'"(3) Did an officer of the Police Force who made early investigations request the presence of a senior officer because he was disturbed by some features of the circumstances or did he suggest that the enquiries be transferred to a senior officer for the same reason?"'

'"(4) Did the post-mortem examination held on the body disclose that there were extensive physical injuries which could or could not have been caused by agencies in the water and, if so, will he state what was the nature of such injuries?"

'"(5) As his statement on March 17 that he could see no valid reason for a re-opening of the enquiries at this stage indicates that investigations are continuing, does he not think that in fairness to the deceased's family and as the parents of the deceased woman desire that an inquest be held, it would be a more merciful proceeding to conduct an immediate public enquiry and end their pain and suspense?"

'"(6) Will he lay on the Table of the House the whole file covering the full report of all investigations and certified to by a responsible Police Officer as being the complete file, so that Honourable Members may inform themselves of all the facts in this case?"

Hon. A. W. Munro (Toowong) replied—

'"(1) The detailed reasons given by the Coroner, Mr. Monaghan, in deciding that no inquest was warranted are as follows:—(a) No good purpose would be served by the holding of an inquest; (b) The Police report reveals there were no suspicious circumstances; (c) The cause of death, after autopsy, certified as drowning; (d) I am satisfied that the deceased committed suicide by drowning herself in the Brisbane River."

'"(2) The Coroner in his certificate refers to the Police report and the Post-mortem Certificate by Dr. J. I. Tonge. The Coroner who dealt with this matter in April, 1958, is now stationed at Longreach. I am not aware as to what enquiries he may have made apart from the Police reports and the Post-mortem Certificate."

'"(3) I have no knowledge of any such request by any officer of the Police Force. Police Force matters do not come within the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice."

'"(4) The Post-mortem Examination Report by Dr. Tonge did not disclose that there were extensive physical injuries. The report did refer to certain physical markings, which Dr. Tonge referred to as being "post-mortem in origin, almost certainly due to marine life.""

'"(5) Under the Coroner's Act the parents of the deceased may request the Coroner to hold an inquest. So far as I am aware, no such request has been made to the Coroner. No such request has been made to me by the parents. If they do so,

FRIDAY, 20 MARCH, 1959.

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

QUESTIONS.

MRS. CALLIOPE CLAIRE BEHM.

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

'"(1) What were the detailed reasons given by the Coroner, Mr. L. Monaghan, in deciding that no inquest was warranted into the manner and causes of death of Mrs. Calliope Claire Behm who died by drowning in the Brisbane River on March 18, 1958?"

'"(2) What was the nature and extent of the enquiries made by the Coroner referred to by the Minister in a statement released by him on March 17, 1959, and particularly what enquiries other than Police enquiries are included in these?"

The Honourable Mr. Speaker:—
the matter will receive full consideration. If the Honourable Member will place before me any information or evidence which, in his opinion, would warrant the holding of an inquest, such information or evidence will be fully considered."

"(6) I do not propose to lay on the Table of the House the Police file. The Police file is a file of the Department of my colleague, the Minister for Labour and Industry. If the Honourable Member makes an application to him for permission to peruse the file he will no doubt give the matter his full consideration."

"(1 to 6) generally—On this matter generally I would remind the Honourable Member that there has been a Coronial Inquiry, although there has not been an inquest. The Coroner, Mr. L. Monaghan, on April 21, 1958, after completing his enquiries, certificated in his opinion there was no necessity for holding an inquest. This was publicly stated in my Press statement of March 17, in which I mentioned the three basic reasons given by the Coroner in deciding that an inquest was not warranted. At that time I purposely abstained from mentioning the fourth reason which I have now stated in sub-paragraph (d) of the answer to Question (1). I refer the Honourable Member to Section 46 (1) of the Coroner's Act of 1958, which is to come into operation on March 23, 1958, and which enacts that the verdict of fredo de so is abolished. I feel sure that the Honourable Member, who is a former Attorney-General, will realise that it is not desirable to cause hurt and distress to relatives and friends of a deceased person by unnecessarily publicising morbid details. However, I will be glad to further discuss this matter with the Honourable Member and to submit to him for his perusal the Post-mortem Certificate by Dr. J. I. Tonge, of March 19, 1958, the Post-mortem Examination Report by Dr. J. I. Tonge, dated April 1, 1958, and the Coroner's Certificate dated April 21, 1958."
in the milk fat content of the all-purpose variety is compensated by an increase of 20 per cent. in price?

"(3) Were the new prices considered by his Department? If so, what were the factors governing the increase and decrease and the disproportion therein even after allowing for the retail vendor's margin being an equal factor in each case?"

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

"(1) I understand that in Brisbane there are two new varieties of cream now on sale."

"(2) I am informed that no relativity exists in respect of the two new creams compared with the 35 per cent. butter fat content previously on sale. The two new varieties are obtained by separation from whole milk and there are other factors to be considered in addition to those outlined in the Question."

"(3) The new prices were fixed by the Commissioner of Prices as base prices on today's market costs, and not on the basis of any relativity to the 35 per cent. butter fat cream."

COMMISSION HOUSES, TROUT ROAD, STAFFORD.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

"Has the Housing Commission been requested by residents living in Trout Road, Stafford, to have expensive-type homes built at the Commission's Trout Road project? If so, is it the intention of the Commission to accede to this request or will the Commission continue construction of the standard average-priced home?"

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

"Yes. The houses for which construction has already been approved will, as I informed the House yesterday, be completed to the original designs unless a purchaser desires variation, in which case he will be asked to meet the cost of such variation by increasing his deposit. I anticipate that the further development of the area will be by average-priced homes but, as I stated yesterday, every effort will be made, at Stafford, as elsewhere to select attractive designs.

FLASHING LIGHTS AND BOOM GATES, GROVELY AND MITCHELTON.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) asked the Minister for Transport—

"In view of the increasing traffic hazard caused by railway crossings at Dawson Parade, Grovely, and Blackwood Road, Mitchelton, will he have flashing lights installed at both these crossings?"

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

"It is necessary when giving consideration to the provision of flashing lights and boom gates at level crossings to give preference of installation to places at which it is considered such devices are most needed. It is proposed next financial year to provide flashing lights at the railway crossings at Blackwood Street, Mitchelton and Samford Road, Ferny Grove, also to provide boom gates at South Pine Road, Alderley, and Wardell Street, Enoggera."

FIRST OFFENDERS UNDER TRAFFIC ACTS.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"(1) How many first offenders have been prosecuted under the Traffic Acts during the twelve months ended February 28 last?"

"(2) What revenue by way of fines has been received by the Government as a result of traffic breaches during the same period?"

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha) replied—

"(1) The compilation of the information asked for by the Honourable Member would involve the scrutiny of every relevant file, not only in Brisbane, but in all the District Offices as well. As there were 17,909 convictions for these offences in the year ended June 30, 1958, the magnitude of the task can be visualised. The work involved could not be undertaken in ordinary hours, and it is considered that the expenditure involved in overtime to take out the information the Honourable Member seeks is not warranted."

"(2) On page 11 of the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police for the year ended June 30, 1958, it is shown that fines amounting to £124,601 11s. were imposed for traffic breaches in that year. Similar information, with respect to the current year, will be included in the Commissioner's next Annual Report to be submitted to this Parliament."

PAYMENTS TO SHIRE CLERKS AND ENGINEERS, JOHNSTONE, MULGRAVE, AND CARDWELL SHIREs.

Mr. BAXTER (Norman), for Mr. BYRNE (Mourilyan), asked the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads—

"What amounts were paid to each respective Shire Clerk and Engineer of the Johnstone, Mulgrave, and Cardwell Shires for services rendered by them for the last financial year?"

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

"Johnstone Shire: Shire Clerk, £195 4s. 7d.; Shire Engineer, £482 10s. 7d.; Mulgrave Shire: Shire Clerk, £344 9s. 1d.; Shire Engineer, £530 19s. 4d. Cardwell Shire: Shire Clerk, £270 4s.; Shire Engineer, £595 10s. 9d."

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MAXIMUM ATTENDANCE FEES AND ALLOWANCES FOR COUNCILLORS.

Mr. BAXTER (Norman), for Mr. BYRNE (Mourilyan), asked the Minister for Public Works and Local Government—

"(1) What is the maximum amount a councillor is permitted to draw annually in respect of meeting attendances including expenses and other services from a shire?"

"(2) In the event of overpayment would the Department insist upon a refund?"

Hon. J. A. HEADING (Marodian) replied—

"(1) 'The Local Government Acts, 1936 to 1958,' provide inter alia—'A by-law may provide for the payment of fees to members for attending meetings and committee meetings of the local authority and making inspections and the payment of expenses necessarily incurred by attending such meetings and making inspections. No such payments by way of fees for attending meetings and making inspections made to any one member shall in any year exceed, in the aggregate two hundred pounds.' It should be noted that the limit of two hundred pounds mentioned above refers to fees and not to actual expenses necessarily incurred by attending meetings, &c.'"

"(2) 'The Local Government Acts, 1936 to 1958,' provide inter alia—'If within six months of the presentation of an application for a fee for attending meetings and making inspections to a member, the Minister shall order such member to repay such fee to the proper fund. If the Member does not repay the fee, the Minister may order such member to repay the fee in a lump sum or in two equal instalments.'"

SALE OF TOWNSVILLE TOWN COMMON.

Mr. COBURN (Burdekin), for Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra), asked the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation—

"(1) Is he aware that an estate agent or similar person has approached the Townsville City Council seeking to buy the Town Common for speculative subdivision and sale as building allotments?"

"(2) Is not the Townsville Town Common Crown Land vested in the Townsville City Council for that specific purpose?"

"(3) If so, will he carefully examine any proposal for the disposal of such land and ensure that all approaches and dealings are publicised so that the people will always be well informed as to developments?"

Hon. A. G. MULLER (Fassifern) replied—

"(1) The Town Common Reserve referred to by the hon. member is a pasture reserve set apart by Order in Council under the control of the Townsville City Council, as trustee. The Department received a copy of a request made to the Town Clerk, Townsville City Council, on behalf of a company to be formed with a view to having part of the reserve released for development and sale as residential allotments."

"(2) The area comprised in the pasture reserve is not vested in the Townsville Council under any title."

"(3) The Department itself has from time to time had parts of the reserve subdivided into building allotments and made available for public competition, and this policy will be followed in the future according to public demand. However, with respect to any part of the reserve which may be too costly or difficult for the Crown to develop, the question of offering such part at public competition as a development lease would be investigated and considered at the appropriate time."

MARY KATHLEEN URANIUM PROJECT.

Mr. COBURN (Burdekin), for Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra), asked the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads—

"Is he aware that on a recent visit to North Queensland the Australian High Commissioner in England, Sir Eric Harris­son, was reported in the Press as saying, in effect, that the Mary Kathleen uranium project has a life span of only ten years and that unless other mineral deposits were...

With reference to his answer to a question on March 5 in connection with the establishment of a Teachers' Training College in North Queensland, what is the number of students considered to be sufficient to warrant action by the Government in this regard?"
discovered the mine and township would be finished at that time? If so, will he favour the House with his observations on such statement?"

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

"I am aware of the Press Report referred to. The position is that the quantity of uranium oxide for which an assured market is available under the existing contract is understood to be capable of being supplied in a period of about 10 years. The annual report and statement of accounts of the Company indicate that the tonnage of oxide in the orebody is appreciably greater than that required to fulfill the existing contract. The Rio Tinto group, however, has been very active in prospecting in the locality for further exploitable deposits of uranium and other ores, and in doing so has spent and is continuing to spend very considerable sums of money."

PART-TIME NURSING STAFF AT HOSPITALS.

Mr. WALLACE (Cairns), for Mr. GRAHAM (Mackay), asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

"(1) Is it a fact that where part-time nursing staff are employed by hospital boards they are expected to provide their own meals apart from morning and afternoon teas?"

"(2) Is it a fact that these arrangements are as a result of hospital boards being instructed by his departmental officers that strict economy must be observed in the management of such hospitals?"

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga) replied—

"Nursing Staff in Hospitals are paid under the relevant Awards, and the conditions of those Awards provide that Staff who live out are paid an allowance of 25s. per week in lieu of board and lodging. Part-time Nursing Staff do not live in, and therefore are paid an allowance under the Award, in lieu of board and lodging."

WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. A. G. MULLER (Fassifern—Minister for Public Works and Local Government): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to amend the War Service Land Settlement Acts, 1946 to 1958, in a certain particular." Motion agreed to.

DAIRY PRODUCE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

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

CITY OF BRISBANE (TOWN PLAN) BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Taylor, Clayfield, in the chair.)

Hon. J. A. HEADING (Marodan—Minister for Public Works and Local Government) (11.54 a.m.): I move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced relating to a town plan for the city of Brisbane, and for other purposes." The purpose of the Bill may be stated in simple terms. It is to obtain an approved and realistic town plan for the city of Brisbane. The history of town planning in the city is an unhappy one. Successive Council administrations have moved in the matter over the last 30 years. A number of schemes have been prepared. Some have been completed but none has been brought to fruition. The plain fact is that after 30 years Brisbane has not got an approved town plan.

Mr. Duggan: I cannot hear the Minister for the noise in the Chamber.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I trust hon. members will refrain from engaging in conversation so that the Minister may be heard.

Mr. HEADING: The last concerted effort to obtain a plan was in 1952. At that date the Council had prepared a plan but the procedure leading up to its approval was of doubtful validity. Parliament ratified the procedure and required the plan to be laid open to public inspection and objection. This was done and a large number of objections was received. The plan was referred to the Government for approval. It was examined by the Director of Local Government and he recommended that it should not be approved. The plan and this recommendation remained in the pigeonhole for years. When the present Government were elected we made up our minds that it was about time something was done to bring matters to fruition. We had the scheme re-examined by an expert committee consisting of the Director of Local Government, the Town Clerk and the Professor of Architecture of the University of Queensland. Their report confirmed the views that the Director of Local Government had expressed some years ago. We then set about getting a proper Town Planning Scheme prepared for Brisbane, and this Bill gives legislative effect to what we have done and propose to do.

Briefly, the provisions of the Bill are as follows:—

(1) The existing town planning provisions of the City of Brisbane are approved. That was done in order to get rid of the plan that was drafted some years ago.

(2) Provision is made for the constitution of a Greater Brisbane Town Planning Committee with representation on the basis of three to Brisbane City Council,
one expert nominated by the Senate of the University of Queensland and a person nominated by me as Minister.

