

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 1 MARCH 1960

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be the erection and transfer of buildings for the High School, can he give any indication when this work will commence as this information has been sought by deputations from both the teaching staff and the committee of this school?"

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

"Temporary rooms will be erected as early as possible to meet classroom requirements at the Proserpine State School. It is anticipated that the erection of permanent accommodation on the new site will be completed this year and, on such completion, the temporary rooms will no longer be used as classrooms."

BITUMEN SURFACE, NORTH COAST ROAD,
MACKAY TO PROSERPINE

Mr. ROBERTS (Whitsunday) asked the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads—

"(1) What mileage of the main North Coast road between Mackay and Proserpine, approximately eighty-five miles, had a bitumen surface at June 30, 1950?"

"(2) What are the mileages over the same sector at the present time which are (a) completely bitumenised, (b) in course of construction or for which tenders have been accepted and (c) in the planning stage?"

"(3) What were the respective costs or estimates and when is it anticipated that there will be a completed bitumen road between Mackay and Proserpine?"

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

"(1) There are two routes declared under the Main Roads Acts between Mackay and Proserpine, a length of about 46 miles being common to both. These are— (a) the Bruce and Northern Highways, via Walkerston, Mirani, Kungurri and Calen, a distance of 96 miles, of which 27 miles had a bitumen surface at June 30, 1950; and (b) the more direct route via Farleigh, Yakapari, Mount Ossa and Calen, a distance of 83 miles, of which 9½ miles had a bitumen surface at June 30, 1950."

"(2) Of the 96-mile length of the highway route, 64½ miles have now been bitumen surfaced, but there are no bitumen surfacing works in course of construction or for which tenders have been accepted, or in the planning stage. On the more direct 83 mile route, a length of 46 miles now has a bitumen surface, while 12½ miles are under construction and plans are being prepared for a further 2½ miles."

"(3) Since June 30, 1950, approximately £408,500 has been spent on permanent improvements on the highway route. In addition to this, on the road between Mackay and Calen, via Yakapari and Mount Ossa, £238,500 has been spent on permanent works and an expenditure of approximately £221,000 is still required to

TUESDAY, 1 MARCH, 1960

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

QUESTIONS

NEW HIGH SCHOOL, PROSERPINE

Mr. ROBERTS (Whitsunday) asked the Minister for Education—

"As the Proserpine State School, which includes a High School Top, is overcrowded to the extent that for some time rooms which would normally be used as teachers' rooms are being used for classes and as the department has approved the eventual transfer of the entire school to a new situation held by the department for some years, the commencement of which was to

complete works under construction or for which tenders have been accepted, while plans are being prepared for works estimated to cost a further £50,000. The Government has set itself a target date for the completion of the bitumen surfacing of the whole of the coastal highway, including the section between Mackay and Proserpine, by about Christmas 1961."

SEWERAGE WORK TO ABSORB UNEMPLOYED, NORTH MACKAY

Mr. ROBERTS (Whitsunday) asked the Minister for Public Works and Local Government—

"(1) As sewerage work in North Mackay (Division 1 of the Pioneer Shire Council) has been in the planning stage for a considerable time, will he make a statement on the position as it exists at present?"

"(2) Will he also endeavour to expedite the commencement of the project with a view to absorbing some of the seasonal unemployment that regularly occurs in the Mackay district?"

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

"(1) Plans for North Mackay sewerage have been approved by the Department of Local Government. There is to be a joint treatment plant for Mackay City and North Mackay. Investigations have been made into the most suitable site for this treatment plant and the councils have agreed on a site at Mount Bassett and negotiations are under way for the land required. A preliminary design for the treatment plant has been adopted."

"(2) Loan subsidy funds to the extent of £72,000 for the construction of North Mackay sewerage were provided for in the 1959-1960 loan programme. The Pioneer Shire Council has raised the necessary loan funds. The council's consulting engineers conferred with officers of my department on February 10 and 12, regarding commencement of construction and it is anticipated that the council will be calling tenders for pumps and pumping stations within a few weeks. Tenders for further works should be advertised later in the year. These matters are, of course, matters for the council."

TEACHERS' RESIDENCES BUILT BY LABOUR GOVERNMENTS

Mr. DEWAR (Chermside) asked the Minister for Education—

"In view of his reply to the question asked by the Honourable Member for North Toowoomba on Thursday, February 25, 1960, regarding teachers' residences, wherein he advised the House that fifty-three residences had been built in country areas by this Government, will he advise the number of teachers' residences built by

the Labour Government during each of the last three years of their administration of this State?"

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

"The number built during the period given were:—

Year	Purchased	Completed or under Construction	Total
1954-1955 ..	Nil	17	17
1955-1956 ..	Nil	22	22
1956-1957 ..	1	2	3
Total for three-year period ..	1	41	42

I might state that, in addition to the sixty residences itemised in the answer to the question asked by the Honourable Member for North Toowoomba and referred to by the Honourable Member, financial provision has been made for the erection or purchase of another seven houses for married officers and if the circumstances prove favourable this Government will be able to claim that a total of sixty-seven residences will have been provided for during its term of office. Furthermore, action has been initiated to provide accommodation for single teachers where it has been found that it is difficult to obtain suitable accommodation. Financial provision has been made for the conversion of the old Lands Office and portion of the old hospital buildings at Hughenden into accommodation for assistant teachers. Work on this project has commenced, and should be completed during this financial year. Negotiations were opened with the State Housing Commission for the purpose of providing accommodation for single female teachers in areas where there is a scarcity of suitable accommodation. Already accommodation in the form of a twin-unit dwelling has been provided at Cunnamulla; another is under construction at Chinchilla; tenders have been called for units at Clermont and Biloela, and action has been initiated to provide similar accommodation at Cloncurry and Goondiwindi."

PAPER MILL TO USE BAGASSE, MACKAY AND AYR

Mr. COBURN (Burdekin) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"With reference to his statement that appeared in 'The Mackay Mercury' on Saturday, February 13, 1960, that an expert in the conversion of bagasse to paper and pulp would in the near future visit Mackay to discuss with sugar producers' organisations the economics of establishing a paper manufacturing mill using bagasse as the raw product, will he arrange for the expert to also visit Ayr, where the availability of cheap electric power and unlimited supplies of water in addition to its central position in relation to the principal sugar producing

areas would make it appear to be ideally situated and suited for the establishment of a paper mill based on the use of bagasse?"

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

"The advantages and disadvantages of all sugar centres for the purpose of establishing a paper from bagasse industry will be discussed with the visiting expert. Decisions regarding visits to any particular area will be dependent entirely upon the desires of the visitor."

BLOCKS OF FLATS TO BE CONSTRUCTED BY QUEENSLAND HOUSING COMMISSION

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

"(1) How many one, two and three bedroomed flats will be contained in each of the three projected blocks of flats planned for the City of Brisbane to be constructed by the Queensland Housing Commission?"

"(2) What is the estimated cost of construction of each of the three projects?"

"(3) What was the cost of the acquisition of the land and improvements upon which the buildings will be erected?"

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

"(1) The number of flats in each project and their distribution between one, two and three bedroom categories cannot be determined until design proposals are finalised. Arrangements have been made for the preparation of design proposals for one of the areas. My present view is that Red Hill is likely to be the first of these projects to proceed. I recently arranged with the Lord Mayor for an officer of the Commission to confer with an officer of the council on the matter of desirable density on these sites which are well elevated and command an extensive outlook in each case, and I am confident that satisfactory results will accrue from these discussions."

"(2) Estimates of cost cannot be prepared until designs are determined. Further, as public tenders are to be invited, estimates when prepared could not be disclosed."

"(3) £39,500."

RENTAL REBATES AND STATE TENANTS INSTALLING TELEVISION

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

"(1) In how many cases has Clause 12 (5) of the Commonwealth States Housing Agreement Act been used to eliminate rental rebates previously granted to tenants following the installation of television?"

"(2) What action was taken in these cases to ascertain that the presumption of a higher weekly income would not create undue hardship?"

"(3) Is he aware that in the case of large families, it has been found that the

economics of the family have not been detrimentally affected by the installation of television and that the saving of expenditure on other forms of entertainment has made up the cost of hiring, &c.?"

"(4) Is it to be the practice of the Commission to follow the same procedure if tenants purchase other household commodities, for example, refrigerators and washing machines?"

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

"(1) On one other occasion. In this case the rebate was reinstated when evidence was obtained that the purchase of the T.V. set which had been installed without prior permission, had not been proceeded with."

"(2) An income which would permit of the installation and purchase of a T.V. set could reasonably be considered sufficient to meet the economic rental of a house without causing undue hardship."

"(3) It has been ascertained that the installation of T.V. to State rental houses in other States has had an adverse effect on arrears."

"(4) No it is not to be the practice but if, in respect of a tenant to whom a rebate of rental has been granted, evidence is obtained of heavy expenditure on hire purchase which is beyond the capacity of the declared family income then such family income will be subject to doubt and the tenant will be required to establish the source from which such heavy expenditure is met."

FINANCE FOR HOUSES FOR ITALIAN AND OTHER MIGRANTS

Mr. GARDNER (Rockhampton), for **Mr. McCATHIE** (Haughton), asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

"With reference to his answer to my question regarding finance being made available for the building of houses for Italian migrants, has any approach been made to the Commonwealth Government to consider a suggestion to interest other countries, including the United Kingdom, from which many migrants come to Australia in the provision of finance on a similar basis to give greater opportunity for homes to be built for these migrants in their new homeland?"

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

"This is not a matter primarily for the Commonwealth Government. It is a matter for the Consular or business representatives of the countries concerned and State Governments and local financial institutions. Societies have been formed in this way by Dutch and Italian groups. This Government will welcome further approaches. I have already done some sounding out as regards Great Britain but I am not in a position to report any progress as yet."

PURCHASE OF LAND FROM TOWNSVILLE CITY COUNCIL AS SITE FOR UNIVERSITY

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

“(1) Has his attention been drawn to an article in ‘The Townsville Daily Bulletin’ of February 19, wherein it was stated that the Townsville City Council had paid £17,750 for 1,015 acres of land on the southern bank of Ross River near Gleasons Weir and that the Mayor (Alderman A. J. Smith) had stated, *inter alia*, ‘it was hoped that a university would occupy portion of the land in years to come?’”

“(2) Has the Education Department considered using any or all of this land as a university site in the future?”

“(3) If so, will he take immediate steps to acquire the required university area from the council at the price they paid for it, namely, £18 per acre, instead of waiting until the construction of the university is about to be commenced, when they will have to pay perhaps ten or twenty times £18 per acre for the land required?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

“(1) Yes.”

“(2 and 3) The matter is under consideration by the University of Queensland.”

HOUSING COMMISSION FLATS IN TOWNSVILLE

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

“(1) Has finality been reached on the proposal to build Housing Commission flats in Townsville?”

“(2) If so, (a) how many flat buildings will be erected, (b) how many and of what type of flats will each building contain, (c) where will they be built, (d) what will be the estimated rental of the flats and (e) on what basis of priority will the flats be allotted to the many who are eagerly waiting for them?”

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

“(1) I discussed very recently with the Mayor of Townsville a proposal to build Commission flats at Bundock street and particularly in regard to a satisfactory density in that area. On the basis of my discussion with the Mayor, the Housing Commission forwarded to the Council on 12th ultimo, sketch proposals for the Council's consideration and as I advised the Honourable Member on 25th ultimo, plans and specifications for two blocks totalling 96 flats are well advanced in preparation.”

“(2) In respect of Bundock street—(a) Two buildings. (b) Each building will contain 15 one-bedroom, 30 two-bedroom and 3 three-bedroom flats—a total of 96 flats in two buildings. (c) Bundock street, Belgian Gardens. (d) This could not be assessed until costs of construction are

known. (e) The points priority system under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement will be followed. The acquisition of further sites for flats in Townsville is receiving consideration.”

RETAIL PRICE OF MEAT IN TOWNSVILLE

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

“(1) Who determines the retail price of meat in Townsville?”

“(2) If the retail price is fixed on the basis of prices paid for cattle, is the basis the average price of all cattle slaughtered or the high prices paid for one or two prime bullocks at each sale?”

“(3) Why is it that the retail price of meat in Townsville always rises when the price paid for cattle at the saleyards rises, but never falls when the prices paid for cattle at the saleyards fall?”

“(4) Will he admit that the present system of price fixing for meat in Townsville has merely afforded the two big companies controlling the trade there with a golden opportunity to egregiously exploit the people?”

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

“(1) The maximum retail prices at which meat may be sold in Townsville are fixed on the basis laid down in Prices Order No. 792, dated May 6, 1958, issued by the Commissioner of Prices.”

“(2) In terms of Prices Order No. 792 the maximum retail prices are fixed on the basis of the average cost into each butcher's shop of all carcasses or sides of beef slaughtered or purchased by that butcher during the preceding week.”

“(3 and 4) The allegations made in these two questions are untrue.”

