carefully. I say further that as far as I know, we are unanimous in feeling that in Mr. Bischof we have an exceptionally capable officer, a man whom we can trust. The State is fortunate in having him as Commissioner of Police.

Some incidental points were raised by the hon. member for Baroona that affect to some extent my department as well as the Department of Labour and Industry. The first is in connection with my department. I do not remember the exact words of the hon. member for Baroona, but his suggestion was that we took a barrister off one particular case and substituted another barrister. That was not so. There was a series of cases. There was a case in the first place before the Appeal Board. If I remember correctly, the Crown in that case was represented by Mr. Finn, a departmental officer. Subsequently there were other cases before the Supreme Court.

Mr. Power: I think Mr. Finn was the Crown Prosecutor.

Mr. MUNRO: Yes, he represented the Crown in the first stage of this series of cases.

Mr. Power: He was a Crown employee.

Mr. MUNRO: Yes. There were cases before the Supreme Court, the Full Court, and at one time a case which was expected to go to the High Court. We briefed Mr. Dan Casey who, as the hon. member for Baroona knows, is a very eminent lawyer and a suitable lawyer for that particular case. Later on we had another case, not before the Supreme Court or the High Court but before the Appeal Board. In the natural course of events it would not have been taken by Mr. Casey but by Mr. Finn. I am not completely familiar with the reasons but I understand that Mr. Finn—

Mr. Power: Mr. Finn could not have taken the case because he was the Crown Prosecutor. He could not take the case to the Appeal Board.

Mr. MUNRO: I thank the hon. member for Baroona for that correction.

Mr. Walsh: Too bad the Attorney-General does not know.

Mr. MUNRO: I accept that position. I know the basic facts that Mr. Finn was not available to take the case and we got Mr. Seaman who was quite a suitable barrister for this particular class of case. What is wrong with that?

Mr. Power: As Crown Prosecutor he could not possibly take the case before the Appeal Board. All the other matters were dealt with by Mr. Casey.

Mr. MUNRO: That is not a bad interjection but I am not sure whether it is right. If this question had not been raised in such a serious way it would have been humorous—all this excitement being raised because one particular barrister is allotted to a particular case. I remember being telephoned by the Press at half past 10 one Saturday night at my home and I said that the selection of a barrister for a certain case was a matter for the Solicitor-General. Of course it is. Goodness me, I have 12 sub-departments to deal with. Does anybody think I am running around to decide which counsel will represent the Crown.

Mr. Walsh: You cannot say that the Solicitor-General did not discuss it with you?

Mr. MUNRO: He discussed it with me in general principles. I am prepared to tell the hon. member the basis of his discussions with me. The Solicitor-General very often comes in and out and he might mention that a case is coming on and say that perhaps we might engage so-and-so. I say, "If you think that he is the appropriate one for the case it would be a good idea." I would know the name of the counsel. In this particular case I should say that I indirectly influenced the Solicitor-General and I will tell the hon. member why. In having a discussion with him—mind you not in relation to this case but some months earlier—I outlined to him one or two general policies in relation to the engagement of counsel. I indicated what was the general policy of the Government but I did not suggest which particular men we should select—

Mr. Power: You cannot always get the man you want.

Mr. MUNRO: That is so, but I prefer that you do not interrupt the trend of my argument. I made three points clear to the Solicitor-General. When I saw the published figures it appeared to me that the previous Government were inclined to lean to two or three barristers rather than to spread the work of the Crown more evenly among members of the profession who were suitable for and appropriate to those types of cases. I said to the Solicitor-General, "In selecting counsel, I should like you to be guided by two principles: the first is that the interests of the Crown are paramount. You must get the man who is most suitable or most appropriate to the particular case. The second is—

Mr. Aikens: That he must not be a member of either Labour Party.

Mr. MUNRO: There was no qualification such as that. I said to the Solicitor-General, "The second principle is that if the case is not one of outstanding importance and if no vital issue is involved, as a matter of general policy it might be a good thing to spread the work as evenly as practicable among the available members of the profession."

I agree with the former Minister for Justice that that may not be achievable, because it frequently happens that a case that starts as a small one very often becomes a large one. However, apparently because one barrister was selected instead of another, members of the Queensland Labour Party are trying to make a mountain out of a molehill.

The other point made by the hon. member for Baroona was that the magistrate in question could not arrive at a proper decision because he had not heard the evidence. The hon. member said, "Why did not the parties confer?" A tribunal decides only the issues on which the parties are not in agreement. Speaking from memory, in this case the essential fact is that the parties did confer and arrived at agreement on certain matters. Therefore, it was not necessary for the Appeal Board to go through all the legal circumlocution of hearing a lot of evidence on something that was not in dispute.

Mr. Power: The only point to be decided was the punishment to be imposed. How could a magistrate say whether the punishment was excessive without knowing the facts of the case?

Mr. Gair interjected.

Mr. MUNRO: I have much more confidence in the Police Appeal Board and the ability of the magistrate who handled the case to adjudicate fairly on these matters than I have in either the hon. member for South Brisbane or the hon. member for Baroona. I do not say that in a derogatory way. I have a very high respect for the hon. members for South Brisbane and Baroona as members of Parliament and former Cabinet Ministers, but when they dabble in legal matters and, on half-baked information, try to substitute their judgment for that of a duly appointed tribunal, they are likely to get into deep water.

Mr. Walsh: The decision of the Appeal Board was plainly illegal.

Mr. MUNRO: I do not wish to pursue the matter any further. I have already taken up much more time than I should have liked to. There is much I should like to say about price control and rent control but, returning to the terms of the motion generally, I was very interested in the statement of the hon. member for South Brisbane this morning. I may not have his exact words but I have the substance of them. He said, "The Government must first put their house in order. The Government must take action to alleviate Queensland's economic disorders." I could not agree with

him more. We took office on 12 August after 25 years of Labour rule. I agree that the first task that faced us was that of putting the economic house in order. It still is facing us, because obviously it will take a long time to alleviate the economic disorders that have affected the State in recent years. That is our task and we are tackling it and I think we are doing a reasonably good job. Remember, we have had only about six months. Let us see what happens in the next three or four years. I think it was a grave error in tactics for the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party to move a motion of this kind at this time. The people who are to be congratulated on their political sagacity in the debate are the members of the official Opposition because they have very wisely decided, "This move will prove to be something of a squib. The best thing we can do is to keep right away from it and let the Queensland Labour Party carry it."

To view the matter in its proper perspective, let us realise that politicians are inclined to think in terms of weeks and months and sometimes in terms of the effect on the next election, but statesmen, if we have any, think more in terms of years and the effect on the next generation. I believe that, fortunately, we have a number of people in Queensland, not necessarily members of this Assembly or members of the Government, who take more the latter line and who will judge the efforts of the Government on their long-term effect and not on phoney charges about the prices of beans and peas that the hon. member for Barcoona might put forward after the Government have been just a few months in office.

If any Government should be condemned on its policy of price control and rent control it is the Gair Government, which went out of office on 12 August and which is now in such a futile way moving this motion. The members of that government, by reason of what they regarded as the political considerations of the time, fell into the temptation of persisting with policies that would give them a passing popularity. They did not face up to the problems; they were not prepared to grasp the nettle and so they have left to the new Government the task of coping with the economic problems that have come about. As at the date the Government took office we had in Queensland an artificial and unreal economy. Although the State is very rich in natural resources they had not been fully developed or used to their best advantage. Despite Queensland's rich natural resources it was falling behind in the race with States like South Australia and Western Australia where for a period of years there had been more effective Governments. So much for the Gair Government.

I do not want to be like the hon. member for Cook and work the parish pump in a remote part of the State. I want the House to see these issues in their proper perspective. Let us look very quickly at the record of the Government. On 12 August, 1957, we

took office as a new Government. Not one member of the Cabinet had any ministerial experience. Our political experience was much less than the political experience of the group of 11 Queensland Labour Party members who previously formed the Cabinet. At the same time I would suggest without undue diffidence that the 11 members of the present Cabinet have had more practical experience in primary production, business, finance, economics, and the establishment and building up of industry in Queensland than any 22 hon. members of the previous Government. We might not be as great political strategists as our predecessors, but at least we are capable of dealing with economic problems more efficiently for the benefit of the State.

We took over at a time when the finances of the State in general were at their lowest ebb for many years. The ex-Treasurer had been in recent years dipping into reserves so that by 12 August, 1957, it was necessary to scrape the bottom of the barrel.

The drought is common knowledge to people outside but it cannot be known to members of the Queensland Labour Party who supported this motion because they have not mentioned it. If they knew of it and did not mention it they have not been completely honest. The fact is that during the whole of the time we have been in office, and some little time before, there has been a severe and prolonged drought in very considerable areas of the southern and western parts of the State.

Mr. Walsh: We have had droughts before.

Mr. MUNRO: Not like this for the last 25 years.

Mr. Gair: It shows how much you know.

Mr. MUNRO: I know much more about droughts than the hon. member for South Brisbane. I studied statistics of droughts long before he became a member of this House. The present drought is far more severe than anything we have had for many years. Naturally it has had effects on the production of primary foodstuffs, and consequently on prices. What contribution have the supporters of the motion made? All they do is look at the columns of the Press and if they happen to see that the price of a commodity has gone up a little because of drought conditions they say, "Oh, this is something we can use to attack the Government." There is no realisation of a proper and constructive approach to the problem.

The hon. member for Barcoona dealt fairly extensively with the question of price control. The hon. member said—and I hope I am interpreting him correctly—that the control of my department was carried out to some extent by the Minister for Labour and Industry. That is completely false. The Minister for Labour and Industry and I are very friendly; our views are very much the same

on most matters; but I would like every hon. member of this House to understand that he runs his department and I run mine. Nevertheless I would say that in my administration of price control I am very greatly interested in the objective of the Department of Labour and Industry. The reason for that is this: Unlike some of the Ministers of the former Government—I am trying not to be personal—unlike some of my predecessors in office, I have not got an obsession about price control. I do not believe that price control is something that is good in itself. I believe—and this is the view of members of the Cabinet also—that the real thing is we must bring good government to this State; that we must bring good government that will increase the productivity of the State, and good government that will attract industries to this State and encourage the expansion of existing industries. It is for that reason that I frankly do not agree with the hon. member for Baroona in his views on price control. I think that price control can become a thing that is vexatious, and defeat its own ends. I am from time to time giving the fullest consideration to any changes in policy which can be made with advantage to bring about a better state of affairs in the development of our industries. The hon. member for Baroona criticised me because I did not give him a whole lot of detailed information this morning in relation to the names of people who have made requests to me in reference to commodities and as to what advice somebody might have given me. I would not give that detailed information because it would be wasting the time of the House. The thing that matters is that this problem should be given adequate and skilled consideration. We shall give the closest consideration to all those problems and when we arrive at a decision that a particular commodity should be decontrolled or brought back under control, we will decide the matter by Order in Council and that decision will be made public through the Press.

Mr. Power: In other words you are holding up everything and will not tell us anything.

Mr. MUNRO: I realise that the hon. member for Baroona has a degree of curiosity on the subject. It may be of some slight interest to him to know that these matters are now being examined in the Department of Justice in a manner completely different from the way in which he examined them when he held this portfolio. We are attempting to divide into two broad categories all goods and services or virtually all goods and services that require consideration. The first broad category covers items in respect of which there is healthy business competition, and items in reasonably good supply. The lifting of governmental price control of those items would not result in a substantial price increase. If we can find commodities that we can regard safely as coming within those

categories, I shall not make any apology for recommending to the Government that price control of them be lifted.

A further classification is of items with a substantial element of monopoly or organised trade fixation of prices, or minimum prices, which would prevent the free operation of healthy business competition in the selling of those items at competitive prices. As I see it at the moment, with regard to those items I cannot see any reason for the lifting of price control, because, if there is an organisation outside the Government fixing minimum prices, there is a responsibility on the Government to see that those prices are not excessive.

But in between those two main groups there are problems of varying degrees, each of which requires to be considered on its merits. Close consideration must be given to each problem, and, as I indicated in my reply this morning, I do not propose automatically to accept the advice of the Prices Advisory Board, which after all consists of only three public servants, although they are men in whom I have great confidence in their particular spheres. I am not going to accept their advice automatically.

Mr. Power: I do not think you should.

Mr. MUNRO: I am going to make my own inquiries from skilled and competent persons. I shall get the very best advice available from people who are able to realise the long-term and economic effects. After those inquiries I shall make a decision.

Mr. Power: You should be honest and abolish the board.

Mr. MUNRO: No. On the contrary, I think that the board can and will carry out a very useful function. The hon. member for Baroona is completely lacking in a correct view of the situation if he thinks that the Prices Advisory Board is going to take the place of the Cabinet, the Government and the Governor in Council as the determining authority on price control policy.

Mr. Power: I said you were wise not to accept its advice. You should have the courage to make your own decision.

Mr. MUNRO: Despite his remarks earlier today, I think the hon. member for Baroona in his inner mind realises that we are tackling this problem in a fairly thorough and comprehensive manner. The results, while they may not necessarily have the approval of the hon. member for Baroona, I feel sure will at least in the long-term be to the benefit of the State of Queensland and the people of the State.

On the matter of rent control, again the hon. member for Baroona adopted some superficial type of reasoning. He evidently picks up "The Courier-Mail" or "The Telegraph" and sees that the rent of a particular house or a flat has been increased by so much per cent. and straightaway he says that it is

an extraordinary rent and therefore it must be wrong and therefore it must be unjust to the tenant.

Mr. Power: Be fair. I gave you a specific case of a home costing £470 and under your legislation the value was increased by £178.

Mr. MUNRO: I think I dealt with this matter reasonably fully yesterday and I ask the hon. member for Baroona to study the answer I gave to the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition. I said—

“As a general comment on the rent increases recently awarded by the Fair Rents Court, it is perfectly clear that as in terms of the amended Landlord and Tenant Acts they are based on capital values as at 1 July, 1948, they must be considerably less than a fair economic rental.”

That is perfectly clear because as everybody knows since 1 July, 1948, the purchasing power of the £1 has dropped to approximately half.

Mr. Walsh: Did you say 1938?

Mr. MUNRO: No, 1 July, 1948, the new basic date. If we had wanted to produce a completely economic rent, one completely fair to landlords we would have asked them to base their claims on the present market value. A fair economic rental would be a rental based on the present market value, but instead we have been fair and reasonable in our approach in bringing forward the date from the completely archaic date of 10 February, 1942, to 1 July, 1948. We have not been able to give a complete measure of justice to landlords but we have given some measure of justice where the injustice has been the greatest, and that measure of justice has been brought about in such a way that it does not create any great injustice to any tenant. I should say that in every case dealt with by the court the rent will be much less than a fair economic rent as determinable by the law of supply and demand.

Mr. Walsh: Whilst you might have given justice to some landlords you have given a lot of injustice to a lot of tenants.

Mr. MUNRO: By the discriminatory legislation of the previous Government some few tenants—a very small percentage of the people—have been tied to an artificial basis which was completely unreal and not in relation to what is a fair economic rent. We are merely doing the obvious thing. Having a crazy, unhealthy, uneconomic system bequeathed to us by the former Government we have devoted ourselves to the task of gradually converting it to a more economic and ultimately fair system.

Mr. Walsh: It is a strange thing that the United Kingdom Government should have continued to use a similar formula.

Mr. MUNRO: I should not like to make a direct comparison, but I might say—

Mr. Power: What about Victoria?

Mr. MUNRO: Victoria has done substantially the same thing as we have done.

Mr. Power: Their date was 1940; ours was 1942.

Mr. MUNRO: At least they have corrected it. We have acted in conformity with the other States. The previous Government got into a rut and would not face up to the problem. That is why Queensland got so far behind the other States.

Apart altogether from the question of justice—and there is no doubt that the new provisions are much more just to both landlord and tenant than were the previous ones—the impelling reason for our making the change was that the economic results of the previous Government's policy were clear and undisputable. It had completely dried up the renewal of the supply of privately-owned rental houses and was a very big factor in bringing about the regrettable housing shortage, which has created such tremendous hardship on Queensland's citizens. Further, it brought about injustices much more serious than any slight injustice that may follow an adjustment of rents.

When speaking on this subject two or three months ago, I said that in November last a conservative estimate of the number of new dwellings needed in Queensland was 8,000 a year. I went on to say that up to 1954-55 requirements were being met, but in the last two years construction had been lower than the requirements, and that in effect the housing shortage had increased in the two-year period by about 1,000. When the present Government assumed office we were faced with the problem that the housing shortage was getting worse instead of better. It is too early yet to judge, but from the small amount of evidence available it would appear that the amendments to the Landlord and Tenant Act are encouraging people who own houses to make them available for letting. In addition, they have also had at least a slight effect in encouraging people to build houses and flats for rental.

Mr. Walsh: Having made that statement, can you produce figures to sustain it?

Mr. MUNRO: Not at this stage. However, if the hon. member for Bundaberg refers to the same source of information as does the hon. member for Baroona, he will find that in the advertising columns of “The Courier-Mail” over the past two months many more houses and flats have been advertised for rental than in any similar period for many years.

Finally, let us view this debate in its proper perspective. Apart from party politics, is there any real reason why anybody should move a vote of no confidence in the Government? Can anything be achieved by it? As a

motion of want of confidence, this one has proved to be not a Sputnik, but a damp squib with no sound foundation. It has served one very useful purpose. It gave my colleague the Minister for Labour and Industry the opportunity of making a factual explanation of recent happenings about which there has been a great deal of misconception. From that point of view I am grateful to the hon. member for South Brisbane for moving the motion. Furthermore, as my dear old friend the hon. member for Barooka seems to be unhappy about some aspects of price control, I am very glad to have had this opportunity of putting him on the right track. However, the further the debate continues the damper it will get. We should be doing a greater service to the State if we worked together to arrive at solutions to some very real problems. I remind hon. members that during the past 12 months a considerable part of the State has suffered a prolonged and severe drought and it has not yet broken in the south-west. Coupled with that there has been a heavy falling off in the overseas prices of some metals, the export of which is of very great importance to Australia and the production of which is of very great importance to Queensland's economy. In addition, recent reports indicate that there is some cause for disquiet over the possible course of wool prices in the near future.

Mr. A. Jones: You have not felt the effect of that yet.

Mr. MUNRO: No, but it is some cause for concern, and I do not say it in a political sense. Instead of this futile political disputation we should get on with the real business of Parliament and try together to arrive at some policy to combat these very real problems.

Mr. H. R. GARDNER (Rockhampton) (5.29 p.m.): We have heard many statements against what is set out in the motion. Ministers of the Crown have sought to get away from the scientific approach to the evil of unemployment. No doubt some of them think it is unworthy of consideration in their political careers. However, a great deal of good will come from the motion because it will let the people of Queensland know that there are in the Parliament some who view with serious alarm the unemployment drift in the State. Surely nobody would say that the members of the Queensland Labour Party are unmindful of the drought conditions in Queensland or of the fall in wool and metal prices which have been mentioned so often this week. We are all aware of these facts. The salient point is what are we going to do to deal with the problem of unemployment. No-one sitting here can hide his head in a bush and say that in the past these conditions did not exist in Queensland and in Australia. In the post-war period we could find jobs for all. If during war and the period following we are able to provide full-time employment there is no reason why we should not be able to overcome the difficulties

in times of peace. Give the family unit security, good housing conditions and the opportunity to raise a family and the average Australian is well satisfied. Surely, as the elected representatives of the people, we are not going to say that the problem cannot be tackled, that we are not prepared to stand up to responsibilities and criticisms and to act in the best interests of the people of the State. What satisfaction do the 20,000 unemployed get from hearing Ministers of the Crown apologising for the big army of unemployed? What satisfaction does Bill Brown or John Smith on social service get from the debate to know that nothing is being done or that we are not attempting to tackle the problem on the broadest basis? It is true that certain activity has occurred in the Federal sphere in the last week. The Loan Council has made grants to Queensland and other States to help relieve unemployment. Certain machinery has been set in motion to relieve unemployment in Queensland by giving local government and semi-government organisations money to keep them going. But it will not create full-time employment and there will still be a big army of unemployed in the queue on social service day. With the present rain there is a brighter prospect but we will not solve the problem by sitting down and saying that unemployment does not exist. We must not turn a blind eye to the high peak of unemployment throughout Australia. In the post-war period in the days of the Chifley Government for the first time in Australia we had full employment. To see an army of unemployed in times of peace after eight years of office by the Menzies-Fadden Government makes people with Labour principles take notice of what is happening. It is no use people being blind to facts.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. GARDNER: It is very easy for interjectors to make statements that are irrelevant. Is there any hon. member in the Chamber who has been satisfied with what the Menzies-Fadden Government have done for Queensland over a period of years? The Labour administration in this State had to rely on the resources built up by previous Labour Governments in order to maintain full employment. The Treasurer has informed hon. members that those funds have gone down. Year in and year out men like Ted Walsh, Vince Gair, Ned Hanlon and others endeavoured to get justice from the Federal Government, but they never succeeded in getting the amount to which this State was entitled. Last week, for the first time in the history of this State, £1,000,000 was allocated to it and £663,000 was allowed for borrowing by local authorities. I am not unmindful of what the Government have done to alleviate the position of local governments, but their efforts so far will not absorb the 20,000 unemployed. During the time that Labour Governments were in control in this State they had to depend on the amount

allotted to the State by the Federal authorities. They do not realise the magnitude of the unemployment problem throughout Australia. The release of £15,000,000 is an indication of a realisation that something has to be done. I do not want to see a repetition of the conditions that existed when I was unemployed and living on a starvation diet. We are on the verge of a recession. Although our position may be governed to some extent by international affairs, no Government worth their salt will permit a repetition of the conditions that operated in 1929-1932. In 1939, credit was created to fight the war. There was no shortage of money to bring the war to a successful conclusion. I maintain that in times of peace we are entitled to ask for credit. We have a responsibility to the people to see that provision is made for them. The Australians are good workers and no man is satisfied when drawing the dole, which is not sufficient to enable his family to enjoy a reasonable standard of living. What are the Government going to do to alleviate the unemployment position? The Government have not been in office very long, but by this motion we are trying to impress on them their great and grave responsibilities. Those responsibilities must be borne by the Premier, the members of the Cabinet and every member of the Government Party. They must make representations to those who control the credit of this country, so that more money will be available for essential work.