(3) The function of the Committee is to prepare a town plan for the City of Brisbane. For carrying out that function, the Committee is required to—

(i) Determine the personnel and qualifications of the staff necessary to prepare the plan and recommend to the Council the appointment of that staff;

(ii) Cause to be carried out such civic survey, inquiries and investigations as it deems necessary in preparation of the plan;

(iii) Consult with such persons and associates as it deems capable of informing it concerning matters pertaining to the preparation of the plan; and

(iv) Have regard to representations made to it by any person or association concerning matters pertaining to the preparation of the plan.

Anybody can go to the Committee or the Town Planner if they wish to offer any suggestions and they will be happy to receive them.

(4) On preparing the plan the Committee has to submit the plan and a full report thereon to the Council.

(5) Forthwith the Council has to lay the plan and report open to public inspection and objection for at least ninety days.

(6) Objections may be lodged to the plan during the statutory period for objections. At the expiration of this period the Committee has to consider all objections and report thereon to the Council.

(7) The Council has to submit to the Minister the plan, the Committee’s report, the objections, the Committee’s report on objections, and any representations the Council cares to make on all or any of those matters. The Governor in Council may approve the plan with or without amendment, alteration, addition, or modification. Upon approval of the plan, it has the force of law and binds the Crown, the Council, and all persons whosoever.

(8) The Council is empowered to appoint a Secretary to the Committee and the staff necessary to prepare the plan. The Council is also empowered to enter into any contracts deemed necessary for carrying out the civic survey and any inquiry or investigation relating to the preparation of the plan.

(9) The expenditure incurred by the Council and the Committee is a charge on the Council’s City Fund. I might mention that the Government will pay the usual subsidy paid to local authorities in preparation of a Town Planning Scheme—in this case 30 per cent.

(10) The Council is empowered to make ordinances to provide for, regulate and control the development and use of land in the city during the period of preparation of the plan.

(11) Any person dissatisfied by any decision of the Council or its delegate acting under an ordinance made under this power, has a right of appeal to the Minister.

I think that is very important. It is something we should have had long ago.

The Minister can appoint some person or persons to hear and determine the appeal. The appeal is a judicial process and the decision on appeal is final and binding on the Council and the appellant. Costs of action may be awarded and recovered.

Where the right of appeal arises in respect of a subdivision and the person aggrieved already has a right of appeal under Section 34 (15) of the Local Government Acts, the latter right of appeal is no longer available to him. In other words, he does not have two separate rights of appeal in respect of the one matter.

There is one further point that I should mention. The purpose of the Bill is to get a scheme prepared and approved. The Bill is not a complete code of town planning powers. Such a code is required and will be introduced by the Government at a later date. The preparation of such a code is a most difficult matter. Legislation has been introduced in many different places and found to be deficient. We are going into this matter most carefully and we are hopeful of producing a code that will be fair and reasonable not only to local government, but, even more importantly, to the body of people governed by town planning schemes. However, the Bill now prepared is sufficient to enable an effective scheme to be prepared and approved and the policy of this Government is to see that it is prepared and approved as early as possible.

I should now like to deal with the article that appeared on page 2 of ‘The Courier-Mail’ of 19 March, 1959. No doubt most hon. members have seen it. I believe there are certain statements in that article which might lead to some wrong impressions and, for the information of hon. members, I think I should put some facts before the Committee.

In the first place, the article suggests that town planning has become just another Government function, that there should be an independent body with its own expert staff and accommodation, not hamstrung by the Council or Government departments. Let me say that, in fact, an independent body has been set up and it is not hamstrung by the Council or the Government. It is the Council’s and the Government’s desire and purpose that a town plan be prepared for the city as quickly as possible. Nothing is going to stand in the way of that. It is obvious that the preparation of the plan cannot be divorced from the Council. In the first place, the Council has the bulk of
the data required in the preparation of the plan. In the second place, the day-by-day development of the city cannot await the completion of the plan. Some of this development can materially affect the plan and this is recognised in the Bill by giving the Council powers over interim development. The liaison between the Committee and the Council on these matters is through the agency of the Chief Planner. There could be no alternative. The Chief Planner has been relieved by the Council of all his routine duties to concentrate on planning. The only matters in which he has contact with the Council is in respect of decisions which will affect the development and preparation of the plan.

Again, it is suggested in the article that there is a scratch staff to prepare the plan, that it is just another job for Council officers and that there should be a full-time staff engaged in the preparation of the plan. There is no scratch staff to prepare the plan. The Chief Planner has reported on the staff required. The bulk of his staff has been appointed. Facilities have been provided by way of space and accommodation in the City Hall which will make the unit completely independent.

There is also the suggestion in the article that there has been procrastination—that little, if anything, has been done.

What, in fact, is the position? There has been no procrastination, but the utmost speed. Immediately the Committee was set up it made arrangements with the Council:

1. To provide separate space at a cost of approximately £2,000. This will be ready for occupation by the end of the month;

2. It obtained from the Chief Planner his staff requirements, immediately invited applications for the positions and appointed the bulk of the staff required. The balance of the staff will be appointed today by the Council;

3. It arranged with the Government for the secondment of certain skilled technical officers with necessary local knowledge. These officers will be made available as and when required;

4. The Council seconded a number of technical officers, including technical, professional and legal men. These are working on the plan;

5. It arranged with the University of Queensland to undertake a water-course survey throughout the city;

6. It has completed a population survey and forecast;

7. The majority of four chain maps, which are the basis of the civic survey, are complete;

8. A soil survey is well on the way to completion; and

9. Work has been commenced on the road pattern.

The article states that the Citizens Town Planning Committee of the Brisbane Development Association was refused representation on the committee. It is true this committee was refused representation. This was done with a view to keeping the committee down to a reasonable working number. Not only would this committee have claims to representation, but so would a number of others. The Planning Committee has already resolved to maintain the closest liaison with bodies having an interest in the plan, and it will do so. It wants their co-operation and, indeed, the Bill requires them to seek it. I look forward to the closest co-operation in the matter.

Finally, the article suggests that there should be a regional planning authority to help other local authorities to prepare town plans under a town and regional planning Act. I have already pointed out that the present Bill is a measure to obtain a plan for the City of Brisbane. I have recognised that further law is required, and I hope to get useful information in this behalf during the preparation of the Brisbane plan. All proposals will be carefully considered when a complete town-planning law is drafted.

Finally, I might point out three things—

1. The real basis of any town plan for a major city is an effective road plan. Hon. members will realise that we must have a plan that will suit the requirements of the whole of the city, and we are going into this matter very carefully. The Council’s traffic engineer is seconded entirely to this work. A deal of preliminary work has been accomplished. A major investigation is an origin and destination survey. Specifications for this work have been prepared and negotiations entered into with the Government so that the survey will give not only information for the plan but also for other aspects of interest to the State. This is one of the major matters which is at present the subject of negotiation and investigation.

2. In a major work of this nature, there is a tremendous amount of work and organisation which is essential to the preparation and completion of a successful plan. This work is now basically completed, and the physical work of preparing the plan can now proceed on a sound and confident basis. Much of this preliminary work is not spectacular in nature, neither does it lead itself to a deal of publicity. But, for all that, it is essential work and, indeed, it is the foundation on which all that follows will be built; and

3. The Government looks to real help and co-operation from all sections of the community in the work ahead of the Committee. I believe the Council and the Committee is also earnestly seeking this help and co-operation. The task is a substantial one and a difficult one. It is my earnest wish that the plan be brought to a successful con-
the conclusion as early as possible, and I seek the help and co-operation of all interested persons and bodies in this great task.

It is easy to sit outside and criticise, but this is a very difficult job, particularly with a city of this size that has developed over the years. This work ought to have been started years ago. We have some data, but it is virtually a new job and we must carry it through. There will be many objections to what is suggested in the plan, and no doubt a number of people will be hurt by decisions made about industrial areas, nos­


tious trade areas, and so on. A number of letters have been received referring to what the City Council has been doing, and when the plan is completed I am sure that, although the plan is almost perfect, there will be a great deal of criticism. We are doing all that we can, and I hope that the final decision will be satisfactory not only to people living in Brisbane but also to people who come to the city on business at various times and to the people of Queensland generally.

MR. DUGGAN (North Toowoomba—
Leader of the Opposition) (11.30 a.m.): I do not propose to take up much of the Committee’s time at this stage in discussing the Bill. I should like to have an opportunity of perusing it and reserving any substantial criticism that I may have until later.

It is to be regretted that the introduction of a town plan for the city of Brisbane has been delayed so long. No useful purpose would be served by trying to determine where the responsibility for the delay lies. All we are concerned about is that we are dealing with the present circumstances, and we must try to evolve something that is of benefit to the city.

It is rather remarkable that a city as large as Brisbane has not had an effective town plan in operation by now. People who may wish to defend the delay in bringing in a town plan might say that the war was responsible for it, but the fact remains that the Minister himself cannot be held respon­


sible. He has been in office for a relatively short time, so that although we may criticise him for what is contained in the Bill, we cannot accuse him of being inactive. He has taken some very positive steps in the matter.

The members of the proposed committee who could probably be referred to as the executive members all have a detailed know­

lidge of town planning. I refer particularly to Mr. Sewell, Mr. Slaughter, and Prof­

essor Cummings, all of whom are well fitted to undertake work of this kind. Mr. Sewell is a relatively young officer of the Public Service. When I entered Parliament as a young man, he was one of the first public servants with whom I came in contact. At that time he was in the Department of Health and Home Affairs, and it was generally accepted that he was a protégé of the late Mr. Chuter, who was regarded by all of us as a very able and efficient administrator. Even at that time Mr. Sewell impressed me, and many others, with his ability as an administrator, and over the years he has grown in the confidence of the Public Service and of successive Governments. He now occu­

pies, of course, a very senior position. I have a very high regard for his ability and his temperate and fair approach to matters of public interest. I have had occasion to submit to him many matters affecting the public not only of Toowoomba but of various parts of Queensland, and he always brings to bear to any subject a great deal of know­

ledge and a sense of fairness, which is some­

thing to be highly commended. I have a great deal of respect for his views, and I should need to have very strong reasons for criticising them. I shall therefore reserve any criticism that I may have until I have read the recommendations. If I offer any criticism, of course, it will be only with a sincere desire to improve the recommendations.

I have had dealings with Professor Cum­

nings, too. On occasions I have used his services on railway work, and I have always found him to be very able.

Mr. Slaughter may have the reputation in some quarters of being a rather decisive, dynamic man, and perhaps at times he assumes to himself a good deal of executive power. However, any man who is vested with the powers of Town Clerk would be com­

pletely lost unless he was of that type. He is an extremely efficient Town Clerk, and I have a very high regard for him.

I think the members of the proposed Com­

mittee have been well chosen.

The Minister has outlined the steps that he proposes to take to set up a planning authority. He has indicated that accommoda­

tion is being made available and that a staff is about to be seconded. In addition, steps are being taken to enable the collation of information within a reasonably short period. I hope his prophecy will be realised, because it is very important that some decisive action should be taken in the matter. Brisbane has been allowed to meander along, which has been to the detriment of its effective development.

It has always been a matter for regret on the part of those interested in town planning that there has been no definite plan for the progressive development of this city along modern lines. Cities in other countries with greater populations and a greater density of traffic than Brisbane are paying the penalty for neglect or delay in providing an adequate town plan.

That is true of the larger cities and the older countries and it is equally true of Brisbane. I sometimes think that various municipal administrations could have done more even with their limited powers to make the way easier for a body such as this, especially with arterial roads leading out of the city. I have mentioned at road safety
conferences, and traffic engineering conferences when I was Chairman of the Road Safety Council, the need for the council, even if it were not in a position to resume buildings, to lay down and define the boundaries of main arterial outlets. Take Fairfield Road as a case in point. I raised the matter some considerable time ago and yet even after four months those who traverse the road will find a new building of some kind erected that will make the work so much harder and the cost of resumption so much greater.

If a new boundary were defined as is done by the Main Roads Department in various parts of the State and even at Sandgate, and as I arranged with the Commissioner of Main Roads, so that nobody would be permitted to build on the new alignment, when the time came for the authorities to proceed with some developmental programme they would be obliged to pay only for the actual physical amount of land resumed plus, of course, the normal compensation for services and for whatever buildings had to be resumed. We see that in so many places in Brisbane where ultimately some authority has to pay sums of astronomical proportions to overcome the difficulty.

When new bridge work was required at Circular Quay in Sydney to extend the electrification system, it was necessary to resume one building at a cost of £250,000. That sort of thing could be avoided by intelligent anticipation and planning. Municipal authorities in the past could have done more if they had had a town plan.

Many people regard Brisbane as a combination of a sprawling country town and a modern city. One has only to contrast what is happening in Sydney with what is happening here to realise how imperative it is to have the town plan functioning as quickly as possible. With the cluttering up of the centre of the city and the failure to plan for its progressive development we are in danger of developing a dead heart. Banks and insurance offices are encroaching more and more on what might be regarded as the retail trading section of the city. I have some very strong personal views about what should be retained in the heart of the city and what should not be allowed there. In my view it should be reserved as the most convenient shopping and business centre for most people. Perhaps an attempt should be made to group Government offices as much as possible. In Adelaide all of the professional men are concentrated on North Terrace and no doubt in years to come a proposal will be made to group them similarly on Wickham Terrace. We might have a similar concentration of banks and insurance companies. I should like to see the town planning go so far as to adopt a policy of encouraging the banks and insurance offices in the main part of the city to make provision for shops and shop windows in the front of their premises. At night-time buildings of that type are frequently blacked out at the footpath level. They do not even have an awning over them to give protection for the public in wet weather. All of the business in insurance companies is done during the ordinary office hours. The average man goes along once in a while to pay a premium on a policy, perhaps once a fortnight, maybe once a month, once a quarter or once a year. Those are the people who during the working day would not go along only periodically to use the facilities. Many of those institutions could place their offices behind a foyer or entrance place and let the front of the building for display purposes. The Commonwealth Bank at the corner of Queen and Edward Streets has provision for show windows, used by Rothwell's, the men's outfitters.

That is what I mean. I do not know whether it would be a contravention of town planning methods. We do not seem to be vesting in some authority the right to make Brisbane a beautiful city, aesthetically pleasing and at the same time providing a functional plan to cope with traffic problems. Another reason why it should be acquired quickly is the binding nature of a Town Plan on the Crown and semi-governmental instrumentalities. At the present time the Brisbane City Council and the Railway Department are arguing about bridges. No sensible person would argue for one minute that modern traffic does not demand wider thoroughfares at these points, particularly while the work is in progress. If I remember correctly, under the provisions of the Railways Act the Commissioner is obliged to provide a carriageway of only 10 ft. for traffic. The Commissioner for Railways is entitled very properly to adopt the attitude, 'Why should I spend railway revenue to provide facilities for road transport if I cannot be recouped for it?' There should be some State Development Fund or other fund to subsidise local authorities where it can be demonstrated that it is in the interests of the public to provide a carriageway much in excess of what the Commissioner for Railways has to provide, one wide enough to cater for modern traffic requirements. There should be some sharing of the responsibility. Under the present provision the Commissioner can say, 'That is all I am doing and that is the end of it.' It will be another 50 years before we get back to rebuilding these bridges. When they are being rebuilt it is the time to construct approaches and foundations sufficient to cater for four or six lane traffic. There are so many directions in which people with statutory authority are pursuing a course, which they, in their wisdom, think is the correct one, but in the general public interest the desired results are not being achieved.