NORTH QUEENSLAND TIMBER FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF MT. ISA RAILWAY LINE

Mr. GILMORE (Tablelands) asked the Minister for Transport—

“As the timber industry on the Tablelands of North Queensland has an abundance of first-class timber in all categories immediately available and is responsible for large scale employment, will he assist this industry by seeing that a fair proportion of the timber required for the Mount Isa rail-reconditioning is purchased from that area?”

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

“Having regard to the availability of suitable species of timber, the railway requirements for the Mount Isa Project will, as far as practicable, be obtained from Northern Queensland.”

RAIL AND BUS SERVICE, INALA TO CITY OF
BRISBANE

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) asked the Minister for Transport—

“In view of the transport difficulties associated with people residing at Inala many of whom are employed in the city,—

(1) Will the Government give consideration to the building of a rail link from Wacol to Inala?

(2) Will he confer with the City Council Transport Department and request them to take immediate action to establish a City Council bus service direct from Inala to Brisbane?”

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

“(1 and 2) The Government is unable, at the present time, to consider the construction of a rail link from Wacol to Inala. As the existing rail-road co-ordinated passenger service provides a reasonable service to the area, it is not proposed to approach the Brisbane City Council for the provision of a bus service direct from Inala to Brisbane. The transport needs of the Inala area have been brought before my notice on several occasions by the Honourable Member for Sherwood, and while he represents that area, I know that he will continue to retain an active interest in the needs of his electors. In submitting his question this morning I do hope that the Honourable Member for Brisbane is sincere and not motivated by a desire to secure for the A.L.P. the support of the Communist Party at the forthcoming elections. Perhaps it is just coincidental that the Honourable Member for Brisbane should give notice of his question on the same morning as the distribution of a pamphlet dealing with transport problems at Inala, ‘World Peace’—direct action by the people—and which pamphlet bears the heading ‘A Communist Publication’ authorised by B. Nord for the Darra-Inala Branch of the Communist Party.”

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FROM KRUPPS, WEST GERMANY

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) asked the Premier—

“In view of a report from Townsville published in the metropolitan press on November 24, 1959, that at that date £250,000 worth of machinery and equipment for Copper Refineries Pty. Ltd. had arrived in Townsville from the Krupps works in West Germany,—

(1) What was the total landed cost of machinery and equipment received to date by Copper Refineries Pty. Ltd.?

(2) Is he able to say whether tenders were called for the supply of this plant?

(3) Are there not Queensland firms or firms in other States capable of producing the plant required by the refineries?

(4) Is he aware of any additional orders placed with Krupps by this firm or by any other firms in Queensland?”

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

“The Government has no knowledge of the matters raised by the Honourable Member.”

APPEALS BY TEACHERS AGAINST APPOINTMENTS OF INSPECTORS; REGIONAL DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION

Mr. DIPLOCK (Condamine) asked the Minister for Education—

“(1) As the preservation of the rights of the individual is the professed intention of the Government, will he advise if the right of appeal by teachers against appointments to the Inspectorate has been withdrawn?”

“(2) As a result of this, have teachers who have not qualified by examination for promotion to Class I. been appointed to the Inspectorate?”

“(3) Has any teacher who has not qualified for promotion to Class I. been appointed to the Inspectorate prior to these appointments?”

“(4) Are these recent appointees now inspecting Class I. Head Teachers?”

“(5) When applications for appointment as Regional Director of Education were called, was the possession of a University Degree a stipulated requirement?”

“(6) Were all appointees to the position of Regional Director of Education in possession of a University Degree?”

“(7) As certain Head Teachers who do not possess a degree would have applied for the position but for the fact that they did not consider themselves eligible to apply, will he advise if these teachers are eligible to apply when applications are called for the position in the future?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZHEY (Isis) replied—

“(1) The Honourable Member is referred to Regulation 127 in Part XI of ‘The Public Service Regulations of 1958.’”

“(2) No. The appointments have been made in compliance with the prescriptions in Public Service Regulations 105 and 106.”

“(3) I am not aware of any teacher not classified in Class I being appointed as a District Inspector of Schools.”

“(4) The recent appointees, all of whom were previously classified as teachers in Class I, would be required to inspect primary schools within an inspectorial district including those in charge of teachers classified in Class I.”

"(5) No. Possession of a Degree of an Australian or other British University has been determined as a qualification (more recently as a desirable qualification) but not at any time as a stipulated requirement for appointment as Regional Director."

"(6) No. Applicants who did not possess a University Degree were appointed as Regional Directors in 1952 and 1960."

"(7) Any officer is entitled to apply for appointment to positions which are advertised in the 'Government Gazette' and in the 'Education Office Gazette.' Such applications would be considered and determined in accordance with the prescriptions of the Public Service Acts and Regulations."

NEW FACTORIES AND BUSINESSES, HAMILTON AND ROCKLEA

Hon. V. C. GAIR (South Brisbane) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"(1) Will he make information available to the House showing the number of factories and businesses which were established in the Hamilton and the Rocklea industrial areas as at June 30, 1957, and as at December 31, 1959?"

"(2) Will he also indicate the new types of industry represented by those factories which have actually become established since June 30, 1957?"

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

"I presume the Honourable Member refers to the Hamilton Lands Area and the Rocklea Factory Area owned by the State Government. Detailed information is not available in my department as to the businesses which were established as at June 30, 1957, and the details I supply hereafter are based on leases approved."

"(1) Hamilton—Leases granted to June 30, 1957, 53; Leases granted to December 31, 1959, 72. Rocklea—Leases granted to June 30, 1957, 68; Leases granted to December 31, 1959, 82."

"(2) Hamilton—Foundry, Chemical Manufacture, Tubular Steel Furniture and Staircases, Carton Manufacturing, Grain Marketing and Cleaning, Radio Cabinets, Wire, Battery Making, Steel Fabrication, Concrete Mixing, Engineering, Building Construction. Rocklea—Manufacturing of Pharmaceutical and Tanning Preparations, Foundry, Confectionery, Hospital Equipment, Underfelt, Furniture and Cabinet Making, Meat Boning and Packing, Assembly of Motor Vehicles, Tropical Testing of Abrasives and their Distribution, Assembly T.V. Receivers and Radio, Upholstery, Sawing and Planing Mill, Commercial Refrigeration and Air Conditioning, Rubber Lining of Valves, etc."

PURCHASE OF HOMES UNDER £250 DEPOSIT SCHEME

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

"(1) What is the approximate waiting time for the purchase of homes on the North Side of Brisbane under the £250 deposit scheme?"

"(2) What is the earliest date from which applications or listed names are still held by the Queensland Housing Commission for such homes?"

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

"(1) In respect of all suitable developed sites in the Commission's Estates on the north side houses have either been constructed or approvals to build have been obtained. Applications to purchase are held in respect of these houses and approvals with the exception of six, the purchase of five of which is being considered by applicants. An area at Stafford which has been subdivided into 219 building sites is in the course of development. It is anticipated that this development—bitumen surfaced roads, kerb and channel and stormwater drainage—will be completed by December, 1960. Of the sites in this area eighteen have been surveyed, levels taken, and plans are being prepared for the erection of houses on them by day labour. These houses will be available for purchase."

"(2) The earliest date is February, 1958. When houses or building sites become available an equivalent number of the persons first listed are notified. It has been found that of those so notified very few were then interested in purchase."

DIAMOND TRAFFIC TURNS

Mr. HANLON (Ithaca) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"As there is some confusion in the minds of motorists on the matter, can he indicate whether 'diamond' turns are in order only where the roadway is marked accordingly or where traffic is so directed by a Police Traffic Officer or are such turns with due care in order now for all intersections?"

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

"At the present time, diamond turns are in order only where the roadway is marked accordingly, or where a police officer so directs the traffic. This was done, in the first instance, to educate drivers into this method of making a right turn, and as the education period is considered to have been sufficiently long, it is intended to have the Traffic Commission consider an amendment to the Traffic Regulations to legalise diamond turns, with or without the roadway marking or direction of a police officer."

FIRST-AID BOXES ON TRAINS

Mr. THACKERAY (Keppel) asked the Minister for Transport—

“(1) Will he inform the House how many guards at Rockhampton in the last three months were authorised to leave Rockhampton without First Aid boxes in the Guards Van?”

“(2) What is the cost of these First Aid Boxes?”

“(3) Is it the policy of the Government to sacrifice First Aid attention for economy?”

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

“(1, 2 and 3) Several guards working trains within close distance of Rockhampton have, during the last three months, been authorised to leave Rockhampton without first-aid boxes. It is not the policy of the Government to sacrifice first-aid attention for economy. It was recently ascertained that the number of spare first-aid boxes kept on hand at Rockhampton was insufficient to provide for the frequent replacements necessary and instructions have been issued for the number to be increased sufficient to meet requirements. The cost of a first-aid box is £3 8s.”

PAY-ROLL TAX PAID BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Mr. THACKERAY (Keppel) asked the Premier—

“What was the amount of pay-roll tax paid to the Commonwealth Government by each of the Government departments for the financial year 1958-1959?”

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

“The amount of pay-roll tax paid to the Commonwealth Government by State Government departments in the financial year 1958-1959 was £1,529,000. Information as to the amount paid by each Government department is not readily available and its compilation would entail considerable work, which would not be justified.”

HOUSING COMMISSION HOMES, THOZET ROAD AREA, ROCKHAMPTON

Mr. THACKERAY (Keppel) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

“What action does he intend to take in relation to the ten Housing Commission homes in the Thozet road area, Rockhampton, which were painted inside and have deteriorated to such a condition that they need repainting immediately?”

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

“Arrangements will be made to have the defective paintwork in these houses rectified. The 10 houses were included in

3 contracts covering 16 houses. Two contracts were let to one builder and the third to another builder. The linings and ceilings to the houses are of asbestos cement and the breakdown of the internal painting did not become apparent until after the houses were completed and occupied. From enquiries made from one of the contractors and from the firm of paint manufacturers whose product was used, it would appear that the application of the paint to insufficiently seasoned asbestos cement caused the breakdown.”

PRICES AND TENDERS FOR MILK, ATHERTON HOSPITAL BOARD

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

“With reference to his reply to part 2 of my question on December 3, 1959, regarding prices of milk supplied to Atherton District Hospitals, will he advise if the information is now available?”

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga) replied—

“The information asked for by the Honourable Member is as follows:—

Hospital	Price per Gallon	Price per Gal. Other Tenders	
Townsville	5s. 4d. June, 1959 increased to 5s. 6½d. 26th October, 1959	Nil	
Clonecurry	5s. 4d. ex Townsville ..	Nil	
Hughenden	5s. 6½d. plus 11d. freight ..	7s.	
Mareeba ..	4s. 10d. Bulk heat treated ..	Nil	
	5s. 2d. Bottled pasteurised ..	}	
Julia Creek	7s. 9d. Pasteurised bottled ..		Nil
Mount Isa	7s. 6d. ..	Nil	
Ayr ..	6s. increased to 6s. 4½d. 19th October, 1959	6s.	
Home Hill	6s. increased to 6s. 4½d. 19th October, 1959	6s.	
Mossman	5s. 3d. Heat treated ..	}	
	6s. 4d. Bottled ..		Nil
	(9½d. pint bottled) ..		
Atherton..	5s. 0½d. Bulk ..	3s. 6d.	
	5s. 4½d. Bottled ..	Warm	
Herberton	5s. 0½d. Bulk ..	3s. 6d.	
	5s. 4½d. Bottled ..	warm”	

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND EDUCATION, ABORIGINALS, BESSIE POINT, NEAR CAIRNS

Mr. WALLACE (Cairns) asked the Minister for Education—

“(1) Has any approach been made by aboriginal parents living at Bessie Point, near Cairns, for financial assistance to purchase a boat, which conforms to the Act relating to the carrying of passengers for the purpose of conveying their children of school-age from Bessie Point to Cairns wharf?”

“(2) If so, will he advise if the request has been granted?”

“(3) If not, will he advise the intention of his department in relation to the continuity of schooling for aboriginal children of the Bessie Point area?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

“(1) The parents of school age children from the Bessie Point area are in receipt of conveyance allowances for their children who are travelling, over three miles, by motor boat, to attend school in Cairns. They requested that the allowances be paid to a committee appointed to purchase a new boat.”

“(2) Conveyance allowances are personal allowances intended to compensate parents for expenditure incurred by them in conveying their children to school and therefore the request could not be approved. There is nothing to prevent the parents from allocating the allowances paid to a special fund in accordance with their own request.”

“(3) When a boat certified seaworthy by the Harbours and Marine Department is available for the transport of these children and provided the number is sufficient to ensure that a daily average of nine children will be conveyed, and application made to the Regional Director of Education at Townsville for a school service providing free transport will be considered.”

ARAB STALLIONS AND MARES, GATTON
AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Mr. WALLACE (Cairns) asked the Minister for Education—

“(1) How many Arab stallions and mares are there at the Gatton Agricultural College stud at the present time?”