Those of us who hold these views are at times said to be biased politically, but we have a precedent, the great task of rehabilitating the men and women of our Forces in post-war years, when full employment was created.

In this State there is an army of 20,000 unemployed. It is abhorrent to think that true Australians have to care for themselves and their kith and kin on the Social Service payment of £6 10s. a week. These men are not satisfied. They want to be gainfully employed. If they were given work at award wages on projects undertaken by the local authority and the Government, Queensland would be much more prosperous.

To this end projects should be sponsored not only by the State Government but by the Federal Government to absorb unemployed seasonal workers. In the area I represent, an area of seasonal industry, there is a record number of 1,300 unemployed men who have no prospect of getting work. The local authority and Railway Department cannot provide work for all of them. The Government must take action. It is useless to criticise the action of some other Government. This Government must be strong enough to find a solution. They must create industries and get the best advice and services in order to overcome the problem.

The small storekeeper and butcher extend credit to unemployed workers, but with the restrictive policy of banks these businessmen in turn find themselves in a financial jam.

I am not ashamed to support the motion. It may be premature and unpalatable to the Government, but I think we must accept responsibility for our views and state them openly, even if they are not supported by or in agreement with the opinions of other people. The views that have been expressed are worthy of consideration rather than criticism, as suggested by the Minister for Justice.

The security of the family unit is affected by unemployment. A man cannot keep his family in food and give them shelter and the opportunities they deserve if he is out of employment or receiving only half pay. With the present inflationary spiral and the ever-rising price of goods we will come to the stage when the basic wage will soar higher and higher. The Landlord and Tenant Act has placed an impost on the man on the basic wage for rent is a big item in the "C" series index. When will the inflationary spiral halt? I spoke against the amendment to the Act and I said that a man in a home paying rent is faced with an impossible set of conditions because he cannot get off the labour market and improve himself. It is no use members of the Government saying that the Queensland Labour Party has put forward a motion of no value. I spoke in 1956 in the same strain as I am speaking now. In Australia we have a responsibility to our people. We have a great country and there is no reason why we cannot in times of peace keep every man and woman able to work in work. I do not think anyone would disagree with that. In view of all the things that have cropped up, the drought, rising prices, adjustments have to be made on all sides, and we cannot justify ourselves standing idly by and not accepting our responsibilities. It has been claimed by real estate agents and others that the recent amendment to the Landlord and Tenant Act would mean a 27 per cent. increase in the rent of the ordinary worker's home. That is a staggering increase. Landlords have to be treated somewhat reasonably, I realise, but a 27 per cent. increase in the rent of a worker's home, a man with a wife and four or five children, means a big slice out of the basic wage. I do not think it can be claimed that our observations on these matters are as stupid as some hon. members would lead us to believe.

I have elaborated on the problem of unemployment and the laxity displayed by those in control in the Federal sphere. The problem is a difficult one. Certain promises were made by the Government during the election campaign that everything would be done to maintain full employment. The Budget presented in the early life of this Government showed the actual financial position of the State. In 1956 unemployment was apparent to every student of economics. It was apparent to the Labour Government. The position did not improve in 1957 despite what was said by Ministers who criticised the former Labour Government for having dismissed men on forestry work and employed

by the Queensland Housing Commission. The problem then was actually the same as confronted the Government when they took office and it was the great thing that caused the split in the Labour Movement of the State. People do not understand the actual position.

Dr. Noble: It was only an excuse.

Mr. GARDNER: There was no excuse. The Government cannot get out of the morass any more than a Labour Government could because the Menzies-Fadden Government control the credit of this country. They put greater difficulties in the way of a Labour Government than in the way of this Government. They have assisted this Government and other Governments to a great extent. They realised that unemployment was in this country and they were being forced by State Governments to stem the tide. I can look back over the years when there was full employment in the Commonwealth and I repeat that it is regrettable that in times of peace unemployment stares us in the face and we do not know the way to move. We are in the same position as we were pre-war. However, I did not want to go back to those days. I hope and trust that the Government will pursue the policy they enunciated. We were forced to move this motion because they have not lived up to their rash promises. Every problem that confronts the Government today was known to them when they were in opposition, when they were very critical of Labour's administration. Unemployment must be attacked on a broad basis, and we should be men enough to deal with it as we see it. After all, we want Australia to remain a strong, healthy nation with the people enjoying full employment.

Another problem that is of vital concern to this and other governments is the growth of the hire-purchase system. I dealt with this matter in 1956 and 1957, and it represents a problem that will have to be grappled with. The opportunity of buying articles on hire purchase is held out as a bait to people, many of whom are unemployed, and frequently they are offered the additional bait of not having to pay a deposit. The hire-purchase system has grown to such an extent that the private banks are investing all their spare money in it. State governments must bring before the notice of the Federal Government the great dangers that can flow from it, as it is primarily the Federal Government's responsibility to curb it. The American system of living on time-payment should not be permitted to grow here, particularly when we have 20,000 unemployed. Many people who enter into hire-purchase agreements have not a full understanding of the obligation that they are undertaking.

The Government should undertake major works programmes to increase employment. I understand that legislation dealing with irrigation works on private properties is to be introduced next week to help primary producers. If we are to do something for the

primary producer, we must also plan large schemes that will create employment for the worker.

It is the responsibility of the Minister for Labour and Industry to foster secondary industries. He is shortly to go to the other side of the world in an effort to encourage the investment of capital and the establishment of secondary industries in Queensland. I stress the necessity for relieving unemployment in Central Queensland. With a population of 40,000, it has 1,300 unemployed. Unemployment in that area would be greatly relieved if the Government instructed the Rockhampton Harbour Board to start building a road to Port Alma.

The Commissioner of Main Roads could say to the people of Rockhampton and Central Western Queensland, "We will build a major road from Rockhampton to Longreach." Those projects would be an asset to the community. They would relieve unemployment and help a district that suffers more from drought than any other part of the State. Members of the Q.L.P. have been charged today with having forgotten what drought conditions are, but the seasonal worker with a wife and three or four children understands drought just as much as does the farmer and he deserves just as much consideration. I was happy to note the Government's announcement in the last 10 days or so that the Deputy Premier will attempt to convince overseas interests of the advantages of establishing a fertiliser works to use the pyrites at Mt. Morgan. That will be a big project but it can be done. It will have an assured market in the cane-fields of the State and will be a great asset to Queensland.

We have been accused of moving a pious motion in order to gain political capital but we know from experience the seriousness of unemployment and we are anxious to keep every worker in a job. It can be done by enthusiastic representations from the State Government to the national Government. If the Chifley Labour Government were able to carry out Australia's greatest development work in the rehabilitation of men and women after the war it can certainly be done in peace-time.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (7.43 p.m.): I doubt that I will take up the full time allowed under Standing Orders but I propose to say what I have to say, much of which, of course, will be right over the heads of several members of the Government and of most members of the Opposition.

Anyone who knows anything at all about the rises in prices in the last six months or so must be struck with the ease, or the apparent ease, with which everyone in business, be he manufacturer, wholesaler or retailer, can increase the prices of his goods from the manufacturer to the wholesaler, from the wholesaler to the retailer, and from the retailer to the public, with absolute impunity. It is all very well for the Government to say

that the "C" Series Index has increased only by such-and-such a percentage or such-and-such a points quota or whatever basis they use to assess it. If you want to find out by just how much prices have increased, ask your good wife; that is, if she does the shopping. I know that many members of the Government employ their butlers and their footmen, their various servants, to do their shopping, but let the other hon. members ask their good wives if it is not a fact that almost every commodity, if not every commodity, has risen steeply in price in the last six months. It cannot be denied. One has only to go to the chain stores, which are supposed to be places where one can buy cheap commodities, to see just how grievously prices have risen. I do not accept a thing without trying to find out a reason for it. In the last three or four months in North Queensland I have been asking many people traders, wholesalers, retailers, manufacturers, and those who sell services to the public, amenities to the public and so on—why prices have been jacked up so alarmingly in the past four or five months. I would assume that what is true for North Queensland is true for the rest of the State. Many of them who are honest enough to say it tell me, "Now that our own Government, the Country-Liberal Party Government, are in power in the State we can jack up the prices as much as we like. We know that we are going to get away with it." The Government will commit political suicide if they do not pull their own political supporters into line, the people who are saying "Now that our mob is in control we can charge what we like and we know for a surety that we are going to get away with it."

Mr. Morris: How about giving us the names?

Mr. AIKENS: There is no need for me to give any names. Let the Minister get any business directory for any town in Queensland, close his eyes and put his finger on any name and he can bet his life that that fellow does it.

Dr. Noble: You were complaining about Alderman Hopkins getting a refrigerator £50 cheaper.

Mr. AIKENS: That is a putrid racket. If the hon. gentleman agrees with that I am astounded because I always thought he had a scintilla of fairness and public decency. If he thinks that a member of the regional electricity board should say, "The price to the public for this refrigerator is £230 but I am going to give a concession to myself as a member of the regional electricity board and sell it to myself for £180" then he is not the man I thought he was. Alderman Hopkins, of course, is a staunch supporter of the Country-Liberal Party. However, I am not going to be sidetracked with Alderman Hopkins. I will deal with him very effectively from the public platform in Townsville during the coming municipal election campaign.

Let me quote from the Bible of the Country-Liberal Party and refer to what appeared in "The Courier-Mail" on Monday and Tuesday of this week. Coming down on the Sunlander on Monday, I bought a "Courier-Mail" at Rockhampton and among other things I read that the price of veal and lamb had skyrocketed. Then I read that the butchers are also to seek price rises for beef, mutton and pork owing to the serious shortage of these commodities due to the drought. That appeared in "The Courier-Mail" on Monday.

Mr. Muller: Is it not true?

Mr. AIKENS: It is not true and if the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation will keep quiet for a split second I will tell him what appeared in "The Courier-Mail" on Tuesday and the day following—

"There is a plentiful supply of beef, mutton and pork available to the public."

On Monday there was such a shortage of supply of these three essential commodities that the butchers were approaching the Government for an increase in the price of beef, mutton and pork. But on Tuesday we were told in the same newspaper that there was a plentiful supply of beef, mutton and pork.

If hon. members want an example of the state of mind of the average trader—the Minister for Labour and Industry quite rightly asked me to name one—I will name the Mayor of Townsville, Alderman Angus Smith. Alderman Angus Smith is a bookseller, as far as I can gather the only bookseller in Townsville who sells school textbooks and the various other schoolbooks that the children's parents have to buy. In the past parents would go into Angus Smith's shop and buy £1, £2, £3 or £4 worth of schoolbooks which would be wrapped up in a nice brownpaper parcel which the customer would take away. Being economic people they would use the brown paper to put covers on some of the school books. I would not mind betting that some Ministers and many hon. members of the Government have done the same thing. (Government interjections.) I know this is going to hurt. I know that hon. members are going to bleed through every pore when I tell them. This year when the parents of scholars went into Angus Smith's book shop—and he is a staunch supporter of the Government—and bought £1, £2, £3 and £4 worth of books—one chap bought £9 worth for his student son—the books were wrapped up in old newspapers. When the purchaser asked if he could get a bit of brown paper to use for covers for the school books Mr. Smith said, "Yes you can; here it is; 6d. a sheet." I have in my hand a sample of the sheet of brown paper that is now sold at 6d. a sheet by the Mayor of Townsville for wrapping the school books. What do you think of that, Mr. Minister? Here is the sheet that is sold for 6d. I doubt if there is a newspaper shop or a school book shop or a stationer's shop in the rest of Australia where you do not get

books wrapped up entirely in brown paper. If you want brown paper from the Mayor of Townsville you pay him 6d. for this little sheet of brown paper. I lay it on the table of the House as an official document.

(Whereupon the hon. member laid the paper on the table of the House.)

I do not know whether hon. members of the Government or Opposition pay much notice to their household accounts. I must admit that I do not. My wife effectively runs the domestic side of our home and pays the accounts which, I understand, all wives of hon. members of Parliament do not do. The other day she said to me, "I wonder how it is that our gas bill is so high?" It was the first time I had examined a gas bill for a long time.

Mr. Burrows interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: If we had a tube in the mouth of the hon. member for Port Curtis we would have free gas. The price of gas in Townsville is now 37s. 10d. per 1,000 cubic feet. I understand that the person who fixes the price is the Gas Referee. If he can justify that price to me I assure him that I can be convinced of anything. He knows—if he does not he is blind, deaf, and dumb—that the Townsville Gas Company is owned by Australian Gaslight which used to be Colonial Gas. It also owns the Greta coal-fields and mines and the great majority of shares in the Adelaide Steamship Co. that brings all the Greta coal to North Queensland. Having brought the coal from their own mine to North Queensland in their own ships they say to the gas referee that it costs them so much a ton to land coal in Townsville and they want him to assess the price of gas on the landed cost in Townsville. He must know—because I have said this on more than one occasion—that the Townsville Gas Company is solely a subsidiary company. 9,995 shares are owned by the old Colonial Gas Company in Melbourne and five shares are held by five people in Townsville. They have the coal mines and the ships and they say, "That is our landed cost. You fix the price." If the Government are interested in cutting down costs they might have a look at a lot of these interlocking companies and combines. There you will find the solution of many of the rising price problems.

Mr. Burrows: They know more about those tricks than you do.

Mr. AIKENS: Perhaps they do, but, if they do not, it is my duty to tell them.

We know, of course, that, since the amendment of the Landlord and Tenant Acts carried in this Parliament a few months ago, there has been a rush of mainly slum landlords to the court, seeking excessive rentals for their slum properties, and among them have been parliamentary members of the Australian Labour Party. They can put that in their

pipe and smoke it. They have been laughing at my having a "go" at the Government, and now they can work that one out for themselves.

The hon. member for Baroona, the ex-Attorney-General, spoke about the appointment of Mr. Bischof to the exalted position of Commissioner of Police. I do not know Mr. Bischof from a crow. I did not meet him until today. I certainly never met him officially in my colourful days, or at least I do not think I did, although I do not remember some of those who met me officially. They certainly were not there when I woke up and had only the concrete to lie on.

From what I can gather, the choice of Mr. Bischof has been and is a particularly good one, a particularly wise one. Whether he lives up to the opinion I have of him now remains to be proved. If he does not, I shall have quite a number of things to say about him not only here where a lot of these so-called courageous people blow off steam, but elsewhere. These courageous people use this place chiefly as a dingo's den, but I would have a lot to say about him where I make most of my statements, from the public platform, where all my statements are actionable, if anyone has the guts to take an action against me.

The hon. member for Baroona spoke of the appointment of the Commissioner and that of Inspector Anthony over the head of Inspector Martin. I know Inspector Martin and hold him in very high regard. I do not think I have ever met Inspector Anthony. If I have, I do not remember meeting him.

The hon. member for Baroona said, "Let us bring everything out in the open. If there is anything known against Donovan or Martin, let us hear it." Fancy that coming from an ex-member of the Queensland Central Executive of the Australian Labour Party which makes all its decisions on slander and scandal, backyard gossip and bar-room talk. Has anyone ever heard of the Queensland Central Executive having the guts to come out in the open and say why it endorsed this particular man and why it refused endorsement to another man?

I was refused endorsement by the Queensland Central Executive back in 1939, just after it had endorsed me for the municipal election in Townsville, just after I had topped the poll, and just after I had become Deputy Mayor, because it knew that I was a certainty to beat their pea in the plebiscite for the vacant seat of Townsville. I was refused endorsement, and from that day to this not one of the executive has had the guts to tell me why I was refused endorsement. When I hear a remark like that, "Let us bring out everything into the open; let us lay our cards on the table; we have nothing to fear", I am reminded of the old ham actors in melodramas. Coming from an ex-member of the Queensland Central Executive, I should say that would be the quintessence of hypocrisy.

We had a few remarks about police promotion also from the ex-Attorney-General suggesting, of course, that there had been ministerial or governmental interference in the appointment of certain police. Being, I think, an ordinary man of the world, I believe that that sort of thing has gone on for quite a long time. If there is any hon. member in the House who believes it more than I do, I should like to know him. I believe in the policy of all spoils to the victor. Do not make any mistake about that. Those statements will no doubt be backed up by the hon. member for Bundaberg, if he is going to speak. I think he is playing a sort of cat-and-mouse game, "Whose move is it? Mine or Peter Connolly's?" It looks as if they are both going to miss out. They are both stalling, waiting for the other to speak. I am sure both speeches will be illuminating and interesting. When the hon. member for Bundaberg tips the tin he does not always stop; he usually tips the horse, the cart, the harness and all. I like to listen to that sort of thing because it is something I do not indulge in myself.

When it was said by Q.L.P. speakers that there was ministerial interference with promotions and transfers of police I simply wrote down on my pad, "The pot calling the kettle black." I can remember when the Promotions and Transfers Board of the Police Department submitted a whole list of recommendations to the Cabinet of which the hon. member for Bundaberg was a member. Cabinet did not only interfere with them but scrubbed the lot and made their own appointments. Cabinet scrubbed the lot and made a batch of fresh appointments, and the hon. member for Bundaberg if his memory is as retentive as it was, could tell us all about that.

Mr. Walsh: I think you are mistaken. Those things never go to Cabinet.

Mr. AIKENS: Well then this one must have got into Cabinet through the back door and the hon. member was the destroying angel.

Mr. Walsh: It depends on which Cabinet you are talking about.

Mr. AIKENS: The Cabinet of which the hon. member was a member. I almost said "honourable member."

As a North Queenslander I speak now of the Jorgensen case. I have been to Mt. Isa. My mother lived there excepting for the latter portion of her life when I took her to Townsville where she passed away. I have discussed the Jorgensen case with quite a lot of people on the spot and I really honestly and sincerely believe that Jorgensen received in the watchhouse at Mt. Isa injuries from which he subsequently died. It is quite possible that I may be wrong in my opinion and it may be that I formed that opinion on unsafe grounds. I gave the matter a lot of thought and I have had many conversations with people about it and I have

expressed my considered opinion. I was quite happy to hear the Minister for Labour and Industry assure the House and the people of Queensland that the Jorgensen case has not been quietly and secretly buried.

Mr. Morris: You can be very sure of that.

Mr. AIKENS: I am glad to have that reassurance, because it would be very difficult to convince anybody that Jorgensen inflicted upon himself the injuries from which he died.

Mr. Walsh: It will go with the files on the Betty Shanks case.

Mr. AIKENS: I hope it does not and I am prepared to accept the Minister's assurance that it will not. I will be in this Parliament for a long time and I will raise the matter. I will not be satisfied until the public have received some indication as to how Jorgensen received the injuries from which he subsequently died. The mere fact that he died a fortnight or three weeks' later is a red herring drawn across the trail by certain people. The Minister for Health and Home Affairs who has a sketchy knowledge of anatomy, medicine and other things associated with the medical profession, with his limited knowledge will tell you that it is quite possible for Jorgensen to die some time later from a ruptured spleen or a ruptured internal organ caused by a punch or a kick. The fact that he did not die immediately does not prove to me or the Minister that he did not get the injury at that time.

Let me make a few general observations with regard to the Police Force and the job of the policeman. Far be it from me to break a lance for them. They have proved to me more than once that they are well able to look after themselves. I have no brief for them, nevertheless they have a job to do. At times it is not a very envious job.

Mr. Walsh: You will admit that they have been very kind to you.

Mr. AIKENS: If the hon. member for Bundaberg so desires, I shall discuss that with him later.

A policeman is bound by his oath of office to carry out the law, but whether he has to carry out the letter of the law or the spirit of the law is something that has never been completely settled. If every policeman in Queensland carried out the letter of every law in its entirety this would be a State of the walking dead, because no-one would be game to do anything. Hardly a day passes that the average citizen does not break the law in some way or another—half a dozen or may be a score of times.

In carrying out the law, a policeman has to take a common-sense, practical view of it. I shall refer to an article that appeared in "The Sunday Mail" some time ago. I had intended to deal fully with it, but I am

sure that hon. members of the Cabinet, and particularly the Minister for Labour and Industry, have seen it. It was a scurrilous article that depicted Townsville as the Las Vegas of Queensland, a city of sin, a city in which no decent woman would be game to walk down the street unescorted. That was not the actual wording of the article, but any stranger from another State or another country who read it would hesitate a long while before visiting Townsville, either as a tourist or as the friend of anyone who might invite him there.

I have a great love for Townsville; its people have been very good to me. They have forgiven and forgotten many things that I have done. I have never appealed in vain to them for their support at the polls. I may have missed out at times on municipal elections due to the system of voting but my numbers are increasing there. Because of that, I cannot sit idly by and see Townsville and its people slandered as they were in the article that I have mentioned. It went on to say that there were many open dice games in Townsville. That was a plain, unvarnished lie. It was so silly that one of the dice games was referred to as carboo. I realise that no hon. member would like to admit publicly that he knows anything about dice games—

Mr. Mann: I do.

Mr. AIKENS: The hon. member for Brisbane is as honest as I am. I have played every game that has been invented, and have invariably lost. I have not played any of them for some years now, because I have reached the stage where I do not smoke, drink, gamble, break the seventh commandment, or visit the racecourse. I am sure the hon. member for Brisbane will agree that carboo is played not with dice, but with cards. It is a cross between pontoon and baccarat. "The Sunday Mail" article said it was a high-powered dice game and that it was being played in a cubicle behind an S.P. shop. Carboo tried to get a kick-off some time ago in a little room about 100 feet away from a registered bookmaker's office, but the Townsville police stamped down on it with a very heavy foot. If I were a police officer in charge of any district I would apply common sense in the policing of after-hours drinking and S.P. betting, but I would stamp down with a heavy foot on any dice game or any "peter" or gambling game. That is where the crooks, the thugs, and the shake-down men congregate, and that is where the damage is done.