I welcome the provision that when the authority is finally established it will have power to bind the Crown, councils and other semi-governmental authorities.

When freeways or express ways are constructed out of the city there should be some agreement whereby the authority of the City Council and the Department of Main
Roads begins and ends. The Ipswich Highway is one of the most important highways in the State. The responsibility of the Brisbane City Council starts somewhere about Oxley. About this point the four-lane road comes into a bottleneck. Where the general public is to benefit the taxpayer's money should not be spent on the preparation of such a plan. I do not know whether the Leader of the Opposition has followed the history of this type of propaganda and whether he is careful enough to know that the obligation at all times rests on the local authority to produce a town plan. That applies whether it be Brisbane, Cairns, Townsville, or any other local authority in the State. I am sure the Minister will agree that the responsibility primarily rests on the shoulders of the local authority. Over the years we have heard much criticism about Governments intruding in the affairs of local authorities. That statement was made in this House by members of the Government when they were in Opposition and by many people outside. It was claimed that over a period the Government continued to take away from different local authorities the powers that were expressly conferred on them by previous Governments.

The motion provides for a Bill relating to a town plan for the City of Brisbane, and for other purposes.

All the matters the Minister had in mind when he moved the motion, apart from the plan itself would no doubt be related to the general development of Brisbane, whether in the way of water supply, sewerage, or in some other way. Those matters are all to some extent affected by the town plan and would have to be considered in conjunction with any plan undertaken by a local authority. Bearing that in mind, I have a few comments to make on the very damaging propaganda paraded by "The Courier-Mail" some time ago about the sewerage work undertaken in the City of Brisbane area. I am not against Press criticism of any local authority as to work it has undertaken, but we are spending thousands of pounds and hours of our time on the preparation of propaganda to attract tourists to this State, yet this journal which must have some standing in the Press world depletes Brisbane on a front page article as being a city still in the dark ages. The type of sanitary cart that still operates in some parts of the city area was shown on the front page. To suggest to people throughout Australia and other parts of the world that that is the system of sanitary hygiene in this city is ridiculous. The article gave certain figures, but I do not know how any comparison could be made. It may be thought that I am advancing a case for the Brisbane City Council, or trying to excuse the errors of the Council. That is not so, but I object to slandering propaganda against the City of Brisbane. It must be remembered that in South Australia less than 45 per cent. of the total population is in areas beyond a 250-mile radius of the capital, and that within the local authority area of Adelaide itself the
work of water supply and sewerage is undertaken by the Government. In the surrounding parts of the City of Adelaide numerous local authorities operate, as was the case in Brisbane many years ago. The same position obtains in Sydney and Melbourne. In comparing the respective positions, did "The Courier-Mail" take the population of the City of Sydney? It certainly would not be anything like the population of the City of Brisbane, an area of 385 square miles. The same could be said of other capital cities. Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney have very limited local authority areas. The sanitary or unsanitary state of this city may be open to condemnation and I do not object to reasonable criticism or a reasonable picture, but I certainly do object to propaganda circulated throughout Australia and the world which depicts Brisbane as a bush town.

Let us consider how the delay in the town plan occurred, and the stages since it was first contemplated. The Minister would no doubt be advised by his officers, and this would be shown by the history of it, that the first Consolidating Act as such in Queensland applied to the Mackay City Council. Eventually it was incorporated in the Local Government Acts. The Consolidating Act was introduced in 1936. Following the original Act, in 1935, the Brisbane City Council took the first step for the preparation of a town plan, a resolution passed by the Brisbane City Council. At that time it could be said that the Brisbane City Council by the legislation passed by the Government of the day had been given the green light to prepare a town plan. We then got to the stage when the plan was actually approved and adopted by the City Council. That was in 1944. From 1944, when it was adopted under the Chandler administration, the Council proceeded to work under what they no doubt thought was a valid and legal plan, a plan that was within the terms of the law. Obviously it was not. The Council did not attempt to comply with the procedure laid down in the Local Government Acts. They in fact passed many resolutions making a plan that was never valid. I have no doubt that they passed about 100 resolutions or more at Council meetings that altered the plan in some way without reference to the people and without reference to the Local Government Department. I am not sure about that, but I think it is correct.

Mr. Burchell, a magistrate, was asked to adjudicate on a particular legal point that was argued before him, and the decision went against the Council. In 1952, when a Labour Council was returned, Mr. Roberts, who was Lord Mayor, brought it to the notice of the Government and the Local Government Department, and a measure was brought down in this House validating the plan that had been prepared and all the things that had been done under it up to that date within the structure of the Local Government law at that time. That meant that the Council was given another opportunity to determine in their own way, in compliance with the law, what the town plan for Brisbane should be. That was the function of the Council till then.

When we are apportioning blame, if any blame is to be put on Governments it must rest on the shoulders of successive Governments since 1935, and any member of this Chamber who was associated with those Governments bears the responsibility equally on his shoulders. It is no good passing the buck from one Government to another, any more than we should say that the obligation was upon the City Council to produce a town plan that would be approved or rejected by the Government of the day.

The Minister is aware, I think, that there were various discussions and conferences between representatives of the local authority and the Director of Local Government, and in some cases myself. I indicated that there was no way in which we could approve of that plan. Let us not overlook the fact that much of the humbugging has been caused by aldermen who wanted to determine the town plan in their own way, and often in a way that would not lead to the development of the city. They might have had a vested interest in a representation by somebody to have this or that area declared an industrial area, another area declared a residential area, and so on. I passed that information on to the Lord Mayor and the Town Clerk at the time. That is past history but I may have an opportunity of elaborating on it later.

Dealing with the Bill one cannot criticise an attempt by the Government to introduce a measure that seeks to overcome the difficulties. My main criticism is levelled at the composition of the Committee. Nobody doubts the capacity of the Director of Local Government to handle these matters and if all members of the Committee had his practical approach and experience there is no doubt that a reasonably satisfactory plan would be produced.

When we hear it said that Brisbane is lagging behind it is a town plan we must not overlook the fact that for many years from the beginning of local government in this State, there were no fewer than 10 local authorities within the present boundaries of the Brisbane City Council's area. Each of those local authorities had the right to draft its own by-laws covering transport communications, widths of streets and footpaths, and so on. Until 1925 there was a number of local authorities within the area of the city of Brisbane, each with differing ideas on the development of the area under its jurisdiction. That fact has to be considered when we are comparing Brisbane's problems with those of other cities.

We must remember, too, that the topography of Brisbane, and particularly the winding of the river through the heart of the city, make town planning here a very difficult matter, especially from the point of view of traffic and road systems.
Reverting to the committee that is to be set up, I was very pleased to hear the Minister say that it is his intention in the near future to bring down something in the nature of a general code for planning throughout Queensland. Is that so?

Mr. Heading: We intend to bring down a general Bill.

Mr. Walsh: I am very pleased to have the Minister’s assurance to that effect. The Government should envisage something for future town planning throughout Queensland. It is not good enough to pay all this attention merely to Brisbane when other large cities such as Townsville and Cairns and the South Coast are facing similar difficulties. Mackay, of course, has had a town plan for some years. In passing, I point out that in previous years the South Coast had the same problem as Brisbane in that the area that it covers came under the jurisdiction of numerous local authorities with differing by-laws.

If the Minister can assure us that the complete responsibility for producing the town plan for the city of Brisbane will rest with the committee itself and not with the local authority, I shall be very happy. The plan should not go back to the City Council for adjustments. If that is done we will still be faced with many problems. I take it that the proposed committee will have power to select its own staff?

Mr. Heading: That is right.

Mr. Walsh: The Council, of course, will be responsible for the expenditure, always taking into consideration that the Government will grant the usual 20 per cent. subsidy, or whatever it may be. It must be remembered that during Sir John Chandler’s regime as Lord Mayor, the rate-payers of Brisbane were put to considerable expense in the importation of professional men from the other side of the world. Flats were built for them, and a very costly town planning section was set up within the structure of the Brisbane City Council. But it did not produce a plan; all it produced was a map showing the development of the city area, and coloured in red, blue, green, yellow, and so on. There was no indication of what the land could be put to, or its likely use in the future.

This is a very big job. Of all the cities in Australia, the best approach I have seen to town-planning was that undertaken in Western Australia. The authorities in that State went to a good deal of trouble to produce an excellent plan.

Reference has been made to the Cumberland County Council in New South Wales. It has been in all sorts of difficulties over its plan but at least after all the years of settlement it has made an attempt whereas previously no serious attempt was made to formulate a constructive town plan. Recently the New South Wales Minister for Local Government approved the release of 850 acres or thereabouts valued at £2,000,000 from the Green Belt set out in that plan to cater for new development. The Cumberland County Council had the same difficulty as the Brisbane City Council. The Government decided where they would erect buildings. Even then in the Brisbane Cabinet had given something in the nature of an instruction that the departments were expected to work in co-operation with the Council as to any future building to be erected by them in the city. Now that the Minister has made it mandatory on the Crown it will be a headache for him in the end. Consideration of sites and buildings and everything else will come back to him. No doubt he will be called upon to referee in many of the arguments between Government departments and the city council.

The main principle in the Bill is that setting up the committee itself and conferring powers on it and I can see no objection to it. I do not think it will be contested by any hon. member who wants to see progress made with the preparation of a town plan.

We have heard statements about the Green Belt and rural areas within the City of Brisbane. There has been some discussion lately about whether the areas should be reduced from 10 acres to 2½ acres of the kind. No doubt the Minister will know all about it. Here again there is a vital point. A few people might develop the properties of 2½ or 10 acres without any regard to the future residential development of the area, and there will be chaos. Again the Director of Local Government will remember that I discussed the matter with representatives of the Council and others who called on me. Some definite action should be taken. The designing of roads and streets and the determination of their width will eventually have to go before the town planners. A homestead might be built right in the middle of a 2½-acre block and many other problems will be seen if there is no control over the development of the areas. The Committee should study very sensibly the Green Belt that is shown in the plan but not yet approved.

I can take no serious objection to the principles outlined and I hope that after perusing the Bill I will be able to support it in its entirety.

Mr. Lloyd (Kedron) (12.19 p.m.): The City of Brisbane town plan as presented in 1952 failed to take into consideration the possible growth of population, subdivisional work, transportation and all the other factors that interest local government. I had discussions with a number of people in areas within a radius of 6 to 7 miles of the G.P.O. that had been included in the green belt. These people naturally were very interested in subdividing their land and securing a profit for themselves. I was particularly interested in the accessibility of the land to transport in comparison with much of the other land being opened up in other parts of Brisbane. With an area of approximately 380 square miles
In the past the City Planning Department has not concentrated on town planning. The work of the department was mainly dealing with land subdivision, surveys and building permits. Difficulty has been experienced in drawing up a town planning scheme for the City of Brisbane. One of the difficulties is the narrow streets which were laid down at a time when it was thought Brisbane would never develop to its present size. The other is the narrow streets which were laid down at a time when it was thought Brisbane would grow up a town planning scheme for a town plan but in other parts of the world it has been found necessary to deal with the Government should employ a qualified man in charge will be an experienced town planner. The Committee has appointed a town planner—Mr. Heath.

Mr. LLOYD: On any ordinance passed by the Brisbane City Council?

Mr. LLOYD: I think the delegation of authority to the Brisbane City Council is unprecedented in Australia. It controls water, sewerage and transport and the main electrical supply, which elsewhere normally comes within the ambit of Government jurisdiction.

Mr. LLOYD: On decisions arrived at under the plan. For instance, in regard to the cutting up of property and that sort of thing. If a person is dissatisfied he will have the right of appeal.

Mr. LLOYD: In the past the City Planning Department has not concentrated on town planning. The work of the department was mainly dealing with land subdivision, surveys and building permits. Difficulty has been experienced in drawing up a town planning scheme for the City of Brisbane. One of the difficulties is the narrow streets which were laid down at a time when it was thought Brisbane would never develop to its present size. The other reason for the difficulty experienced in drawing up a town plan was owing to the alienation of lands on the northern bank of the Brisbane River. This land was taken up by people who came from the South and it has been a big obstacle in the way of implementing a town plan. In the early days no consideration was given to the matter of the future requirements of Brisbane. It will be necessary to spend a large sum of money to recover these lands that have been alienated in the implementation of a town plan.

The Minister mentioned that objections may be lodged against the plan and they will be referred to the Minister. The final decision will rest with the Minister and the City Council. I hope that it is not the Minister's intention to make it necessary to have legislative authority for every amendment, but that it will be possible to have minor amendments with the approval of the Town Planner, the City Council, or the Minister himself.

With the advance of progress and development many problems arise. It would be a mistake not to allow objections or amendments to a town plan. Of course, if there are many objections delay may be caused in implementing it. I hope that there will not be a repetition of what has happened in the past and that there will be no unnecessary delay.

I do not know whether I understood the Minister rightly, but I thought he said that if future there could be an appeal against Brisbane City Council ordinances or decisions made under those ordinances.

Mr. Heading: There will be an appeal to the Minister.

Mr. LLOYD: On any ordinance passed by the Brisbane City Council?

Mr. LLOYD: I am glad to hear that. It was rather difficult to hear the Minister when he introduced the Bill.

Mr. Mann: Is Mr. Heath the Town Planner in the council now?

Mr. Heading: That is right. The only work he will do with the council will be the work that affects this plan. He has been relieved of all his other duties.

Mr. LLOYD: In the past the City Planning Department has not concentrated on town planning. The work of the department was mainly dealing with land subdivision, surveys and building permits. Difficulty has been experienced in drawing up a town planning scheme for the City of Brisbane. One of the difficulties is the narrow streets which were laid down at a time when it was thought Brisbane would never develop to its present size. The other reason for the difficulty experienced in drawing up a town plan was owing to the alienation of lands on the northern bank of the
In consequence only large businesses and firms can afford to construct shops of the specified material. The right of appeal to the Minister is a most desirable feature of the legislation could cite in many cases where ordinances have led to grave discontent. The Brisbane City Council has built up such a complicated net of administrative red tape that the public suffer the hardship of unreasonable delays and great difficulty in getting action by the administration.