“(2) What was the landed cost in Brisbane of the 12-years-old Arab stallion, Grand Royal, which arrived from England in December last, and who was the vendor?”

“(3) Are mares from outside private owners accepted for service by the Arab stallions at the College stud?”

“(4) If so, what is the fee for such service and how many mares have been accepted for service since the inauguration of the stud in 1958?”

“(5) What is the total cost of the stud to date and what income, if any, has been derived from its operation?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

“(1) Three stallions and ten mares.”

“(2) (a) £1,158; (b) Mr. Cecil Covey, Crabbet, Surrey.”

“(3) Yes.”

“(4) (a) Twenty guineas; (b) Thirteen. The stud arrived too late for the 1958-1959 season and therefore was available only for the 1959-1960 season.”

“(5) (a) £6,245; (b) £890.”

MAIN ROAD FOR CENTRAL QUEENSLAND

Mr. GARDNER (Rockhampton) asked the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads—

“(1) Will he give consideration to declaring the Longreach-Rockhampton road a main road, despite his previous replies stating it was Government policy not to declare any more roads in Queensland at the present time, and because I feel he does recognise the justice of this request on behalf of Central Queensland people?”

“(2) Will he place all the factors of the existing road with a survey of the Bogantungan-Longreach section before his Government with the object of having some consideration given to the request?”

“(3) Will he review the possibility of ‘demeaning’ the Longreach-Jundah road to assist in the general policy of giving Central Queensland a Main Road, the same as Southern and North Queensland areas?”

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

“(1 and 2) The reasons for the Government’s policy on declarations was explained in my answer to a similar question by the Honourable Member on November 27, 1959. It would not be equitable to select any particular road or district for preferential treatment.”

“(3) The Longreach and Barcoo Shire Councils are already committed to the cancellation of the declaration of the balance of the Longreach-Jundah road (river route) following the construction of the alternative eastern route.”

NUMBER OF SLINKS TREATED AT BRISBANE
ABATTOIR

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba) asked the Minister for Agriculture and Stock—

“What is the total number of slinks, that is, unborn calves, treated at the Brisbane Abattoir from July 1, 1958, to June 30, 1959, and from July 1, 1959 to December 31, 1959?”

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick) replied—

“Figures relating to the number of slinks which were skinned prior to treatment at the by-products section of the Cannon Hill abattoir for the periods in question were—July 1, 1958 to June 30, 1959, 11,743; July 1, 1959 to December 31, 1959, 3,023. No records are kept of slinks which are not skinned. The by-products section utilizes slinks in the manufacture of meat meal for livestock feeding.”

COST OF SCHOOL BOOKS AND OTHER
REQUISITES FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS

Mr. ADAIR (Cook) asked the Minister for Education—

“Owing to the numerous complaints received from parents of students attending

secondary education, regarding the extra high cost of school books and other school requisites needed by the students, will the Government give some financial assistance to relieve parents of the heavy financial burden?"

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

"Scholarship allowances are granted, subject to a means test, to holders of State Scholarships to assist in the provision of text books and stationery for secondary school work. This Government is spending more than any previous Government in order to make facilities for secondary education available to more children. In respect of last financial year the sum of £43,804 was paid to parents in the lower income group who qualified under the means test for such assistance."

NEW STATE SCHOOL, NORTH BOOVAL

Mr. DONALD (Bremer) asked the Minister for Education—

"Is he in a position to advise when the construction of a new State school at North Booval is likely to commence?"

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

"At the present time it cannot be stated when the construction of a new State school at North Booval is likely to be commenced, but a site of 9 acres 1 rood 26 perches has been acquired for this purpose. I am not yet in a position to know whether or not the erection of a school building for this area can be undertaken during the coming financial year."

SOUTHPORT MATERNITY HOSPITAL

Mr. JESSON (Hinchinbrook) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

"(1) Will he please advise on what date the administrative officer was appointed to the Southport Maternity Hospital and the name of the gentleman?"

"(2) Will he please advise the date when the last expectant mother booked accommodation at the hospital and paid in advance for eleven days?"

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga) replied—

"(1) Noel Peters was appointed Acting Administration Officer, Southport Hospital, by the North Brisbane Hospitals Board as from February 15, 1960."

"(2) The decision to reduce the advance payment period was made by the North Brisbane Hospitals Board at its meeting on the evening of Thursday February 18, 1960, and is recorded in the Minutes of that meeting. The decision was conveyed to the matron of the Southport Hospital on Tuesday, February 23, 1960."

CEMENT FOR LITTLE NERANG RIVER DAM

Mr. JESSON (Hinchinbrook) asked the Minister for Public Works and Local Government—

"(1) With reference to his answer to my question on February 24 concerning the tenders for the supply of cement for the Little Nerang River Dam,—(a) Are Morleys Pty. Ltd. general merchants at Tweed Heads; (b) Is Mr. C. C. Carey an agent for Queensland Cement and Lime Co. Ltd. (Darra) who receives commission for all cement sold on the Gold Coast; (c) Is Mr. Wood a transport carrier between Brisbane and Tweed Heads; and (d) Have J. N. Nicholson Pty. Ltd. been given a sub-contract by Carey & Woods to haul cement from Mudgerah Station to the works site?"

"(2) Is he aware that no commission is being paid on cement bought through the State Stores by the Irrigation Department for the construction of the Moogera Dam in the Fassifern district, whereas the commission paid in the case of the Nerang Dam is alleged to be between eight and ten thousand pounds?"

"(3) Will he introduce legislation to provide that in future all public and local government bodies, particularly when a 33½ per cent. subsidy is being paid, obtain supplies through the State Stores, thus making a saving of thousands of pounds in commissions?"

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

"(1) These questions relate to matters which are not within my knowledge as Minister for Local Government."

"(2) No."

"(3) At one stage the Queensland Cement & Lime Coy. Ltd. permitted local authorities to buy cement under the Government contract let by States Stores Board. The practice was ceased in 1948. The Local Government Association of Queensland approached the then Government on several occasions with a view to Local Government purchasing through the State Stores Board. The Company advised as late as January, 1957, that its previous experience had been one of considerable difficulty in the matter of payment, etc., as well as a deal of additional work in the compilation of separate accounts. Accordingly the company was not prepared to meet the request. As the Honourable Member apparently has so much interest in this matter, I am rather surprised that he did not raise it some twelve years ago when the practice, which he now advocates, ceased."

DUTCH ECONOMIC MISSION IN AUSTRALIA

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

“In view of the report that a Dutch twelve-man economic mission is visiting Australia and that one group intends to tour Queensland, will he endeavour to persuade this group to visit Maryborough to (a) examine the possibility of establishing one or more new industries in that district and (b) survey the tourist potential of the Maryborough District and Fraser Island?”

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

“The Honourable Member’s habit of posing vague questions framed to obtain some political advantage and to cover his failure to make a positive contribution to debates, is well known to me. He might do more for Maryborough if he abandoned his negative approach and tried to help. Advantage will be taken of every opportunity during the extremely short visit to Queensland of Members of the Netherlands Mission to Australia to urge them to see as much as possible of Queensland, and to impress upon them both the investment potential and tourist attractions of the whole State, including Maryborough.”

IRON ORE AND BISMUTH DEPOSITS,
BIGGENDEN

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) asked the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads—

“(1) Is it a fact that he recently stated at Biggenden that a Government geologist would survey iron ore and bismuth deposits there?”

“(2) Has this area been surveyed previously to investigate iron ore or bismuth deposits? If so, when and by whom and what was the nature of the various reports?”

“(3) Is it correct that Southern business interests have explored this area? If so, is he aware of the results of such investigations?”

“(4) If no completely adequate surveys have been made, will he arrange for a thorough survey?”

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

“(1) Yes. By arrangement, a geologist later visited the leaseholder, who agreed that a geological inspection at the present stage would be of no avail.”

“(2) The Mount Biggenden iron-bismuth deposits were last surveyed by a Government Geologist (L. C. Ball) in 1902. Since that date they have been worked on two occasions. The department has made unsuccessful efforts to obtain full information on later workings from the company which last worked the mine in 1938. The company did, however, advise that arsenic

content of the ore increased with depth and that latter operations were confined to ore of this nature. Surface inspection by a Government Geologist during 1959 found the workings in a derelict state, and no useful survey could be carried out until they are re-opened.”

“(3) The department has been told that some sampling of a small accessible portion of the old workings was lately carried out by local and Southern interests. Results are not known.”

“(4) At present the only accessible workings are an old open-cut and some adits. Geological inspection of these could not help in assessing future prospects, but arrangements have been made with the leaseholder for the Geological Survey to keep in touch with developments if and when mining re-commences.”

NEW FISH PROCESSING DEPOT,
MARYBOROUGH

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

“(1) Have negotiations for the purchase of a site for the new fish processing depot at Maryborough been completed? If not, when does he consider the purchase will be finalised?”

“(2) Have plans for the new building been completed? If so, when does he expect the erection of the building to commence and what is the anticipated cost of same?”

“(3) How many people does he expect to be employed at the new depot, including the filleting and processing section?”

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Cooorparoo) replied—

“(1) Yes, possession now obtained.”

“(2) Preliminary plans were prepared, and, with minor modifications, have been approved by The Fish Board and the Queensland Professional Fishermen’s League. The working plans and specifications are now in the process of being prepared by the Board’s architects, preparatory to the calling of tenders. The building is expected to be commenced at the end of April, 1960. Until the plans of the buildings are developed further, it is not possible to estimate the cost.”

“(3) In peak periods it is estimated that the employees will number twenty.”

SHIPMENT OF COPPER FROM PEKO MINES,
NORTHERN TERRITORY, TO JAPAN

Mr. A. J. SMITH (Carpentaria) asked the Minister for Transport—

“(1) Has his attention been drawn to recent Press statements that (a) a Japanese smelting and refining company has made a long-term contract with the Peko copper mines at Tennant Creek, Northern Territory, for an annual supply of 30,000 tons of copper concentrate and (b) as the Peko copper mines are not anxious to ship this

copper concentrate through Darwin to Japan, they are considering, as an alternative railing this huge tonnage of copper concentrate through Mount Isa to Townsville and thence by ship through the port of Townsville?"

"(2) In view of these statements made by Peko Copper Mines Company, will he make immediate contact with the company with a view to encouraging the road hauling of their product from Tennant Creek, Northern Territory, to Mount Isa and thence by rail to Townsville for shipping to Japan through the Townsville harbour, as such action would be a great financial asset to North-west Queensland and to Townsville?"

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

"I appreciate the action of the Honourable Member in drawing my attention to this matter. However, on reference to the Commissioner for Railways I find that Peko Copper Mines have already been communicated with and a reply is awaited."

ONE-WAY TRAFFIC SIGNS, GEORGE AND ELIZABETH STREETS

Mr. JESSON (Hinchinbrook), without notice, asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"Some time ago I asked the Minister to have a traffic sign placed at the corner of Elizabeth and George Streets opposite the Treasury Building and the C.I. Branch. At present there is only one 'One Way' traffic sign and it points up Elizabeth Street. Three times I have seen serious incidents there."

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Would the hon. member please ask his question?

Mr. JESSON: I am leading up to it.

"Will he have another traffic sign placed at the right-hand side so that people going up George Street may see that Elizabeth Street is a one-way road?"

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

"If the hon. member cares to give notice of his question I shall have the matter thoroughly investigated."

Mr. JESSON: I have told you about it three times already.

MEDWAY CREEK RAILWAY DISASTER

Mr. DAVIS (Barcoo), without notice, asked the Premier—

"I know that the Premier has already sent messages of condolence to relatives of the victims of the Bogantungan railway disaster. I should like to know if he would be good enough to convey the sympathy of all hon. members to those who suffered

injury in that tragic accident, together with an expression of our wish for their speedy recovery."

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

"Action has already been taken to convey to those who were injured in the unfortunate railway disaster at Bogantungan the sympathy of the people of Queensland. I should like also to inform hon. members that a specially selected officer of the Railway Department was instructed to visit all the injured in hospital to see if anything could be done for them."

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamation under the Public Works Land Resumption Acts, 1906 to 1955, and the State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1958.

Order in Council under the Racing and Betting Acts, 1954 to 1957.

Regulation under the Fisheries Acts, 1957 to 1959.

Regulation under the Queensland Marine Act of 1958.

Order in Council under the Southern Electricity Authority of Queensland Acts, 1952 to 1958.

Order in Council under the State Electricity Commission Acts, 1937 to 1958.

Order in Council under the River Improvement Trust Acts, 1940 to 1959.

Order in Council under the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Acts, 1944 to 1951.

Order in Council under the Barrier Fences Act of 1954.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

UNEMPLOYMENT IN QUEENSLAND

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to inform the House that I have received the following letter from the Leader of the Opposition:—

"Leader of the Opposition,
"Parliament House,
"Brisbane,
"February 29, 1960.

"Dear Mr. Fletcher,

"In accordance with Standing Order 137, I beg to inform you that it is my intention on Tuesday, March 1, to move—'That this House do now adjourn.'