"The Sunday Mail" article lyingly alleged that S.P. betting shops were wide open in Townsville. After reading this fantastic article, one would expect to see prostitutes sitting on the footpaths in Flinders Street openly soliciting business. To be quite candid, if the reporter who wrote this article an imagination so vivid that he could see all these things he claimed he saw, I do not know why he could not see

the gay girls sitting on the footpaths of Flinders Street soliciting custom from the passerby or perhaps the homos patting the posteriors of men and extolling their wares, because that would have been just as lying and just as stupid as the story about the open S.P. shops and the night clubs and the after-hours drinking and all the other stupid bosh that appeared in the article. I was going to deal with the reporter responsible for the article but I know his mother and father and I respect them; they are respectable and respected citizens of Townsville and I will spare them the indignity of reading his name in the pages of "Hansard."

It is true, as the Minister for Justice said, that any law that cannot be enforced is a bad law, and we must admit that the laws against S.P. betting cannot be enforced strictly to the letter. I think the hon. member for Bundaberg will agree with me on that. It is quite true that you can close the betting-shops; it is quite true that you can stop the little punter from having his five bob each way or his two shillings each way, or half a nicker each way on a horse, but you cannot stop the big fellow from getting on. You cannot stop the man who can get to a phone and who knows where he can get in touch with a bookmaker. You cannot stop the big punter who can meet a bookmaker in the street and place his bet.

I would say that the most venomous and virulent opponent of the off-the-course betting in Townsville would be Dr. Halberstater, the chairman of the Townsville Turf Club, yet Dr. Halberstater won't tell you that he picked up a £1,000 double the other day that he made with an off-the-course bookmaker. Cluden races, I think, 28 Saturdays a year. Where does Dr. Halberstater place his bets on southern events on the other 24 Saturdays? Does he go without a bet on those Saturdays?

Mr. Mann: It is ridiculous to call a double an S.P. bet.

Mr. AIKENS: That is purely and simply a technical quibble. He had the bet with an off-the-course bookmaker. It just shows how ridiculous it is to think that you can suppress S.P. betting just by closing the shops. I want to point some matters out to the hon. members of the Government in case they do not know them. I repeat that I do not bet or gamble. I never did bet on horses. I never fell for the racing game, though I fell for everything else. However, I know a great deal about it. Because I do not bet, people on both sides trust me. S.P. betting is not a party political issue because there are just as many supporters of the Country-Liberal Party who like a bet off the course as there are supporters of the Australian Labour Party, the Queensland Labour Party and the North Queensland Labour Party, who like one.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Will the hon. member inform the House under which heading of the motion the subject with which he is dealing falls?

Mr. AIKENS: Yes, the appointment of Inspector Bischof as Commissioner of Police because we are dealing with a matter that comes right within the ambit of the Commissioner's duties. My word, I am right on the beam for once. It is not very often that I am, but I am right on the beam this time and coming right in onto the tarmac in between the green lights. Just to show how the big fellows operate—I was standing talking to a bookmaker in the street in Townsville only a couple of weeks ago when along came a very prominent opponent of off-the-course betting, also a member of the Townsville Turf Club Committee. He said to the bookmaker, "What price so-and-so?" The bookmaker said, "Fives." He said, "Could I have a spot each way on it?" The bookmaker said, "You're on." The man walked away. The whole conversation did not take eight seconds, yet that prominent opponent of S.P. betting in Townsville picked up £625—£500 to £100 a win and £125 to £100 a place, when the horse won. Anyone who knows anything about racing will tell you that that goes on, so when you tell the Commissioner of Police that he has to stamp out S.P. betting he is entitled to say to you, "O.K., I can close the shops; I can even stop the men from going into the shops and using their phones; I can stop the little fellow, but you tell me how to stop the big fellow?" Can anyone here tell me how the big fellow can be stopped? I am not criticising Dr. Halberstater for off-the-course betting any more than I criticise some of the promising members of the Government for their heavy betting. But I do criticise his slobbering, sickening hypocrisy for being an opponent of off-the-course betting for the little fellow and at the same time being a participant in off-the-course betting himself. There are very many hon. members of the Government Party who are big off-the-course punters. They do not have to go to a betting shop to get a bet, they can get it any time they like. They can ring up any town in Queensland and get set. I do not care two hoots in Hades whether S.P. betting operates or does not operate. I am completely unconcerned about it. I am merely talking now as the average man who goes around the country with his eyes, ears, and mind open. The Government just cannot stamp out S.P. betting for the big fellow and if they stamp it out for the little fellow it becomes class legislation, class administration of the law and I for one would not be a party to asking the Police Commissioner to do anything that favoured one section of the community against another section.

Some hon. members of the Government who do not know anything about the S.P. game

may not agree with me. Let them ask some of their colleagues who know the S.P. game as well as I know it. If we are to have administration of the law let us have administration of the law for the rich as well as the poor. As the Government cannot enforce anti-S.P. betting against the rich and against the big bettor, why should they be so concerned to rigidly enforce it against the little fellow? Why not give him the same go as they give the man who can get in touch with the bookmaker whenever he likes?

The same thing applies to the liquor laws. There has been a suggestion that golf clubs be allowed to serve liquor with the Sunday meal. What about bowling clubs? Are they to be given the same privilege? What about the fellow who does not belong to either a bowling club or golf club? Is he to get an opportunity to have liquor with his Sunday meals at a hotel or boarding house? When administering the law you have to watch that the law is not being administered in the interests of one particular section; you have to watch that not necessarily the letter of the law but the spirit of the law is being administered in the interests of all and that there is no suggestion of class distinction in its administration.

If the Commissioner of Police is to be guided by me—he could not be guided by a more worldly, fair, broadminded man—he will concern himself with the administration of the spirit of the law and not so much the letter of the law.

Mr. Sparkes: No doubt "Modesty" is your middle name.

Mr. AIKENS: If I could only cultivate 100th of the pachydermis hide for which the hon. member for Aubigny is notorious, I would be a very happy man. It is my diffidence and my reticence that more or less acts against me in this Chamber and outside, but with practice I will overcome my shyness and modesty.

Let us get back to high prices and rising prices. There has been a suggestion by the hon. member for Rockhampton and by the hon. member for Ithaca in a debate the other day that perhaps the cause of our trouble was the drying-up of the financial springs that are controlled by the Federal Government. I believe that has some effect on the unemployment situation but I do not think it has the effect on rising prices that they believe it has. If they do a little research they will find that thinking men realise that the trouble in Australia today—we are talking about Queensland, so we can say the trouble in Queensland too—is that we are getting each day more and more under the control of the mergers and monopolies. I was speaking privately to a member of the Liberal Party and he told me—and honestly believed it because I regard him as an honest man—"Oh, no, where you have got competition, competition between the traders themselves will keep down prices."

I am going to ask hon. members of the Government if we get competition today. Do we get competition in the grocery trade or the softgoods trade, and other trades? The competition which did keep down prices was when there were many little stores conducted by small firms who actively competed for the trade and custom of the people. Their main attraction was that they could sell their goods a half-penny or a penny cheaper than their competitors. Have we that competition today? Just think what has happened in Brisbane. We read of the merger of Walton Sears and Overells, the merger of Myers with McWhirters and Coles with Pennys, and yesterday we read in the paper of the merger between the B.C.C. and Woolworths in the grocery trade. I do not know whether hon. members read the figures which were published. I think the first thing that any hon. member should read in the newspaper is the financial column. Although it is a Fascist rag, I think hon. members would be well advised to read the Wildcat column in the Sydney "Bulletin." There you will see the profits made out of industry and the staggering and exorbitant profits made by these mergers and holding companies. We were told the other day that the B.C.C. stores had tangible assets worth £500,000 and we were told that Woolworths are going to buy that £500,000 worth for £3,000,000 of share issue. They are going to make a 25 per cent. profit not on the £500,000 but the £3,000,000 which they are going to pay to the B.C.C. You have not to be an arithmetician of the highest order or a Rhodes scholar to know that Woolworths will pay £3,000,000 for something worth half-a-million pounds, and that they are going to make £750,000 profit per year on the £500,000 of goods and assets they buy. They are going to make that profit of 25 per cent., not on the £500,000 which they admit B.C.C. is worth, but on the £3,000,000 which they are paying for it.

Mr. Pizzey: The little fellow should be able to compete now.

Mr. AIKENS: He will not be able to.

Mr. Pizzey: He should be able to on that.

Mr. AIKENS: They crush him out. They buy up the manufacturer. They go to the manufacturer and the wholesaler and buy their entire stock and get a monopoly to handle certain lines. If they cannot buy out the manufacturer and the wholesaler they buy them out with a parcel of shares. We have listened to political barn-storming during this debate but none from me, as usual. If the Government want a tangible suggestion of the way to start to grapple with the rising price structure in this country, they should immediately set their legal men to work to draw up an anti-trust and anti-combine law such as they have in the United States of America, and, I believe, in the United Kingdom. Do not set it up entirely in accordance with the United States anti-trust law because there are more loopholes

and more funk-holes in it than there are in some of the political parties which I could but will not mention at the moment. If the Government are to grapple in a real manner with ever-spiralling prices and intend to give the people a square go, they have to face up to the enemy, and the enemy is the big holding company, the big merging company and the big combine.

Dr. Noble: Where can you buy cheaper groceries in Brisbane?

Mr. Walsh: Why did you support them on the petrol Bill?

Mr. AIKENS: Because it was one of the biggest farces and shams ever introduced into this Chamber; but let me reply to the Minister for Health and Home Affairs. The interjection he has just made exemplifies the truth of the old saying that there is no-one as stupid as an educated man when you get him away from the subject in which he was educated. The hon. gentleman is, I believe, a competent physician and surgeon. I give him full marks for that, but his interjection exemplifies his complete ignorance of the matter. He said, "Where will you buy the cheapest groceries in Brisbane?" It will not matter whether you can buy them at the B.C.C., Barry & Roberts, or somewhere else; the real crux of the question is whether the B.C.C. is selling those groceries as cheaply as it would sell them if it was not in a trust or combine. The question is whether groceries are being sold as cheaply as they should be sold.

Dr. Noble: You are talking about the cost of living.

Mr. AIKENS: The B.C.C. as well as anyone else jacks up its prices.

Dr. Noble: You were inferring that groceries were dearer there.

Mr. AIKENS: That interjection reminds me of the story of the single girl who had an illegitimate baby.

Dr. Noble: Probably yours.

Mr. AIKENS: Probably. I would need to be flat out to beat you to the punch.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: The parson or minister of her particular religion chided her with having an illegitimate baby. She said, "Yes, parson, but it is only a little one." The Minister does not care whether they are profiteers, racketeers, or immoral in business, or if they hold the people in pawn, as long as their profits are not very, very high. Anyone who has an elementary knowledge of economics must know—it is happening in the United States and in other countries where the profits have been excessive—that there is too much figure money in the country, to use the general economic term. In other words, there are more figures in the credit balances of the various corporations, firms and combines than

in the compensatory figures for goods on the other side in the ledgers of the various industries and warehouses in the country.

In other ways I have found the Minister for Health and Home Affairs a very receptive student. If he cares to drop around to the broom cupboard some day, when he has an hour or two to spare, I shall give him some lessons in elementary economics. I suppose that he has been so eager to make himself proficient in his own profession that he has omitted to study elementary economics.

The Government must admit that the day of genuine competition is fast disappearing, if it has not disappeared. They must admit that the big merger, combine and holding company is moving in. If the Minister for Justice or the Treasurer were in the House, men who know the merging and the holding company game from the bottom up, they would admit it. They are chartered accountants and are right in this. I am not suggesting they are right in the rackets, but they know it from go to whoa. Those Ministers would know more about it than I do, and that is saying something. I am paying them a compliment. They would concur in everything I have said.

I make that suggestion to the Premier. If he really wants to do something to stop these ever-spiralling costs of living, he should take that action. The Government should not fool themselves by assuming that it will not continue. It will continue unless they do something to stop it. It is quite true that the Federal Treasurer may be induced from time to time to make a little more central bank credit available to prime the pump, but we will not get rid of the flood water or the troubles that confront us unless we deal with the basic problem. It is not much good skirting around the edges or hanging around the perimeter. One must get to the core of everything, and the core of the spiralling price structure, is the monopoly, trust and combine control, and the sooner it is tackled the sooner our people will see daylight. If the Government are not going to tackle it the Premier should be honest enough to stand up and tell the people that the Government have sold out to the combines, the monopolies and the big merging holding companies.

Mr. WALSH (Bundaberg) (8.31 p.m.): It will be conceded that the various points listed in the motion moved by the hon. member for South Brisbane on behalf of the Queensland Labour Party call for a vote of no confidence in the Government. Every one of the points mentioned are important and have been subjects of a good deal of public discussion in recent times. Unemployment, of course, is a question that should be exercising the minds not only of all members of this House but everyone in Queensland whether employers or employees in permanent positions who have an interest in the future development of the State. Of course we realise that the Government went to the people with a great blare of trumpets

and promises of what they would do if they were returned as the Government. We find that in a short space of seven months we have reached the stage when there is a greater percentage of unemployment in this State than at any period during the depression years.

Government Members: Oh no! Oh!

Mr. WALSH: I am making the statement.

Mr. Muller: Of course, you would make any statement.

Mr. WALSH: It is up to the Government to produce the figures and not just wipe my statement off by saying, "Ha, ha!" The fact is that there are over 20,000 unemployed in this State today and at no stage in the history of the State since 1932 or 1933 has there been such a number of unemployed. Members on the other side are not conversant with what happened in this State. With their counterparts in the other States and in the Federal sphere they stand convicted of their failure to recognise the scourge confronting 20,000 breadwinners and their dependants, the misery confronting the home-owner who, on his weekly income and with security under a Labour Government, now finds himself with no job and no help from the Government. The position cannot be because of money as I want to make it clear very early in my remarks that it is not a question of finance that there is such a large number of unemployed in this State.

Mr. Windsor: Why did you put 1,900 off in March and June?

Mr. WALSH: The hon. member has not had much experience and I am not going to waste my time over him. The fact remains that it is the Government's responsibility and the responsibility of private enterprise to see that employment is kept to the maximum in this State or any other State. Private enterprise has obligations, the Government have obligations. If we look at the picture on the basis of 80 per cent employed in industry, employed by private enterprise, in round figures we would have 20 per cent employed by the Government and semi-governmental institutions. Since the Government came into power they have had, on their own statements—do not accept mine—an additional £2,200,000 over and above what the previous Government had. If that is so how does it come about that there is such a large number of unemployed in Queensland? I am not asking the House to accept my figures. Let hon. members take the figures that the Premier himself has given of the allocations made by the Loan Council in the middle of last year for the works year 1957-58. When the Treasurer brought down his Financial Statement, he pointed out that the loan works programme for 1957-58 was approximately 1 per cent higher than that for 1956-57. He made it clear that the amount available for the loan works programme was slightly

higher than that available to the Gair Government, who were defeated in August of last year.

When the Premier and the Treasurer went to the Loan Council, they came back with a blaring of trumpets. The Press reported that an amount of £1,788,000 had been allocated to Queensland. That was a misleading report, which the Premier subsequently corrected. The amount made available to the Government following the Premiers' Conference was £1,125,000. The balance of £663,000 remains to be raised by the various local authorities.

Local authorities play a very important part in providing employment; so much so that their expenditure in actual works is much greater than that of the Government. In 1956-1957, under the previous Government, there was an allocation of £16,400,000 for local authorities and semi-Governmental bodies, and under the present Government, following the Premiers' Conference that the former Premier and I attended last year, the figure was increased to £17,940,000. In addition, there is the amount of £663,000 that was recently allocated. That gives an amount of £18,603,000 for semi-governmental bodies and local authorities, compared with £16,400,000 during the regime of the previous Government.

The Premier said that out of the £1,125,000, an amount of £225,000 had been made available to local authorities as Treasury loans and subsidies. The people who are looking for work have a right to know what has happened to the other £900,000. Where has it gone? What are the Government spending it on? It was not mentioned during Tuesday's debate, nor has any representative of the Government told us what has been done with the additional money. It is not enough for the Government to be crying about the difficulties of the primary producer. They are always present in times of drought—anyone who has worked the land knows that—but the worker has to come into the picture somewhere. If the Premier is distributing the extra money in a way that will help the fertiliser companies and the farm machinery companies, it will not be of much benefit to the workers. Drought has always played its part, and it will continue to play its part until Governments as a whole and the land-owners as a whole do something about drought insurance, fodder conservation and water conservation. It is utterly absurd for the Premier or the members of his Government, especially the likes of the Minister for Public Lands, and the Minister for Agriculture and Stock, to say that this is the worst drought. I have been hearing that ever since I was a small boy. People who were not even born in 1902 will still tell you that this drought or the last one or the next one is worse than the drought of 1902.

Mr. Muller: I did not say so.

Mr. WALSH: I would at least have expected the Minister to contradict some of those stupid statements. The drought has been severe enough from a line north of

Rockhampton down to the border and its effect on stock-owners through the loss of sheep and cattle has been tremendous; but the 1951 drought was State-wide, not confined to one part. Even in the very fertile areas of North Queensland crushing was begun late in July and finished in October and early November whereas normally it would have been started in May and finished in January. That was the position that faced the previous Labour administration. They had no more money than the Government today have available from the Commonwealth, indeed not as much.

We have heard blather about cutting through red tape but what have the Government really done? If they have the money why is it not getting to the local authorities? Anyway, why put the responsibility onto the local authorities to go round hawking to raise the money by way of debenture loans?

In 1952, following the disastrous drought of 1951, the Government straightway made an extra £1,000,000 available to the Department of Main Roads. The department was then under the Treasury and as the Minister in charge I asked the Commissioner of Main Roads if he had any schemes available to release. He spoke of the difficulty with Orders in Council. I said, "Forget about the Orders in Council. Release the schemes to the local authorities. Let them get on with the work and we will get the Orders in Council later."

But here we get the same old excuses. I want it put on record that the Government have available to them £2,200,000 more for this financial year, 1957-1958, under the headings of Loan Works Programme and Semi-Governmentals and Local Authorities in the State.

Dr. Noble: We have not got the huge trust funds you had left from the war years.

Mr. WALSH: I am not going to be side-tracked but I am glad the Minister has reminded me of that by interjection. If I had the time tonight I could read many of the statements made by the Premier during the 1956 election campaign, backed up by the Federal Treasurer, Sir Arthur Fadden. They made the stupid statement—accepted by the A.L.P., do not forget after the split came about—that there was £26.3 million in reserves available to the State. If there were £26.3 million available in 1956 somebody must have got away with it. The fact is that the money was not there. The credits were there in the reserve funds and nothing more. If we accepted that same basis and applied it to Sir Arthur Fadden's Treasury at the time, they would have no less than £733,000,000 available in reserves. That must be remembered. The taxpayers of the country in their income tax every year are paying a contribution, which was previously known as the social or national welfare tax. It is embodied in their income tax today. That is supposed to be for the provision of unemployment assistance during periods such as that through

which we are passing now. But again that money has gone into general revenue. No doubt Parliament has been used to buy up the machinery that the hon. member for Southport mentioned in his report tabled here. Millions of pounds have gone to assist the Colombo Plan while people here have got to the verge of starvation. It is all very well to make yourself a good fellow to other countries at the expense of the taxpayers but not while your own people are looking for a job.

The Government have to see to it that we do not produce in Queensland a set of conditions typical of those that confronted both employers and employees during the dark days of the depression in 1929-32. I think every hon. member genuinely desires that those conditions do not return. But they will return unless the Government face up to it and see that the money available is expended in directions that will provide real works and real assets for the expenditure. There is no evidence of real planning by the present Government. Every answer to questions asked from this side of the Chamber clearly indicates that they are still working on the plans that have been developed by the Labour Government over the years. The contracts the Treasurer mentioned this morning would be contracts, plans and applications that had been approved or that had been on the way for approval, before the Government were defeated last August. Let the Premier and his Ministers come here and show the House and the people what they are doing about it. What plan have they got to meet the situation? It is no good the Premier trying to ridicule the figures produced on the number of unemployed. It is no good trying to put the responsibility on to hon. members on this side to produce documentary evidence. There was a time when we could get accurate figures. Because of the relationship between the Government and the various departments, particularly the Department of Labour and Industry, we had access to figures for every part of Queensland which would give a clear indication of the number of unemployed, but no longer is accurate information available. I have not the slightest doubt that if the real figures were given they would be nearer to 30,000 than 20,000. There is a large number of unemployed in Bundaberg, Maryborough, and Rockhampton, the areas stricken by the drought, but outside of these areas altogether there are again many thousands seeking jobs. At the end of the financial year the Minister for Transport will no doubt be coming along with a pitiful tale telling us of his worries, that he will be faced with the position of having to terminate the services of many thousands of his workers in the Railway Department. The other day the Treasurer told the House that out of the extra allocation of £1,125,000 an amount of £50,000 had been allotted to the Railway Department. The Railway Department is an

undertaking with over £36,000,000 in turnover, the biggest industry and the biggest employing agency in the State, yet only a miserable £50,000 was allotted to it.

Let us consider unemployment as the major problem which must be given the highest priority. The Premier will be looking for some ideas. I am not going to waste too much time giving ideas tonight but I will say this: We have just had floods in Mackay. I have said before that all along the Queensland coastline there is work to be done in every watercourse. Money would be well spent there. It is beyond the capacity of the land-holder. Every water stream lends itself to the expenditure of considerable public moneys which would save a great asset—the land which keeps industry going.