Liaison between all Government departments and the Brisbane City Council is essential. It may be thought that the town plan affects only the local authority, but it is impossible for any local authority to prepare a plan without consulting many other government bodies who are carrying out other activities in the same area. Immediately after the war Housing Commission estates were opened up in many parts of Brisbane. There was no co-ordination of the efforts of the Brisbane City Council, Commonwealth departments such as that of the Postmaster-General, and semi-governmental authorities in providing service to those estates, and as a consequence many services were not made available to the residents. That position arose at Inala. Very few services were available, whereas, if the policy had been one of co-ordination, the Brisbane City Council could have pointed out the great difficulties facing the Housing Commission in providing the services required by those residents. Co-operation between various authorities is essential in the preparation of the plan. In respect of highways the Department of Main Roads would have to be consulted. Subdivision of land would come within the province of another department. I understand that the Department of Education is to be informed of any future subdivisions, so that it can plan for the construction of schools. All those matters must be considered in the preparation of a plan, if it is to be a success. I reserve further comment until I have a copy of the Bill.

Hon. V. C. GAIR (South Brisbane) (12.35 p.m.): No hon. member would be opposed to this legislation, which is another attempt to grapple with the problem of town planning for the capital city of Queensland.

I suppose no good purpose is to be served by conducting a post-mortem on the reason for the delay in arriving at a solution to the problem. However, I think it is primarily and indisputably the responsibility of the local authority to introduce an adequate and balanced town plan for a growing city like Brisbane but the most appropriate time to draw up such a plan was when the Greater Brisbane Act was passed. It provided for the amalgamation of the various municipalities in Brisbane in 1925, when the population of Brisbane was 30,000 less than it is today. No provision for a plan had been made up till then, at that time people with faith in the growth of Queensland and the city of Brisbane, men with vision and an ability to provide in a balanced way for the community life of the city, could have been asked to draw up such a plan, but unfortunately it was not done. However, nature has been very kind to the city of Brisbane; it is a beautiful city but the work of nature has been marred to some extent by maladministration of local authorities over the years, due in many cases, no doubt, to a lack of vision, lack of faith, and a lack of confidence in the development and growth of the city, and by the intrusion of personal interests and, perhaps, party politics.

Mr. Windsor: It is very difficult to predict the future.

Mr. Gair: It is, but cities, towns, States, and countries have developed because the responsibility of government has been in the hands of men of vision, men with faith in the future and confident that their town, city, State, or country would grow. We can point today to model cities and towns. A comparison of provincial towns in Queensland with similar populations will show that one town is laid out in an orderly way—beautified by small parks, river works, and so on—while another is neglected, with no evidence of any attempt at beautification.

It is well known that over the years many local authorities have failed to take advantage of the Government loans and subsidies that were available to them for the provision of better health conditions, sewerage, and other amenities, while others have had the courage to go ahead with them. The result is that the latter places are sewered and have water-tables and properly formed footpaths and roads, and so on. They had enough faith in their districts and enough vision to provide for the future.

Much that is objectionable today in the Greater Brisbane area lies at the door of those who were charged with the administration of the city, and I sincerely hope that when this plan is evolved it will be of advantage to the future development of the city. There is no doubt that the spread of Brisbane in the post-war years has been amazing. One has only to fly over the city to realise the extent to which it has grown and expanded. Changes are taking place in the inner suburbs. I refer particularly to Wooloogamba, in my electorate, Spring Hill, in the Brisbane electorate, and Merthyr. Residences in those areas are gradually being moved out to make room for industrial organisations.

Mr. Power: And service stations.

Mr. Gair: And service stations, too. Perhaps that is another matter that could be dealt with in the plan, and with very good effect.
The change that I am referring to has been the subject of great controversy. Naturally the people in the inner suburbs did not welcome a move from the places in which they had lived for many years, even though their homes were small and old. They knew that they would be faced with additional expense in transport from an outer suburb, and that they would be going into homes that commanded higher rents. The question may be asked should not the industrial organisations have gone to the outer suburbs so as to allow the people to remain where they were.

Against that, of course, is the advantage of better housing. In most cases the homes in the inner suburbs would be among the original dwellings of Brisbane; the streets are narrow. One would think that there was a shortage of land when the original surveys were made. No doubt the surveyors, architects, and planners of those days came from the Old Country, with its large populations and shortage of land, and they drew the plans on the old English style.

People can almost shake hands across the streets of Woolloongabba. Narrow streets present traffic hazards and without stop signs at every intersection there would be many accidents. In time the homes will be moved out or demolished and be replaced by industrial concerns.

We need a balanced plan as soon as possible, one to provide both for today and tomorrow. We must look ahead and have faith in the future, something that people evidently did not display in the past. In 1925 the first Greater Brisbane Council was elected; the city has increased in population by more than 300,000 since then and perhaps in another 20 years or more we can expect a similar or greater increase.

One cannot retard the growth of a city but I have no desire to see Brisbane grow into a mammoth city like Sydney or Melbourne. I would sooner see the increasing population decentralised in provincial towns through the decentralisation of industry and the development of North and Central Queensland. Big cities pose tremendous problems; their citizens are at a great disadvantage in many respects compared with those in country areas. True, they enjoy greater facilities than those in remote places but there are disadvantages, too.

Mr. Pizzey: They waste most of their day in travelling time.

Mr. GAIR: Yes. They spend much time in travelling to and from work. The people in country towns have many advantages over city dwellers.

Mr. Beardmore: And go without many of the benefits, too.

Mr. GAIR: Yes, but there are advantages. The whole atmosphere of the country is healthier and better.

However, it is not my purpose to delay the Committee. I hope that eventually we will have a concrete and balanced plan.

Brisbane has a beautiful river but it has been neglected. Parts of the banks are littered with junk from industrial establishments. The river should be an attractive feature of the city. Compared with the Brisbane River the Torrens River in Adelaide is little more than a trickle but every attempt has been made to beautify its banks and the parks alongside. Look at what has been done with the Swan River and estuary in Perth! Land has been reclaimed and beautified. There is a beautiful drive from the city proper in the direction of the University. Surely something like that could be done with the Brisbane River. More could be done by the Brisbane City Council to make the most of the river, to assist to beautify what nature has already given us, rather than mar it by permitting unsightly buildings and structures to occupy the frontages, particularly in the city itself. These are all matters that the Council and the town planning authority will have to consider in carrying out this legislation.

I hope the Council will give consideration to the matter referred to by the hon. member for Baroona, namely that it will take advantage of its ordinances to prevent the city and suburbs from being even more cluttered up with service stations here, there and everywhere. Alderman Crawford is reported as having said that we have to be progressive, that Brisbane is growing. That is undoubtedly true, but neither Alderman Crawford nor anyone else could convince me or any other reasonable person that the oil companies have not overdone the building of service stations in Brisbane and perhaps in other cities throughout Queensland, as they have in other cities in the Commonwealth. Oil companies spend so much money on the erection of petrol stations that it is difficult to understand how they can be economically sound. But we can be sure that the oil companies do not suffer. They would never do so if the contracts drawn up between themselves and the lessees are watertight. If there is to be any loser, it will be the lessee. I admit that most of the new service stations are very attractively laid out but they will not always have their present-day new appearance. They may become an eyesore. They occupy important sites on the roads and highways throughout the city and suburbs of Brisbane. Unquestionably the matter has been overdone. Years ago when I was in office I was assuaged by representatives of the oil companies that they had built all they were going to build, or that they were going to slow down considerably in building more service stations. I trust that this further attempt to provide a town plan for Brisbane will be accompanied with the greatest measure of success.

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) (12.5 p.m.): It is not my intention to give a recital on town planning because I am not an authority on it. If I were, I would draw attention to
tours like Bundaberg and Grafton which were evidently planned by councils with vision. It is a pleasure to visit those cities.

The Minister said the object of the Bill was to repeal the Act and make a realistic plan for the city of Brisbane. The Committee will have a big job ahead of it. I know that they are big men who have plenty of ideas. The big job ahead of them will test their capacity. In my own area the Brisbane City Council made an outlet from the city going towards Red Lion. For this purpose they resumed a number of properties in Little Edward Street. They did a good job there, but they left an S bend at the top of Edward Street, which is almost a traffic hazard owing to the number of vehicles that use that road. If a town planner had dealt with the matter that hazard would not be there.

There does not seem to be any more co-operation between the Brisbane City Council and the State Government than there is between the State Government and the Federal Government. Although they are supposed to be friends, they do nothing to help one another or to co-operate.

It is the intention of the Government to resume a number of properties at Spring Hill for the purpose of erecting a building to house the Main Roads Department. Seventeen people live in those houses. Although some of the houses are in poor condition, others are very good. The owners have built them up and cared for them over the years, and the Government, callously disregarding the wishes of the people, have resumed the properties for the purpose of erecting this building. My leader suggested that there should be a plan to have all Government buildings in the one area. At present the Main Roads Department has a transport department at Ivory Street, and the Road Safety Council is next door. Under the present plan they will have the Main Roads Department miles away in the middle of Spring Hill. I am glad that Mr. Heath is to be the town planner; he understands the position.

I have referred to the lack of co-operation between the Government and the Brisbane City Council in the preparation of a town plan and the announced intention to resume 1½ acres of land on Spring Hill on which 17 houses are built, so that the Main Roads Department building can be constructed there. The Minister for Mines and the Lord Mayor differ on whether the Council was notified that the land was to be used for this building. I do not know which version is correct. I do not think the position is appropriate, but I am not an authority on town planning. If the Member for Mines, Mines, and Main Roads has taken any action, I suggest that the Minister for Local Government should veto it until the Town Planning Committee has had an opportunity to make its recommendation. If the committee is in favour of the plan to put a Main Roads building on the site, by all means let it be put there, but, on the other hand, if Mr. Heath and the other committee members are against it, the scheme should be abandoned. I suggest, in those circumstances, that the Minister should veto any action taken by the Minister for Mines. I do not think the Minister could be fairer than that. I and the local residents do not know which version to accept, that of the Lord Mayor, or the Minister for Mines.

I have been informed by an alderman of the Brisbane City Council that the Lord Mayor is opposed to the resumption of the property for the department, as it cuts across the town plan of the City Council.

When he introduced the Bill the Minister said that any recommendation of the Town Planning Committee which was approved by the City Council would be binding on the Crown. I now ask the Minister for Development to stay his hand until the Town Planning Committee has decided whether this building should be in Spring Hill or in some other part of the city.

The Leader of the Opposition suggested that the Town Planning Committee should set aside a block for all Government buildings, so that they could be as near as possible to each other. That would be better than the present higgledy-piggledy arrangement.

A town plan is essential. I do not intend to try to ascertain how the delays have occurred or who was responsible but I have my own idea. I shall not enter into a discussion on that controversial subject. It is time that positive action was taken. Nor am I going to suggest what materials should be used for buildings. That can safely be left to the Town Planner and his fellow committee men. Before people are allowed to construct shops or buildings they must submit their plans to the Council and the Town Planner, and if the building is approved for the locality, they can go ahead with its construction. I am not an authority on architecture or town planning, but I believe that there should be some co-operation between the Government and the Council.

I have been told that there are some people in this area at Spring Hill who would be happy to leave but there are two with homes equal to those in any suburb. They are very upset that the Government would callously take their homes away from them. The Minister or somebody in the Main Roads Department might say that they will get adequate compensation. They do not want compensation; they want to live there. If they are within their rights and this action of the Government cuts across the town plan, I ask the Minister if he will exercise the power to veto, to prevent the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads from going on with this project until the committee is formed. Then if the committee decide that the new building is necessary, the people in the area will have to accept its decision. If
there are to be resumptions the people concerned will be satisfied to abide by the decisions of the committee.

Hon. J. A. HEADING (Maridjan—Minister for Public Works and Local Government) (2.22 p.m.), in reply: There are one or two matters to which I should like to reply.

The Leader of the Opposition said that I was not to blame for the delay in producing a town plan. I am glad he said that, because I do not feel very guilty. We have been slow in starting because many things had to be done; but greater progress should be made when the Bill goes through. I am not worried about the result. Once the plan is drawn up, the problem will be to put it into operation. It will be difficult, because the city has been allowed to grow without any plan. Some country towns have set Brisbane an example. They have town plans that are functioning well. Brisbane’s size is no reason why a town plan should not have been prepared long ago. Unfortunately, it has not, and I shall have something to say about that later.

I appreciate the complimentary remarks of the Leader of the Opposition concerning Mr. Sewell, Professor Cummings, and the Town Clerk, Mr. Slaughter. I remember well that the first report they made was acclaimed everywhere as a very fine one. I think the Leader of the Opposition was absent when it came out in the Press, but it was acclaimed by the Press and it was a good report. The Lord Mayor and Alderman Ord were also on the committee of five.

I refused to give the Citizens’ Town Planning Committee of the Brisbane Development Association representation on the committee not because I wanted to be nasty but because I thought five members were enough. The members of the organisation have been in touch with me; their members include engineers, surveyors, and professional men, and I am sure that they could be of great assistance to the new committee, but I think they will agree that a committee of more than five is too big. The Press said that I ‘flatly refused,’ but I did not intend to slight them when I refused to increase the number. It makes it appear that I was very blunt; but I was not. I merely said that I did not think I should increase the number.

Mr. Duggan: I think it is only fair to say that you have proved yourself to be very courteous.

Mr. HEADING: I should like to thank the Leader of the Opposition for that remark.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke about the erection of buildings in the wrong places. That is one of the tragedies of the delay in bringing in a town plan, much of which no doubt is due to differing political opinions.

A good deal has been said about the need for co-operation between the Government and the Brisbane City Council. I point out, however, that 12 months ago every Government department was asked to submit to the Department of Public Works full information on its probable needs during the next 10 years. I refer particularly to the Education Department, which occupies a good deal of land in the Brisbane area. We are now so far ahead in that matter that we have a very good general idea of where we are going and what the requirements of the various departments will be for some years ahead. Therefore, we can hardly be accused of not doing everything possible to see that the town plan is proceeded with.

The subject of roads and highways has been raised. I point out that the ratepayers have to bear the cost of their local roads, with the assistance of course of the Main Roads Development Fund, but the cost of highways is not chargeable to a local authority. They are built by the Main Roads Department.

A recurring problem for every Government is to find finance to do all the jobs. We are in no different position from previous Governments in that regard.