"My reason for moving this motion is that I desire to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance as follows:—

"The very urgent necessity for this Parliament and immediate discussion by this Parliament of the serious unemployment in

Queensland, which, at 3.1 per cent. of the State's work force, is much worse than in any other Australian State, and is 1.6 per cent. greater than for the whole of the Commonwealth;

"The failure of the Government through its ineffectual industrial policy to do its part in maintaining employment, and the lack of any positive steps to arrest unemployment as evidenced by the fact that whereas the registered unemployed represented 1.4 per cent of the work force when the Government assumed office in August, 1957, the ratio of unemployed had deteriorated to 3.1 per cent. of the work force as at January 29, 1960, the last date for which official figures are available;

"The grave danger of a further increase in unemployment in Queensland following the lifting of 90 per cent. of import controls by the Commonwealth Government, which action, according to spokesmen for the Associated Chamber of Manufactures of Australia, the Australian Men's Clothing Industrial Council, the Queensland Chamber of Manufactures, and other employer and manufacturer organisations, and trade union councils, will lead to further unemployment, particularly in the textile, clothing and food processing industries, which have a major place in Queensland secondary industry;

"The particular need for the Government to sponsor a positive, organised plan covering both public and private undertakings in order to absorb the unemployed and prevent the migration of Queensland workers to other States.

"Yours faithfully,

"JOHN E. DUGGAN.

"The Honourable A. R. Fletcher, M.L.A.,

"Speaker,

"Legislative Assembly,

"Parliament House,

"Brisbane."

Not fewer than five members having risen in their places in support of the motion—

Mr. DUGGAN (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (12.5 p.m.): I move—

"That the House do now adjourn."

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful that you have ruled that this matter might be discussed this morning as we of the Opposition, in common with many other thoughtful Queenslanders, are concerned at the impact of unemployment on the economy of the State and the dismal failure that has characterised the Government's efforts to deal with it. We are now on the eve of an election and it is to be assumed that the Government will attempt to give some account of their stewardship. I want to remind those who follow the proceedings of the Parliament that the pledges contained in the 1957 election speeches of the principal members of

the present Government painted a picture of great cheerfulness and confidence in the development of Queensland and the stabilisation and improvement of employment. They went so far as to emphasise that not only would the unemployment problem be solved, but also that there would be over-employment, that there would be more jobs than men to fill them. You may remember some of the following extracts from their policy speeches:—

"Look at the glowing vista of development that lies ahead of Queensland."

"It is a vision splendid that should inspire every Queenslander."

"We will create a climate for investment in the future of Queensland."

"A Liberal-Country Government will encourage the promotion of new secondary industries and the establishment of factories. Indeed, given the development that we are determined to see, it won't be a matter of finding jobs for men but finding all the men for all the jobs."

It is a fact that during the regime of this Government many thousands of our jobless citizens have left the State to get work in the South. We cannot hold our migrants in Queensland. There has been a marked exodus of migrants from Queensland since this Government assumed office. Our ratio of unemployment has topped all other States of the Commonwealth. The industrial development promised by the Government has, at best, turned out to be beyond the capacity of the Government and, at worst, it is nothing more than a wicked Tory imposition. The indications are that the unemployment pool has become a permanent feature of our economy while this Government remain in office. That that opinion of the Opposition's is shared by all thoughtful Queenslanders is proved by an address that the Premier himself gave when he opened the thirteenth annual congress of Queensland co-operatives at Lennox Hotel. Amongst other things he said—

"There is unfortunately some unemployment here and in other States, but there is certainly no need for it, particularly in Queensland."

There we had the chief Parliamentary representative of the State indicating that there was no need for this unemployment and making an impassioned appeal for the representatives at that conference to lend their aid to solve the problem. So that we can effectively prove the charge of neglect by the Government it is necessary for me to quote some figures taken from the Monthly Review of the Unemployment Situation officially released by the Minister for Labour and National Service at Canberra. These are the only figures I propose to use in this debate. Just before the present Government came into office the unemployment figure for Queensland, in January, 1955, was 7,766. In January, 1956, the figure was 10,045 unemployed, and in January, 1957, it was 12,612.

That number constituted 2.2 per cent. of the total work force of the State. In 1958 the figure increased to 19,797 unemployed and in 1959 to 19,446. The percentage of the total work force had risen to 3.5. The 1960 figure is 17,839 unemployed, or 3.1 per cent. of the total work force of the State.

A Government Member: Coming down!

Mr. DUGGAN: Indeed it would need to come down still further. Even at that it was 1 per cent. more than when Labour left office in 1957.

Mr. Windsor: The repercussions of Labour's bad management for 30 years or more.

Mr. DUGGAN: The hon. member will please keep quiet and let me continue. He is an inconsequential figure in this debate. I am directing my attention to some of the big guns of the Government and not the little minions that are over there at the moment. In the last two years of Labour Government the total number employed in Queensland increased by 9,700, from 530,600 to 540,300 in 1955-1956, and by 4,200, from 540,300 to 544,500 in 1956-1957. Under the Nicklin-Morris Government the total number employed decreased by 1,700 from 544,500 to 542,800 in 1957-1958. The number increased by 5,900 from 542,800 to 548,700 in 1958-1959. The number of employed increased by 13,900 during the last two years of Labour Government, but the number increased in two years of Tory Government by only a net 4,200. Over 9,000 more people found employment in the last two years of Labour Government than in the first two years of Country-Liberal Government. These figures are taken from the Government Statistician's returns.

Let us have a look at the factory position. We have been told that the Government were anxious to promote decentralisation of industry, that they wanted to get rid of the Queen Street Trades Hall control that allegedly dominated the Labour administration of the past. This Government got onto the hustings and said, "Send us back and, comprised predominantly of Country Party members as we are, we promise that there will be an increase in the growth of factory development in Queensland, particularly North Queensland." How often have we heard the song about the neglect of North Queensland by Labour Governments? I have figures here covering factories and factory employment in Queensland compiled by the Government Statistician's office. They show that since 1957 the number of employees in Queensland factories has increased by a bare 1,569. In nearly three years there has been a bare increase of 1,569 as against a general increase of employment of 13,900 in the last two years of Labour government. The percentage of factory employees in relation to the total in work in the State has remained static, or, to be precise, has

increased by only one-tenth of one per cent. I think it will be agreed that that is a very damning indictment of this Government's industrial development. In addition, the Statistician has seen fit to include in those figures about 1,500 running men in railway workshops in the various parts of the State who were previously excluded. Therefore the figures can be reduced by that amount.

Let us see what the Government have done under their policy of developing factories and increasing employment in North Queensland. In Townsville in 1957 when Labour left office there were 379 factories; today there are 355, 24 fewer than three years ago. In Mackay the number of factories has been reduced from 281 to 276, five fewer than previously. In Bundaberg there were 248 factories in 1957; at the end of 1959 there were 220, a decrease of 28.

Mr. Windsor: You have not said anything about the railway sackings when your Government were in office.

Mr. DUGGAN: The hon. member will be sacked before very long.

In 1957 Cairns had 178 factories. In 1959 there were 176, a decrease of two. The figures for Maryborough are 224 and 222, a decrease of two.

In Rockhampton where the Government are making a valiant bid to secure electoral support the number of factories has been reduced from 376 in 1957 to 350 in 1959, a loss of 26. The total number of factories for these six cities has fallen by 87. The number of operatives or employees in these factories has been reduced by 995 since 1957.

The position had become so acute that both the Brisbane "Telegraph" and "The Courier-Mail" felt constrained in editorials as recently as December of last year to draw attention to this grave problem. "The Courier-Mail" said—

"This seasonal unemployment is an extravagant waste of able-bodied manpower which might be doing useful work that would earn much more money than a seasonal dole.

"With assistance from the Government local authorities might organise useful work to fill in gaps between seasonal employment."

It will be recalled that the Minister for Labour and Industry came back and said that seasonal unemployment was not as serious as some people tried to make out. He went on to say that seasonal unemployment in Queensland virtually would disappear after this season. If hon. members are sufficiently interested to review the figures—they should be sufficiently interested to go through all the figures—they will find a progressive deterioration. I do say that instead of stabilising the economy, the only thing the Government have stabilised is unemployment.

The chairman of the Immigration Advisory Council, according to a report in "The Courier-Mail", said this when he was in Brisbane—

"Job opportunity in big southern cities was the main factor influencing migrants against settling in places like Queensland."

That is another way of saying that there is very little opportunity here at the moment. The Premier received a deputation from the representatives of the Trades and Labour Council and they directed his attention to the wide incidence of unemployment in our provincial cities of Townsville, Rockhampton, Maryborough, Mackay, Bundaberg, Ipswich, Toowoomba, and other places. The Premier was prepared to admit that the electrification of the Queensland Railways may be a particular avenue that could be canvassed to see if something could be done to alleviate unemployment. The fact that he was prepared to look into this showed that he was influenced by the representations submitted to him.

At the present time 7,765 people are receiving unemployment relief in Queensland. The tight regulations exclude many from receiving unemployment relief so that figure does not indicate the true nature of unemployment in this State. There are a number of people who are not prepared to register because of the period before they can receive Commonwealth benefit, and they would rather go searching for work than remain in their own area in the hope of qualifying for a job from the Labour Bureau. Overall there has been an alarming deterioration in the unemployment position in this State. I have before me the latest figures released by the Department of Labour and National Service on 15 February, 1960, to be regarded as confidential to that time, in which it shows that despite the prognostications of the Premier and the Prime Minister—

Mr. Power: You had a chance of giving it to them and you voted against it.

Mr. DUGGAN: If the hon. member was sincere in his desire to deal with unemployment he would be the first to support this motion instead of allying himself with the Government.

Mr. Power interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: Any person with a modicum of feeling for the unemployed would be voicing a vigorous protest instead of being an Aunt Sally for the Government. On several occasions the hon. member made the declaration that he would never stand against an endorsed Labour candidate.

Mr. Power interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: Let the hon. member prove his promise. I do not want to take up time dealing with points raised by people who are in the evening of their political

careers. I would sooner see a young, vigorous man like the hon. member for Ithaca as the representative of the people.

Despite the dismal picture they have attempted to paint about what is happening in the southern States, we find that in New South Wales the percentage of unemployment is 1.5 per cent., Victoria 1.1 per cent., South Australia 1.3 per cent., Western Australia 2.3 per cent., Tasmania 2.2 per cent., and in Queensland, under this Government who claimed they would solve this problem, it is 3.1 per cent.

(Time expired.)

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (12.19 p.m.): I desire to support the Leader of the Opposition. There has been an admission by the Government that there is serious unemployment in Queensland.

At the recent Loan Council meeting which was attended by the Premier, and, I think, the Treasurer reported that a unique case was advanced by Queensland for extra finance on the ground of unemployment. That is an admission by the Government that a serious position of unemployment has been created in Queensland. We believe the cause is the policy pursued by the Government during the past 2½ years. Excuses for the present position have been made. The Premier in a Press statement said it was essential if we are to solve the unemployment problem in Queensland that we be given extra money. Let us examine the results of the Government's policy of high prices and higher rents for the people. In reply to a question asked by me a few days ago the Premier stated that marginal increases could result in increased revenue to the Commonwealth up to £30,000,000. The Government by their policy have contributed to the present position. They have created economic instability, and the cost to them will be up to £3,000,000 a year, at a time when commodities will not be more readily available to working people. Just as costs have been increased for the Government through the relinquishing of price control and decontrol of rentals, so also have costs been increased for the working people. They are now faced with an additional burden. People on fixed incomes, pensioners and others are now in a much worse position through the policy of the Government.

Disregarding the fact that we require additional money, the Premier on his return from a recent Premier's Conference and the Treasurer attending that conference with him, stated that the star of federation was in the ascendancy, with the alteration of the formula for tax reimbursements. In fact we know that the alteration of the formula has made Queensland's position very much worse compared with the position of other States. The Leader of the Opposition pointed out that in Victoria which several years ago had a record deficit of nearly £5,000,000 the unemployment figure today is only 1.1 per cent.,

whereas the figure for Queensland is 3.1 per cent. Yet the Premier allowed the Victorian Treasurer to secure a new formula for main roads allocation, and in fact, to rob this State over five years of £1,000,000 in those allocations. The same can be said of the formula for tax reimbursements. Queensland's position has deteriorated very much under the policy of the Country-Liberal Government.

They went to the people in 1957, and according to the Deputy Premier there would be more jobs than men to fill them. That statement was reminiscent of the 1929 gimmick that the boy would be given a chance. The Deputy Premier said there would be more jobs than men to fill them, but in fact unemployment is greater. The percentage this year is 3.1 per cent., last year it was 3.5 per cent., and the year before that 3.6 per cent. The Government have said that therefore unemployment has been reduced, but they do not take into consideration the net Queensland migration loss of 1,000 a year. Those working people leave the State to get work in other States so that the figures quoted do not reveal the position accurately. In fact unemployment has been increasing continuously.