Mr. Coburn: The Don River is an example.

Mr. WALSH: I have been there and I have seen it myself. I have seen the piles of sand in the middle of the Don higher than the banks of the river. When the floods come down tremendous damage is done to the surrounding fertile areas. Around Merinda and other places the floods have caused irreparable damage to the land. In order to do this work you would not need engineers to draw up blueprints. You could put them in there with axes, brush hooks and bulldozers. Such expenditure would give a worthwhile return. A plan should be developed as rapidly as possible and before we are faced with similar disasters in other parts of the State.

Mr. Nicholson: How long has it been going on?

Mr. WALSH: The hon. member knows what is happening in his own area. You can see what is happening at Queen's Beach, Scarborough.

Mr. Nicholson: They are getting a subsidy.

Mr. WALSH: You need finance on a considerable scale.

Mr. Nicholson: We are getting it now from this Government.

Mr. WALSH: It is good to know that you are getting it. The Government have £2,200,000 more than last year and there are 20,000 unemployed according to the Premier's own statement. According to the Premier's statement since January the percentage of unemployed has increased over 2 per cent.

Much of the discussion has been in relation to the Police Force.

Mr. Aikens: Are you going to tell the full story?

Mr. WALSH: No, I have not the time. There are other things which I want to say. If ever an hon. member or a Minister put up a weak case the Minister did. I think that

would be the reaction of every hon. member who heard the Minister's speech. The Minister knows that he has not told the full story.

Mr. Morris: I do not.

Mr. WALSH: Why does the hon. gentleman want to go and mislead the members of the House? We know the gossip—you you can hear it anywhere—of what is happening.

The hon. member for Mundingburra had something to say about what would be required of the police. This is contained in the instructions that are given out. The following is the concluding paragraph in the Preface to the Queensland Police Manual written by John Smith, Commissioner—a man with a very honourable record:—

“An intelligent interpretation of the laws, general instructions, directions and advice contained in this Manual should enable members of the Police Force to discharge efficiently their several duties. They should cultivate those qualities which tend to enhance their value in the Police Force and realise that initiative, honesty”—

I emphasise that—

“tact and common sense lead to the highest positions in the Service; and that accordingly, as they show themselves possessed of such qualities, and of zeal, activity, and sound judgment their value will be estimated.”

The following is the concluding paragraph in the Policeman's Manual which was written by Cecil James Carroll, in 1939:—

“This Manual has been prepared and issued to members of the Force for the purpose of giving them general advice and assistance in the performance of their many duties. It does not contain instructions to meet every case that may arise, nor deal in detail with the administration of the various Acts of Parliament as something must necessarily be left to the intelligence and discretion of members of the Police Force themselves; initiative, honesty, tact and common-sense lead to the highest positions in the Service, and accordingly, as members show themselves possessed of such qualities, and of zeal, activity, and sound judgment, their value will be estimated.”

Those are the instructions issued by two Commissioners, and I think they cover some of the points made by the hon. member for Mundingburra.

If the strict letter of the law was enforced by the police in this State many if not most of the policemen themselves would find themselves behind bars, in the cell of the watchhouse, quite apart from the civilian population. It is for that reason that police are expected to exercise tolerance in investigating something that may be a breach of the law but nevertheless has no real challenge to the welfare of society.

But things have happened in recent times that have given some cause for public disquiet. I have said it over and over again in this Chamber when defending the police from attacks made from this side of the Chamber that the department is one of the most important, if not the most important organisation of civil administration in this State. The police have many matters to deal with. Their duties are varied. They probably have more duties than any other branch of civil administration. For that reason they have to understand humanity and have the correct approach to the weaknesses of humanity. For acceptance into the Force they should have a certain standard of education, of physical fitness, medical history, family background. All those things are important and should be investigated before a man is accepted in the Force. There have been weaknesses, not in any way due to Government policy, but due to those who are in charge of the acceptance of recruits. Members of Parliament probably have assisted by making representations for some person or other to be admitted to the Force. I know of a case of a man admitted to the Force who was found eventually to have a criminal record. Does that indicate that there had been the examination and scrutiny of applications that one would expect? If that happened in one instance, there would probably be another, but somewhere along the line it will be found probably that some member of Parliament had made representations on that person's behalf.

The Police Department is a very important branch of our civil administration. Those who have followed happenings in overseas countries will concede the need to have a Force not only free from corruption but loyal to the realm. That is very necessary. One of the first on the other side in the line of dictators who found it necessary to model a Police Force so that it would be useful to him was Hitler. It was he who, having corrupted the top of the Police Force found it so easy to corrupt the whole of the Force and so do the damage that was eventually done to that country. It was the same in various branches of public and civil administration. When he had succeeded in corrupting the administration, it was easy for him to take over.

We have read a lot about these proposals put up to the Minister for Labour and Industry regarding the reorganisation of the Police Force on the basis operating in Scotland Yard. That is just so much bunk. In actual fact Scotland Yard would probably not have as much authority and as much power as the Criminal Investigation Branch in this State. Anybody who understands the setup in England knows that the various boroughs each have their own police administration and that on the rate notices there is a charge, the money from which goes to the payment of the Police Force in the particular borough. It is only when a local administration deems fit to call

in the services of Scotland Yard that Scotland Yard has any authority in that particular area. Do not be misled by the position. Scotland Yard mainly rose in importance from the books of Conan Doyle. It would not be any more efficient than our organisation here. It might have more gruesome weapons that were used in crimes because of the population. West Germany, because of what happened under Hitler, has proceeded to organise its Police Force on the English system. That is the thing to be watched here. Do not let the Minister mislead the public that they are going to have some real worthwhile improvement if our system is based on the Scotland Yard principle. Actually, the proposals now being submitted are nothing new. They were previously submitted by the Commissioner who has just retired. They were submitted when the hon. member for Charters Towers was the Minister in charge of police, but after consideration of all aspects the Government were not satisfied that there would be any more efficiency within the Police Force. There were four more top jobs to be created with substantial salaries and with substantial pension and retirement allowances, but that did not necessarily mean that there would be greater efficiency. Whatever is required, it is not more top jobs because in some respects the Police Force is a bit top heavy now. Go through the list of inspectors and sub-inspectors at Roma Street and you will find that there are enough men there and the appointment of any more would be at the cost of the taxpayer. I remember the former Minister asking for more recruits, but for every 100 additional recruits it is costing the taxpayers another £100,000. The interest of the taxpayer has to be watched. The public generally have had a pretty good service from the Police Force. It has been more efficient in many respects than the Forces in other States of Australia. There are a few things, of course, we were not satisfied with, but I suppose these things happen in any country, and will happen as population grows with the influx of migrants. I do not give the new appointee any credit; I do not give the Government any credit and I do not give any other person associated with the Force credit who is continually harping about political interference. I challenge the Commissioner or anybody else to name any occasion when I as a member or a Minister endeavoured to influence the act of the Commissioner of Police or an inspector. I can say that there would be many civilians outside Parliament itself who have, because of their good relationship with the top structure of the Force, got results they were not entitled to. If that was proved against any of those officers, they would find themselves facing the same charge as did the hon. member for Belyando. In effect, they have corrupted their office.

There is a good deal of loose talk about political interference in the Police Force. I have acted as Minister in charge of the Police Force and responsible police officers

have told me that extraordinary representations have been made on behalf of people, representations that should have no place in our community.

I hope that the new Commissioner of Police will be able to say that he is not influenced by any member of Parliament, Minister or otherwise, in any decision that he is called upon to make. I challenge the Minister to cite one instance of political interference by the previous Government as a Government. I could name individuals, but that is not the point. A Government have to accept responsibility for decisions made by them. But if there is an arrangement between one section of public administration and an individual member of Parliament of which the Government are unaware, they cannot be blamed for it.

I say without qualification that the present Government are responsible for bringing political odour to the administration of the Police Force. I instance the disgusting way in which the office of Commissioner was hawked round not only this State, but throughout Australia. I know that the Minister for Labour and Industry had some definite choices for the office, and if the Premier had not acted wisely and taken the matter out of the Minister's hands, goodness knows whom we would have been saddled with as Commissioner of Police. During the time that I was a Minister of the Crown, whenever a Commissioner of Police was to be appointed the Minister controlling the department submitted his recommendation to Cabinet, with whom the final decision rested.

Mr. Morris: The fact that you did it that way makes it suspect immediately.

Mr. WALSH: The Minister knows very well that I was never in control of the Police Force. I acted on various occasions, but at no time did I take to Cabinet matters of policy that should be dealt with by the Minister in charge of the department.

So much money has been spent by the Minister in tripping back and forth to the South that I felt inclined to write to the Premier and ask him if the Minister for Labour and Industry had an itinerant hawk's licence. He certainly did a good deal of hawking. We could have had Red Robbie here.

Government Members: Who is Red Robbie?

Mr. WALSH: Ask the Minister for Labour and Industry.

Mr. Morris: Who is Red Robbie?

Mr. WALSH: The Minister knows who he is.

Mr. Morris: I do not. Come out in the open and tell us.

Mr. WALSH: I will come out in the open. He is Sir Horace Robertson. If it had not been he, it could have been the one from Victoria.

The previous Commissioner was bludgeoned into retirement. There were many reasons for it. Of course, I am not denying the right of the Government to make the appointment; that is their exclusive right. But out of the blue the Minister made it clear that he intended to model the new administration along lines that would suit his outlook, which was not necessarily that of the Premier.

Shocking implications were contained in the report that appeared in "The Sunday-Mail". As well as a photo of the retiring Commissioner, there were statements and allegations that were credited to the Minister himself. Nothing has been said about that during the debate.

Mr. Morris: What allegations?

Mr. WALSH: About the allegations of the top officer and about his being on the mat, and so on. The Minister knows the report.

Mr. Morris: I made no allegations.

Mr. WALSH: I will quote one more specifically directly. He will probably tell me he did not see that one either. This all leads up to it. We are not in the Government's confidence and it could be that they had their own reasons, not the reasons the Minister gave here, not by any means, but despite anything that the Government may have known that would have justified them in terminating the services of the Commissioner, for the Minister to come into the Chamber and hawk the medical certificate, to read it out and demonstrate it publicly, giving details of the man's state of health, is to my mind a shocking state of affairs.

Mr. Connolly: You asked for it.

Mr. WALSH: Never asked for it at all.

Mr. Connolly: Of course you did. You challenged the Government.

Mr. WALSH: The little boy with the effeminate voice comes into it again.

Mr. Connolly: I have never been caught getting my hair dyed.

Mr. WALSH: The hon. member for Kurilpa can always take me as I stand. Unlike him I have never changed, and I hope I never will. I can quite appreciate his outlook with the company that he mixed with as a young boy. They might be termed bodgies today, the fact remains that if he got mixed up with those same elements they in some way screwed his outlook. I can appreciate that.

Not only did the previous Commissioner give good service to the community, but also I say without hesitation—and I think the new Commissioner will agree with me—Harold was widely respected throughout the Force. Much of the work of organising during the occasion of the Queen Mother's visit might be credited to other people but

Tom Harold was the man responsible for the bulk of it; otherwise we may have been in a mess there, too.

In filling the vacancy there has been a departure from seniority. Why? During the debate the hon. member for Barooka asked the Minister, but no reason has been given here. What happened with previous appointments—Mr. Smith, Mr. Glynn, and Mr. Harold? In each case the senior man was appointed.

Mr. Pizzey: You made many other public service appointments of junior men over senior men and nobody questioned your right to do it.

Mr. WALSH: That would probably be on the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner. I do not in any way question the right of the Government to depart from seniority if the evidence before them justifies it.

Mr. Morris: You departed from seniority in the Police Force on many occasions.

Mr. WALSH: Where?

Mr. Morris: If you want one example I can tell you—Inspector Martin.

Dr. Noble: What about Commissioner Carroll?

Mr. WALSH: Here we go back to the Dark Ages. (Government laughter.) That is how they will have the State before it is all over, believe me. I am asking the question and putting it straight to the Minister and the Government: why was not Inspector Donovan appointed? There should be something known to the community. The community has that right. I think again it could be said that his honesty and integrity could not be doubted. It would not be excelled in the Force. Public men hear a great deal about police executives. I have yet to find the man who has come along and said that Donovan at any time has been corrupt, not one, and the Minister would know that to be true, too.

Mr. Aikens: Have you ever heard anyone say that Bischof was corrupt?

Mr. WALSH: I am making this speech. Donovan's ability as a criminal investigator could not be faulted. If his honesty and his integrity is not doubted, if his work has not been faulted as a criminal investigator, what then are the qualifications that are necessary for appointment as Commissioner of Police?

Mr. Morris: I gave them to you today.

Mr. WALSH: I think the hon. gentleman will give me credit for saying what is in my mind anyway. I have a fair idea there was considerable lobbying in this both within the Federal and the State structure.

I come now to what I think is the most serious matter of all, a report appearing in the "Sunday Mail" of 26 January which reads—

"Even he does not know

"Secret probe on police officer

"Serious allegations reflecting on a senior officer in the Queensland Police Force have been made at a Government inquiry.

"The probe has been continuing in secret for a fortnight.

"Justice Department officers have recorded thousands of words of evidence.

"The Solicitor-General (Mr. W. E. Ryan) is understood to have been recalled from leave to conduct the hearing.

"Two police N.C.O.'s are stated to have been giving evidence against the officer, alleging dates, places and names.

"Certain allegations have been placed before the Minister in charge of police (Mr. Morris).

"Secrecy has been clamped on the inquiry so tightly that it is believed even the officer who is the subject of the allegations has not been told about it.

"The Premier (Mr. Nicklin) asked about the inquiry last night, replied: 'I am not going to say anything about that.'

"Mr. Morris was not available last night.

"The Queensland Police Union secretary (Mr. C. A. Behm) would make no comment last night."

I do not think it is necessary to emphasise that that is a very serious position. In the interests of the officer concerned and in the interests of the community, it must go further. It is serious enough for any member of the public to be making a charge against any police officer, no matter what his rank in the force may be, but it is far more serious when officers within the force, apparently officers of some standing whose integrity has not been doubted in any way make charges.

Mr. Aikens: If it was a secret inquiry how did the "Sunday Mail" get it?

Mr. WALSH: The hon. member had better ask the Minister. I am not going to pull my punches on that report because I think it is too serious. It has been stated to me that the allegations have been made by detectives, possibly one of them a detective sergeant. The serious thing is that one of the allegations refers to the Isisford fire. A woman and a babe lost their lives in that fire and I think two men were committed. If there is any officer in the force who has any knowledge that there is something wrong in this the Government owe it to the community, to the officer, to the whole Police Force, to make a full and searching inquiry by nothing less than a Royal Commission. It is not sufficient to have this secret inquiry behind doors. What has become of the man Weston? What has

become of the man who owned the hotel who is alleged to have given instructions to burn the place down?

Government Members interjected.

Mr. WALSH: The Government can put this one on. They cannot get out of this by saying that they are going to blow it over. Charges have been made. Charges were not made under the previous administration.

Mr. Morris: Who suggested they have been made under this?

Mr. WALSH: They have been made under this and the hon. gentleman knows that.

Mr. Morris: No, they have not.

Mr. WALSH: I cannot understand how the Minister can sit there and be so deliberate in his denials. The report says that these things were brought to his notice and the notice of the union executive.

Mr. Pizzey: Some report said that you were going to the Senate.

Mr. WALSH: You will have to wait to see if that is true. These things cannot be treated lightly. What were my impressions when I heard the report that some of these people went to the Executive. The impression I got was this was another racket to get rid of Harold. I found that was not the case as the Minister had that in hand and was going to do that job himself. I then thought it applied to another officer about whom the allegations were made. Apparently there was nothing in that.

Mr. Morris: You quoted that as being late in January and the ex-Commissioner was out in December.

Mr. WALSH: I gave a report from the public paper. It is not my report. The obligation is on the hon. gentleman. I am making the charge that one of these officers is alleged to have stated that somewhere in this probe. Matters relating to the Isisford fire were involved in it. The second one was a case conveyed to me secondhand—the hon. member for Baroona would know this. The second charge was made by a man credited with being a staunch Liberal supporter.

Mr. Morris: A figment of imagination.

Mr. WALSH: Do not think that it is imagination. An allegation was made. When I went to Townsville where this person had gone into smoke to one of the pastoral properties, the man who employed him told me that £250 was placed in that man's hands when he was spirited away. He was the victim in the case.

Mr. Morris: Make a charge.

Mr. WALSH: It is your job. You have got the charges and they have been made by responsible people.

Mr. Morris: You are not game.

Mr. WALSH: The public will demand a Royal Commission not only into that but also into the Mt. Isa case. In regard to the Mt. Isa case I think it would be fair to say that the Minister had talks with the Executive or somebody to reinstate the two men dismissed. That would be a fair statement.

Dr. Noble: Are you making an allegation yourself or is this just a second-hand allegation?

Mr. WALSH: I am making a speech. You are not going to deny that there were charges made against two policemen, McArthur and Murray.

Dr. Noble: You are scared to make an allegation yourself.

Mr. WALSH: I do not have to. The department made allegations against McArthur and Murray, not me. There was an inquiry conducted by Magistrate Fowler.

Mr. Morris: You would look a fool.

Mr. WALSH: You will look a fool if they appoint a Royal Commission into all this. There was an inquiry by Magistrate Fowler who found on the evidence submitted to him that the two men were unfit to continue as members of the Police Force. The Minister knows he was anxious that both these men should be reinstated, and the previous Commissioner would not reinstate them because of the findings of the magistrate. That is what I would have expected of the present Commissioner also, that he would not reinstate the men on the findings. It does not follow that these men were found guilty. I am not saying that. I am treating the case as it is presented to the public.

Mr. Ewan: By whom?

Mr. WALSH: By the magistrate and the department. Then we have the retirement of the previous Commissioner, to get him out of the way. He was the obstruction. Then we have the replacement of counsel. Mr. Casey was replaced. Because Mr. Casey is a member of the Q.L.P. it does not follow that he would be looking for favours. Let me say that Dan Casey was offered a position on the Supreme Court bench in this State and he refused it. It is just as well to have that on record for the information of the hon. member for Kurilpa.

Mr. Morris: What right have you to say that?

Mr. WALSH: Say what?

Mr. Morris: That he was offered a position on the Supreme Court bench.

Mr. WALSH: Because I know.

Mr. Morris: You think it is right to make a statement like that in the House?

Mr. WALSH: Yes, I do, because of the shocking treatment that has been meted out to him. There is no more respectable citizen in the State than Dan Casey.

The men themselves on the findings were unfit to be readmitted. The position as it stands now is that the men have been reinstated by the Commissioner. It is not fair to the men themselves. They go back into the Force with what is tantamount to a conviction. If those two men appear in court as witnesses, what is going to happen?

Mr. Morris: What about the 11 men your own Government charged with more serious things?

Mr. WALSH: That has no relevance whatever.

Mr. Morris: Those cases were ten times as serious.

Mr. WALSH: I now come to the constitution of the Appeal Board. The chairman was Mr. Mansell. I have no complaint against the chairman and I am not in any way questioning his integrity. There were the departmental representative and the representative of the Executive, Mr. Behm. What did the coroner say about Mr. Behm? Do not tell me that the Minister has not looked at that part of the findings? He said that Behm had in effect obstructed the investigation that had been carried out by Donovan in the Mt. Isa case and drew attention to Section 140 of the Criminal Code. He is the man who sat in judgment on these two men, after putting up obstructions by informing members of the Mt. Isa Force not to give any information to the investigating officer. That was the evidence in the coroner's inquiry and he then sits in judgment on these two men. Have hon. members ever heard of such a racket?

Let us have a look at the requirements of the Act in regard to the court. Section 57 (8) reads—

“The Appeal Board shall investigate in open court every appeal and transmit the evidence taken together with their decision thereon to the Commissioner.

“They shall make their inquiry without regard to legal forms and solemnities, and shall direct themselves by the best evidence they can procure or that is laid before them whether the same is such evidence as the law would require or admit in other cases or not.”

That sets out the clear duty of the Board.

Is any hon. member of the Government going to say that the Appeal Board complied with the requirements of that section? Of course it did not comply with the requirements. In fact, an illegal decision has been conveyed to the Commissioner, and the Commissioner was a party to it, because, as would be expected of him, he instructed the departmental counsel. He entered into a

pact with the counsel for the appellant and no doubt with the executive of the union to readmit these men.

In fairness to the men themselves, there should be a royal commission into the whole incident and, if the investigating officer is proved wrong by the royal commission then action should be taken accordingly. Those are my views, and forever more no longer could anybody have any faith or trust in the activities not only of the Police Appeal Board but any other board which might act in a similar way.

(Time, on motion of Mr. A. Jones, extended.)

Mr. WALSH: I thank the hon. member for Charters Towers and the House for the privilege. There are a few other things I want to say but in the meantime let me finish off the Mt. Isa case in the interests of the future discipline of the Police Force in this State. That is an important question and if the Minister has any desire to see that the administration of the Force is kept on a high plane it is his duty to see that there is no suggestion in any way of any interference. It is remarkable that members of the Australian Labour Party at no time have raised this question. If the previous Government were in power I should imagine how they would have screamed to high heaven demanding that the Government should probe these things to the fullest extent. Not a word have we heard from the official Opposition.

An A.L.P. Member: What about?

Mr. WALSH: About the report in "The Sunday-Mail" and the charges made against top police officers. If that is the way this question is going to be treated by the Government and the A.L.P. it is a bad lookout for the future administration. I do not think the hon. member for Brisbane should invite me in on any question. Keep this on the plane that it is a political responsibility and no more. That is all I am asking but if the hon. member gets in on any other argument I am prepared to box on.