The hon. member for Bundaberg made the assertion that Governments interfere too much in local authority affairs but I cannot altogether agree with him. It is my opinion that when he was the Minister in charge of local government he interfered too much in local authority affairs. When I became Minister, the first matter that I discussed with Mr. Sewell was the necessity to keep our fingers out of the affairs of local authorities. They are elected by the people to carry out work in their own districts, and I have tried to let them settle their own difficulties as much as possible. Somebody has said, “Look at the mistakes they make.” My reply to that is, “That is how they learn.”

Mr. Power: You wouldn’t stand by and let a local authority approve of the pulling down of 28 flats without taking some action, would you?

Mr. HEADING: I have already said that I interfere with local authorities as little as possible. I do not intend to be drawn into an argument about service stations. Everything in its own time.

Mr. Mann: They are not going to be pulled down.

Mr. HEADING: The hon. member for Bundaberg said the Bill was just another attempt to have a town plan prepared. This time it will be more than an attempt; it will be done. I will not sit back and watch it flop. When I took office I was surprised to find that I was responsible for town planning. Coming from the country I was not greatly interested in the subject, but when I learned that I had to be interested in it, and when I found alongside me a competent man who had devoted much study to town planning in Mr. Sewell, naturally I discussed it with him.
It is my view that while the plan is being prepared the Government should know what is happening. What happened last time? To the shame of the Government they had the town plan delivered to them and they kept it in a pigeon-hole. The hon. member for Bundaberg held it in his office for four years and did nothing whatever about it. That was a tragedy. The hon. member for South Brisbane said that the great development in those years was not according to any plan. The hon. member for Bundaberg said that the plan was no good in which case he should have pointed that out and sent it back.

Mr. Mann: Did you say he kept it in his office for four years?

Mr. Heading: Yes.

Mr. Mann: Are you sure he did not send it back to the Council?

Mr. Heading: No, he did not.

Mr. Mann: I think he did.

Mr. Heading: I do not think so. That question can easily be settled. He simply kept it there; he did not say why it was wrong or anything else. The years went by and no plan was approved, and still there is no plan, but we are taking action now. What staggered me is that the Government of the day was headed by many hon. members who lived in Brisbane. One would have thought that they would be more interested than country people in the town plan, but they were not.

The hon. member for Bundaberg took us right back to 1935 and spread the blame over all the Governments since then. I am not very interested in having a wash-up. History can teach us many lessons but it is far more important to look to the future.

The hon. member for Bundaberg said that water supply and sewerage and other services were tied up with the formation of a town plan. We all know that. Roads, sewerage, electric light, telephones, and many other services are involved.

I learned at lunch time that an assistant town planner was appointed yesterday. Soon we will have all the necessary officers. An officer of my department in the architect's section will be seconded to the Council as soon as necessary. We intend to co-operate. Mr. Sewell is on the Committee to see it through and he will keep us well informed about it. We will not wait for years to decide on the plan. We will decide very quickly whether it is the plan we want. With co-operation I hope that we will be able to fix the plan as we go along. It is correct that the plan will go to the Council for examination. It will be advertised and objections invited. Then it will come to the Government for consideration. It has been suggested that the Government would not have anybody qualified to consider it. We have enough sense to make sure that we have a competent person. Mr. Sewell is a very capable officer but he is not a town planner. Let there be no fears about it, the Government will find a suitable person to check the town plan. If we have two town planners, engineers and surveyors on the job surely we can get an acceptable plan.

I have my own views about the green belt but again that is a matter for the town planners. I think we should have more parks rather than a green belt. The existence of the green belt means that transport has further to go to cater for people living on the other side. Public transport will never pay if it has to travel long distances through a green belt with almost no habitation. I know all about the transport difficulties that have been mentioned. The plan has to be drawn in such a way that transport costs will not be overburdensome.

Shopping centres were mentioned by the hon. member for Kedron. That is another matter for the town planners. We want the best plan we can get. We ask for co-operation. What I said earlier in reply to the criticism of that report will satisfy hon. members opposite that we are not so backward as they would suggest. The committee will have rooms of their own at the City Council. The only connection the town planner, Mr. Heath, will have with the Council will be that he will watch development to see that it does not conflict with the town plan. I hope that when the plan is completed hon. members opposite will be able to say that the job has been well done. We will not get a plan that everybody will agree with. Probably many people will get hurt and objections will come. But if we get the best town planners available I think we can rely on them for a sound town plan.

Motion (Mr. Heading) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

First Reading.

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

Oaths Acts Amendment Bill.

Second Reading.

Hon. A. W. Munro (Toowong—Minister for Justice) (8.41 p.m.): I move—

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

This is a very short and simple Bill. It has only two clauses which were explained on the introductory stage. I do not think it is necessary for me to say anything further.

Motion (Mr. Munro) agreed to.

Committee.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Taylor, Clayfield, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.
TRUST ACCOUNTS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Justice) (2.43 p.m.): I move—

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

This is also quite a simple Bill. It has one or two important principles, but they are quite short and were fully discussed on the introductory stage.

Mr. DUGGAN (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (2.49 p.m.): The Leader of the Opposition) (2.49 p.m.): The

I explained at the introductory stage that this Bill amends the Queensland Trustees, Limited, Acts, 1888 to 1955, and the Union Trustee Company of Australis, Limited, Acts, 1890 to 1935. It contains some clauses which are rather technical in their operation but which do not involve any major question of policy.

I think the most interesting principle is the establishing of the common fund in relation to trustee companies. As I pointed out earlier, that principle is at present in operation in respect of the Public Curator’s department, and the proposal is that it should now be brought into operation for the trustee companies, but with some modification to cover the different conditions of the trustee companies. I do not think I can usefully add anything further at this stage. If there are any provisions which are not clear to hon. members, they could be discussed more appropriately at the Committee stage.

Mr. DUGGAN (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (2.49 p.m.): The

After perusing the Bill, I find that none of the clauses is inconsistent with the earlier statements by the Minister. That being so, I have nothing further to add.

Motion (Mr. Munro) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Taylor, Clayfield, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 to 29, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

OFFENDERS PROBATION AND PAROLE BILL.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Taylor, Clayfield, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 to 19, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 20—Establishment of Parole Board—

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona) (2.51 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

"On page 12, lines 4 to 7, omit the words—

‘(a) A Judge of the Supreme Court nominated with his consent by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court either generally or for a specified term;’"

This clause deals with the appointment of a Judge of the Supreme Court as Chairman of the Board. During the second reading stage I gave the reasons why I was not prepared to support this clause and I intimated, and after giving my reasons, I would not discuss it again on the Committee stage. I formally move the amendment.

My other amendments down to Clause 23 are consequential; if this one is defeated I do not propose to move the others.

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Justice) (2.52 p.m.): This question was discussed very fully at an earlier stage—should a judge me a member and chairman of the Parole Board? I have given a great deal of thought to the points of view that have been expressed, but for reasons that I indicated earlier, I believe that the clause would not be improved by the amendment. It is clear that the Parole Board will have great responsibility, and because of that, I wish to make it as strong, as competent, and as authoritative as I can. I also indicated that I was reluctant to ask the judges to make one of their number available for this work because I know that they have other very pressing duties. Nevertheless, it is so important that we must do so. For those reasons, I am unable to accept the amendment.

Amendment (Mr. Power) negatived.

Clause 20, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 21 to 30, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.
Clause 31—Direction and control of parole officers—

Mr. DUGGAN (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (2.55 p.m.): I should like the Minister to reconsider the decision to place parole officers under the control of the Under Secretary of the Department of Justice. I pointed out that in New South Wales—and in Victoria too, I think—these officers are under the direct control of the person holding the position similar to that of the Comptroller-General of Prisons in this State. People with a sound knowledge of the subject hold the view that a parole officer should be free to move about in the gaol, and that it would be preferable for him to be answerable to the Comptroller-General. After all, from the reports furnished to him, and from his own personal observations, the Comptroller-General would know a great deal about the character and temperament of the prisoner. He is not there in the role of a harsh gaoler. Certainly he has to see that the punishment inflicted by the Court is carried out, but primarily he is there to do everything possible to rehabilitate the prisoner. He, and those associated with him, are naturally anxious to see that the prisoner is given every opportunity to rehabilitate himself, and it is only reasonable that the parole officer should be attached to his staff. The rehabilitation of a prisoner could be much more easily carried out under those conditions than if the parole officer was appointed from outside the gaol and came under the direct control of the Under Secretary.

I point out, of course, that the Under Secretary would still exercise control over the parole officer. He is of a higher status than the Comptroller-General, and he could make any inquiries that he thought necessary of the Comptroller-General and his staff. My suggestion, therefore, would not in any way lessen the Under Secretary’s authority.

I pointed out during an earlier stage of the Bill than I have every confidence in the Under Secretary. However, from the prisoner’s point of view, and particularly from the point of view of his rehabilitation, it would be preferable to have the parole officer under the immediate control of the Comptroller-General.

I ask the Minister to reconsider my suggestion. I do not want to force a division on the matter; I am merely trying to be constructive. I pointed out briefly in an earlier stage of the Bill that there is always the possibility of a lack of co-operation if an officer from one department is sent to another department to carry out an investigation or do a supervising job. I ask the Minister to reconsider his attitude.

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Justice) (2.59 p.m.): This matter gave me a good deal of thought when the Bill was being prepared. It is true, as the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, that in Victoria the parole officers are subject to the direction of the Director of Penal Services, not the Under Secretary of the Department of Justice.

However, we gave the matter a great deal of thought and concluded that for the probation and parole system to work entirely satisfactorily we had to ensure that it would not be completely under the influence of the Police Department or the Prisons Department.

Mr. Power: Don’t you think that in the very near future you will have to make the Prisons Department a department on its own and not under the Under Secretary?

Mr. MUNRO: That would involve a question wider than the one contained in the Bill. There may be a case for that. The Prisons Department is a very important sub-department.

Mr. Power: A very big department, too.

Mr. MUNRO: Yes. Nevertheless, I think it is better for it to be, as at present, under the administration of the Under Secretary. I have the fullest confidence in the Comptroller-General and I find that we get the best results from the prisons administration with an absolute minimum of interference with it either by the ministerial head or by the Under Secretary. Our relations are quite satisfactory. There is the fullest consultation but very rarely is there any interference with Prison administration.

Mr. Power: All the memoranda have to go from the Comptroller-General through the Under Secretary to the Minister.

Mr. MUNRO: That is an advantage because it is desirable to have the overall control by the Under Secretary. That does not mean that I, as Minister for Justice, cannot get the Comptroller-General of Prisons to come over and see me and discuss matters in my office.

Mr. Power: You have not got to tell me that.

Mr. MUNRO: I often do. My Under Secretary is quite happy with that personal contact.

Clause 31 (1) says—

“Parole officers shall in relation to any parole order be subject to direction by the Board, but shall otherwise be under the control of the Under Secretary.”

So the control by the Under Secretary of the Department of Justice is merely for general
administrative and financial purposes. Somebody has to look after them, to pay their salaries and to attend to minor routine matters of that kind. But in the actual carrying out of their duties as parole officers they will be guided by the Parole Board far more than by the Under Secretary.

For those reasons I think the clause will work satisfactorily in its present form.

Clause 31, as read, agreed to.

Clause 32—Release on Parole—

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona) (3.4 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

"On page 16, line 3, omit the word—

'direct'

and insert in lieu thereof the words—

'recommend to the Governor in Council.'"

I dealt fully with the subject in my second-reading speech. Briefly, I am opposed to vesting the powers of releasing a prisoner entirely in the hands of the Parole Board. The Governor in Council should not give that right to the Board.

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Justice) (3.5 p.m.): This point was very fully discussed both at the introductory stage and second reading of the Bill. I appreciated the early discussion because it gave me an opportunity to turn the matter over in my mind. However, even after that further consideration I still adhere to the opinion I expressed earlier that it would not be wise to accept such an amendment. The law covering the release on parole of prisoners serving life sentences is as the hon. member for Baroona desires it to be in terms of his amendment. We are now considering the provision in respect of the release on parole of prisoners not undergoing sentences of imprisonment for life. We are setting up this new Parole Board with powers to consider and deal with a fairly wide range of offenders—a wider range than previously—among them being quite a number of cases that could be regarded as minor. I do not want to go into the details again, but we have very considerably strengthened the composition of the Board. Therefore I think it would be better to rely on the very thorough, competent examination that will be made by the Parole Board than to put the Board in the position of merely making a recommendation and then to rely on consideration by the Governor in Council. Because of the huge number of other matters necessarily coming forward for consideration by the Governor in Council, any final consideration by the Governor in Council could obviously not be nearly so thorough as the consideration given by the Parole Board. For that reason I am unable to accept the hon. member’s amendment. However, I have circulated an amendment that I propose to move to Clause 32. I think it will be acceptable to the hon. member, perhaps not fully acceptable as an alternative to his amendment, but as an amendment in the general direction he desires.

Mr. Power: I cannot understand why you will not accept my amendment when you establish the same principle in the Bill for another purpose.

Mr. MUNRO: Let me make it clear that I am not prepared to accept the hon. member’s amendment because I am not prepared to agree that every case should go to the Governor in Council. I have indicated already that cases concerning prisoners serving life sentences will. If I might digress a little, the amendment I propose to move would leave in the hands of the Governor in Council the further extension of the powers of the Parole Board to cover cases not within the limitation set out in Clause 32. I do not want to explain the amendment in detail at the present stage but merely to forecast a further amendment to Clause 32.

Amendment (Mr. Power) negatived.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona) (3.10 p.m.): As my other two amendments are consequential on the one that has just been negatived, I do not propose to move them.

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Justice) (3.11 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

"On page 16, lines 18 and 19, omit the words—

'Provided that unless the Board for reasons which to it appear good and sufficient otherwise determines'

and insert in lieu thereof the words—

'Provided that unless the Governor in Council, upon the recommendation of the Board, otherwise determines.'"