Mr. Windsor: Through 25 years of your bad government.

Mr. LLOYD: The hon. member for Fortitude Valley surely has enough problems of his own. I notice he has been able to expand his own business and is evidently not concerned about unemployment. The Premier and the Government have allowed a tremendous upsurge in profits and dividends, but have given no consideration to the people who really matter, the working class of the community. Working families have suffered extreme hardship through the failure of the Government to curb the upsurge in profits and the creation of additional employment.

The figures quoted by the Leader of the Opposition give a very good picture of the actual reduction in the number of people employed in heavy industry in Queensland. These figures were made available by the Commonwealth Government Statistician. Now, no doubt, the Deputy Premier will again give us the Morris Statistical Review, as he has always done. The hon. gentleman has been all over this State, tripping around endeavouring to form sub-committees in the various towns and cities in an endeavour to solve the unemployment problem. We find that in the Northern cities of the State there has been a tremendous upsurge in unemployment during the past few years. In previous years when the meatworks cut out there was always alternative employment to absorb the great numbers displaced each year, but this year, there is no alternative employment available. That applies to every meatworks in Queensland. No doubt the Minister for Agriculture and Stock can bear out my statement when I say that the Brisbane abattoirs will experience this year its worst period since the depression years.

That statement applies with equal force throughout the aras concerned with the killing of cattle. What has the Minister for Labour and Industry done to bring additional industries to Queensland? There has been nothing done. Thousands of men have been put out of employment in the ship-building industry. What have the Queensland Government done to protest to the Commonwealth against placing so many orders overseas for ship-building requirements? We in Australia have been unable to keep men employed in this heavy industry, one of tremendous national importance. There has been no protest from the State Government to the Federal Government about the placing of orders in Germany and Japan for air-conditioned trains for the trans-continental railway. The placing of those orders within Australia would have kept thousands of men in employment here. Have the Queensland Government protested to their colleagues in Canberra against the placing of orders for heavy equipment in other countries of the world, not only Germany and Japan, but in Sweden, a nation of comparatively few people? Sweden has been able to undertake the filling of orders to serve the New Zealand shipping trade. No vigorous approach has been made to the Commonwealth Government to ensure that men engaged in the heavy industries in Australia will be maintained in constant employment. What has been done by the Minister for Labour and Industry to attract new industries to Queensland? It is of no use saying, "We have not got sufficient money to enable us to have full employment in this State," because when Labour left the Treasury benches there were many reserve funds which would have provided for continuous employment and the maintenance of a steady economy to preserve the same level of employment. Certainly there were times when Labour Governments found it necessary to displace some men from employment in the Government service, but was always possible to have them absorbed into private industry.

(Time expired.)

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry) (12.29 p.m.): I do not think I have ever listened to so much hysterical nonsense as we have had this morning from the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Normally one would take no notice of such nonsense, although some people might believe it. Their announcements would lead people to believe that things are happening that really are not happening at all. The statements that they made were not true, as I shall proceed to prove.

First of all, the Leader of the Opposition and his Deputy engaged in their old trick of misquoting figures. Everybody knows that Queensland has always had a seasonal unemployment problem, that the worst months for unemployment are December and January, and that the best months are

June, July, and August. It is very easy to compare one month in one year with a different month in another year. But it is very misleading! It is equivalent to telling a deliberate untruth.

The Leader of the Opposition quoted figures relating to factories. They were very old figures, and he knows perfectly well that recent figures reveal a completely different picture. Even today, in one of the worst months of the year for unemployment, over-employment exists in many industries; it is impossible to get many classes of employees. The Leader of the Opposition is well aware of that.

I cannot help wondering why the motion has been submitted to the House, particularly during the present week. Of course, I am well aware that hon. members opposite were twitted by "The Sunday Mail" for not taking action in certain directions. In other words, they were told that they were a dying party and were doing nothing about it. I suppose they are doing this as a last gasp. I am sure that they would not have done it had they not been spurred on by a newspaper article. The Leader of the Opposition admitted that the action was being taken on the eve of an election. He has tried to build up a completely untrue case to help his poor, dying group, who are very much on the wane in Queensland.

What is the broad picture of employment in this State? I repeat, unemployment is at its lowest in July, August, and September, and at its highest in December and January. Quoting figures relating to the number of people registered for employment is, in reality, painting quite an erroneous picture. For example, hon. members opposite know very well that included in those registered for employment are many people who are not wanting work, as well as many who are, in fact, in employment. The Leader of the Opposition has said that some people do not bother to register. What a lot of twaddle!

I point out that more than 50 per cent. of the people who are drawing unemployment benefits are, in fact, seasonal workers. They choose seasonal work; they get very high wages while they are working. They know that they can earn more in seven or eight months at seasonal work than many other people can earn in 12 months.

Let me tell hon. members something else. Among those who are registered as unemployed, and among those who are drawing unemployment benefits, there are many hundreds of University students. Do hon. members opposite realise that? As soon as the academic year finishes, hundreds of University students register for employment. That, of course, boosts the figures that hon. members opposite have used to bolster up their very weak case.

Some people point to the figures of unemployment and try to plant in the minds of the public the idea that some thousands of

people are month after month out of employment. That is not true. In England a very careful review of the number of people drawing unemployment benefits disclosed that most draw them for only two or three weeks of the season. The same is true of Australia. Unfortunately we have not yet as full a coverage of statistics as we should like, but it is clear that most of the people drawing unemployment benefit do so for only a few weeks in the year. Why do not hon. members opposite admit that?

Let us take comparable figures. The number of people receiving unemployment benefits in the middle of February, 1960, the last figure available, was 6,923, while the figure for the end of February, which was only yesterday, was a shade over 6,000. Remember that this is the worst time of the year. Last year the number was 7,444, and in January of the year before it was 9,342. So in each January of the years we have been in office there has been a steady reduction in unemployment benefits. In fact the February, 1960, figure represents a reduction of 28 per cent. on the February, 1958, figure, yet hon. members of the Opposition try to paint a picture to frighten the citizens of the State for cheap, mean, political advantage.

That is one side of it. The other side is the employment position. The latest figures of wage and salary earners show a steady increase. They are—

1957	373,200
1958	381,000
1959	383,700

It is a pretty poor state of affairs when the Opposition choose to paint a dismal picture of Queensland, whereas the Financial Review, which is regarded as probably the greatest authority, shows that Queensland is making greater progress today than it ever did in the years under Labour.

The Leader of the Opposition says that the figure for factories is down. What nonsense! Why does he tell untruths? That is what he is doing.

Mr. DUGGAN: I rise to a point of order. I have been accused of telling an untruth. The figures I used were taken from the Minister's own report tabled here. If the report is inaccurate, he is responsible for it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I ask the Minister to accept the hon. gentleman's explanation and withdraw his remark.

Mr. MORRIS: Yes, but I will give you the facts. In Queensland 5,651 factories are now operating, which is 100 more than there were 12 months ago. I gave the Leader of the Opposition the figures seven or eight weeks ago, and he chooses to say they are not true. They have been issued by the Government Statistician, but the hon. gentleman deliberately hides them to build up a case. He knows that he is building his case on unsound foundations. On the latest figures available there are over 100 more

factories in Queensland than there were a year ago; the value of output shows an increase of 11.2 per cent. over the previous year, and the value of production an increase of 8 per cent. There are 2,755 more people employed this year than last, and over 6,000 more than the year before. The amount of salaries and wages paid has increased by 8.2 per cent. The food, drink, etc., group recorded an increase of £3,955,000 in production; metals, machines, etc., showed an increase of £3,385,000; bricks, pottery, etc., produced an increase of 21.9 per cent. For good measure let me say that the Brisbane City Council reported in December last that between June and December, 1959, it had approved plans for buildings to cost £12,000,000 to be completed or begun in 1960. In Queensland buildings valued at £4,658,000 were approved during November, an increase of £1,000,000 over the previous November, and approvals for flats, hotels, etc., for November, 1959, as against November, 1958, showed an increase of 79 per cent. Approvals for additions and alterations to buildings showed a somewhat similar increase. In every field there is greater economic progress and greater employment with consequently less unemployment. I have given the figures before; in many fields of employment today it is impossible to get employees. It is in the unskilled trades where there is a measure of seasonal unemployment. These people choose these fields of endeavour. If they want to choose them that is their business.

This Government have done more to assist the development of the State and provide greater employment in one year than the previous Government did in 10.

Hon. members opposite choose to be critical of employer-employee conferences. People in country areas where such conferences have been held, for the first time in many years have been given an opportunity to bring their problems before a Government who are sympathetic to them. All my colleagues have given their attention to the development of the various parts of the State for the benefit of the people. I could produce a sheaf of letters received from all over Queensland to bear that out. Only the other day the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation allocated extra money to Cairns because of a problem that had to be met in that area. In association with his Cabinet colleagues he has developed a plan for the reclamation of land in the Cairns area as a means of providing employment for people who choose seasonal unemployment and live in areas of seasonal unemployment because they want to. No other Government have done what we have done to try to overcome seasonal unemployment. Today there is less seasonal unemployment than ever before. Next year the position will be infinitely better again, thanks to good government.

Mr. KNOX (Nundah) (12.44 p.m.): Firstly I congratulate the Minister for Labour

and Industry and other Cabinet Ministers on the excellent way in which they have endeavoured to keep people fully employed in Queensland since we took office in 1957. The Government have a very fine record, one entirely opposed to what we should expect from the Opposition in office, because they are insincere in their attempts to tackle the problem of unemployment in Queensland.

In typical fashion the Leader of the Opposition has put forward certain ideas in the House, but he speaks with another tongue elsewhere. It is in line with his past history; he has not changed one little bit. I have here a copy of what I understand to be the official organ of the Australian Labour Party, the "New Age," of Thursday, 4 February. On the front page there is a report of a speech made by the Leader of the Opposition when addressing members of the Hospital Employees' Union. The statement by the Leader of the Opposition particularly concerned unemployment as a result of the introduction of automation and electrification processes in industry. I quote the following from the report of the hon. gentleman's speech:—

"However, although the main problems posed by these changes related to the preservation of employment, and the diversion of workers to other fields of industry with a minimum of industrial and social upset, the basic problems of gaining more just wages, better conditions, and working hours remained the continuing obligation of the unions."

Mr. Duggan: What is wrong with that?

Mr. KNOX: There is nothing wrong with it: it is just what the hon. gentleman said. When dealing with the basic problems the hon. member left out the subject of unemployment. We think the basic consideration is to provide full employment for the people of Queensland. The attaining of that objective makes possible the higher standard that the hon. member claims is the first consideration of the unions. In his statement he indicated that unemployment is not the first consideration of the unions, but he is now endeavouring to show that he is genuinely interested in unemployment. The obvious relish with which the hon. member read unemployment figures indicates that that he longs for the day when there will be more unemployment so that he will have more to talk about. He has a vested interest in unemployment in this State. No doubt he hopes that it will continue because his own party is so bereft of policy and capacity to give the people an alternative Government that they have nothing else to talk about but those who are unemployed.

Mr. Hanlon: You tried to forget them.

Mr. KNOX: We did not. We have tried to make sure that everybody would be employed. The Leader of the Opposition waves documents about without quoting specifically from any particular one and without giving the source of his figures.

Mr. DUGGAN: I rise to a point of order. I specifically stated several times that I quoted from figures supplied by the Minister for Labour and National Service in Canberra. The hon. member is misleading the House when he says that I did not say where I got them.

Mr. KNOX: I shall quote from the same document which the Leader of the Opposition said he quoted from. It is headed "Department of Labour and National Service", and was not for release till 15 February, 1960. The last sentence in the second paragraph reads as follows:—

"In Queensland, where seasonal unemployment is generally at its peak in January, there were fewer persons registered than in January, 1959."

In other words, we had made a genuine attempt to reduce the number of unemployed in this State. Hon. members opposite mumbled about figures supplied by the Government Statistician. I point out that Bulletin No. 42 of 1959 issued by the Commonwealth Government Statistician contains Table 5 on page 6 which shows that the number of workers in the building industry at 30 June, 1959, was 23,000 compared with 20,000 at the end of June, 1958. In every quarter since that time there has been an increase in the number of persons employed in the building industry, a fairly good indication of the general level of employment in the State.

Bulletin No. 7 of 1960 in the table entitled "Queensland Factories—Five Years (Including Heat, Light, and Power Works)" reveals that in 1954-1955 a total of 100,000 people were employed in Queensland factories in those industries, and that by 1958-1959 the number had grown to 105,000.

In each year while the Government have been in office the number of male and female employees in those industries has increased. That is a fair indication of the state of prosperity, and of the proportion of people who are able to get good jobs within the State.

The Minister revealed some most interesting facts. It is strange the Leader of the Opposition has not dealt with them, possibly because he knew they would not help his case.