It looks as if the Minister for Transport might have the honour of re-enacting incidents that occurred at the Eureka Stockade. I understand that an army of dairy-farmers are certainly up in arms over the new tax imposed upon them by the Government. They are not going to pay it—exactly what Peter Lalor did at the Eureka Stockade. I am watching to see how the Minister will get out of it. I have been invited to address the dairy-farmers and I promise the Minister that I will not go up there without consulting him. I think some explanation is required of the arbitrary action taken by the Government in the cancellation of certain of the transport licences between Brisbane and Toowoomba.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will not be in order in discussing the

matter of the cancellation of licences since the whole question is the subject of a court action. I have been advised that there is a court action and that on the 13th day of January 1958 writs were issued by Browns Transport Pty. Ltd. and Downs Transport Pty. Ltd. against Norman Eggert Kropp, in each case claiming an injunction against the defendant restraining the cancellation of a licence issued under the State Transport Facilities Acts to the plaintiff. As the hon. member doubtless knows, according to "May" a matter whilst under adjudication by a court of law should not be brought before the House by a motion or otherwise. Therefore, I must rule that the part of the motion which concerns matters relating to the legal action to which I have referred may not be discussed in this debate.

Mr. WALSH: I respect your ruling, Mr. Speaker, and I would not strive to go against it. However, I shall refer to the reply that was given by the Minister for Transport this morning to a question on the co-ordinated service that was asked by the Leader of the Opposition. Reference was made to the fact that a man who had defrauded the department of something like £15,000 over a period of five years was the successful tenderer for the co-ordinated goods service between Brisbane and Toowoomba. The matter may have been adjusted subsequently. I think another man owed a much larger sum than that.

Mr. Nicklin interjected.

Mr. WALSH: I am not concerned with whose administration it was under. These things are brought out now. However, I shall not proceed with that. The Minister made a good deal of noise about the contract that was let by the previous Government to a man named Story, yet his Government accepted the tender of a man who had defrauded the department of £15,000. As a matter of fact, it is being widely circulated that Leybourne's Transport is a subsidiary of Western Transport.

Government Members: No.

Mr. WALSH: Hon. members opposite may deny it, but the Minister read out his reply this morning, that at one stage Cobb & Coy. became the owners of Leybourne's Transport. It is being said now that Western Transport is the fly in the ointment where Leybourne's Co-ordinated Service is concerned.

Mr. Chalk: If you have any proof of that, why don't you produce it?

Mr. WALSH: The three main companies were talking about challenging the Government on their action, but one of them pulled out. It is now getting all the trade. It is being denied to the other two companies although they had committed no offence. These are the things that are causing some concern in the minds of the people. There was

a great blaring of trumpets when the Minister for Transport spoke about the letting of a contract under suspicious circumstances. A previous Minister for Transport, who was then the hon. member for Toowoomba, would not approve of a co-ordinated service at any stage. After his defeat the proposal was revived by the Railway Department, submitted to Cabinet by the then Minister and approved of by Cabinet. If the previous Minister would not bring the proposal before Cabinet for its approval, how would the Cabinet know of the arrangements for the service?

I warn the Minister to keep his eyes open. Some of the people engaged in the transport business became well known to me when I was Minister for Transport, and I know what has happened. My only hope is that the department is now on top of the hauliers and that it gets from them every penny it is entitled to.

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (9.40 p.m.): Since Parliament assembled this week we have had the unique experience for this State of notice being given of an adjournment motion and a no-confidence motion on the same day. It is very evident that there has been a battle of tactics between the two component Opposition parties in an endeavour to gain some political advantage. But I hand it to the Leader of the Opposition for completely outwitting the other section of the Opposition by getting the Speaker out of bed in the morning and handing him a letter to the effect that he intended to move the adjournment of the House.

When the motion was called the Leader of the Q.L.P. did not know whether he wanted to discuss it or not.

However, although the battle of tactics resulted in a win for the Leader of the official Opposition, both moves proved to be completely damp squibs. The discussion on the motion for the adjournment did nothing real towards dealing with the problem that the Leader of the Opposition allegedly wanted to treat. All the satisfaction he got out of it was that he outwitted the hon. member for South Brisbane.

The six point "no confidence" motion includes two points that the mover, with his political experience, knew quite well he could not discuss in the House, but he used the tactics of including them in the motion to endeavour to get some political gain. He did not improve his political stature by the methods he adopted to bring an allegedly controversial subject before the House, by endeavouring to get around the procedure of the House, and by being disrespectful to one of the justices of the Supreme Court of Queensland, knowing full well that if he wants to deal with a member of the Supreme Court Bench he must have a substantive motion. His snide methods do him no credit.

Today we have listened to a variety of contributions from hon. members opposite.

The hon. member for South Brisbane did not seem to have his heart in it when he moved the motion. One would have expected an important "no confidence" motion to be seconded by at least one of the senior members of the party, but instead possibly the most junior member made a second-reading speech that he has made three or four times in the House already and did not deal with one point in the motion.

We have just heard what I was going to call a most remarkable dissertation by the hon. member for Bundaberg, but I will not say it was remarkable because he was running true to form—many half truths, many misconstrued statements, and nothing really substantial in a single statement that he made. He threw empty innuendoes around the Chamber, hoping that some of them would stick and hoping that they would damage someone or other, as sometimes they can. If he were concerned about alleged wrongs in the State, why, instead of making innuendoes, did he not make charges and stand up to them? He is never game to come right out in the open and make real charges on which he can be nailed. Let us have a look first of all at his statement about unemployment. The Government have made no attempt whatsoever to minimise in any way the effect of the present above-average unemployment in Queensland. In fact we based our case to the Loan Council on the fact that there was above-average seasonal unemployment in Queensland. As a result we were able to receive for Queensland very substantial financial assistance of which we have made very good use, notwithstanding what the hon. member for Bundaberg says. Of course, in an endeavour to make his point he comes out with the more-than-remarkable statement that unemployment in Queensland at present is the highest it has ever been in the State's history. Do not let us forget the famous statement made by the late Mr. Gledson when he was Minister for Labour and Industry.

Mr. WALSH: I rise to a point of order. Just to get the correction in its proper place I point out that I said, "The highest on record since the depression years." (Government laughter.)

Mr. NICKLIN: That is a further example of the hon. member's twisting of the truth. He said, "Including the depression years." That was his statement, a statement too silly for words. It is an example of the tactics which the hon. member will adopt in an endeavour to make a case. Exactly the same tactics were adopted in an endeavour to discredit what the Government have done with the money received from the Loan Council. For the benefit of the hon. member I intend to put him right and correct his mishandling of the figures.

Mr. Walsh: I used your figures, you know.

Mr. NICKLIN: I know the hon. member did. He used them all right, twisted them around the wrong way!

As to local authorities, he said in effect, "What is the good of allocating £663,000 to the local authorities if they cannot raise the money?" The hon. member has forgotten that there has been a change of Government in Queensland. He is thinking his own Government are still in office when there was not sufficient confidence in the Government of the State for the people of Queensland to lend local authorities money when they required it. Every year various sums of money allocated to local authorities went begging because they could not raise the money. The £663,000 is more than covered already.

Mr. Walsh: What about the Brisbane City Council?

Mr. NICKLIN: The hon. member knows full well that the Brisbane City Council does not come into the £663,000. Because of the confidence financial institutions in Queensland have got in the Government that amount of money is covered. Every local authority will get its money. Out of the money made available by the Federal Government the State Government have allotted £225,000 for loans and subsidies so that £888,000 will be expended before the end of the financial year by local authorities throughout Queensland on works that will provide employment. This money is being directed to areas where unemployment is greatest. Already all these works are starting. We have lost no time. If the hon. member likes to come down I shall show him the programme of works that has been released already.

Mr. Walsh: It is part of the normal works programme.

Mr. NICKLIN: The hon. member can wriggle as much as he likes. These are all new works—all extra works which are being put into operation through the Government's policy of cutting red tape and getting on with the job. It is no use having money if we cannot spend it. We are going to spend it and give work to the people who need it. In addition to the local authority works we are also implementing a £400,000 governmental programme. £125,000 is allocated to main roads. The hon. member mentioned that that was nothing. It will provide a lot of work. The people who will get a job as a result of that expenditure will think that it is something. £75,000 is to be spent on Forestry. Virtually all that money will go in wages for men who are now out of work. The hon. member attempted to belittle the allocation of £50,000 to the Railway Department and asked, "Where will that go in a big business like the Railway Department?" The hon. member forgets that at the present time the railways are suffering loss of traffic due to the drought, which the hon. member said was nothing. That £50,000 will be paid as wages and not for materials, and it will have

a very vital effect on employment and it will help the railway programme. An additional £100,000 is being allotted for housing and £50,000 for public works, making £400,000 in all. That is a substantial sum which will make a pronounced impact on unemployment in this State. The statement made by the hon. gentleman that the drought has not had such a terrific effect is not borne out by facts. The hon. member comes from one of the worst affected drought districts in which some of the cane-farmers never cut a stick of cane for two years; yet the hon. member says there is no drought.

Mr. Walsh: I already mentioned that—south from Rockhampton.

Mr. NICKLIN: I hope the people of Bundaberg will remember. I have just received from the Minister for Agriculture and Stock a report of the latest survey of the State which gives some idea of the cost of the drought to this State. The figures are alarming. Bearing these things in mind we realise there is more than normal unemployment. For example, the meat works cannot operate when there are no cattle to kill; the sugar mills cannot crush when there is no cane offering; the butter factories cannot make butter when no cream is being produced. All this is the result of the drought. The stoppage of the normal flow of money into the community must inevitably have an effect on the economy of the State and the number of jobs available.

Take the beef industry. Over the State deaths have averaged 5 to 10 per cent. through drought. In some of the worst affected areas deaths amount to 80 per cent. with an average of over 50 per cent. yet according to the hon. member for Bundaberg this drought is a mere nothing.

It is estimated by the Department of Agriculture and Stock that the loss of cattle in the State through drought is somewhere in the vicinity of £5,000,000. That does not take into account the loss of calving or natural increase, and does not take into account the loss of weight through drought. If we include the weight loss, which is estimated at a 60 per cent. loss in regard to production this year, hon. members would have some idea of the tremendously adverse effect the drought is having on the State.

Take the pastoral industry. It is estimated that the lambing loss due to drought is equivalent to £3,000,000. It is estimated further that we have lost 1 lb. per head in wool production which is approximately £7,000,000.

In the dairying industry butter production losses are 29 per cent. of normal, compared with 1957, and cheese 30 per cent. of the 1957 production, a loss of between £12,000,000 and £15,000,000.

Take the grain industry. The losses in wheat amount to £4,000,000, barley £500,000, linseed £1,000,000, and canary seed £200,000. The loss in sugar alone in the hon. member's

area, Bundaberg and Maryborough, where the farmer got a 54 per cent. crop, amounts to £4,000,000, yet the hon. member for Bundaberg has the colossal hide to say that the drought has cost the State nothing. It is costing the State a tremendous amount of money, losses we cannot afford.

Mr. Walsh: Those figures are not right. You said the loss was 54 per cent. It is 66 per cent.

Mr. NICKLIN: The hon. member has all the virtues and everything else. He knows more than the officials of the Department of Agriculture and Stock whose business it is to estimate these matters.

Mr. Walsh: I say the loss is greater.

Mr. NICKLIN: That is indicative of the hon. member's attitude. Nothing is right unless it is certified by the hon. member for Bundaberg.

Mr. Walsh: Look at your Sugar Journal. I say the loss is greater than you have said in the Bundaberg and Maryborough districts.

Mr. NICKLIN: The subject of unemployment has been debated very freely, and I do not wish to labour it, but I assert that it is ridiculous to say that the Government are doing nothing about it. We have done something very real in helping to provide employment at a time when it is so badly needed.

Let us consider some of the things the Government have done in the seven months they have been in power. One of the first things we did was to save the jobs of 685 railwaymen who had the axe suspended over their heads by the previous administration. We secured from the Loan Council—it was allocated immediately—an additional £1,250,000 for public and local authority works in the State. We allocated £125,000 for main roads works on roads with the greatest labour content. We allocated £50,000 for public works generally. We transferred the miners from Mt. Mulligan to Collinsville to keep them in their jobs. I give full credit to the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads. He did a magnificent job, but he did not talk about it. When he heard about it, he got on the job and did things. Those men who had lost their jobs are now working very profitably for this State.

We have also authorised the borrowing of additional money for local authority works throughout the State, and besides authorising the borrowing we have seen that the local authorities will get the money. That is more than the hon. member for Bundaberg did when he was the Treasurer of the State. Furthermore, in addition to this quick, positive action by the Government, we have induced private industry to get behind us and help in the problem of unemployment. We heard much today and yesterday about the unemployment that would be brought about

at Port Douglas on the readjustment of the handling of sugar. Only today I received a telegram which reads—

“Re report Cairns Post unemployment Port Douglas anticipate employing up to twenty extra men our Bloomfield mill adjacent Mossman Port Douglas area end of wet season will give preference Mossman Port Douglas men.”

That is an example of how private industry is getting behind the Government. It is prepared to do something to help.

Mr. Adair: I had that wire, too.

Mr. NICKLIN: But the hon. member did not bring it forward. He spoke a lot about men going to starve and all that sort of thing when he had in his pocket a telegram telling him exactly what I have read.

Mr. Gair: Do not be a deliberate liar.

Mr. SPARKES: Mr. Speaker, is the hon. member for South Brisbane in order in saying that the Premier is a deliberate liar?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! No hon. member would be in order in calling any hon. member a deliberate liar. If the hon. member made the statement I ask him to withdraw and apologise.

Mr. Gair: I would readily withdraw if I said he was a deliberate liar, but I said, “Don’t be a deliberate liar.”

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Let there be no quibbling. I require a withdrawal of the expression.

Mr. Gair: I withdraw.

Mr. NICKLIN: I do not intend to deal with the other points in the 6-point no-confidence motion but I do want to make reference to the remarks of the hon. member for Bundaberg in regard to Item 4,—The disquiet that has been created in the public mind by the Government's administration of the Queensland Police Force. He made the remarkable statement that there was political odour in the appointment of the new Commissioner of Police. Might I say that instead of there being any disquiet in the police force or in the public mind in regard to the appointment the Police Force has never been happier nor have the public of the State been happier over the selection of a Commissioner. The hon. member endeavoured to make his story and in it he made all sorts of extravagant statements, saying that the job was hawked all round Australia and that all sorts of unusual methods were adopted to bring about the appointment of a new Commissioner. The method adopted might have been unusual judged by the standard of hon. members opposite but not unusual by the standards that the Government adopt. We adopted the standard of getting the best man we could, but we did not hawk the job round Australia. We put public advertisements in the Press of every capital city calling applications for the position. We got a number

of applications, and the Deputy Premier asked Cabinet to appoint a sub-committee to help him to sort them out. That was done, and the record of every applicant was closely scrutinised. The Cabinet sub-committee selected a panel from among the applicants, and each of them was personally interviewed. Surely no-one would say that that method savoured of political odour. It was a practical method of getting the best man for the job. I take this opportunity of saying that Mr. Bischof was the unanimous choice of the Cabinet, and I believe we got the best man offering for the position.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN: Instead of causing public disquiet, Mr. Bischof's appointment was received with universal acclaim.

The hon. member tried to put forward the claims of men who he thinks would have been a wiser choice than Mr. Bischof. He referred to Inspector Donovan, but I think he did him a bad turn by bandying his name round the Chamber. I would not say that he was a friend of Inspector Donovan in speaking in the way that he did tonight. He spoke of corruption and all sorts of things. He did not say with whom the corruption was associated, but there was a certain amount of innuendo in his remarks. I can assure hon. members that if the Government find corruption in any member of the Police Force, he will not remain in it for very long.

The hon. member made all sorts of wild charges, and based his case on a newspaper report. He suggested the appointment of a Royal Commission. I know he is inclined to support the appointment of a Royal Commission on the slightest excuse if he thinks he can catch his political opponents, but the Government must have some real reason for the appointment of a Royal Commission. The hon. member made no real charges. After making a number of innuendoes he said, "Why don't you appoint a Royal Commission?" If he will reduce his charges to writing and is prepared to substantiate them, I, as head of the Government, will give every consideration to the appointment of a Royal Commission.

It is useless for the hon. member to come into the Chamber with innuendoes and half truths. Let him make a definite charge. Something that is contained in a newspaper report is not sufficient grounds for the appointment of a Royal Commission. If he can produce evidence of anything that savours of corruption, I can assure him that the Government will take immediate action.

The hon. member told us that somebody had said something about an amount of £250. If the hon. gentleman had evidence that somebody put £250 into someone else's hand to do something it was his duty to report it to the proper authorities, not to come into the House and talk about it under privilege. If he makes such charges he should stand up to them.

Mr. Walsh: I will make the statement that Bruce Wilkins got £250 paid by somebody. I do not know who it was.

Mr. NICKLIN: The hon. gentleman makes the statement now but why did he not make it to the police when the matter was being investigated?

Mr. Walsh: It was known to the police.

Mr. NICKLIN: It is no good making it here months after the event. However, I can assure him that if he has any real charges to make and if he will put them in writing and substantiate them with evidence, we will appoint a Royal Commission.

Mr. Walsh: You satisfy the Government about the charges made by the two detectives; that is what you have to do.

Mr. NICKLIN: I am not going to be led off the trail by the hon. gentleman's introducing something else. It is no good his making statements and innuendoes. Let him back them if he wants a Royal Commission.

I suggest that the grounds for moving the motion have been very weak indeed and not one tittle of evidence has been given by any speaker from the ranks of the Queensland Labour Party to substantiate any of the points written into it.

Mr. WOOD (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (10.12 p.m.): On few occasions in Queensland's political history have there been more grounds for the House to express its lack of confidence in the Government and I suppose there has never been an occasion in that history when those grounds have existed and have been so shockingly expressed. Let me say at the outset that I have no confidence in the record of the Government in its handling of the economy of the State and its interest in the welfare of the great mass of its people. I think that opinion is shared by most people in the State; if an election were held tomorrow it would be overwhelmingly confirmed. I am not challenging the Government to go to the polls. I know they fought too long to become the Government to take such a foolish course. But if an election were held the people of the State would demonstrate in no uncertain manner that they have no confidence in the Government.

Mr. Walsh: You wait till the Queensland Labour Party wins the Flinders seat.

Mr. WOOD: I will not be diverted by the hon. member for Bundaberg, who is now trying to switch something else into the debate. Heaven only knows he has swung enough in, including, as the Premier said, half truths, veiled assertions and innuendoes. He has been given a direct and unequivocal assurance that if he will put those charges about the Police Force in writing top consideration will be given to the appointment of a Royal Commission.

Mr. Walsh: Are you ignoring the charges made by the two detectives?

Mr. WOOD: So I am not going to be diverted by any more side-tracking of his. The Government were elected by a fluke as a result of the tragic position that occurred through rank disloyalty by the people who left the party to which they owed allegiance. Since this fluke put the reins of government into the hands of those who now hold them the Government have forfeited any right that they may have had to the confidence of the people. They were overwhelmed by a spirit of exhilaration at their unexpected victory and they have never had their feet on the ground since. They have absolutely no touch with the ordinary people. It cannot be said that they lost it because they just never had that feeling of understanding and sympathy for those on whose behalf we of the Australian Labour Party are speaking tonight.

I believe that the Government are unrepentant sinners. From time to time we have pointed out their sins of omission and commission but their attitude towards the motion we moved on the first sitting day this week for the adjournment of the House showed that they are unrepentant. The motion was moved at the earliest possible opportunity, not for tactical reasons but to bring to the notice of the Ministers in particular, and the back-benchers who support them, the alarming position developing in Queensland. We wanted to lodge our protest against the Government who were playing the role of Nero in the unemployment tragedy in Queensland.

I have prefaced my remarks by saying that we have no confidence in the record of the Government. Equally we have no confidence in the Queensland Labour Party or its bona fides. I cannot affirm that too often or too strongly. The Queensland Labour Party was born in disloyalty, and nurtured by the hatred of its leaders. Its leaders are consumed by the hatred they have for those who remained loyal to the Australian Labour Party. Their judgment has been entirely warped by the hatred which manifests itself on every possible occasion. They have self-confessedly embarked on a campaign of destruction aimed at the Movement to which they owe their political all. I say now that this campaign is doomed to failure and will result in their inevitable self-destruction as is happening with the party's brother-in-arms, the Democratic Labour Party.

The hon. member for South Brisbane has persistently denied any association with the Democratic Labour Party of New South Wales, but I would ask the House to observe the inescapable family likeness between the performances of the hon. member for South Brisbane's party in Queensland and those of the Democratic Labour Party in New South Wales as revealed by top party executive, Charles L. Morgan who recently resigned from the party. In view of the affected interest of the Queensland party in the lot

of the workers and their protested hostility to rent and price increases and unemployment, the statements of Morgan are highly informative.

Here are some of the things which he said in his letter of resignation—

"The party does not represent the community in general but a section of the community.

"The party has by its 'spoiling' campaign against the A.L.P. alienated from itself many attracted by its facade of constructive policies.

"The party's war on Communism is a smokescreen to cover policies favouring a section of the community.

"I can no longer support the sham and humbug which the D.L.P. has become."

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. gentleman to state the point he is debating.

Mr. WOOD: I am debating the motives underlying the action of the hon. member for South Brisbane in bringing this motion before the House.

I continue to quote from the letter of resignation—

"I have found the D.L.P. rotten at the core and will warn my neighbour accordingly.

"The party's platform has been distorted, and by devious means has become the tool for the personal ambitions of its general secretary.

"While declaring itself as anti-Labour, anti-Liberal, anti-Country Party, and anti-Communist, the party has consistently refused to fight an election on its own policies. Destructive criticism and negative attitudes mark the path of those who are merely determined on the destruction of the A.L.P. through the medium of the D.L.P."