In broad principle the amendment is somewhat similar to the one proposed by the hon. member for Baroona, but it is substantially different in its effect. In sub-clause (1) of Clause 32 it sets out that the Board may in its discretion deal with certain types of cases, and then by way of limitation there is a proviso to that clause which goes on to say that unless the Board for reasons which to it appear good and sufficient otherwise determines. That is certain types of prisoners shall not be eligible for release on parole. In the clause as printed, hon. members will observe in the first place that we strictly limited the powers of the Board, and then we provided that in certain circumstances the Board may, for reasons which to it appeared, good and sufficient, deal with cases which are slightly outside the limitation of Clause 32. We thought that there could be some unusual cases that would merit consideration by the Parole Board, but which the Parole Board would not be permitted to deal with by limitation of Clause 32. Therefore some flexibility was desirable. Further consideration I think that is a matter for a modification of the limitation of Section 32, and one that should not be wholly in the
discretion of the Parole Board, but should be a matter for the Governor in Council to determine upon the recommendation of the Board. That is the effect of the amendment.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona) (3.14 p.m.): I see nothing wrong with the amendment, but, as I pointed out previously, the Minister is now writing something into one section of the Act which I asked him to agree to in regard to other sections. The amendment will deal with three different classes of prisoners. The first is a prisoner, not being an habitual criminal, undergoing a sentence of imprisonment other than a sentence of imprisonment, either with or without hard labour, for life. The Board can, with the approval of the Governor in Council, agree to parole such a prisoner, before he has done half his sentence. The same applies to the next class, a prisoner, being an habitual criminal, who, having completed a sentence of imprisonment, is being detained during Her Majesty's pleasure. After he completes the sentence imposed on him by a Supreme Court judge, or, in future, by a district court judge, he is detained at the discretion of the Governor until such time as it is felt he can be released. I do not intend to delay the Committee by dealing with all the processes of law involved in that matter. The board is given power to make certain recommendations to the Governor in council. Clause 32 (1) (c) relates to sex offenders and the legislation introduced by the late Mr. Gledson some years ago. If this proviso had not been inserted, these people would have been detained until they had served half their sentence, and in the case of habitual criminals for two years after they have served the sentences imposed on them. I support the amendment. There will be many good reasons why some prisoners should be released.

I shall give an example. This prisoner was serving a life sentence for murder, and during imprisonment contracted tuberculosis. The medical opinion was that he would have to be in hospital for a period from two to three years, that he would be confined in the hospital for that period. He had served a lengthy term of imprisonment. If as he could not be taken to Ward 16 it would have been necessary to guard him 24 hours of the day. That would have cost a considerable amount of money. In view of the medical evidence that he would be in hospital for a number of years and that while in prison he had endeavoured to some extent to rehabilitate himself, certain action was taken. In cases of that nature I think the Governor in Council would readily agree to release the prisoner.

Amendment (Mr. Munro) agreed to.

Clause 32, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 33 and 34, as read, agreed to. Clause 35—Cancellation of parole by order of Board—

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona) (3.18 p.m.): I move the following amendment:

"On page 17, after line 37, insert the following paragraphs:"

"Where the Board orders the cancellation of a parole order, such cancellation shall be subject to confirmation thereof by the Court.

For the purposes of that subsection any reference to a Court shall be deemed a reference—"

(a) Where the sentence or detention was imposed by the Supreme Court—

to any sitting of the Supreme Court in its criminal jurisdiction at any place in Queensland;

(b) Where the sentence or detention was imposed by a District Court—

to a District Court sitting within or for the District in which the order was made;

(c) Where the sentence or detention was imposed by a court of petty sessions—to any court of petty sessions sitting at the place at which the order was made, notwithstanding that the Judge or justices constituting the Court may not be the same as made the order originally."

I think the amendment is reasonable and should be acceptable to the Minister. The Bill contains a similar provision for a prisoner released on probation. There is a distinction between probation and parole. Before a probation order can be cancelled it must be confirmed by the supervisory court. If it should apply to a prisoner released on probation, why should it not apply to a prisoner released on parole? I can see no justification for the distinction.

As I said in my speech on the second reading, the powers given to the Parole Board are extraordinary. Clause 35 reads—

"Where a prisoner, including a prisoner referred to in Section thirty-three of this Act, is released on parole as aforesaid the Board may in its discretion at any time before the expiration of the parole period by order cancel, amend or vary his parole . . ."

It is remarkable that the Board should have an absolute discretion to say, without giving any reason, "We are going to cancel the parole of this prisoner." It will be argued by the Minister that there must be some good reason for the cancellation, and I might agree with him. But, at the same time, the unfortunate person who is on parole is given no chance to defending himself against complaints that may have been made to the Parole Board, which has this great power vested in it.

I believe that this amendment is very reasonable, and I think that in the interests of British justice it should be accepted. The members of the Parole Board should not
have this power. On many occasions there may be very good reasons for returning a prisoner to gaol. If he breaks the provisions of his release on parole, which are set out, he must put up with the consequences. However, I think it is wrong to give the Board this absolute discretion, and I ask the Minister to give the amendment serious consideration and to accept it.

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Justice) (3.24 p.m.): I congratulate the hon. member for Baroona upon his very thorough examination of this Bill. It is quite a complex subject, and the hon. member, as a former Attorney-General, has examined its provisions very closely. Notwithstanding that, and despite the fact that I can see something in the main argument that he has put forward, I believe quite firmly that the Bill would not be improved by his amendment.

Mr. Power: But there would be some protection for a person released on parole.

Mr. MUNRO: Let us consider the matter. In the first place, the hon. member for Baroona has compared the procedure on parole with that on probation. It must be recognised that there is an essential difference between parole and probation, it is not a matter of a prisoner’s being released on parole but of the court’s having power to make probation orders.

Mr. Power: It is a matter of the court’s releasing a convicted person on probation.

Mr. MUNRO: In terms of Clause 8, it is a case of a person’s being convicted by the Supreme Court or any District Court. The clause says that if the court is of the opinion that, having regard to the circumstances generally of the case, it is expedient to do so, it may, instead of sentencing him, make a probation order, that is to say, an order requiring him to be under the supervision of a probation officer.

That is very different from the case where the court considers the matter and sends the prisoner to gaol for a term. That is the second case, in which the offender becomes a prisoner. He is sentenced to a term in gaol, and the Parole Board has the power in certain circumstances to give a direction releasing him on parole.

Mr. Power: I think you have overlooked the point that many people are in prison today because previously there was no probation system under which a parole officer or a probation officer could deal with them.

Mr. MUNRO: That may be so. I freely admit that there may be some persons in prison today who would not have been sent to prison if this Bill had been in operation a few years ago. Of course, we cannot put the clock back. But that does not alter the fact that those persons have been sentenced to terms of imprisonment. The power of the Parole Board is merely to suspend or modify a sentence that has been imposed by the court.

I think it is a fairly general principle of law that where you give power to any authority to make a determination, you usually give it the power to vary or rescind. After the Parole Board has made its decision some new facts may come before it, and it may be essential in the interests of justice for it to make some variation of its previous order. While I do not suggest that justice could not be done under the terms of the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Baroona, it would make the procedure extremely cumbersome and would handicap the carrying out of the principles that we have in mind.

For those reasons, although I concede that theoretically there is some argument in support of what the hon. member has put forward, I do not think that the amendment would help in the satisfactory administration of the legislation. Therefore, I regret that I am unable to accept it.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona) (3.30 p.m.): The Minister has not convinced me; rather has he strengthened my views. He said the amendment would make the provision cumbersome. He must surely know from his experience that more people are released on probation than on parole and at any one time there would be more on probation than on parole. Yet before probation is cancelled the matter has to go to the court. Over the years very few prisoners have been released on parole.

Clause 35 (2) makes provision for the cancellation of parole upon conviction as follows:—

‘‘Where the prisoner is sentenced to another term of imprisonment in respect of any offence committed during the parole period, whether in Queensland or elsewhere, his parole shall ipso facto be cancelled notwithstanding that the parole period may already have elapsed.”

So for some cases statutory provision is made for cancellation whereas another provision gives unlimited power to the Parole Board. I agree with Clause 8; I have no quarrel with it, but I ask the Minister to try to extend that provision, or a similar provision, to prisoners on parole. The Bill puts too much power in the hands of the Parole Board. I ask the Committee to support the amendment.

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Justice) (3.32 p.m.): I reiterate that there is a very clear distinction between probation and parole. A probation order is made by the court and the question of any subsequent variation or cancellation is a matter for the court. With parole the determination is made by the Parole Board and the question of any subsequent variation or cancellation is one for the Parole Board. The two procedures are completely consistent and the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Baroona would merely weaken the provisions of the Bill.
Hon. W. Power (Baroona) (3.33 p.m.): I want to make it quite clear to the Minister that I am well aware of the difference between the prisoner who is convicted and placed on probation and the prisoner who is released on parole. Nevertheless, they have both offended against society. Some prisoners released on probation by the courts have very lengthy criminal records. Some of the judges in their desire to be humane and to help people have released prisoners with very lengthy records of conviction. They have said, ‘I am prepared to give you another chance.’ And many prisoners have taken advantage of that chance. Nevertheless, they have been convicted of an offence; they have already seen the inside of a prison. I am glad the provision is there but why treat the prisoner released on parole differently from the prisoner on probation?

Amendment (Mr. Power) negatived.

Clause 35, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 36 to 40, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with an amendment.

CENTENARY OF THE STATE OF QUEENSLAND HOLIDAY BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. K. J. Morris (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry) (3.35 p.m.): I move—

‘That the Bill be now read a second time.’

I explained this simple Bill at the introductory stage; it contains no complex problems. Nevertheless it is very important. It is a recognition by Parliament of a very important day, the 100th birthday of the State. I am quite sure that every hon. member would like to give as many people as possible a holiday on that day to enable them to take part in the centenary celebrations. As the Bill has the unanimous support of hon. members I need say no more.

Mr. Duggan (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (3.43 p.m.): I move:

‘That the Bill be now read a second time.’

Mr. Duggan (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (3.56 p.m.): I confirm the Minister’s statement that there is unanimous support of the action being taken to celebrate this day. We gave our approval of the Bill at the introductory stage when I pointed out some reasons why the date should be especially selected because of its tremendous historical importance. I referred to some of the great development and achievements and why we should on that day pause to reflect on the progress made.

Motion (Mr. Morris) agreed to.

COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Taylor, Clayfield, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

HOTEL THEODORE SALE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. A. G. Muller (Fassifern—Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation) (3.38 p.m.): I move—

‘That the Bill be now read a second time.’

I gave a very full explanation on its initiation. Now that hon. members have had an opportunity to read it I am sure they will agree that it is very necessary.

It gives a very progressive association the right to mortgage the property to raise money to build a new hotel. The principle in the Act is not altered, the same conditions will apply. The association will not have power to transfer the hotel to other than another co-operative association. A transfer is permitted by the banks to an individual only in times of financial crisis. That is a remote possibility. The association is very progressive, it is endeavouring to enter for the interests of the district and they need the extra capital to carry out the job.

Mr. Duggan (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (3.41 p.m.): We view with a measure of apprehension an amendment of this nature. The Minister pointed out that it was only because of the inability of the association to secure finance in order to carry out improvements that this action is being taken. We would have been concerned if the transfer necessitated any basic alteration to the principle of the Act. The Minister has given us an assurance that the principles of the Act are virtually preserved, and the Bill shows that. Therefore I have no serious objection to it.

I regret with other hon. members that the Government did not see their way clear to guarantee the loan and thus remove even the remote possibility of the hotel’s reverting to private ownership. The association should be encouraged to provide better facilities for the people in the area and those who visit it. As the Government have not elected to carry out their responsibility by giving a guarantee the only alternative is that set out in the Bill. They have done the next best thing.

Mr. Foley (Belyando) (3.43 p.m.): I had something to do with the original associations who were connected with this hotel at Theodore prior to the introduction of any legislation to deal with it. A group of people at Theodore were anxious to take over the hotel and provide better facilities for the people, and the only way in which they could do it was to form a co-operative association. The Government agreed to their proposal to take a lease for 3½ years. They did remarkably well and an application was then made to purchase the hotel. The Valuer-General estimated the value at about £10,000, and the Government agreed to dispose of the hotel to the co-operative group for that sum.
Certain conditions were laid down. It had to be run as a community hotel. No profits were to be distributed among the members of the society. All profits were to be applied to improving the premises, plant and equipment, and for the promotion and encouragement of scholarships and for the advancement of literature, science, art, and recreation in the Theodore district. Those conditions were accepted. The Government have not guaranteed the loan obtained by the society. The property is to be mortgaged, with the possibility of foreclosure in the event of default, which would destroy the original objective. The mortgagee could sell to an individual, whereas the Act provides that the hotel cannot be transferred to other than a co-operative society with similar objectives. The Bill cuts right across the original intention of the Act introduced by the Labour Government, that is, that it should be a community hotel, the profits of which would be devoted to improving, modernising, or adding to the hotel, and to providing scholarships and other amenities for the district.

What would happen if those in charge of the hotel disregarded the original objective and neglected the business? In the event of default, the Bill would allow the mortgagee to dispose of the property to a private person and the community would lose the benefits they now enjoy.

The lessee, prior to the hotel being taken over by the co-operative, gave no thought to service the community; he was merely interested in profits. If that situation arises in the future, we will be back where we started many years ago.

I regret that the Government did not see fit to guarantee the society's loan, or guarantee its debentures. The money could then have been raised internally and there would have been no possibility of a mortgagee taking the action I have mentioned.

Hon. A. G. MULLER (Fassifern—Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation) (3.49 p.m.), in reply: The hon. member for Belyando cannot let the occasion pass without trying to get in a little snide political propaganda. The association did not ask the Government to guarantee its account at the bank. It is a progressive body of men possessed of civic pride. They are able to run the business and they have made a great success of it. They approached me and said, "We would have no trouble in getting the money if we were permitted to mortgage the hotel." They have saved a fair amount of money. Some sections of the community look to the Government when they are in trouble, but that cannot be said of the members of this society. All they seek is power to approach the bank.

Mr. Foley: What would happen in the event of default?

Mr. MULLER: There is no danger of that, as the hon. member for Belyando knows only too well, but he must speak in accordance with the socialist policy that he has followed for a number of years. The Theodore Hotel will not pass from the hands of this association. Does not the hon. member think that the members of the Association should be the best judges? These men have made a better job of it than the Government did. It came into the hands of the co-operative association because the Government made a botch of running it. The association took it up and made a success of it, and they are just whistling along. In fact, they have already saved half the money to do the job. They could wait till they saved all the money, but they believe that a new hotel is urgently needed for the people of Theodore and the surrounding district. I have no time for people who run to the Government as soon as they are in trouble and ask them to guarantee this and guarantee that. These people do not wish to do it. I compliment them on their civic pride and I throw that insinuation back in the teeth of the hon. member for Belyando. There is no danger of failure here. If a crisis occurred, it could fall back into the hands of private enterprise, and that would be a dreadful thing from the point of view of the hon. member for Belyando.

Mr. Foley: It is mentioned here in the Bill—"in the event of default."

Mr. MULLER: There is no danger of that. The association has not requested a guarantee, and the Government have only done what they have been asked to do.

Mr. FOLEY (Belyando) (3.53 p.m.): Mr. Speaker,—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is no provision in the Standing Orders for a second speech. The hon. member has already spoken.

Motion (Mr. Muller) agreed to.

COMMITEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Taylor, Clayfield, in the chair.)

Clause 1—Short Title—as read, agreed to.