In August, 1959, the Minister compared the employment position in the States of the Commonwealth. He said that Queensland had the highest percentage increase in employment in larger private factories, as revealed by the following table:—

Western Australia	..	.2 per cent.
Victoria	..	.6 per cent.
New South Wales	..	.7 per cent.
South Australia	..	1.2 per cent.
Tasmania	..	3.5 per cent.
Queensland	..	4 per cent.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. KNOX: And it is estimated that the increase this year will be of the order of 5 per cent.—a magnificent record that compares favourably with the record not only of previous Queensland Governments but also of administrations in other States. It is a record of which we can justly be proud.

As long as one person is unemployed in Queensland hon. members on this side of the chamber will be concerned. We will do everything in our power to provide employment for him.

The Opposition strangely persists in its claim that we are financially capable of implementing equal pay for equal work and three weeks' annual leave, that the economy could not be more buoyant and that things are on the up-and-up. It is equally strange that the Opposition did not introduce those matters in debate. Hon. members opposite omitted to do so because it did not suit their case. They know that in order to introduce equal pay for equal work and three weeks' annual leave for all workers there has to be a buoyant economy. They know the arguments they use today counter any argument they put forward in support of those extra benefits.

The Opposition's case that we have not taken positive steps to counter unemployment is quite false. The Minister for Labour and Industry, in many rural areas where the highest level of unemployment exists—and we are not denying that unemployment does exist—has had conferences with union leaders, with chambers of manufactures and chambers of commerce in an effort to improve the position.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HANLON (Ithaca) (12.55 p.m.): The Deputy Premier and the hon. member for Nundah have made some remarkable statements in a desperate attempt to avert or destroy the case made by the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition about the serious unemployment position that has developed in this State within the last three years. The Deputy Premier more or less implied—and I think I am fair in saying this—that so far as he was concerned the people who entered seasonal industries did so of their own accord and it was their own business. That was his attitude. He more or less said, "We do not ask people to work in seasonal industries and why should we be concerned with them when they become unemployed?" That was the substance of what he said.

Mr. MORRIS: I rise to a point of order. I object to the hon. member's making untrue statements. I said if people accepted employment in seasonal industries it was their business, but I did not say, as the hon. member said, that we were not concerned with them when they were unemployed. His insinuation is untrue and I ask that his remarks be withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER: I ask the hon. member for Ithaca to accept the explanation given by the Deputy Premier.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. gentleman admits he said that people who go into seasonal industries make up their own minds to follow such occupations and that, therefore, they have to accept the disadvantages which accrue so far as unemployment in those industries is concerned. He used that as an argument against the motion for the adjournment of the House to discuss this important question. I say it is unfair to say that those people do not deserve the consideration of this Parliament or the Government. He further implied that the motion was simply an election stunt. Let me tell him straight out that it is not a stunt at all.

Mr. Morris: Of course it is.

Mr. HANLON: If it was an election stunt, I can assure him that so far as the people of Queensland are concerned it would have a devil of a lot more effect than the stunts the Government have tried, and I refer to the Bill generally known as the Bill of Rights and this Session itself. They are sorry indeed that they ever had this Session.

Let me remind the Deputy Premier that the late Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Wood, and the present Leader have over the last couple of years on no fewer than three or four occasions, either by direct motion for the adjournment of the House or by way of amendment to the Address in Reply, drawn the attention of the Government to the need for greater action concerning unemployment. The Deputy Premier says that we are now bringing this motion on as an election stunt, but he himself was associated with the application of the "gag" some six or eight months ago in this House on such a motion. He cannot say that we are trying to make this matter an election stunt when he and his Government, by weight of numbers, cut off the debate on such an important subject as this. We have considered it necessary to raise the subject again. He said that the Government had improved the employment position in Queensland. The hon. member for Nundah attempted to paint a rather remarkable picture of improvement by saying that there had been a slight improvement in the last 12 months. First of all, he took a very bad figure in respect of his own Government. He took 1959 and said that there was a tremendous improvement because he had improved the previous year's bad figure. The Deputy Premier admitted that January is probably the worst month for unemployment and said that in January, 1956, the number of people registered as unemployed in Queensland according to the official figures furnished by the Minister for National Service in Canberra, was 10,045.

The January figures in each of the following years were—

	No registered as unemployed
1957	12,612
1958	19,797
1959	19,446
1960	17,839

The hon. member for Nundah made the rather remarkable claim that, as there had been a decrease of 2,000 in the number registered as unemployed between January, 1959, and January, 1960, the Government had brought about a great improvement. I point out, however, that during the present Government's term of office from 1957 to 1959, the number increased from 12,600 to 19,400.

Government Members: Where did you get those figures?

Mr. HANLON: They were issued by the Minister for Labour and National Service in Canberra.

There is a very good reason for the slight reduction in the 1960 figure compared with that of 1959. It is that the Government have been withholding funds for an election year splurge. That cannot be denied. During the financial year 1958-1959 an amount of £1,400,000 was allocated to the Mt. Isa railway line. I know that hon. members opposite will say that they could not get the co-operation of the Menzies Government in reaching finality on that project, but a good deal of work could have been carried out. Not one penny was spent on it during that financial year.

Again, in the current financial year there was an allocation of £1,900,000 for the Mt. Isa railway line, making in all £3,300,000 allocated this year. However, it does not look as if very much of that money has been spent until now when the election is pending.

I point out, too—and this is something that hon. members complained about when we were the Government—that at the end of the previous financial year there was a very substantial sum in the Main Roads Fund. It is obvious that all that money has been kept back and is now being spent to improve the unemployment figures immediately before an election. That is the reason for the very slight improvement in the figures that was referred to by the hon. member for Nundah.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has already pointed out that the Government acknowledge the seriousness of unemployment in Queensland. Since the Government attained office, we have moved adjournment notices to bring home to the Government the serious deterioration in employment. The Premier and his Deputy—and other members of the Government party—tried to tell us that there was no justification for adjourning the House. However, only recently, at a Loan Council meeting in Canberra, the Premier used almost the same words as the Leader of the Opposition and

others on this side of the House have been using in trying to impress upon the Federal Government the seriousness of unemployment. He stressed before the Loan Council the point that Queensland had a unique claim for additional funds to relieve unemployment.

It is idle for Government members to deny that their policy has contributed to the present serious position. People who threw up their hands in horror at the thought of giving all workers three weeks' annual leave had no compunction about bringing into effect the Country-Liberal Party's policy of relaxing rent and price controls. The people of Queensland would have been much better off if the cost to the Government of relaxing price control had been spent in the relief of unemployment. Hon. members opposite did not hesitate to inflict on the people their policy of lifting rent and price controls, even though it cost the Government millions of pounds without alleviating unemployment.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HERBERT (Sherwood) (2.20 p.m.): I have noted with interest the lack of argument by the Opposition, and I have come to the unavoidable conclusion that this is simply a blatant act of political campaigning bereft of any relation to truth or fact. The only reason for it is that "The Sunday Mail" pointed out to the Opposition that they had done nothing yet and that the best idea would be for them to move a motion like this, which would give "The Sunday Mail" something to talk about next Sunday. So the Opposition had to wait for the Press to point out to them the procedures of the House available to them to voice a protest.

We have listened to many peculiar figures produced by hon. members of the Opposition, and although they say figures cannot lie it is quite obvious that liars can figure. I will produce the official figures of recipients of unemployment benefit in Queensland. Those are the only ones to go on, not airy-fairy figures of tens of thousands spread over the State. And these figures are for January—the worst period of each year. In January, 1958, the number was 9,357, in January, 1959, it was 8,359—down 1,000 in 12 months; while in January, 1960, it was 7,765—down again in spite of an increase in population. At the moment it is about 6,000.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. HERBERT: The figures speak for themselves, but they include many who are technically unemployed. I had a remarkable letter from Rockhampton after the visit of the Minister for Labour and Industry. The writer protested vigorously at the action taken by the Deputy Premier to reduce seasonal unemployment because it would upset his plans. He is a meatworker who makes about £1.200 a season. At the end of the season he lives in a small cottage on the seashore, and for the rest of the year he draws unemployment benefit of £6-odd a week as a married man.

That gives him a fairly good average income over the 12 months. He has no desire to see seasonal unemployment removed from Rockhampton. Perhaps he would surrender his unemployment benefit rather than take on one of the jobs offering. That will be his own decision. I do not suggest that people should not apply for the unemployment benefit if they are not working, but we must not forget that the figure of 6,000 unemployed at the moment includes many people who get considerably more than that benefit over the 12 months. That is common in the North. According to the Year Book cane-cutters average £6 a day, or over £30 a week, for the season, and at the end of it they draw unemployment benefit, in spite of the fact that they have earned high wages during the season. It naturally follows that over the year cane-cutters earn more than an adequate wage. I do not suggest that they should not apply for unemployment benefit, but the resultant figure of 6,000 gives one the impression that all those people have been out of work for some time.

That is why the work being done by the Deputy Premier in areas with pockets of seasonal unemployment is of particular value. In those areas are people who could be used to help develop the State. It is the first time in the history of the State that we have had a Minister interested enough to go out and try to find a solution to the problem of seasonal unemployment. While we were in Opposition, whenever we brought up the subject it was brushed aside. Because the then Government thought there was no way of solving it they were not interested in it. All of a sudden when they occupy the Opposition benches they become interested in the plight of the poor seasonal workers. It is quite obvious that this is purely and simply a catch-cry to be used in the election campaign in an attempt to fool people into thinking that there is a great deal of unemployment in Queensland. It does not measure up with what I have no doubt will be contained in the policy speech that the boys from the Trades Hall will hand the Leader of the Opposition to read on their behalf. It is quite obvious that in his policy speech he will promise three weeks' annual leave and equal pay for the sexes. If unemployment is as widespread as he makes out he should be moving heaven and earth to produce a policy speech based exclusively on the solution of the unemployment problem. What the Australian Labour Party's policy speech will contain is evident from the notices of motion appearing on the business sheet. First of all we see—

"Mr. Wallace to move—

"That this House declares its adherence to the principle of three weeks' annual leave for all employees in Queensland, and affirms that this principle should have satutory recognition forthwith."

There is a motion suggesting that we should bring in three weeks' annual leave forthwith. If there were many unemployed they would not relish the idea of having this conditional benefit handed out to the fortunate few in employment.

Further down on the business sheet appears a motion to be moved by Mr. Mann covering equal pay for men and women. That is not the sort of motion to move at a time when allegedly there is unemployment in our midst. But they know very well that we have not any huge numbers of unemployed. This is purely and simply an attempt to fool people who only read the headlines in the newspapers into believing that there are huge numbers of unemployed in this State. But it will not work. If a man knows that he is employed, that his relatives and friends are employed, indeed that only a very few are unemployed, he will realise that there is not widespread unemployment.

Hon. members opposite cannot suggest that I represent a silver-tail area. Inala, Cooper's Plains, and Rocklea include a large percentage of people in the lower income group, but in my area at the moment I have not one able-bodied man on my books looking for employment. The only ones looking for work are people with disabilities who are unable to accept general employment. It was five weeks before a vacancy for a janitor could be filled. Had there been unemployment people would have jumped at the job.

An Opposition Member: How much a week?

Mr. HERBERT: The job paid £16 10s. a week which is a fair wage for a janitor. I was turned down by a couple of people to whom it was offered because they wanted higher wages. Had there been an unemployment problem that job would not have lasted 24 hours. The plain fact of the matter is that in Brisbane there is virtually no unemployment. The pockets of unemployed in the North are seasonal only. They have been there for 30 long years of Labour rule without anyone doing anything for them. But now we have a Government that are attempting to do something for them. The Opposition realise that the Deputy Premier is having a great deal of success, and therefore they are trying to belittle his efforts.

The figures covering unemployment in the State have already been quoted. Employment figures are up 3 per cent. in the last 12 months. The State is booming. We are taking in additional population, employing more and having less unemployment. Therefore this motion by the Opposition has absolutely no foundation in fact, but is aimed at producing some sort of fear complex in the minds of the people in the hope of deluding them later in the year into believing that the Opposition have something in the shape of a policy to offer the electors of Queensland.