How like the party led by the hon. member for South Brisbane! We could quite justly substitute the name Q.L.P. for D.L.P. in the statement made by Mr. Morgan, and the statement would be accurately descriptive of the Q.L.P. in Queensland. I would like to say more, but we have important problems to discuss in this State. Had this motion been restricted to items (1) dealing with unemployment, (2) rising prices, (3) rent control, and (5) transport, we would have given it our unqualified support. I make that absolutely clear. All these matters concern the welfare of our people and are matters on which we should all feel deeply. The A.L.P. is bitterly resentful towards the Government's attitude on unemployment, its foolish relaxation of price control, and its rent legislation which is placing a grievous burden on very many of our people. I shall have more to say on those things later on. I know that I cannot discuss in detail No. 5. Our opinion on the transport bungle is

reflected in the wrath of the people of the Darling Downs and the Lockyer at the action taken. I am not discussing the question of the cancellation of licences. I do say this regarding the two firms whose licences were cancelled: they are good employers and I believe that they have been honest in their dealings with the Transport Commissioner. On the other hand, I have had drivers employed by other transport firms coming to me and telling me of the way in which their principals have systematically defrauded the Transport Commissioner.

Mr. Pizzey Have you reported that to the Transport Commissioner? It is your duty to do so.

Mr. WOOD: This information was only given to me very recently. I shall certainly do so. I should prefer to discuss it personally with the Premier. I know that I cannot elaborate on this question of transport as you, Mr. Speaker, have ruled that it is sub judice. If the mover of this motion of no confidence had limited it to those points, and heaven knows they contain enough of interest to all our people to evoke a wide-scale discussion, our support would have been given to the motion.

Another item has been deleted. I have no intention of discussing it, but I think I should be given the opportunity of saying on behalf of the Australian Labour Party that if that item had been allowed to remain in the motion hon. members of the Australian Labour Party would have taken the opportunity of declaring their confidence in the integrity and capacity of Mr. Justice Wanstall.

Since the election we have at every opportunity demonstrated our feelings on these extremely important subjects covered by the four items. Item 4 dealing with the appointment of the Commissioner of Police is, I believe, the crux of the motion. I believe the House is entitled to ask was not the whole motion designed in such a way that the four items could be used as pegs on which to launch attacks on the appointment of the Commissioner of Police. I believe that this is a phoney motion, that the Queensland Labour Party were not very interested about these vitally important subjects, unemployment, price control and transport. I shall have more to say about that later. The Queensland Labour Party threw those in merely as an excuse to launch an attack on the appointment of Inspector Bischof. I say again on behalf of the Australian Labour Party that Commissioner Bischof's selection was a very good choice. I shall say something later about the method of selection, but Inspector Bischof has an outstanding record. I believe he is honest and capable, the two main qualities that should be possessed by a Commissioner of Police. His reaction to political intrigue should on no account be considered; he must be judged only on capacity and integrity. I shall return to that later.

During the adjournment motion I was limited to 15 minutes and could speak only very briefly on the unemployment position. I am certain that those out of work remain completely unconvinced by the answer given by the Premier in that debate. He admitted that the Government realised the seriousness of the position. He said they thought they were doing all they could to correct it, but he gave the House no evidence that the number of unemployed was being reduced. We have further evidence. I have received a couple of telegrams. The first reads—

“Drastic cut in railway orders. Dismissals. More pending. Request your assistance.”

A further telegram reads—

“Ten fettlers between Mutarnell and El Arish being paid off on Friday next. Permanent way in bad, run down condition. Appreciate your aid in having these men's services retained. O'Brien, District Secretary, A.R.U.”

Further evidence is coming to hand day by day of small bands of men here and somewhere else being dismissed, but at the same time we are told in a complacent way by the spokesman for the Government that everything that can be done is being done.

I suppose my own area, Toowoomba, is one of the most favoured areas in the State. The last unemployment figures I received showed that in Toowoomba there were approximately 300 unemployed men. I think the figure was 296. Yesterday the Minister for Transport held up to me a copy of the Toowoomba “Chronicle” that I had not seen and said, “Don't you know what we are doing? There will be work for 50.” That will only be replacing the men who have lost their employment as workmen or owner-drivers when there was a restriction in main roads work in the Toowoomba area, and the 50 to be replaced will only be probably employing one out of every six unemployed in Toowoomba. The position in Toowoomba is probably more favourable than it is in any other city in Queensland but I find it extremely difficult to find a job for a man out of work. I have decent young lads who have just passed the Junior coming to me every week who want to be employed in the Railway Department or somewhere else. Whereas 12 months or two years ago it was a simple matter to place them, it is completely impossible now to put these decent young fellows into jobs.

I was pleased that the Minister for Transport gave the assurance to the hon. member for Ipswich that there was no truth in the statement circulating in the Railway Department that there would be wide-scale dismissals. Railwaymen generally will welcome that assurance. I hope it proves to be reliable.

Mr. Pizzey: You did not believe it for a minute.

Mr. WOOD: I will say this—the hon. member for Ipswich did the right thing. He did not originate the statement. I tell the Minister now that in the last week I have had approximately a dozen railway employees coming to me and asking me exactly the same thing, and the same figure was used. The hon. member for Ipswich did the right thing in publicly asking the question of the Minister. The hon. gentleman has given his assurance that there is no foundation for the rumour. We accept it, but I do not think the Minister was right in making rather cheap jibes at the hon. member for exercising a public responsibility in asking the question. I tell the Minister definitely that I have had reliable reports that in some cases senior officers in some parts of the railway service are holding veiled threats of possible unemployment over the heads of some employees. That is happening. Members are being told that if they do not take certain action they will be joining the ranks of the unemployed.

Mr. Pizzey: What sort of action?

Mr. WOOD: That they will be dismissed.

Mr. Pizzey: What action have they got to take?

Mr. WOOD: Such as becoming too active in union matters. Veiled threats have been made. It is not enough to realise that the unemployment position is serious; it is not enough to express pious hopes that it will improve. The Treasurer said that he expects that with the allocation of additional loan money and the return to normal seasons we will quickly catch up the unemployment lag. I sincerely hope he is right. No man in his right senses wants to see a growth in unemployment in this State just for political reasons. There is nothing more demoralising to domestic, community or national life than unemployment. I hope the Treasurer's forecast is correct. I hope, too, that in a month's time, after the work has been put in train, the Treasurer will be able to say, "Because of what has been done, the unemployment figure has been reduced to 10,000. Next week we expect to see it reduced to 5,000, and we hope that shortly it will disappear altogether." If he can say that, I shall be the first to congratulate him.

Mr. Hiley: My two greatest worries are the falling prices for wool and metal.

Mr. WOOD: I am sure the Treasurer will agree that when a Government conquers one worry, another always takes its place. A Government is very seldom free from worries.

On the subject of unemployment, it is interesting to hearken back to what Professor Hytten, one of Mr. Menzies' economic advisers, had to say when he advocated a permanent pool of unemployed. As late as 27 February, Professor Downing, who is professor of economic research at the Melbourne

University, told 80 big business men, at Adelaide of the economic virtue of having some unemployment. He said, and I quote from "The Telegraph" of 27 February—

"My own feeling is that Australia today is in a twilight zone between full employment and inflation, just where we want to be. The present increase in unemployment is pathetically small when we look at our total work force."

What kind of a voice is that to have in the economic councils of a Christian society? Apparently the professor regrets that there are not more people out of work.

I think all hon. members have received a letter from the Brisbane City Mission dated 28 February, in which Mr. C. S. Trudgeon who is secretary and superintendent of the Mission, says—

"Just now there is a heavy call upon our resources. The number of men who have been unemployed for frightening long periods has us deeply concerned, for in so many instances we have to supply their families with food as well as clothing. I worked out our daily requirements and I was amazed to know that we need £80 cash and £270 worth of goods, such as clothing, etc. to meet the needs of the distressed of this community."

In "The News Release" of 19 February, 1958, from the Commonwealth Employment Service, we have these figures of the number of unemployed in the main Queensland towns and cities—

Mr. Nicklin: Are they sustenance, or registered?

Mr. WOOD: The figures cover recipients of unemployment benefit. They are—

Brisbane	..	..	..	3,523
Rockhampton	..	..	..	1,349
Townsville	..	..	..	935
Mackay	..	..	..	861
Bundaberg	..	..	..	825
Cairns	..	..	..	642
Maryborough	..	..	..	486
Toowoomba	..	..	..	296
Ayr	..	..	..	288
Ingham	..	..	..	262
Innisfail	..	..	..	252
Ipswich	..	..	..	180
Gympie	..	..	..	117

It is not a case, as the Premier said, of labouring the point. The more that the House can bring into the minds and hearts of Cabinet members the urgent need for making the cure of unemployment their main task, the better chance we shall have of achieving our purpose. I repeat what I said in the debate on the motion for the adjournment. We have no desire to create panic. It cannot be said, for instance, that the Commonwealth Employment Service of the Department of Labour and National Service, which releases these figures creates panic when it states the number of unemployed. As I said yesterday, accurate and up-to-date

statistics give tremendous help, and if we realise the great urgency of the problem and do not become complacent we will be doing our job. If the Government correct the matter, as I hope they will, we will freely give them due credit.

I will not say very much more about rent. I asked the Minister a question and he answered it this morning. I asked him whether, in view of the extraordinary rises of from 40 to 65 per cent. given by the magistrate in rent determinations, he would concede that they were weighted in favour of the landlord. I think the Minister will fairly admit that the text of his answer was that his general opinion was that in many cases the rents were not high enough and if justice were done to the landlords they would receive more.

Mr. Munro: No. My statement was very clear. It was to the effect that, if those rentals are determined on the basis of values as at 1 July, 1948, they are very much less than a fair economic rent.

Mr. Wood: That is right. In effect that is what I said. The Minister said that if justice were done the rents in those cases would be higher. Already, as the Minister has said as reported in the Press, many people have applied for a rental determination, many who feel that the 20 per cent. allowed under the Act is not enough. They have gone to the court seeking more and in very many cases they have got much more than the 20 per cent. Have we any way of determining how many people have not even gone to the court? This is no propaganda, but we know the position where people who have struggled to get a rented home have settled in and have not wanted to lose it in any circumstances. We know cases have occurred where the landlord has come to such a tenant and said, "Under the new Act I can charge more rent," and demanded more than a 20 per cent. rise. Rather than go to court and risk losing the house the tenant will pay the extra. In Toowoomba last week a businessman was approached by his landlord. At the moment he is paying a very substantial rent. The landlord told him that under the new Act he was going to charge him increased rent, and he stated a mere increase of 150 per cent. It so happens that the tenant is a man who will fight a bit for himself, and the tenant said, "I will take this to court." Finally the beneficent landlord broke down the requested increase to 100 per cent. Naturally the tenant will still go to court. I know of many landlords who have made demands beyond what is allowed by the amending legislation and in many cases the tenants have readily acceded to them because they did not want to risk losing their homes.

Some time ago the A.L.P. strenuously opposed the Government's attitude in relaxing price control and I shall have something to say on that. What I say now will be an argument to support the case that I have made that the motion moved by the hon.

member for South Brisbane was a phoney one, when he put up such a case today on rents and prices.

Who is prepared to concede that there is any sincerity whatsoever in the protested concern of the hon. member for South Brisbane over prices, rents and unemployment after reviewing his apparent unconcern in these matters since the inauguration of this Parliament? I shall produce evidence of this unconcern. When the Australian Labour Party moved for the disallowance of an Order in Council whereby the prices of essential foods were decontrolled, what did the hon. member for South Brisbane have to contribute to this protest against an order which gave retailers an open go to fleece the public? Although he claims that the major concern of himself and his party is to protect the working man and his family, the hon. member for South Brisbane did not have one word to say on that occasion in defence of this implied attack on the working family. The only member of the party to participate in the debate was the hon. member for Baroona who, on every occasion has carried the party on his back. Whatever else may be said about him, on every occasion he has expressed in his own way his views on legislation. One would have been justified in expecting a party leader claiming to represent the workers to have made an important contribution to a protest, the sole aim of which was to save working families from exploitation. However, not one word of protest was advanced by the hon. member for South Brisbane against this scandalous order which has since resulted in meteoric price rises in fish, fruit and vegetables.

Are we then to accept that there is any sincerity in paragraph 2 of the motion wherein the Government are charged with having failed to hold the price of basic commodities? I think not.

If one is incensed over an injustice to the people and is given the opportunity to register his protest in the Parliament of the people I should think he would be quick to take advantage of it. Why, then, the strange silence of the hon. member for South Brisbane?

Let us come to rents, the subject of paragraph 3 of the motion. How much interest did the hon. member for South Brisbane and his party of 12 manifest in the threat to tenants contained in the Bill brought down towards the close of last year? Not much! We see the results of the legislation today in astronomic increases of rents to the tenants of flats and houses. But when the Bill was before the House the hon. member for South Brisbane, the party leader, entered the debate at the introductory stage only and was silent thereafter. He had nothing to say in the important second reading or Committee stages of the debate. In fact, only four members of the party participated, which showed a very poor interest in a Bill to which we objected so strongly, a

Bill which would send rents soaring. Conversely, the intense interest of the members of the Australian Labour Party in the legislation was reflected by the fact that there were 12 speakers on its initiation and 16 in all who contested the measure through all stages and forced five divisions.

Would hon. members concede any real interest in prices and rents by the hon. member for South Brisbane when his party could produce only one vocal opponent to the de-control of prices and only four against the harsh and inequitable amendment of the Landlord and Tenant Act which is now reaping such a harvest of money for the landlord and such a harvest of worry and hardship for tenants?

I cannot recall the hon. member for South Brisbane ever mentioning unemployment in the Chamber since the House met in August last. Indeed, he has not addressed one question to the Government on prices, rents or unemployment since he took his seat in this current Parliament.

I wish to say a little on the question of the police. As I said before, we believe that Commissioner Bischof is an outstanding officer. I do not think we are doing any service to the newly-appointed Commissioner by including in a motion of no confidence a section designed to smear him. The ex-Treasurer spoke of gossip; half of his speech consisted of it. I have heard a lot of gossip; we have all heard a lot of it; but what irresponsible legislators we would be if we based our speeches on slander and gossip. We heard what was going to be done. I frankly think that an all-out attack was going to be made on the Commissioner, but that the Leader of the Q.L.P. sensed the public reaction and back-pedalled. That is why the hon. member called "Formal" twice yesterday when the speaker called the motion. The whole conduct of this debate has this significance. The motion was moved by the ex-Premier who merely used a house of words—words that conveyed nothing. It was seconded, not by the Deputy Leader, the hon. member for Bundaberg, but by a back-bencher, for whom we all felt sorry; a back-bencher who stood up and did his best under trying circumstances and gave us an Address in Reply speech on his own electorate, in which he has every right to be interested. The hon. member for Bundaberg waited back. It was obvious that the whole gravamen of the charges were contained in the speech the hon. member was to make. But what a damp squib it turned out to be. No definite charges were laid. Let us have a look at the speech the hon. member made. I am not quite clear in my mind whether the ex-Treasurer asked for a Royal Commission into events that happened before or after the accession of the Government. I want to say this: if there is disquiet in the Police Force, there was

also considerable disquiet before the August elections. I quote from the Policy Speech of the Australian Labour Party—

"We will undertake a thoroughgoing investigation into the administration of the Police Department.

"Apart from police departmental administration, there are many matters of serious concern to police personnel—including suspensions and dismissals, superannuation, etc.—on which we will seek informed opinion as a prerequisite to any inquiry.

"For some years there has been marked discontent in the Police Force—a matter which should not only gravely concern us, but the whole community—since we rely on the Police Force to maintain law and order.

"These matters will gain our earnest consideration, as we will not brook any injustice under the law to the men who police the law."

If there is disquiet in the Police Force it is not something that has suddenly happened. In fact I believe it can be safely said that if there was disquiet in the Force—and there was—there is less disquiet since the appointment of Commissioner Bischof. I have found that the rank and file members of the Police Force welcomed his appointment, and that the people in the main who have mentioned to me the harmful effects of political intrigue within the Police Force are policemen themselves. I should be very wary, in view of what has happened before, of any Royal Commission suggested by the ex-Treasurer, but, if on the other hand the ex-Treasurer can give to this House or the Minister in writing, as he has so often said previously when charges have been made, definite charges which he is prepared to substantiate, hon. members of the A.L.P. will wholeheartedly support him if we believe that those charges are well founded.

Mr. Walsh: Charges have been made by two detectives. That is sufficient.

Mr. WOOD: No charges have been made in this House tonight. Let me make that quite clear. As for this Press report, "Secret Probe on Police," surely the day has not come when on the strength of a speculative report by a journalist we are going to appoint a Royal Commission. We have had experience of Royal Commissions from time to time, and, as I said previously I should be very, very careful before I supported a request from the ex-Treasurer for a Royal Commission, having in mind what has happened in the past.

I have another Press cutting here, attributing this statement to the ex-Premier—

"The appointment of the new Police Commissioner was 'one of the greatest pieces of injustice ever meted out to an officer of the Deputy Commissioner's standing.'"

The ex-Treasurer tonight told us that a grievous wrong had been done because a senior, capable officer had been superseded by Inspector Bischof. After all, it is the Government's responsibility to appoint the Commissioner, and they must be guided by the things I mentioned previously, his capacity and integrity. It is for the Government to decide how the appointment will be made. I can recall many occasions in the past when officers have not been appointed on seniority only. I can remember when Inspector Martin was made Chief Inspector, although he was junior to Inspector Bischof and ten others. When Inspector Martin was appointed to that position, he superseded the man who is now Commissioner. In top appointments I do not think it has ever been the Government's hidebound, rigid policy to appoint on every occasion the senior man.

When this appointment was made I criticised the method in which it was done, and I repeat my criticism. The Government should have acted in the normal way for filling a top, responsible position. Those appointments are made from time to time—Public Service Commissioner, Commissioner for Railways and other top officers. I objected to this being dropped to the realms of the ridiculous. It was virtually made a public sweepstake. The Minister went to other States like a radio talent scout. I criticised him at the time and I repeat the criticism. I believe that the correct procedure is this: first, see if you have a suitable, capable man within your own police ranks; if you have not, and you are satisfied there is no-one here to carry out the job, you should look for applicants from other States. I think the most suitable thing to do is to appoint a local man if he is efficient. This running about was engaged in, but finally the Government came back to the man right under their noses. Whilst I criticise the method by which it was done I say that all members of the A.L.P. are in complete accord with the man whom the Government finally chose.

The Premier gave it as his opinion that in voting on this motion we would have to vote on all items at once. I repeat that I have no confidence in the action of the Government in regard to controlling unemployment, in regard to prices and rent and their general transport policy, but on the other hand I have every confidence in the Commissioner of Police. In voting on the motion, on no account could I express confidence in the Government because we have not confidence in them, but on no account is the Opposition going to vote for a motion that would condemn the Commissioner of Police.

Mr. CONNOLLY (Kurilpa) (11.1 p.m.): This motion of no confidence has proved such a fiasco that probably one should not take up the time of hon. members at this hour of the night with further debate were it not that many things have been said which, in my respectful submission, need to be answered. It is my opinion if there is one major problem facing the Government today it is

that of employment, a problem that nobody is attempting to minimise, but I suggest the Ministry have already demonstrated in their answer to the motion moved by the official Opposition some days ago, that they are completely in charge of, fully aware of and taking all necessary steps to deal with as rapidly as possible. When what is supposed to be a major party raises a motion of this character hon. members would expect to have some really serious matters raised for their consideration. Apart from the general economic questions which hon. members have the right and duty to raise, what has been brought forward for serious consideration? A lot of rumour and unsubstantiated hearsay. Mr. Speaker ruled out of order debate on one item of the motion and I join with the leaders of the Government in condemning as quite disgraceful the effort to smear the name of an honourable man in a way which the gentleman who moved the motion knows is not open in this Chamber so that the matter could be properly ventilated. When the motion was moved today it proved to be not a genuine motion. The hon. member for South Brisbane in moving it was apologetic. The hon. member for Barooka was as usual incomprehensible, and the hon. member for Bundaberg whom we expected to bring out the bucket, could only bring out "The Courier-Mail." The tail of the party spent their time priming the parish pump, and one cannot blame them for doing so because they had no material to work on, furnished to them by their leaders, to substantiate this extraordinary motion.

The motion is supposed to be one of no confidence in the Government, but it has succeeded only in destroying what little confidence any of us may have had in the honourable gentleman who moved it, or the other honourable and titled gentlemen who sit on the cross-benches, and who with such indecent haste rushed in and secured for themselves the permanent title of "Honourable". I do not know whom they wanted to impress, but for years they have been refusing honours from Her Majesty for other and perhaps more deserving citizens. They have raised a couple of matters that are really not worth being dealt with. However, they have raised them in an effort to spread disquiet among the public, and for that reason they must be replied to.

First of all, we have the subject matter dealt with in paragraph 4(b) of the motion, that is, the alleged intervention of the Government in the ordinary procedures of the Police Appeal Board. I may be mistaken, but I do not remember a shred of evidence being adduced by anybody to suggest that the Government have intervened in the procedures of the Police Appeal Board. I take it that what the mover intends to convey is that an appeal before the Police Appeal Board was settled. The hon. gentlemen who bring a complaint against the Government because the two parties to the appeal—the Police Commissioner on the one hand and

two constables on the other—managed to settle an appeal are two former members of the Executive Council, and they should know something about the procedure before courts and other judicial tribunals. There is nothing at all unusual in a procedure of this nature being settled. The two constables were charged with misconduct in that they made an untrue statement. They were under a suspicion on a major criminal charge—circumstances under which anybody might be tempted to tamper with the truth. They were held not to have given truthful answers to the inspector who was investigating the matter. Perhaps “investigating” is not the correct word, as I shall demonstrate. On that basis, they had committed an offence. That is not now denied. I think they originally hoped to persuade the Police Appeal Board that they were not guilty of the charge, but when the Commissioner intimated that he thought a lesser punishment than dismissal would be adequate, they were prepared to withdraw the appeal against their conviction, as it were. There was nothing at all unusual about that. Frequently in the Criminal Court the Crown Prosecutor will intimate to counsel for the defence that he will accept a plea of guilty on a lesser charge when convictions on a couple of charges are open to a jury.