Clause 2 Amendment of Sec. 5; Hotel Theodore not to be operated for private gain—

Mr. FOLEY (Belyando) (3.53 p.m.): I do not wish to obstruct the passage of the Bill in any way or to move an amendment, but I wish to correct the Minister by reiterating what I said on the second reading about the risk that exists if the property is mortgaged and anything occurs to prevent those concerned from meeting their obligations. The Minister has made provision for that in Clause 2 (b), which says—

"The power of the mortgagee duly exercising the power of sale contained in a mortgage mentioned in paragraph (a) of this subsection to sell the Perpetual Town Lease issued in pursuance of this Act to a person other than a society formed
and registered under 'The Co-operative Societies Acts, 1946 to 1951', or of any person to whom the said Perpetual Town Lease is so sold to take and hold the same.

The original Act provided that it could be transferred only to a co-operative society. Permission is now sought for the mortgaging of a very good property. As the Minister said, these men have managed the hotel well up to date. But anything could happen, and if any financial mishap should occur before they have re-paid the £20,000, £30,000 or £40,000 that they intend to raise to meet the co-operative group would be embarrassed. If that takes place—I sincerely hope it does not—the mortgagee will be entitled to sell the property to some private person, not to a co-operative group. If that happens, the whole purpose of the original Act will be destroyed. When the Minister was negotiating with this co-operative group, he should have sought some information from his advisers on this point. I am sure that they would have pointed out the possibility that I am now raising. The other course for the group to take would be to raise money on debentures. Then, in the event of default, the property would revert to the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply. I point out that with the possibility of default the whole purpose of the original measure will be lost, as the property can be handed over to a private person.

Mr. ROBERTS (Whitsunday) (3.56 p.m.): I am satisfied that the hon. member for Belyando rose merely for the sake of speaking. Under the terms of the original legislation the hotel could be sold only to another co-operative society. It is natural to assume that in an area such as Theodore—or even in a much larger area—there will be very few co-operative societies. Anyone with experience in real estate matters knows that no property is worth anything as a security unless there is a ready market for it. Therefore, if there was no other co-operative society in the Theodore district, the hotel could not be regarded as good security.

The hon. member for Belyando said that times might get bad and the co-operative society may not be able to meet its obligations. I point out, however, that over the years it has done so well that it has been able to subscribe a good deal of money to local organisations, both in bursaries and in other directions. It is running the hotel on very sound lines. If my memory serves me correctly, the hon. member for Mackenzie said that the cost of the new hotel was about £20,000 or £30,000 and that the society had saved up at least half that amount.

I point out that if times got really bad and the co-operative society could not meet its obligations, there would be nothing in the world to stop it from coming to the Government for help. I am quite satisfied that almost every hon. member realises that the co-operative society that runs the Theodore Hotel will make just as good a job of it in the future as it has in the past. As the hon. member for Mackenzie has said, it expects to pay the hotel off within the next three years.

Hon. A. G. MULLER (Fassifern—Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation) (3.59 p.m.): In effect, what the hon. member for Belyando said was that if the Theodore Hotel failed, the Government should carry the responsibility.

Mr. Foley: The original Act provides for that.

Mr. MULLER: Does the hon. member think that is sound practice? If we adopted the course suggested by the hon. member and the association fell down on the job it would become the Government's responsibility. Surely it will be admitted that the responsibility is primarily one for the members of the association, and that is what the Bill provides. If the association fails to measure up to requirements it will lose what interest it has in the hotel, but there is no fear of that. If it happens, the land would not be worth anything in any case. Only in a crisis would the bank have to come in. We must be realistic. What is the alternative? We cannot expect any financial institution to accept bad security. If the present association fails and another one is formed, what chance will it have of realising on the property? That argument is plain silly. The course that has been adopted at the request of the association itself is the correct one.

Clause 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 7—Amendment of s. 7; Application of ss. 5 and 6—as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Taylor, Clayfield, in the chair.)

Hon. A. G. MULLER (Fassifern—Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation) (4.4 p.m.): I move—

'That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the War Service Land Settlement Acts, 1940 to 1938, in a certain particular.'

The Bill is complementary to the Agricultural Bank (Loans) Bill that was introduced by my colleague the Treasurer yesterday and is designed to extend to war service land settlers the benefit of the increase in limit of advance from £7,500 to £10,000. Most of the soldier settlers have been looking forward to the increase for some considerable time. Many of them had little money when they went onto the land and some of the properties were difficult to improve. Some of them were covered in scrub. The settlers need more money to bring them into production.
They have been struggling but, while they have made use of some parts of the properties, with increased costs of material and machinery they have had to leave large areas of land undeveloped and so they have had no return. This is a piece of legislation that ex-service men have been waiting for for a considerable time. I think all hon. members will see the need for it. If they find anything wrong with it at all it might be that they consider the limit that may be advanced is not high enough. On the other hand, if too much money were made available there might be a tendency on the part of some settlers to accept a greater loan liability than they can carry. The Bill is a wise move. I am confident that it will be of considerable help to soldier settlers who have been looking forward to this assistance for a long time.

Mr. DUFFICY (Warrego) (4.6 p.m.): I think we should reserve our comments until we see the Bill. Judging by the Minister's brief introduction I would say that there does not appear to be anything very controversial about it, nothing to which we could take serious objection at this stage. The Minister said that if too much money were made available some people might take advantage of the additional money unnecessarily and thereby over-capitalise. That might create difficulties.

Mr. Roberts: The money would not be advanced if the security were not there.

Mr. DUFFICY: We know very well that in many instances when a person draws a block it is equivalent to winning the Mammoth Casket. There is considerable security in the Crown lease. Whether the settler can use the money made available to him to the best advantage is to a large extent a personal matter. It depends on his personal capabilities. Without having had an opportunity to consider the Bill, on the face of it at this stage I cannot see very much wrong with increasing the amount made available by the Agricultural Bank from £7,500 to £10,000.

Mr. FOLEY (Belyando) (4.9 p.m.): Apparently we are victims of inflation in this sphere where bigger loans are required to carry on developmental work and the Government are not doing very much to check the inflation. The Labour Government originally made loans available to the extent of £5,000. At a later stage men engaged in certain agricultural pursuits—tobacco growing, for instance—found it difficult to carry on with a loan of £5,000. In their wisdom the Government raised the limit to £7,500. Because of rising costs the average settler now finds it difficult to purchase all his requirements with a loan of £7,500. The Government are now endeavouring to equalise the position by increasing the amount to £10,000.

The hon. member for Warrego raised an important point regarding the danger of over-capitalisation. I was in charge of War Service Land Settlement for a number of years and I had calculated how much of the minimum amount necessary for a man on a dairy farm and a man on a small grazing farm in the Wandoan district. The minimum was £13,000, but there were other expenses that would have brought the figure to about £20,000. When I was speaking to one of the prominent members of the Returned Soldiers' Association I mentioned the figures to him and he said that he would not like to have a £20,000 burden on his shoulders in order to work one of these blocks. These men are up against it from the start. They have to be physically fit. They have to work hard and live hard. They need and deserve all the assistance the Government can give them. I agree that as a result of increased costs many alterations are necessary in order to cope with inflation. This is a commencement. We are doing something more for ex-servicemen and I have no doubt the Bill will have the unanimous support of the Committee.

Motion (Mr. Muller) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING.

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

POULTRY INDUSTRY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Nicholson, Murrumba, in the chair.)

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick—Minister for Agriculture and Stock) (4.15 p.m.): I move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Poultry Industry Acts, 1946 to 1950, in certain particulars."

The principal object of the Bill is to provide additional finance for the Poultry Industry Fund by removing the present limitations on Government contribution and on precepts levied on egg marketing boards.

Other objects of the Bill are to extend the power of the Minister to appoint deputies for industry representatives on the Poultry Advisory Board; to remove the limitation placed on stock suppliers' registration fees; to bring the legislation dealing with accreditation into line with the State poultry improvement plan by the inclusion of a third class of establishment, viz., "A hatchery-supply farm"; to provide for the prescribing of regulations concerning the inspection of poultry carcasses and the shops or places where carcasses are sold; to provide for the basis of payment for poultry supplied to slaughterhouses and which or the carcasses of which have been condemned as unfit for sale; and to provide for the prescribing of regulations concerning the keeping of books and records by the owners of slaughterhouses and the returns to be made by such owners.

The Poultry Industry Act of 1946 was amended in 1950 to provide for the creation
of a trust fund to be known as the Poultry Industry Fund. This fund was designed to be used for the development and improvement of the poultry industry in Queensland. The finance for this fund is derived from a Government contribution with a limitation of £15,000 per annum; from a precept levied on egg marketing boards with a limitation of £10,000 from fees for the blood-testing of fowls for Pullorum disease, from fees paid by registered hatcheries, suppliers of hatching eggs and poultry dealers, and from the sale of eggs and poultry from the department’s poultry section at the Rocklea Animal Husbandry Research Farm.

At the inception of the Poultry Industry Fund some nine years ago, it was almost certainly not envisaged that the costs of the department’s poultry section would rise so steeply in the course of a few years. The financial estimates for the Poultry Section have increased from £17,405 in 1951 to £39,215 for the current financial year.

This rise in costs has not been due to any great build-up of staff—there has been an increase from 16 to 19 in the period. Rather, the increase has been the result of increased salaries, higher transport costs, and the expenses and running costs arising from the establishment and rapid development of a poultry experiment section at the department’s Rocklea Animal Husbandry Research Farm. This section is now one of the leading and best equipped poultry experiment centres in Australia and has been operating since 1953. The flock maintained at the Rocklea Poultry Section has expanded from approximately 400 in 1954 to 3,000 head of poultry at the present time. The centre is not, however, a heavy charge on the poultry at the present time. The centre is now one of the leading and best equipped poultry experiment centres in Australia and has been operating since 1953. The flock maintained at the Rocklea Poultry Section has expanded from approximately 400 in 1954 to 3,000 head of poultry at the present time. The centre is not, however, a heavy charge on the poultry at the present time.

As the total Government contribution was pegged to £15,000 annually, the only way of meeting these rising costs was by increasing the amount of precept levied on egg marketing boards. Precepts issued on boards rose from £1,300 in 1951-1952 to £6,813 in 1956-1957 and to £8,215 for the present financial year.

In 1951-1952 the Government contribution from Consolidated Revenue represented 74.7 per cent. of the receipts in the fund. In 1956-1957 the contribution had dwindled to 55.6 per cent. and for the current financial year, 1958-1959, the estimate is 51.3 per cent.

Since 1950, the poultry industry has faced serious financial difficulties occasioned by rising costs of production and losses on surplus production which has to be disposed of on overseas markets.

Until May, 1953, surplus production was disposed of at an unremunerated price to the British Ministry of Food as eggs-in-shells, and egg-pulp. This contract terminated then, and since that time all eggs have been sold on the open market in competition with eggs from other countries. Also, two droughts affecting the grain-growing areas of the State have occurred, with serious repercussions on availability and price of grain.

That the industry has declined is shown by the lowered intake of the South Queensland Egg Marketing Board from ten and three-quarter million dozen eggs in 1949-1950 to seven and a-half million dozen in 1957-1958. The number of poultry growers registered with the Egg Board has also been reduced. In 1951, 8,563 growers supplied eggs to the Board during the flush period of production, August to December. In 1957, the number supplying eggs during a similar period was 1,978.

Since the amount of precept levied on egg boards is met by board deductions from payments to growers, the position has arisen over the years that fewer suppliers to the boards are now available to meet the substantially increased precept.

The next provision relates to the appointment of deputies for industry representatives on the Poultry Advisory Board.

Attention has also been given to the appointment of deputies for industry representatives on the Poultry Advisory Board in their absence.

Under the terms of the present Act, the Minister can appoint a person to represent certain departmental officers on the board in their absence. The Bill extends the power to cover the appointment of deputies for the industry representatives who may be absent from a poultry advisory board meeting.

Another provision relates to the removal of the limitation placed on stock suppliers’ registration fees. The Bill also amends the section dealing with the fees to be paid by registered stock suppliers.

A stock supplier is a person who engages in the business of hatching chickens for sale, or supplying fowl eggs for hatching, or poultry dealing. Under the present Act, the annual registration fee for hatcheries is limited to £1 and for the other classes of businesses to 10s. As the costs for administering the registration scheme have risen since the present fees were provided in 1946 and these fees cannot be altered except by an amendment to the Act, the opportunity has been taken to provide in future that fees can be varied without the need for special amending legislation.

The next provision is for hatchery-supply farms to be considered for accreditation under this legislation.

The opportunity has been taken, also, to bring sections of the Act which are concerned with accreditation, etc., into line with changed conditions.

Higher production per bird without lower mortality is the keynote to success in the poultry industry, and with this in mind the State poultry improvement plan was introduced in 1956. This plan provides for the
accreditation of breeding farms which show their stock to be superior by random sample testing at Rocklea.

The superior stock from these farms will be used to upgrade flocks on hatchery-supply farms from which fertile eggs will be channeled to hatcheries.

The present Act provides for only two classes of accreditation, namely, the breeding establishment and the hatchery. Under the Bill, a third class—the "Hatchery-Supply Farm"—is included.

The next provision relates to the inspection of poultry carcasses for sale in shops, and the shops or other places where poultry is sold. Consideration is being given to the desirability of the licensing of poultry slaughter-houses and the regular inspection of poultry for slaughter, and to the charging of licensing and inspection fees. The necessary regulation-making power is already provided in the Act. The section dealing with the inspection of slaughter-houses has however been revised in the Bill to include the inspection of poultry carcasses in shops or wherever they are sold. The shops will also be subject to inspection. This will help to ensure a supply of wholesome dressed poultry to the public.

The next main provision relates to the basis of payment for poultry supplied to slaughter-houses which, or the carcasses of which, have been condemned as unfit for food.

Mr. Mann: Does that relate to poultry that is condemned at the abattoir?

Mr. Madsen: Yes. There are certain diseases to which poultry is subject that make it unfit for human consumption. In view of the large numbers of poultry now being slaughtered, care will have to be taken with slaughtering facilities.

In order to provide an added incentive for the owner of a poultry slaughter-house to report disease or suspected diseased poultry to the department, the opportunity has been taken to make it possible to provide for the refunding of any moneys paid for poultry that have been condemned as unfit for human consumption. Ways and means of implementing this are being explored, and the views of poultry abattoirs may be sought on the matter.

We have not yet thought out a way by which this can be done, but we regarded it as wise to make the provision. Under the Stock Act, if any tubercular stock is supplied for slaughter, the loss must be borne by the person who sells the beast. With large numbers of poultry now being sold, there is no reason why the abattoir should lose if any are diseased. If the loss has to be borne by those who supply diseased poultry, it will encourage them to remove disease from their flocks.