Hon. V. C. GAIR (South Brisbane) (2.29 p.m.): In the course of the debate many figures have been used for and against the argument that unemployment has increased in Queensland since the present Government took office. Although I am guided by official figures I have never accepted them as a true record of the unemployment position in Queensland or in any other State. I say that for the reason that I think in this community a percentage of people who find themselves unemployed are reluctant to run along to a Federal employment bureau and register as unemployed. We also know that we still have a number of independent people in our community who are prepared to work out their own destiny when they become unemployed and do not rely on the Government to find a solution for their problem. Irrespective of the figures quoted for and against in this matter, no-one can conscientiously submit that the employment position in this State has not deteriorated considerably since the advent of the present Government. I am sure, notwithstanding all the very generous Press publicity that this Government have received regarding the establishment of new industries in this State, the problem that worries the Premier and his Cabinet more than anything else is unemployment. Just as I and my Government were always concerned about maintaining full employment in this State, I am prepared to say that would be the concern of the present Government; but because of reasons of administration, lack of realism, and probably lack of experience as a Government, the position has certainly deteriorated. It is all right for the Minister for Labour and Industry to obtain a great deal of publicity in regard to new industries here, there and everywhere, but in spite of this unemployment increases. In answer to a question submitted by me this morning in regard to new industries established at Rocklea, Wacol and other places, the Minister told us that 20-odd more industries were now established at Rocklea compared with the number at June, 1957, just prior to the defeat of the Labour Government. I should be interested to know where the new industries have been established, because from my knowledge of the Rocklea buildings that were acquired by me as Minister for Labour and Industry from the Commonwealth Government I know they were full to capacity in 1957, and applications for leases could not be granted. However, that is a minor matter compared with the important question of unemployment. It is the most vital and important responsibility of the Government to maintain full employment in the State of Queensland. Surely no-one can sit back with any measure of complacency and view the deterioration that is taking place in this respect. It has often been stated that the inherent right of man is the right to work; and in a democracy such as this surely, with comparative prosperity, there should not be 20,000 or thereabouts unemployed in this

State. I am not unmindful, because of my experience of the unique problem associated with employment as far as Queensland is concerned.

Mr. Aikens: Particularly in the North.

Mr. GAIR: That is so, particularly in North Queensland I am conscious of the seasonal unemployment which occurs annually in that part of the State; but those who represent the Government today were not very mindful of that problem when they sat over here and never missed any opportunity of making a political football of the issue. They did not lose any opportunity of drawing attention to the seasonal unemployment.

During the course of the Minister's reply—and I must say it was not a very convincing or impressive one on such an important matter—the hon. gentleman said he had been convening conferences in the North, which he said had been done for the first time, in an effort to eliminate seasonal unemployment. If he took the time to ascertain what action was taken, instead of making empty claims under previous Governments he would know that under the Employment Facilities Act introduced in this Chamber by the Hon. Tom Foley local committees were set up in centres throughout North Queensland to deal with this problem. If my memory is correct, the first time I met the Minister for Development was at a conference with a local committee set up to deal with seasonal unemployment.

I am fair enough to admit that seasonal unemployment in North Queensland invariably occurs during the wet season when departments such as the Main Roads Department and others are unable to spend the money allocated to them because heavy rain makes the work impracticable or impossible. I concede that that is so, but why should hon. members deny that the unemployment position is serious and becoming more serious? The most important or vital job of the Government is to see that full employment is provided so that the decent, industrious people of our community are able to maintain themselves and their dependants at a reasonable standard.

We are not obliged to rely on figures. We can take the statements of the Premier which have been dealt with. He does not deny that unemployment exists. He has made a special plea to the Loan Council and Premiers' Conference on that ground, and he has secured certain additional money because of Queensland's unique position among the States. At this stage I point out that the Commonwealth Government are slow, as usual, in distributing or allocating the additional £4,000,000 they have made available for alleviation of unemployment throughout Australia. I have not yet read any statements as to the allocation, although I realise that the Premier and his Government are anxious to

make the money available to local authorities so that work can be created for those in search of it.

Mr. Hiley: As a matter of fact, we have taken a chance and made some allocation, although the total amount has not yet been ascertained from the Commonwealth.

Mr. GAIR: Then the Treasurer must agree with me that the Commonwealth, as usual, are tardy.

I have stressed or emphasised to the utmost the importance of this matter and desire to urge the Government to take some positive and effective action to arrest and reduce the drift. Do not let any member of the Government think that all is well in the State. Do not fall into the error of pulling your own leg merely because someone is talking about establishing an industry here and another industry there. Do not make the mistake of thinking that the position is good, because it is not good.

I have been in the political life of this State for a good number of years, and I can feel the pulse of the position as well as most people. I am very close to rank-and-file members of the working class, and I know that the position has changed from full employment to unemployment for too many since the change of Government. The subject is far too important and vital to be turned into a political football, and I do not exempt the Government on that score. When they were in Opposition they never missed an opportunity of turning it into a political football. They harped continuously about it and hit the Government with it on every possible occasion—deservedly so, I suppose they thought, but now they have the responsibility, what are they doing to overcome it? The position worsens and there is not much likelihood of much improvement, if any, under the present arrangement.

On the other hand I am not convinced of the sincerity of the official Opposition on this matter, because I think Opposition members are gloating over the deterioration in the employment position believing that it will be of advantage to them politically. I do not think that attitude is good enough. I confirm or substantiate my statement by saying that, when Premier, I and my Government, because of our intimate knowledge of the financial position, did not feel disposed to grant three weeks' annual leave to those permanently employed at the expense of those employed on forestry, railway construction, and other works, many of whom would have lost their jobs, but the attitude of those people who represent the Opposition today was—give an additional week's leave to those who have security in employment, and to hell with those who may lose their jobs.

(Time expired.)

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Development, Mines and Main Roads) (2.40 p.m.): I felt sorry this morning for the Leader

of the Opposition when he moved the motion for the adjournment of the House. We all know of the fight that has been going on within his own ranks. We know that there are various groups in the party—the Duggan group and the Mann group, for instance, but the chief director of the party and those instructing the Leader of the Opposition and his party to move this motion come from the Trades and Labour Council at the Trades Hall. In listening to the Leader of the Opposition this morning I noticed that he centred his remarks round August, 1956. Even “Blind Freddie” would know that August is the best month of the year for employment because the meatworks are working, men are engaged in the production of sugar, the waterfront is busy, and there is almost full employment. As a matter of fact, since we have been the Government if we called for men in August to undertake various work, there would be no response. January is the bad month, particularly when it is a wet month as it was last year and this year. As the Leader of the Q.L.P. truthfully said January in North Queensland is a month we cannot control.

The various shire councils in Queensland have been dealt with most fairly. It is coincidental that the Leader of the Opposition occupied the portfolio I now hold, and I shall compare the allocations that he made during his time and mine. The hon. member for Ithaca said that we had built up funds to spend on a lot of jobs before the elections. Nothing is further from the truth. To be fair I must say that when I took over there was £411 or £419 in the Main Roads Funds, and in August the Government rushed to spend that money because it was a very dry year and the money allocated could be spent. Last year which was a wet year my department finished up with a surplus of £1,400,000.

Mr. Gair: You have not had a bad year.

Mr. EVANS: Last year was a bad year. Replying further to the hon. member for Ithaca let me say that demands were made for millions of pounds more than were available. Furthermore, the Federal Government—and I do not know why—which usually reimburses the Commonwealth Aid, Local Authority Roads Fund in August reimbursed it in June, something that has not happened before.

Mr. Davies: Why have they taken such a dislike to your Government?

Mr. EVANS: That is a matter for the hon. member to answer. My Government increased the grant to local authorities from £1,200,000, which was granted by the Government of the Leader of the Opposition to £1,800,000. We were not satisfied with the £450,000 increase that we received, and I say that I think we got a raw deal from the Commonwealth Government. I say that everywhere I go. Of that £450,000 the Department of Harbours and Marine got

£80,000, and local authorities got the balance, except £30,000. Was that not a fair deal for local authorities?

I find that local authorities are not playing the game. It may possibly have been caused by the extended wet season, but at the end of last year they still had an amount of £330,000 that had been given to them to spend. I know, of course, that at times it is impossible to get contractors for certain jobs. I have let out work on contract to a dangerous limit. When we had only £419 in the Treasury, I was not deterred from letting out work. When we were without money, I called on the Treasurer to meet the commitments.

I point out, too, that 40 per cent. of the roads maintenance tax is being returned to local authorities. The figures for the months mentioned are—

1959	Amount
February	£81,075
May	£85,050
August	£103,850
November	£115,325

Mr. Lloyd: And you have taken back the subsidies.

Mr. EVANS: We have done nothing of the kind.

We have heard a good deal about unemployment in January of each year. In January, 1957, there were 4,264 wages employees in the Main Roads Department. The figure at the end of January this year had increased almost to 5,000.

Mr. Hanlon: This is an election year.

Mr. EVANS: I am referring to last year. We have, of course, had increased allocations from the Federal Aid Roads Grant.

I shall refer now to the Mackay district, where there are quite a number of unemployed. Although Farleigh mill has undertaken an expenditure of £600,000 in the laying of tramlines, not one man is working on the job. It is too wet for them to work. The same position obtains at Plane Creek, where an expenditure of £350,000 is being incurred on laying tramlines.

The main case submitted by the Leader of the Opposition was based on the figures for August, 1956.

Mr. Aikens interjected.

Mr. Duggan: Isn't the improvement in Mackay caused by the money that you have been pumping into that district?

Mr. EVANS: I have not been pumping money into the Mackay district.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Mundingsburra and the Leader of the Opposition are interrupting far too frequently.

Mr. EVANS: I am trying to pick up the lag in the Mackay district that was created

by the Leader of the Opposition when he held my portfolio. He spent far too much round Brisbane.

Let me deal now with the Mines Department. We have bought a good deal of drilling plant and today are employing on drilling work 30 more men than when I took over the portfolio.

(Time expired.)

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) (2.50 p.m.): I rise to support the motion moved by my Leader and supported by his Deputy. I am surprised and astounded that the Minister for Labour and Industry, supported by the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads and by the hon. member for Nundah and the hon. member for Sherwood, has the temerity to stand in the Chamber and say there are practically no unemployed in Queensland. The statements of hon. members opposite show that they have no regard for the unemployment problem and no plan to present to the House for tackling it.

I was astounded to hear the hon. member for Sherwood say there are no unemployed in Brisbane and that an advertised vacancy for a janitor did not attract an applicant. Had he gone to the man in charge of the miscellaneous workers' bureau at the Treasury he would have found him any number of applicants. Recently there were vacancies for two waitresses in a city cafe and 100 girls applied.

Mr. Ewan: Because they knew you were there.

Mr. MANN: That shows the intelligence of the hon. member for Roma and the regard hon. members of the Country Party and the Government have for the unemployed. The position is deteriorating yet the hon. member can crack jokes about it just to raise a laugh. I can tell him that a leading hotel in Brisbane the other day advertised for a receptionist and 42 applied. Does the hon. member deny that? If he wants to know the name of the hotel I will tell him. At a place in the Valley four labourers were wanted and 72 applied, yet hon. members opposite say there are no unemployed today. According to the Federal Minister for Labour and National Service there are 2,154 unemployed registered in the city of Brisbane. Does the hon. member for Sherwood deny that? Does the Minister for Labour and Industry deny it?

Mr. Morris: Yes, of course I do.

Mr. MANN: And in Rockhampton there are 1,049. The Minister says he denies it. Here is the information contained in the Department of Labour and National Service News Release dated 9 p.m. on 18 January, 1960.

Mr. Morris: It does not say there is that number unemployed. It says they are drawing unemployment benefit. Why can't you read?

Mr. MANN: If the Minister is so stupid that he cannot understand it I will show it to him. It says there are 2,154 persons in Brisbane and 1,049 in Rockhampton.

Mr. Morris: What, unemployed?

Mr. MANN: Receiving unemployment benefit. There are 868 in the town of Mackay. Does the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads deny that? Does he suggest that the figures compiled by his fellow workers in Canberra are wrong? Of course they are not, and they are published for everyone to read. The Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads cannot deny that there are 868 registered unemployed receiving benefits in Mackay and 773 in Bundaberg.

Mr. Morris: Your figures are out-of-date.

Mr. MANN: Yes. They might even be worse.

Mr. Morris: They are very much better.

Mr. MANN: I believe I am being conservative.

Mr. Herbert: That will be the day.

Mr. Morris: I am conservative about you.

Mr. MANN: In Townsville there are 520 drawing the benefit and so it goes right through the State. Dalby has its percentage of unemployed. For hon. members opposite, and particularly the hon. member for Sherwood, who is regarded as being one of the bright boys of the Liberal Party, to say that there are no unemployed in the community is all wrong.

Mr. Richter: Are those figures for the towns or for the districts?

Mr. MANN: For the districts, of course. Surely the hon. member does not think they are only for the towns and that there are no registered unemployed in the surrounding districts!

Mr. Richter: It covers a pretty big district.

Mr. MANN: All the districts are big; the whole of Queensland is big and there are thousands of unemployed in Queensland today. According to the grapevine, if the Government get back at the next elections—which I seriously doubt—the hon. member will be a keen applicant for Cabinet rank. He cannot laugh this off. He cannot make a joke of the unemployed in our midst today. It is no use his making a joke or laughing about it because it is a serious matter, and it will get worse.

Mr. Herbert: Yes, you will be unemployed in a few months.

Mr. MANN: If the hon. member thinks I will be unemployed politically I challenge him now to leave his home at Sherwood and come to Brisbane to contest the seat.

Mr. Herbert: Reverse the order and I will take you on.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the hon. member for Brisbane be allowed to make his speech.

Mr. MANN: It is quite evident that hon. members opposite are treating this matter with levity. Had they any regard at all for the unemployed man and woman in the community and the inflationary trend they would be very serious in their approach to this matter instead of making a joke and laughing about it. They would realise that their Government have failed to grapple with the unemployment problem.