The hon. member for Baroona, who holds himself out as an expert in law, says it is extraordinary for a magistrate to decide on a question of punishment without hearing the whole of the evidence. I have yet to hear a more ignorant and a more extraordinary statement from a former member of the Executive Council with the permanent title of “Honourable”.

Mr. Power: That is the opinion of a competent legal man, which you are not.

Mr. CONNOLLY: I have no wish to try to establish my own prominence in my profession. However, I can say without fear of contradiction that whenever a plea of guilty is entered in the Criminal Court, no evidence is heard. The facts are stated to the tribunal, which then determines the punishment. Evidence is very rarely taken and usually only if the prisoner wants to put it forward in mitigation of his punishment. The Crown evidence is almost always accepted. The Prosecutor states the facts to the tribunal. There is absolutely nothing unusual about it and nothing extraordinary except in the extraordinary mind of the hon. gentleman who made the comment here to-day.

Mr. Power: It is the opinion of a prominent legal man of much greater experience than you.

Mr. CONNOLLY: As I say, I am not here to discuss my own experience; but no-one can possibly dispute that that is the regular and constant practice of the Criminal Court.

Mr. Power: An illegal action.

Mr. CONNOLLY: The settlement of legal actions happens constantly. I was present yesterday in the Supreme Court on the settlement of a legal action.

Mr. Power: I said it was an illegal action.

Mr. CONNOLLY: What would the hon. gentleman know about it?

Mr. Power: I would know more about it than you, “Necessity.”

Mr. CONNOLLY: It is probably that sort of self-confidence that has enabled the hon. member for Baroona to perpetuate himself in the House when nobody who observes his conduct can imagine how he manages to do it. But I suggest to hon. members that they should be entirely satisfied with the punishment meted out to the two constables. A prime principle of criminal law is that a man is not to be punished for something of which he has been acquitted because he can be caught for something less.

Mr. Walsh: Were they acquitted?

Mr. CONNOLLY: Those two officers were not convicted in any criminal proceedings. There was no evidence on which they could be convicted, and that was the ruling of the Court. They were then charged by the Commissioner with having made a false statement to Chief Inspector Donovan, as he then was, and on that basis they were dismissed from the Force, although people who have made false statements and have wilfully misconducted themselves in the line of duty, which is very different and most reprehensible, have been getting off with fines and reprimands for years.

Mr. Aikens: Miss them with the left barrel and then try to shoot them with the right.

Mr. CONNOLLY: Quite so, and it is entirely improper. The fact that these hon. gentlemen tried to support it indicates the sort of attitude of mind they have had to the administration of justice in this unfortunate State for so many years.

On the basis of the Mt. Isa matter I have to traverse another matter—and it is unfortunate that whenever the members of the Q.L.P. espouse somebody's cause he has occasion very rapidly to wish they had left it alone. Heaven preserve us from our friends! Last year a gentleman called Quinn was Comptroller-General of Prisons and he resigned the office. The hon. member for South Brisbane thought he could make unpleasant political capital out of it and he insisted on ventilating it in the House. Hon. members will remember that the net result was that the Minister for Justice, a most temperate and moderate man, if I may say so with respect, was forced, in defence of his Government and his Ministry, to give some facts about the gentleman concerned and his competence for the office, which need never

have seen the light of day. However, the Government cannot be expected just to sit back and take any sort of criticism levelled under privilege in the Chamber without defending themselves, so it was necessary to state the facts.

We had another instance today. A Medical Board was held into the health of the former Commissioner of Police. Having provoked the Government by the very terms of the notice of motion to explain the circumstances of the resignation, the hon. member for Bundaberg had the brass-bound effrontery to taunt the Minister and reproach him for giving the terms of the medical certificate saying, "What a dreadful thing to discuss a man's health here in public!" It was most unfortunate that it was necessary, but who started it all? Who caused it? It was the gentleman who moved this preposterous motion who caused it. Heaven preserve us from our friends!

There is one other officer of the police force who is unfortunately his friend. None of us has any desire to ventilate matters unnecessarily but it seems to me that it is necessary here to advert to some degree to the position of the Deputy Commissioner of Police because we have had a statement from the hon. member for South Brisbane that it was the greatest piece of injustice ever meted out to an officer of that gentleman's standing or seniority—I forget the exact words—that he should be passed over for the position of Commissioner. We were asked tonight by the hon. member for Bundaberg why was Inspector Donovan, or Deputy Commissioner Donovan, not appointed to the office. The hon. member said that there was no suggestion of corruption against him. I hasten to say that so far as I am personally aware there has never been any such suggestion. He went on to say that his work as a criminal investigator has not been faulted. It is the tragedy of these cheap political tricks in which this gentleman specialises that when they put Governments and those who support them into a corner it is necessary that something of what we understand to be the truth must come out. With profound respect to the gentlemen concerned it is my submission to the Chamber that the proceedings before Mr. Fowler, S.M., in the matter of an investigation of certain charges against Constable Paul McArthur and Constable Eric Keith Murray show that the investigation which was purported to be made by the Deputy Commissioner at Mount Isa into the death of Jorgensen was an entirely inadequate investigation. He was forced under cross-examination to admit not once but at least half a dozen times that matters which clearly bore most directly on this man's death he had not followed up. His reasons for not doing so are ones which, to me at least, are as incomprehensible as the speech of the hon. member for Baroona. Broadly speaking, Jorgensen died as a consequence of some violent injury. That fact is beyond doubt.

The crucial question is where he sustained it and from whom? I think it is fair to everybody, including the dead man himself—one does not wish to speak ill of the dead—to say that it is beyond doubt that he was a man who drank a great deal, a man of violent disposition.

Mr. Aikens: It is no reason why he should be kicked in the stomach.

Mr. CONNOLLY: Quite right, but I think that is a fair statement as part of the background. The case which the Crown and the Deputy Commissioner were seeking to make out, that he had been assaulted in the cells at the watchhouse by one or other of these two constables, McArthur or Murray, was certainly a possibility. Rather, let me put it this way: it was a possibility that he sustained his injury in the cells; it was also a possibility as the evidence developed at the coronial inquiry and the subsequent inquiry, that he sustained his injury either in a brawl with a man named D'Ambrosi or in a brawl with a man named Lucas. There was a further distinct possibility that he did sustain his injuries in the cells at the watchhouse but that the person who injured him was not named either McArthur or Murray. I suppose also with the indulgence of hon. members to follow the example of the Deputy Premier and not name the police constable who was named by the deceased as being the person who "slapped" him in the stomach—I think that was the expression. The first point I want to make is this: in view of his history, and in view of other evidence offered to the Deputy Commissioner when he was investigating, and evidence given in the course of the inquest, Jorgensen could have sustained his injuries in a brawl much earlier than the date of his arrest. One very important piece of evidence is that this man on his own statement complained of illness on arrival at the watchhouse. That appears at pages 273 and 274 of the record. It appears plainly that he complained of illness at the watchhouse, and the Deputy Commissioner had that information available to him. He conceded that that, if correct, would alter the whole aspect of his investigations, and he was asked later why he ignored the evidence and he said, "I had no such evidence." Counsel said to him, "Was it not included in your statement that Jorgensen said, 'When I was first charged the night before I asked for a solicitor and a doctor and I was refused.'" The Chief Inspector admitted that. That is one aspect of the investigation. Hon. members might think that that was a matter to be followed up, and that would possibly exonerate any police officer. The evidence was that he had been seen in the house of a Mr. and Mrs. Lucas, and an injury to his groin had been observed. That was not followed up. The deceased man made a statement in which he named his assailant as being a police constable. I will not mention his name. He made the statement to a man

called Newburn and a man called Pearce. That was known to the Deputy Commissioner. As far as one can judge that was never properly investigated.

Mr. Walsh: All the more reason why there should be a Royal Commission.

Mr. CONNOLLY: You sit quiet for a while. That is on the question of the investigation of what is clearly to be inferred as a felonious death. The hon. member for Bundaberg said there is no suggestion that the criminal investigation work of the gentleman concerned has ever been faulted. I cannot accept that. There is one other matter which is most improper and appears at pages 287 to 288 of the record. It appears clearly that the Deputy Commissioner caused to be forwarded to Inspector O'Sullivan, who had assisted him in the investigation and who did not give evidence at the inquest, certain material. The Deputy Commissioner gave evidence at the inquest and was cross-examined. When these proceedings were launched before Mr. Fowler the Deputy Commissioner was to be called again. Things had got a bit larger at that stage and it seemed desirable to somebody—perhaps the Deputy Commissioner himself or the Crown Law officers, that some corroboration of his account of the investigation should be given. It was decided to call Inspector O'Sullivan. To prepare Inspector O'Sullivan for the task of telling Mr. Fowler the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, the Deputy Commissioner caused to be forwarded to him a copy of the transcript of the Deputy Commissioner's cross-examination at the coronial inquiry. What is the object of one witness getting a copy of the evidence given by the witness he is intended to corroborate?

I do not want to take that any further, but this Government cannot be forced into corners like this by scurvy, cheap, political tricks and their back benchers sit by and allow them to be attacked unworthily without defending them. These things have to be said. I do not relish saying this sort of thing, but if those who seek to befriend the Deputy Commissioner had held their tongues and had realised that the Government are doing their best to give the State a decent, clean, efficient Police Force and that they would not pass over a Deputy Commissioner for no good reason, it would not have been necessary in such a public forum as this to say the things I have said.

The Secretary of the Police Union has been attacked. His behaviour was attacked. No-one reading the transcript of the investigation at Mt. Isa could come to any conclusion, if he was fair-minded, other than that the whole matter is completely shrouded in doubt. No fair-minded person could dream of concluding on the sort of evidence elicited by this investigation that any of the people mentioned was responsible for Jorgensen's death. The most he could get to would be a state of extreme suspicion; he could not make up his mind. It is not feasible that he could make

up his mind. On the other hand the conduct of the investigation seems clearly to have been to find evidence which would convict the people whom those in authority thought a priori to be the guilty men. One gets the impression that the assumption was made before the Deputy Commissioner left Brisbane that the two men they were after were McArthur and Murray. I do not know. It may have been right or wrong, but the effect of going into an investigation with an assumption in your mind is that you close your mind to all other avenues. That reflects very seriously on the technique of the gentleman concerned.

Mr. Behm, the Secretary of the union, was criticised for having advised his members. I take it that all he advised them was that they were not bound to give evidence that might tend to incriminate them. If he went further than that—I have no brief for Mr. Behm—if he went further, he may have breached some provision of the Act or Criminal Code, but do not forget that the lines the investigation proceeded on were to make out a case against the two men and to ignore all other evidence. Perhaps in the circumstances it was not a bad thing that the Secretary of the Police Union gave the advice he did to his members.

Reference has been made to the representation before the Police Appeal Board at which this appeal was settled. Some sinister inference is sought to be drawn from the fact that Mr. Casey did not appear for the Crown on that occasion. I do not know why hon. members on the Opposition cross benches are so anxious to draw sinister inferences. This matter was before courts or tribunals on four occasions.

Mr. Power: Your case is still before the Barristers' Board.

Mr. CONNOLLY: I have not a case before the Barristers' Board. The Board is a board that registers counsel. I have never been called upon by or made representations to the committee of the Bar Association, which you, as the leader of the Bar for so many years ought to know of. It is one thing to make representations to a committee and another thing to have it take action. Mr. Casey appeared only once in all the proceedings. At Mt. Isa before the coronial inquiry I think Mr. Finn of the Crown Law Office appeared. Before Mr. Fowler I think Mr. Finn appeared. Proceedings were taken in the Supreme Court, very difficult proceedings, in which Mr. Casey appeared for the Crown. He acquitted himself honourably and very ably and succeeded for the Crown. The matter came on again before another magistrate. What reason is there for the briefing of the same counsel before another magistrate. Would Mr. Casey have wanted it? I do not know. He has not discussed this with me. Why the attempt to see something sinister in what is a routine matter of briefing counsel? All that happened was that the Commissioner instructed counsel to consent to a settlement of the appeal. There

is no reflection on the learned counsel that appeared but Mr. Casey is a very able and a busy gentleman and would he be required to go before the Appeal Board and say, "I am instructed to consent to this appeal being allowed."

Mr. Power interjected.

Mr. CONNOLLY: I cannot go on repeating statements in answer to the hon. member for Baroona. He does not appear to understand the answers when he gets them. There is nothing illegal about the settling of a matter of this character; it is a perfectly common procedure and a proper one, and to suggest to the contrary involves a suggestion that the magistrate and those counsel were parties to an impropriety and hon. members on the cross benches opposite should be ashamed of themselves. The hon. member for Bundaberg spoke about information in "The Courier-Mail" and "The Sunday Mail." He had somebody whose name he could supply and would not tell the Ministry.

Mr. Walsh: A correction there—I never quoted "The Courier-Mail."

Mr. CONNOLLY: "The Sunday Mail." I beg the pardon of hon. members for misleading the House. He really had sound information—it was not "The Courier-Mail" but "The Sunday Mail." He said he had information worthy of investigation and if he had it, as a public-spirited citizen, as no doubt he would like to be known, surely there is a duty upon him to put it before the authorities.

Mr. Walsh: Two detectives had the information before them.

Mr. CONNOLLY: If the hon. member knows the names of the two detectives it is his bounden duty to put the information before the Minister.

Mr. Power: The Minister already knows it.

Mr. CONNOLLY: The hon. member for Mundingburra raised a matter to which I think I should allude when he suggested that we should devote time to anti-trust legislation. For what it is worth I remind hon. members that we have the Profiteering Prevention Act, a large section of which deals with anti-trust and monopolistic practices. I also remind hon. members opposite that over the long years when they had this legislation on the Statute Book they did not go far in doing anything about it. The party to which I have the honour to belong is no more fond of monopolies than anybody else. They are diseases of modern life, and you cannot dispose of them simply by taking a pair of scissors or a pair of tin-snips. America spent many years in trying to untangle the Dupont Trust but never got very far.

Mr. Jesson: String them all up!

Mr. CONNOLLY: The hon. member for Hinchinbrook has a simple solution—he does not cut the Gordian knot; he would put it around their necks and string them up. I repeat that the hon. members who occupied the Treasury benches for so long did not show great anxiety to use the anti-trust and anti-monopoly legislation. It may be that the matter is not as simple as it seems.

The Leader of the Opposition said that extortionate demands were being made by landlords for increased rentals. That is amply covered by the Act. It is an offence to demand more than a fair rental. The Government cannot prevent landlords from committing offences any more than they can prevent tenants, trade unions, employers, or anybody else. However, if the names of such landlords are furnished to the authorities, I am confident that the Ministry will see to it that as far as possible the practice is stamped out. I am sure that all hon. members hold the view that no such practices should be tolerated, and it is their place to acquaint the proper authorities with any cases of that nature that come before their notice.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (11.36 p.m.): I rise to support the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition, and I propose to elaborate on what he has said about both the Party that has sponsored the motion and the Government. Members of the Queensland Labour Party had a good deal to say on the motion. One of their statements was that it was unfortunate that the administration of Queensland had been placed in the hands of the Government. I completely concur with that statement. However, I find it rather strange that the hon. member for South Brisbane should be the mover of the motion. He was in charge of the Cabinet that within the last 18 months put workers out of employment so that the Government could show a small surplus. It comes strangely from him to try to place the blame on a Party that gave him the greatest opportunity of a lifetime. It comes strangely from him also to hear his remarks about the Australian Labour Party. They would be more appropriate from a man such as America's Mr. McCarthy. We of the Australian Labour Party have nothing to hide. We at least have some honesty of purpose.

Mr. Power: You voted for the defeat of a Labour Government. You voted with the Opposition.

Mr. LLOYD: The blame for that can be laid at the door of those who chose to place personal political ambition above the major issues that were at stake.

The growth in the numbers of unemployed has been admitted on all sides of the House. It is indeed a serious problem. We do not say that unemployment is isolated or that the drought has not in some way been responsible for much of it. However, the Government

do not possess the confidence of the people. When there is a recession in the economic stability of a country, it is essential for the Government to embark on large developmental projects. As yet, the Government have produced no evidence that they intend to embark on projects that will increase employment. It is all very well for the Premier, the Treasurer, the Minister for Justice, and the Minister for Labour and Industry to stand up in the Chamber and give us words and promises, but what has been the result? The unemployment problem has not grown overnight. The Government have been in office since last August and it has been growing ever since they took office. I will admit that the unemployment problem was not easy before they took office, but unemployment has increased since. I am sure every Government member realises that unemployment has an unfortunate habit of snowballing.

Mr. Nicholson: The more you talk about it the more it snowballs.

Mr. LLOYD: I quite agree. We need action. It is all very well to present schemes such as that for increased rentals proposed by the Minister for Justice in an attempt, as he said, to encourage the building of homes and flats. It is all very well for the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads to say that the Commissioner of Main Roads has been employing more men on main roads since August. It cannot be denied that the number of unemployed in the State has increased since last August in spite of all the words and promises of members of the Government.

Mr. Munro: Do you not agree that unemployment has increased only as the effect of this severe and prolonged drought?

Mr. LLOYD: No, I do not agree with the Minister at all. The recession has been continuous and has only been aggravated by the drought. Only a fool would deny that the drought has some effect on employment; but nothing substantial is being done by the Government about unemployment.

Mr. Munro: Oh yes.

Mr. LLOYD: Government members may protest that they are doing something, but why is the number of unemployed in Queensland continually increasing? In my opinion it is all very well for members of the Cabinet to say that private industry will absorb the unemployed, but it is not correct. It is time that the Ministers came down to earth and planted their feet firmly on the ground. They are leaving it to private industry in accordance with the old Treasury view enunciated by the Conservative Government in Great Britain before the depression and during it, namely, that public works should be restricted as much as possible and private industry given the incentive to enable it to absorb the unemployed. That view overlooks the fact that as there are unemployed so

there will be a recession in private industry because of the reduction of the purchasing power in the community.

The effect will snowball unless the Government have sufficient courage to embark on large developmental works to absorb the unemployed. Many developmental projects have been planned in the past and many of those schemes throughout the State could be used to absorb the unemployed; but the Treasury when presenting the last financial statement indicated that there was a reduction in the amount to be expended by the Burdekin River Authority this year. That is one development project on which the Government have reduced the vote. Every year along the eastern seaboard of Queensland rivers carry soil and water which could be utilised in the interests of the State and the welfare of the community. Whether it is the Burdekin, Fitzroy or any other river or stream on the eastern coast of Queensland there is flooding every year. If there is a drought one year there is a flood the next. Let us have planning. Let the Government plan their schemes now. I ask the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads why there was such a big reduction in the Vote for the Burdekin River authority this financial year.

Mr. Evans: You know that many votes were reduced.

Mr. LLOYD: I realise as well as the Minister realises that there has been money available in past years which has not been used in the best interests of the people of Queensland. It has been stated from time to time that finance is scarce. So it is, because we are dependent to a great extent on the Federal Government. If we can ensure that money is spent in the best interests of the greatest number of people we shall be doing something constructive and providing a greater source of employment.

The Premier and the Deputy Premier have made statements about encouraging industry to Queensland. They have said that they can do things which no other Government could do. They have yet to show any evidence at all where these industries of which they have spoken have been brought to Queensland. It is all very well for one member of the Government to speak of the bauxite scheme in the Cape York Peninsula. Who commenced that project? It has been going on for years and the culmination was purely and simply the agreement entered into by the present Government. It was a legacy left to them by the previous Government. It reminds me of other matters, the subject of promises made by the Premier even within the last few days. He acclaimed the wonderful system of education by correspondence as though he and his Government were responsible for it. Things that they claim credit for have been going on for years

under Labour administration. We were responsible for the original agreement which was reached for the development of Cape York Peninsula.

Mr. Evans: Do not be childish.

Mr. LLOYD: I do not take any credit away from the Minister for Development, Mines and Main Roads whose sincerity I do not doubt for one minute. Again I do not doubt that he would attempt to get an agreement which would give the greatest benefit to the State. But I do say that along with other people he can be fooled.

What encouragement has been given to new industries to come to Queensland? One item in the notice of motion referred to the cancellation of certain licences. Cabinet's precipitate action could not possibly give any encouragement to industry in other parts of Australia or in other parts of the world to invest surplus capital in Queensland. Surely we cannot encourage industry to invest capital in a State where the Government have not the confidence of the people and cannot engender confidence in the people. Overseas capital can be encouraged to come to this State, and when it does I hope the conditions will be such that the maximum benefit for the people will be obtained. As far as we can see there is no evidence of big industries coming to Queensland. Unemployment is increasing, despite the statements made by Government Ministers. The question of housing is a serious concern for the working family. The availability of houses for the people is a gauge of the prosperity of any country. When there is unemployment in the building trade there is a recession.

Mr. Nicklin: Two hundred and fifty-nine building workers are required by the Labour Bureau at the moment.

Mr. LLOYD: Why is it that there are several hundred men queueing up at the Commonwealth Employment Office every morning, if the hon. gentleman's statement is correct?

Mr. Pizzey: They are unskilled; these are skilled.

Mr. LLOYD: Yet the statistician informs us that there are 2,500 fewer people employed, skilled and unskilled, in the building trades than there was nine months ago.

Mr. Nicklin: If you like to go down tomorrow morning you will find that what I say is correct.

Mr. LLOYD: Men come to me every day wanting employment.

Mr. Pizzey: Unskilled.

Mr. LLOYD: Unskilled. It is sometimes not possible to place skilled tradesmen. There are 2,500 fewer people employed in the building trade than there was nine months ago.