The next provision relates to the books and records to be kept by slaughter-houses and the returns to be made by them. Slaughter-houses licensed under the Slaughtering Act of 1958 are required to keep proper books and records of killing. It is considered that poultry slaughter-houses also should be required to keep and maintain similar books and records. This may help to reduce the losses suffered by commercial farmers because of poultry thieving. Consideration will be given in due time to the details that may be required to be entered in books and on records.

The next main provision requires slaughtering returns to be made. It is proposed to provide for the prescribing of returns that will be made by the owners of slaughter-houses. This is being done on a voluntary basis by most poultry slaughter-houses in the Brisbane metropolitan area, and provides a reliable guide to trends within the industry. These returns might also provide a basis for the assessment of inspection fees should an additional source of revenue for the Poultry Industry Fund be sought.

I think most hon. members realise that the poultry industry, whilst affording a very valuable source of food supply, has been till now a pioneering industry. It has had an extremely tough row to hoe. With the increasing population of the State, large quantities of poultry are now being made available for slaughtering purposes. Therefore, we regard the proposed controls as necessary.

Mr. Foley: Did you say that you are removing the precept on eggs?

Mr. Madsen: No, we are making it possible for it to be increased. But at the same time we are removing the limitation on the Government's contribution. The contribution by the Treasury is £10,000 plus an amount equal to the precept on the marketing board, with an overall limitation of £15,000. It is that overall limitation that we hope to remove and at the same time we want to remove some of the limitations that have been placed on levies on marketing boards and also on the registration of hatcheries and other types of farm. I commend the Bill to the Committee.

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) (4.30 p.m.): From the Minister's explanation I cannot see any objection to the Bill. Anyone who has any knowledge of the poultry industry knows that it has its ups and downs and that lately it has been struggling to stand on its feet. No exception can be taken to the desire of the Government to assist the industry as the Minister explained.

It is interesting to note that the Government intend to increase the licence fees for poultry abattoirs and stock suppliers.

Mr. Madsen: The Bill makes it permissible.

Mr. MANN: The abattoirs and stock suppliers may consider that unjust. Will the Minister tell me what the fee is now?

Mr. Madsen: There is no fee at present for poultry slaughterhouses and the maximum for stock suppliers is £1.
**Mr. MANN:** Then perhaps it will not make much difference to the abattoir or poultry supplier.

The Minister spoke of refunding money for poultry slaughtered at the abattoir and found to be unfit for human consumption. In reply to a question he said he thought that extended to shops, too. But the point of inspection should be the abattoir. The inspection should be thorough and care should be taken to ensure that any diseased stock killed at the abattoir does not find its way into the shops for sale. It would be very hard to inspect it in retail stores.

**Mr. Madsen:** With constant inspection it should be possible.

**Mr. MANN:** I understand the Bill provides for the appointment of a deputy for any member. I cannot see anything wrong with that.

I am not an expert on poultry, though I know something about capons served at the table but on the Minister’s explanation of the Bill it seems to be warranted and it will improve conditions in the industry. The Government and the Parliament should do all they can to assist any industry. I reserve further comment till I have an opportunity to examine the Bill in detail.

**Mr. FOLEY (Belyando) (4.35 p.m.):** I gleaned from the Minister’s remarks that the Poultry Industry Trust Fund is in such a state that it is necessary to increase the contribution to enable the poultry experimental station to carry on its work. Good work is being done there and the industry has had its benefit. When better stock are distributed amongst hatchery stock it will mean a general improvement throughout. The egg producer will get a better type of fowl as a layer, and a more disease-resistant fowl. Naturally those in the industry will benefit.

By increasing the precept on eggs to the Egg Marketing Board I am afraid the Minister will give another knock to egg producers who are carrying on under very great difficulties today. I was living on my daughter’s poultry farm for a long time. I gave a hand now and then, so that I have a complete picture of what goes on on a poultry farm. I have heard her and other producers say that when they have to pay levies of up to 1s. Id., a dozen on all eggs produced, naturally they want to know what it is all about. If the precept is increased above the £20,000 collected from that source today naturally the egg buyer has to pass it on to the egg supplier. There is a further burden on the industry. With the cost of mash and the price of eggs over the whole season I can assure the Minister that they have very little margin to play with. Every small addition by way of levy will only increase their burden. I suggest that the Minister try to avoid at least at this stage the imposition of any further charges. If the fund needs to be supplemented to carry on its good work, why not make the suggestion to the Government in a year or so that they make a bigger contribution to enable them to carry on their good work?

The provision insisting on the inspection of books and records of slaughterhouses is all right. There must be a reason for that. The Bill makes provision for adequate supervision to ensure that condemned poultry do not enter poultry stores for human consumption. I would warn the Minister not to employ an army of inspectors. It would impose a further charge on the industry. I have assisted men from Red Comb and other poultry abattoirs at my daughter’s place when they have come out to collect poultry. They take the older fowls as the young pullets begin to lay. I can assure the Minister that firms like Red Comb will not take a fowl unless it is in a healthy condition. Whatever goes through their abattoirs must be good, healthy stock. Although the fowls they take are old and past the laying stage, they are clean, edible, and good for human consumption. Any fowl suffering from paralysis or deformity or has gone light is rejected. I do not think the Minister will have much work for inspectors in that field. Perhaps some of the smaller poultry farmers occasionally may sell a dozen or so fowls to a motel. They might ring in one or two diseased fowls. Even they are on the watch because they want weight in the birds they buy. Usually a healthy fowl weighs the normal weight.

I know that the Minister is anxious to do something for the industry, but I warn the hon. gentleman not to impose any further costs on the poultry farmers because they are up against it at present.

I reserve further comments until I see the Bill.

**Hon. W. POWER (Baroona) (4.41 p.m.):** I wish to join in this discussion. Any action that can be taken to ensure that unhealthy stock used for human consumption should receive the commendation of the Committee. One has only to visit the backyards of some of these places to see large numbers of poultry that are obviously not fit for human consumption. One purpose of the Bill is to get further revenue from the producers of poultry. The Poultry Industry Fund was created for the purpose of improving poultry stock. Anything that can be done to improve the standard of poultry is worth while. Sometimes there is a decline in the quality of poultry because of inbreeding which is due to the scarcity of stud stock. The Minister’s secretary was very helpful when I sought certain information; he informed me of the work that was being done by the Poultry Section of his department and he gave me certain useful papers. I had occasion to seek the advice of the officers on some ducks that I breed, and they were able to tell me the cause of their illness. The Minister mentioned that the cost of running the Poultry Industry Fund had increased from £17,000 to £29,000 for
the current financial year. The Government contribution to the Poultry Industry Fund is £15,000 and further funds are necessary to assist the industry.

In view of the statement of the hon. member for Belyando that the amount paid in levies is ls. 1d. a dozen, the poultry producer already carries a very heavy load. A big proportion of that amount is passed on to the consumer, and eggs have become a luxury. Customers at a little store in my area who used to buy half a dozen eggs now only buy one and two at a time. Any increase will accentuate the position. I am greatly interested in the poultry industry; an extra levy will inflicts more penalties on them. I should like the Government to find some other method of raising the required amount. If there is a greater increase in the price of eggs there will be a reduction in consumption, and the industry will be placed in a precarious position. The Minister mentioned the effects of the drought and the increased cost of food on the poultry industry. It is impossible to buy a bag of first-grade wheat in Brisbane. I am told by the merchants that when they go to Pinkenba to collect the wheat, which is 15s. 9d. a bushel, ex Pinkenba, they are told they must take feed wheat.

Mr. Windsor: Get a couple of packets of Corn Flakes.

Mr. POWER: I do not mind a bit of humour, but this is far too serious a subject for that sort of remark. The Minister has a very good class of herd on his property, just as other hon. members have similar herds. They desire to get the best production from their cattle, and they know that can be achieved only by the use of first-quality food. I propose on the Address in Reply next session to bring into this Chamber a bucket of rubbish I get from one bag of wheat. I will tip it on the table to show hon. members the rubbish that is being sold today. I know what I am talking about, as I have three buckets of this rubbish under my house that came out of three bags of wheat. That in itself must have a serious effect on egg production.

In winter maize is fed to poultry at night, because it generates warmth, but in the summer they are fed with wheat and milo, which do not produce as much warmth. Any merchant will confirm my complaint that poultry raisers cannot obtain a bag of first-quality wheat in Brisbane. Those who keep poultry for a living want to show a reasonable margin of profit, but they cannot do it with the inferior wheat that is being supplied in the metropolitan area. I was told by letter from the manager of the Wheat Board that this wheat should never have been sold at all, and he added a most remarkable statement that if the merchant it had been bought from was prepared to bring back the wheat the board would replace it. How could that be done when some of the wheat had been sold! I had a great deal of correspondence with the Wheat Board on the subject. They told me that they thought I knew more about marketing than I did, and that if I went up there they would discuss the position with me. I certainly knew more about it than they did; I had to pay top price for rubbish.

First-class feed should be available for the poultry industry. Top prices are being received for this product. In addition to the fixed price, a premium is paid on first-grade wheat, but the poultry owner who is prepared to buy first-grade wheat is unable to get it because of the activities of the State Wheat Board. What are the objects of the department doing in the way of inspections. I have purchased wheat from three different firms, but the bags contain just as much rubbish in the form of husks and so on. It does not matter greatly to me, as I buy only two bags a month, but it does mean a great deal to the man who is battling to get a living in this industry. It is my hobby, and I am prepared to spend money on it; but others are struggling for an existence under adverse conditions, and their position is made worse by the rubbish they are forced to buy, wheat that should never be put on the market. I ask the Minister to give some measure of protection to those people by sending officers to various places where wheat is being sold so that a person who wants first-grade wheat or first-grade poultry food of any kind will be able to buy it. It is essential to the building up of a stud stock or a breeding stock. Good stock cannot be produced if a batch of chickens is not started on the right food. You find that they have worms and all sorts of complaints. You use chemicals to cure them, and when you want to build them up for the purpose of egg-production or to show them, you cannot buy the best quality wheat. I believe that the Government should ask the Wheat Board to see that this rubbish is not sold to poultry producers. I feel very strongly about this, because of the poor quality wheat, and also because many other people are affected. I cannot buy first-quality wheat to feed my own birds, which are of the highest quality and which cost me a great deal of money to buy. The wheat that I buy now should never be sold; it is just a lot of husks and shells. The Minister assured me previously that he thought I knew more about this than he did, and I am prepared to spend money on it. I am prepared to pay a premium for better quality wheat, we should be able to get it.

The Minister has referred to the deterioration in the poultry industry. He pointed out that in 1951 there were 3,500 growers supplying eggs to the Board, and that in 1957 the number had dropped to 1,378. He did not give us the figures for 1958. We must remember, however, that the figures given by the Minister may not be as startling as they may appear to the average person, because the flocks of the 1,378 suppliers may have increased considerably as a
result of using the cage system. We really cannot get a true picture of the production until all the information is available to us.

We have been told that the number of eggs sent to the South Queensland Egg Marketing Board dropped from 10½ million dozen in 1949-1950 to 7½ million dozen in 1957-1958. As I said, to get a clear indication of the true position we must know the number of suppliers and the number of eggs that have been delivered to the Board.

Some of the other proposed amendments are of a purely machinery character, but I am concerned about the increased charges that will be placed on the producers. I think the licensing of poultry slaughterhouses and the regular inspection of poultry sent for slaughtering is a very good idea. The location of the slaughter-houses will be known and it will be possible to inspect them regularly.

I believe that action should be taken to prevent unhealthy poultry being sold either to the abattoirs or privately. I do not think anybody is entitled to be paid for something that is unhealthy or diseased, and the slaughtering of poultry is expanding not only in Queensland but throughout Australia. There was a time when day-old cockerels were destroyed, but today they are fattened and made available for human consumption. Every assistance possible should be given to the people engaged in the industry.

I trust that the Minister will give those engaged in the poultry industry every consideration, and that precepts will be kept to the irreducible minimum. The Government should examine the matter and see if a further contribution can be made to the industry. At present, any increased costs must be passed on to the consumer. The result is that with the price of eggs today, they have become a luxury.

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick—Minister for Agriculture and Stock) (4.57 p.m.), in reply: The underlying purpose of the Bill is to secure a contribution towards the necessary funds from a much broader section of the industry than hitherto. At the present time, virtually the whole of the cost is thrown on those who supply eggs. There is no reason why those who supply poultry for slaughtering purposes, particularly young cockerels and so on, should not make some contribution towards the cost associated with the industry, especially those connected with disease control. I point out that in 1952 the Government’s contribution was 74.7 per cent., which had dwindled by 1958 to 51.3 per cent. We want to restore the percentage as far as we possibly can. That is the main purpose of the Bill, in addition to trying to draw revenue from a wider field within the industry itself.

I think all hon. members with a knowledge of the poultry industry will agree that the last couple of years have been very difficult, just as they have been for all other industries that use grain. However, with a much improved wheat crop and the promise of a good grain sorghum crop, conditions should improve greatly.

I appreciate the remarks of the hon. member for Baroona on the quality of feed grain. However, it is a matter of conjecture whether the people who handle the grain after it leaves the Board buy it at a greatly reduced price. My own experience of wheat is that whenever the quality is not very high, the price is reduced.

Mr. Power: That could be so, but in this case I know where the wheat has come from.

Mr. MADSEN: I know other hon. members associated with the dairying industry have raised the same matter. It is important to get value for one’s money and I assure the Committee that I intend to follow that. Indeed, I have already raised it with the board. I know from experience that often the wheat of low quality has been available more cheaply, so I wonder whether someone is going in for a little exploitation somewhere along the line.

I assure the hon. member for Belyando that it is not our intention to have an army of inspectors. The number will be determined entirely by the need for them. We can go a long way towards meeting the position without great expense.

The matter of costs and precepts is largely one for the Poultry Advisory Board, which is constituted in the main from the growers themselves. It is not the intention of the department to override those representatives. We leave it to the good sense of the people elected by the industry to tell us their requirements.

Mr. Power: Have you a consumers’ representative on the board?

Mr. MADSEN: It is purely advisory on diseases and general scientific developments. I have presided at meetings of the board and I am very pleased with the work done by it. I am sure the hon. member for Baroona will know that the incidence of disease has greatly increased in the last year or two. Diseases are even finding their way into country areas and it would not be hard to wipe out the whole poultry industry if great care were not exercised.

The various points raised will be noted and I feel sure that when hon. members have an opportunity to study the Bill they will be quite satisfied that it is worthwhile and in the interests of the poultry industry.

Motion (Mr. Madsen) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

First Reading.

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

The House adjourned at 5.6 p.m.