That is an indication of the extent of the depression in the building trade. It is all very well for the Treasurer to say that he is able to place people in homes. There are many unemployed people who are facing eviction as a result of court orders. There are many young married couples and old people who are facing eviction.

Mr. Morris: You know perfectly well that the situation was infinitely worse 12 months ago when the Gair Government were in power.

Mr. LLOYD: Twelve months ago before the dismissal of so many from the Queensland Housing Commission day-labour projects the housing position was bright, and it appeared that the shortage would soon be overcome, and all those with any claim to priority would be housed.

Mr. Morris: You know that is not true.

Mr. LLOYD: That was the position before the dismissal of all these men by the Housing Commission.

We have heard claims about the employment of so many extra men by the Department of Public Works since the end of June last year. That was the re-employment in July of a great number of people who had been dismissed earlier. It was fortunate that they could be re-employed but since that time there has been no acceleration of the rate of building construction by the Queensland Housing Commission. The blame for this must be borne by the Federal Government. Restrictions on finance have forced many private building contractors out of business in the last 12 months. For that reason many extra men have been thrown on the labour market. Bricklayers, plumbers and other skilled tradesmen have been forced out of business. Sawmills have been closed. I believe that approximately 58 sawmills closed down in Queensland during the latter part of last year. What are the Government doing about it? They have made lengthy statements but they have brought forward no evidence to substantiate their claims. They have not re-employed any of those people who have been thrown out of work. If they had, there would not be at the moment a record number of people on the labour market.

Schemes on housing have been placed before the House by the Minister for Justice and the Treasurer. Those schemes amount to an increase of rentals which they say will enable potential landlords to build flats and homes and remodel old homes and convert others into flats and lease them at exorbitant rentals, rentals that cannot be paid by working families.

The Treasurer has said that he will be able by means of guaranteeing the overdrafts of co-operative building societies with trading banks to get a greater number of homes constructed. It is all very well to speak about those things, but there are difficulties that have to be faced by co-operative building societies. The first is that trading banks

can advance only a proportion of the savings deposited in the new savings bank branches since they have been started.

Mr. Pizzey: No. They have to do that.

Mr. LLOYD: A charter is given by the Central Bank under which these savings banks advance 25 per cent to co-operative building societies on condition that the State Governments guarantee the loans. The managers of savings bank branches of trading banks in Queensland have said that Queensland has not lost money because the State Government have not previously guaranteed those loans. There is a possibility that the 25 per cent. of savings banks deposits has been diverted to other States but we have no evidence of that. If it means that more money will be available for the construction of new homes, we will support it, but it will not provide homes for the people about whom we are concerned. It will enable homes to be provided for people who can afford to pay a high rate of interest, but it will not mean more homes for the average working family with an income of approximately £15 or £16 a week.

If the Government wish to establish a landlord-tenant system in Queensland, let them carry on with their present policy. I suggest that they divert more money to the building of homes under the Commonwealth States Housing Agreement for working families at rates of interest that will give an incentive to those people. The homes could be sold on a low deposit and a low rate of interest. In that way a working family could afford to seek a higher advance. With a low rate of interest, the interest and redemption payments would be reasonable.

Mr. Pizzey: Did your Government do that?

Mr. LLOYD: No, but we were absolved of that responsibility this morning by the hon. member for South Brisbane. We did not have sufficient responsibility to enable us to dismiss so many men from employment. We were not sufficiently responsible to fight the Federal Government on the increased rate of interest on housing loans which was imposed by that Government in June, 1956. Interest was increased from 3 per cent. to 4 per cent. The Minister cannot get away from that. I disagree with the 5½ per cent. rate of interest imposed as it was exorbitant and placed an impossible burden on the working families of the community. This Government and also the Gair Government secured that money. If the Government wish to build more homes there is a right way to go about it. If money is loaned to the State at 4 per cent. I see no reason why it should be necessary for the home purchaser to pay 5½ per cent. It should be possible for the Government to build homes and charge no more than 4½ per cent. because one-quarter per cent. would be more than sufficient to cover administration costs. The Government are carrying on with the policy instead of fulfilling the promises they made

to the people. There has been ample time since August to implement some of the policy enunciated by the Premier and Deputy Premier at the election campaign particularly in regard to housing. The schemes placed before us by the Premier and the Treasurer might take at least two years to really come to fruition. There is an emergency at present. The building trade is in the throes of a recession. The Minister for Education could build more schools. Let us get to it. If he attempts to do so he will get my support.

Mr. Heading: We are doing more than you did.

Mr. LLOYD: There are methods by which this work can be undertaken.

Mr. Nicklin: What do you think we are doing?

Mr. LLOYD: There is no evidence of anything being done.

There is evidence that you say you are doing this and that. I agree with the hon. member for Cook when he said that the small pockets of unemployment could snowball. The Premier knows that there is a drift away from country areas.

Mr. Nicklin: I do not know that.

Mr. LLOYD: Then it is about time that the hon. gentleman woke up to it. Let him get his feet on the ground and his head out of the clouds. Men in country areas who are unemployed are coming to Brisbane and are placing themselves on the labour market in Queen Street. Small pockets of unemployed are being created throughout the State.

Mr. Pizzey: What about the drought?

Mr. LLOYD: The drought closed down the transportation by sea of sugar from Port Douglas to Cairns? The Cook Shire Council had spent £16,000 in 12 months in improvements and purchasing new equipment. The tramways were built for the specific purpose of the carriage of sugar from Mossman to Port Douglas for lighterage to Cairns.

Mr. Nicklin: You cannot stop progress.

Mr. LLOYD: I am fully aware of that, but why was not the Cook Shire Council warned of the Government's intention? The Premier has said that 20 men have been offered employment in the sugar mill, but about 70 or 80 are affected. How many men are engaged in maintaining the tramway line? The proposal of the Government is to transfer to the sugar mill for £64,000 something that is worth approximately £250,000.

I realise that we cannot stop progress, but we can at least show some consideration for people and give them an opportunity to readjust their lives. We can start developmental works to cope with the unemployment that will be created by the Government's precipitate action.

Mr. Pizzey: How could the sugar be transported to Cairns by sea?

Mr. LLOYD: It could be transported by lighter. The hon. gentleman knows that the Adelaide Steamship Company has intimated that it is prepared to carry the sugar from Port Douglas to Cairns. I am sure that the hon. member for Cook will substantiate that statement. On Tuesday the Premier maligned the Opposition for engaging in what he referred to as destructive criticism of the Government. However, when these incidents are brought to their attention, they choose to ignore them.

Mr. Nicklin: What incidents?

Mr. LLOYD: Has the Cabinet given full consideration to this matter? Localised unemployment is being created in small pockets throughout the State, and it must have a snowballing effect. Development must be maintained, and even increased, in country areas when a recession threatens the economy of the country. That principle is recognised universally by economists. Developmental works must be undertaken to absorb those who are thrown on the labour market. I have yet to hear of anything that the Government have done or intend to do. They speak glibly about making increased finance available to local authorities. However, I have yet to learn of any local authority that is offering increased employment. There is an extreme lack of confidence among local authorities on loan raisings. I understand there is still a shortage on loan raisings.

Mr. Heading: You would not know anything about local authorities.

Mr. LLOYD: Some day I may ask the Minister to teach me something about them. In any case I have sufficient imagination and initiative to be able to undertake a task given to me. Regardless of how much hon. members opposite may laugh and snigger, I believe the Government have not the confidence of the people; they have lost it on the unemployment problem. Let them move with the working people, the people who count. It is all very well to speak theoretically about rentals and prices and assume that affairs will return to normal eventually. Country Party members will know that it is very seldom that the grower gets a greater return for his product when there is an increase in the price and it is very seldom that the consumer gets an advantage. It is the middleman who gains the greatest benefit.

The matter raised in Clause 4 of the motion is very important. It is unfortunate that it is framed in a manner that would

give the impression that it is an attack on the new Commissioner of Police. I think we were all led to expect a very bitter and vitriolic attack on him in favour of another man who did not secure the appointment. Apart from many innuendoes and other statements the attack did not eventuate. I understand the Premier has promised a Royal Commission into the affairs of the Police Force if the hon. member for Bundaberg can substantiate charges in writing, and I think that is very reasonable. It is not a matter of who made the statements referred to in the House. What matters is: whose was the voice that made the statements? It is only on that that we can work.

Do not think that the disquiet that has been evident in the Police Force for many years, since 1952, in fact, has completely disappeared. It is still evident, and many members of the Force are concerned at some of the methods that have been adopted recently. The Government might well examine all the circumstances to see whether they are in some way guilty of creating discontent within the Force. Many members of the Police Force at present would welcome a Royal Commission into the affairs of the Force and into incidents and events that have gone on for many years and many would be prepared to give evidence if called on. It is for the Premier and his Government to say whether it is necessary. I am sure many aspects of the recent Mt. Isa inquiry have caused hon. members a great deal of concern and still are causing concern, but until we have before us some substantial arguments we cannot do a great deal about them. Let us have the substantial arguments first. But do not let us blame altogether the present administration for the appointment of a man who I am certain will acquit himself well to the advantage of the Police Force and the State. He himself has been superseded in the past because people have favoured friends within the Force. Unfortunately that practice operated for some time. We hope it will not continue just as we hope that the practice adopted by the Government on this occasion of refusing to air in the appeal inquiry some of the matters in the Mt. Isa case by settling out of court will not continue in the future. Any appeal that is launched should go on and judgment should be given on its merits. I do not disagree with the judgment but I do disagree with the methods adopted. I disagree with the methods adopted by the Minister for Labour and Industry in the selection of the Commissioner of Police. I do not disagree with his appointment of Mr. Bischof. If the Government were ever to secure the confidence of the people of the State they would first have to come out of their idle daydreams and give greater

material consideration to the questions with which they are confronted, particularly unemployment. They would see that we have some form of development in Queensland instead of running to other States, and in the event of an emergency running to the other side of the world on a mythical venture which may not give any great advantage to Queensland. Every Minister should realise his duty to co-ordinate the efforts of all departments in overcoming the problem.

Hon. V. C. GAIR (South Brisbane) (12.16 a.m.), in reply: I wish to exercise my right of reply. In the course of the debate many fantastic and ridiculous reasons have been advanced by members of the Government and the Australian Labour Party as to why the Notice of Motion was put on the business sheet. It was suggested by some that the intention was merely to provide an opportunity to criticise and condemn the Commissioner of Police. There is nothing in the motion about Commissioner Bischof. While members of the Australian Labour Party condemn that section of the motion the Leader of the Opposition and his deputy engaged in wide criticism of the Minister for Labour and Industry for the method and means he adopted in the selection of the Commissioner of Police. That is all that Item 4 of the motion sets out.

The Leader of the Opposition said that he would support the motion but for Item 4 dealing with the appointment of the Commissioner of Police. He then went on to condemn the Minister for Labour and Industry for the method adopted in the selection. He suggested that he should have first of all ascertained whether a suitable officer was available in the ranks of the Queensland Police Force before he went out of the State.

The Premier displayed white heat because I had included two items which he alleged I had included purposely knowing full well that discussion on them would not be permitted. You will agree, Mr. Speaker, that immediately prior to the commencement of the debate you intimated to the House that it would not be competent for us to discuss Item 6 except on a substantive motion. While I respect your ruling in that connection, Mr. Speaker, I am doubtful whether a substantive motion is necessary to discuss the conduct of a gentleman prior to his becoming a member of the judiciary. We would not be discussing his conduct as a judge but as a person prior to his appointment to the judiciary.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have given my ruling on that matter, and it must stand.

Mr. GAIR: I have said that I am prepared to accept it. I am also expressing my opinion on the matter. The Premier said that I deliberately included it in the motion knowing that discussion on it would not be permitted. In regard to Item 5 dealing with roads transport operators, at the commencement of the debate you, Mr. Speaker, did not rule that it was out of order. You made reference to one item only—Item 6. It was not until the hon. member for Bundaberg commenced to discuss transport matters that you gave your ruling in that connection.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that my ruling only related to Cobb & Company and Browns. There are other Toowoomba transport operators.

Mr. GAIR: When that item was included in the motion it was intended to discuss Cobb & Company and Browns. It was thought that a decision would have been given in the matter long before this motion came before Parliament. How was I to know that the motion would be brought on today? If the court decision had been given discussion on the matter would have been permitted. The Premier charged me with having placed those two items in the motion knowing that discussion on them would not be permitted. The discussion on the very important questions of unemployment, prices, rents and other matters has been of little concern to the Government. I have never seen a greater display of self-satisfaction in regard to these important matters than was shown by the Premier today. If they are content to reaffirm their policy on prices and landlord and tenants, I am sure that the people will expect some explanation for the increase in the price of essential commodities and rent. The unemployment figures are indisputable. They show very clearly that in the last six months there has been an acute increase in the number of unemployed.

Dr. Noble: You would be delighted if there were more.

Mr. GAIR: What benefit would I obtain from an increase in unemployment? I have some knowledge of the difficulties and vicissitudes of the unemployed.

Dr. Noble: You once made a statement in this House that 4 per cent. of unemployed persons was a normal thing.

Mr. GAIR: The hon. gentleman would say anything.

Dr. Noble: It appears in "Hansard," in 1949.

Mr. GAIR: The Government have a grave responsibility to overcome unemployment. They have my sympathy. Under the present financial arrangement between the Commonwealth and States they cannot do a great deal unless they succeed in obtaining adequate funds to carry out their works programme and to see that local authorities have the means to carry out their works programmes. I have had the responsibility of leading a government and I know what is involved. The Government are wrong in adopting a complacent attitude. Nothing snowballs faster than unemployment. The Government should keep a watchful eye on it before it gets out of hand. The Queensland Labour Party decided to introduce this motion to enable a full discussion on these important subjects, unemployment, prices, rent, and so on.

The Premier seemed resentful at the moving of the motion. He is becoming hypersensitive about any criticism. On Tuesday he complained about the motion for the adjournment of the House and said it was moved to embarrass the Government. He should reflect on the occasions when he was not reluctant to embarrass successive Governments. It will be a sorry day for Parliament and democracy if hon. members are denied the right to move motions, whether of no confidence or of any other type. If the Premier aims to deny me the right to move a motion in this House, he will learn very quickly that my rights in this Chamber are equal to his and that I will exercise them if I think it is necessary.

Dr. Noble: We will give you a royal commission if you write down your allegations.

Mr. GAIR: Let us be frank and honest about this matter. Let the Premier or the Minister for Labour and Industry confirm or deny that allegations have been made by two members of the Police Force against a high officer of the Force. If they have been made, they should be thoroughly investigated in fairness to the officer against whom they have been made. There is a rule of the Police Force which provides for punishment for members who make allegations against their superiors and fail to confirm them. If that is the case and if the Government are prepared to admit that the allegations have been made and investigated, why not come out into the open?

Mr. Morris: You are the people who are saying that.

Mr. GAIR: I am asking the Minister to confirm or deny that the allegations have been made. I know from what I have heard here today and previously

that it has been stated that two members of the police force have made charges against a superior officer. If that is the case and the matter has been probed and investigated and if the charges are unfounded, there is provision in the rules of the police force to deal with a man who makes such charges and is unable to substantiate them. That is what the hon. member for Bundaberg stated. It would be simple for the Government to come out into the open and make a clean breast of the whole thing in the interests of the police force and the public generally.

Some members of the Opposition said that the object of the motion was to attack the present Commissioner. That is not so. I think we have the right to express some opinion about the unusual procedure adopted by the Government in the calling of applications for the position of Commissioner of Police. I think hon. members of the Government would concede that it would be normal for me as Leader of the Cabinet responsible for the appointment of Mr. Donovan as Deputy Commissioner to express my disappointment that the man we had chosen as Deputy Commissioner and whom we expected would succeed Mr. Harold had failed to get the position. Mr. Donovan is a man of unquestionable integrity, a man with an excellent service and a man several years senior to the appointee. There was nothing unusual about that.

Mr. Pizzey: That could be said about many appointments you made when you were Premier.

Mr. GAIR: I am not disputing that either.

Mr. Pizzey: Nobody questioned your right to make them.

Mr. GAIR: I do not know whether they did or not; in some cases they did. To say that you have never done so would not be strictly correct. However, that is all that was involved and I assure the House that there was no intention on my part or anybody else to attack Mr. Bischof in his appointment. He was appointed. Good luck to him. I hope he has a successful term of office. On the other hand I publicly express my disappointment that Mr. Donovan whom we selected to understudy Mr. Harold and succeed him in due time failed to be the successful applicant.

Mr. Muller: Did you expect us to consult you before making the appointment?

Mr. GAIR: Not at all. No more than I ever thought of consulting the hon. member. I never felt the need to have his assistance and I do not think he would be competent to give advice.

We also heard a long dissertation from the hon. member for Kurilpa on the much discussed Mount Isa case. He referred to the evidence that was given by the Chief

Inspector of Police at the coroner's inquiry and to the cross-examination that was conducted by counsel for the two policemen, McArthur and Murray. I thought the hon. member for Kurilpa might have explained why counsel for the two policemen failed to call evidence and relied solely on his cross-examination of Chief Inspector Donovan. Either that was a very strange thing to do, or there was an absence of evidence in support of the policemen. They were dealt with departmentally and we have on record the decision of a stipendiary magistrate in the person of Mr. Fowler, who held that on the evidence placed before the court of inquiry the policemen were not fit to be members of the Queensland Police Force. That was a very serious decision. I think hon. members will agree that dismissal was the only appropriate punishment for men who were not considered fit and proper persons to be members of the Police Force.

Mr. Morris: The Police Rules contain provisions for punishment ranging from a reprimand, transfer or fine right through to dismissal.

Mr. GAIR: That is true, but I take it that the lesser penalties would not apply to police officers who are found to be not fit and proper persons to be members of the Queensland Police Force.

Mr. Morris: Many policemen were found to be unfit to remain members of the Police Force during your regime, but they remained in it. You know one of them, and you know him very well.

Mr. GAIR: I do not know to whom the Minister is referring. The fact remains that these men were found by Mr. Fowler to be unfit to be members of the Police Force.

Mr. Muller: There was always a doubt about it.

Mr. GAIR: Because there was a doubt about it, the men exercised their right of appeal. The Appeal Board accepted the arrangement between the police authorities and counsel for the police officers, and dealt merely with the quantum of punishment. It reduced the punishment to a reprimand, which meant that they were reinstated in the Police Force.

Mr. Morris: That was a decision by a magistrate.

Mr. GAIR: Just as Mr. Fowler decided that the two policemen were unfit to be members of the Police Force. The Minister will admit that the magistrate to whom he refers had not the opportunity of hearing evidence either for the appellants or against them. All that he had to do was accept the statement by Mr. Wanstall that some arrangement had been made round a back corner to let the men out. I am not complaining about the reinstatement of the two

constables. Good luck to them. They have succeeded in winning their appeals. What I am complaining about is the method adopted, particularly when it is known that the Minister for Labour and Industry, very soon after he assumed office, committed himself to the Police Union that the men would be reinstated.

Mr. Morris: Oh, rubbish!

Mr. GAIR: And also known that attempts were made to get the former Commissioner, Mr. Harold, to reinstate them in the Force.

Mr. Morris: By whom?

Mr. Power: By you.

Mr. GAIR: Who else but the Minister?

Mr. Morris: That is not true. You are deliberately telling untruths as you have constantly done. It is characteristic of you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. GAIR: In any case, it will be found in the files of the Press that the Minister said that if these men were found to be unfit to be members of the Police Force they would be dismissed, but he displayed more than the usual anxiety for their reinstatement and there is not any doubt that the Appeal Board took a very unusual turn. In all my experiences with the Railway Appeal Board, the Public Service Appeal Board, and even the Police Appeal Board, about which I know less than about the other two, I do not know of another occasion when a decision was reached without any evidence having been supplied either for or against the appellants. It is most unusual. What are the duties of an appeal board? To my understanding, they are to hear the case in support of the appellants and the case for the department. The latter is in support of the appointee if it is a case for promotion or for the department itself if it is a case of punishment. One party submits its case and the other party submits its case. On those cases the magistrate makes his decision or the board makes its decision. Invariably the appeal board comprises three members. Is it any wonder that people raise a query as to the unusual practice adopted in this case? Whether the men are right or wrong does not enter into it. If they had right on their side there was a greater reason for going through the usual procedure and less reason for being concerned. Because of the unusual practice adopted it is to be expected that members of the public will query why these men, who were found by Mr. Fowler, S.M., to be persons unfit to be in the Police Force of Queensland, have been reinstated with merely a reprimand. It is very difficult to reconcile the decision of one stipendiary magistrate with that of a board following an arrangement between the representatives of the officers concerned and the police authority at top level.

Question—That the motion (Mr. Gair) be agreed to—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 7.

Mr. Gair	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Hilton	Mr. Adair
" Jones, A.	" Gardner
" Walsh	
" Power	

NOES, 36.

Mr. Ahearn	Mr. Madsen
" Beardmore	" Morris
" Bjelke-Petersen	" Müller
" Chalk	" Munro
" Coburn	" Nicholson
" Connolly	" Nicklin
" Dewar	Dr. Noble
" Evans	Mr. Pizzey
" Ewan	" Rae
" Gaven	" Ramsden
" Harrison	" Smith, P. R.
" Hart	" Taylor
" Heading	" Watson
" Herbert	" Windsor
" Hewitt	
" Hiley	
" Hooper	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Jones, V. E.	Mr. Hodges
" Knox	" Richter
" Low	

PAIRS.

AYES.

NOES.

Mr. Smith, A. J.	Mr. Gilmore
" M'Cathie	" Roberts
" Foley	" Tooth

Resolved in the negative.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier): I move—

"That the House, at its rising, do adjourn till Tuesday, 11 March, 1958."

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 12.54 p.m.