We of the Australian Labour Party consider that the Government are patterning themselves on the Menzies Government. They believe that wages should be reduced and that unemployment should be created so that they can put an end to the inflationary spiral. On the other hand, we believe that the Government should endeavour to put forth a concrete suggestion to find work for the unemployed. It is no use hon. members opposite saying that seasonal work is responsible for all the unemployment in Queensland today. I want to be fair. The Treasurer is nodding his head. He realises the difficult position. After three years of office his Government are bankrupt, and he knows it. They are in these sad financial straits despite the fact that they have received more consideration from the Menzies Government than the Labour Government ever did when the hon. member for South Brisbane was Premier.

Mr. Gair: We had the Commonwealth Government on our back and you destroyed the Labour Government.

Mr. MANN: We did not destroy any Labour Government. I want to deny that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I point out that this is not the time to debate that subject. I appeal to the hon. member for Brisbane not to reply to such statements.

Mr. MANN: They were not the Australian Labour Party Government when they were defeated, but the Queensland Labour Party Government.

The occupants of the front benches on the Government side are men of considerable business knowledge. Most of them have been directors of banks and private concerns, men of commercial knowledge and understanding. Applying their commercial training and knowledge to the affairs of State is entirely different from applying it to the running of a private concern for profit. Let hon. members look at the statistics to see the number of people in the community who are in financial difficulty. Hundreds of workers are in financial trouble over their homes.

(Time expired.)

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo—Treasurer and Minister for Housing) (3 p.m.): I have only 10 minutes to speak. Let me make it perfectly clear we do not say there is no unemployment problem and nothing to be concerned about. On the contrary, I propose to demonstrate the way in which repeatedly we have shown consistent regard for the problem and pursued policies in dealing with the problems which have been attacked by hon. members opposite. What did we hear from the last two speakers on the Opposition benches. The hon. member for Ithaca claimed that the Government withheld money for a pre-election splurge, and the hon. member who just resumed his seat said that we had exceeded the whole of our resources. Who is right? They cannot both be right. Each gives the lie to the other.

Mr. Mann: Not at all.

Mr. HILEY: Let me remind hon. members of what took place just before Christmas. What was the line that hon. members opposite took against the Government during the last financial year? They attacked us for over-spending. They wanted us to put men off and reduce employment.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. HILEY: Hon. members attacked us for using up the cash resources of the State.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. HILEY: Of course you did. We used them up to provide the maximum employment within our capacity. It was our hope this year that we would balance the Budget; but we will not balance the Budget this year.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. HILEY: Hear the cries of delight. Hon. members opposite are too stupid to realise that in yelling incessantly for a balanced Budget they are asking us to employ fewer people. This Government could balance this year's Budget, but this Government will not balance this year's Budget because they refuse to lay men off.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! These unseemly interjections must cease forthwith. I will deal with any hon. member who consistently interjects.

Mr. HILEY: Did hon. members hear any attack by the Opposition on the Government for succeeding where they had so lamentably failed? Our efforts to raise the full debenture allocation in this State were so successful that the local authorities will spend an extra £5,000,000. We succeeded in drawing that money into them. If hon. members opposite are honest in politics they will acknowledge that.

Let us see how our policies have worked out. Let us see what we have been doing in our approach to the housing situation.

During the last year that our opponents were in office the number of houses completed was 7,216, and in the first year that we were in office—before we were able to see all the fruits of our policy—we improved that slightly to 7,356; and last year we improved it to 8,208. For the half-year ended 31 December we have improved it tremendously—to 4,620. I do not need to tell hon. members of the contribution that the building industry makes to the employment situation—from the forests to the sawmills, the cement workers, brickworkers, carriers, painters, and finishing trades. The labour content of a dwelling is one of the most significant contributions to the provision of labour. In all this the Government can demonstrate they have organised and materially improved matters. When it comes to the building of flats there is a multiplication of what was done in housing. In the last year of Labour in office 240 flats were built, and in our first year of office we went to 360, and in our second year almost 200 per cent. further, reaching a figure of 692. For the period ended December we increased it to four times Labour's pace—480 flats in six months, compared with 240 in Labour's last year of office.

Mr. Walsh: Are those all out of Government funds?

Mr. HILEY: On the contrary. We have so skillfully organised money that hon. members opposite were too blind and stupid to see that we have succeeded in getting much greater expenditure. I am glad the hon. member raises the point. I am pleased that hon. members opposite parade their own shame. They were too blind to take advantage of the money available to co-operative housing societies. Under the legislation introduced by the Government no less a sum than £2,050,000 has been guaranteed, but if the Labour Government had remained in office not one penny of that money would have been available.

In several directions we have provided work of an order quite significant compared to the effort of our predecessors. Take the works on our waterfront to which the Minister for Mines has referred. Under the Commonwealth Aid Marine Works Fund Labour's greatest expenditure for three years was in 1956-1957 when they spent the sum of £9,653. In our first year of office we more than trebled that figure to £29,952; in our second year we spent ten times their rate, £92,454, and in our Budget this year we will spend 20 times the amount spent by the Labour Government, £204,500. Up and down the coast in small ports and in access places work has been provided. The results of that expenditure are visible.

In the last year that the Labour Government were in office they spent on all the major ports and harbours £1,110,000. In our first year of office we nearly trebled that expenditure to £2,962,000; in the next year

the expenditure was 3½ times the Labour Government's rate, the amount being £3,639,000.

Mr. JESSON: On bulk loading of sugar.

Mr. HILEY: That is so, and the expenditure has slackened this year to £1,915,000, which is still virtually double the amount the Labour Government spent in their last year of office. In this direction also valuable employment has been provided right up and down the coast.

I repeat what I said on the occasion of introducing the Budget that if this Government have a fault it is that they spend until it hurts. We have not been timid in the maintenance of activity through governmental sources, nor have we been idle, and this is evidenced in the field of housing, in getting supporting assistance to make possible a greater total effort.

I have sat in Cabinet for three years. Regard for the problem of unemployment is the theme constantly on the lips of my Cabinet colleagues. If we had been silent on that issue we would have produced balanced Budgets, but as we saw the need for it we followed a course we are not happy about following, of spending beyond our resources and of exhausting the reserves that have been tucked away so that the employment capacity of the community would not be cut down.

That is our performance, that is our policy and the Government are proud of it.

Mr. WALSH (Bundaberg) (3.9 p.m.): I should be tempted to embark on a financial discourse if I took the remarks of the Treasurer seriously. A complete answer to his statements that in any way reflect on the Labour Government prior to their defeat in 1957 is provided by the fact that debates of the nature taking place this afternoon and that have taken place on two previous occasions were not known in the days of Labour Governments. We had no debates of this nature on the subject of unemployment in this State.

Mr. HILEY: Hon. members opposite said we did.

Mr. WALSH: I am not going to distort or mislead hon. members, but what the Leader of the Q.L.P. said was that on every occasion when the Labour Government put forward proposals for the expenditure of money the Opposition attacked the Government on it. There is the answer to the Treasurer. There were no debates of this nature up until the time the Labour Government were defeated. What better answer do we want to the statements made by the Minister for Labour and Industry, the Treasurer and other members opposite than that. One must ask oneself the question: is there in fact unemployment in the State? Figures reveal that there is and I am sure neither the Treasurer nor the Minister for Labour and Industry will deny it. No matter what calculations are made

or what formula is used there has been a steady increase in unemployment in the State since the present Government took office. The documents are here for all to see. The position under this Government is worse than under any Government since the days of the depression. The next question is whether the Government are doing anything about unemployment. A further question would be, who is responsible for it? I do not place the responsibility for unemployment entirely on the shoulders of the Government. Private enterprise has a responsibility also. I remind hon. members that the Queensland Labour Party drew attention to this two years ago when it moved a motion of no confidence in the Government and got little support. Despite the fact that the Government have had increased funds as the Treasurer and the Minister for Development, Mines and Main Roads admit the position is still deteriorating. But the worst has yet to come. The Treasurer knows that it will not be a matter of attempting to keep a balanced budget. He will bring down a budget for a probable deficit of £2,500,000 or £3,000,000. He has no reserves to put his hands on as his Government had on a previous occasion. What planning to relieve unemployment are the Government doing? I noticed a report in the Bundaberg Press only the other day that the hospital board contemplate works to cost £178,000. The board has asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs for approval to draw plans and specifications for this work to start next January, 10 months away. The board already has £85,000 of the amount raised, but the board has had no approval from the department or the Government. We have been told that there are over 700-odd unemployed in Bundaberg.

Dr. Noble: There are a lot of old buildings that should not be there.

Mr. WALSH: To say that other electorates want attention does not answer my question. The board wants the right to proceed with the drawing of plans and specifications. It is not being allowed to go on with the work.

The Government might boast of the number of men in Government employ, but there are no more in Government employ today than under Labour Governments, having regard to increased population. The Bundaberg Foundry have had to dismiss over 100 men since the Government came into power. The management say that they cannot get their share of the work offering. At Napier's in Dalby in 1957 there were 180 men unemployed: in 1958 the company dismissed 40 men, in 1959 a further 40 and in 1960 it was advised by the department that no further work would be farmed out to it to keep its rail section going. The previous Government's policy of decentralisation is not being encouraged. The Minister for Labour and Industry might boast about the increase in the number of factories since his Government attained office, but I want to

know what they are doing and where they are situated. Most of them are in Brisbane, and are of no benefit to the seasonal workers and the unemployed in Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Maryborough, and other places where there is serious unemployment.

What plans have the Government to combat unemployment? I have said before—and I say it again—that, whether it be due to the Government's failure to handle their finances properly, or to the lack of a fair spin from the Federal Government, the fact remains that the Government can present no real plan to deal with the monster of unemployment, which has been growing in size ever since they attained power. Why was there stability of employment under the Labour Government, and why has that stability deteriorated so rapidly with all the money that the Treasurer says the Government have spent? I shudder to think what the position would have been if the Treasurer had not got the additional handouts for cyclone relief, the Main Roads Fund, tax reimbursements, and additional loan funds for local authorities, amounting to between £5,000,000 and £7,000,000.

With all the additional money that they have received, the Government must admit that the percentage of unemployment is increasing. No Government like to see people looking for work, particularly men with families to support, but we can accuse the Government of a lack of planning, both in the handling of finances and the undertaking of works projects. Many proposals that would involve the employment of at least half a dozen men here and there have been put up to the Government. Surely they have at their disposal the means to visit these places in an effort to relieve the distress caused by unemployment?

I am not saying that the Government are solely to blame in this matter. Private enterprise, too, has some responsibility. Of course, if private enterprise is continually frustrated because of the Menzies Government's financial policy, it has some reason for its failure to relieve unemployment. If the Government are returned to office, irrespective of what they might do at the present time, their plan after the election will be one of wholesale dismissals.

(Time expired.)

Mr. ROBERTS (Whitsunday) (3.18 p.m.): It has been forcibly brought to my notice more than ever today—and I am sure to the notice of everyone in Queensland—that there is an unholy alliance between the Australian Labour Party and the Communist Party.

Mr. DAVIES: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member has said that there is an alliance between the Australian Labour Party and the Communist Party. That statement is objectionable to members of the Australian Labour Party, and I ask for a withdrawal.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There was no apology. There was a statement in refutation. The hon. member will accept the statement, not an apology.

Mr. ROBERTS: I could not quite catch what the hon. member said. I thought he was due to make an apology, and that is why I said I accepted his apology.

Mr. DAVIES: I rise to a point of order. There has been no withdrawal of the hon. member's statement.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Maryborough is under a misapprehension. I point out that the hon. member for Whitsunday automatically accepts his statement. There is no need for the hon. member specifically to say, "I accept the denial." It is accepted automatically. If the hon. member for Whitsunday indicates clearly by his subsequent remarks that he has not, in fact, accepted the statement of the hon. member for Maryborough, I shall deal with him.

Mr. ROBERTS: It is a well-known and established fact throughout the world that the only places where Communism has secured a footing are those countries in which misery, hunger, unhappiness, trouble, distress and kindred conditions prevail. Here, too, the filthy doctrine of the communists seeks to thrive on the distress and misery of the people.

Today the members of the A.L.P. Opposition are making a big song about unemployment. There is not the slightest shadow of doubt that there is unemployment in the country. We are sorry that it is so but there has always been unemployment. Here we have a bereft Opposition, without doubt the weakest Opposition that has ever sat in the Chamber. Many members of Parliament who have gone long before us would be ashamed of them. Here they are bereft of any thought and any deed, trying to capitalise on the misfortunes of the unemployed.

The hon. member for Kedron said something to the effect that we as a Government did not protest to the Federal Government when contracts for some big projects were being let to Japan or other countries. Is his memory so short that he forgets that, during the term of the previous Government, of which he was a member and in which the present Leader of the Opposition was the Minister for Transport, the contract for the Indooroopilly Bridge was let to an Italian firm?

Mr. Aikens: Don't forget the Houghton Bridge.

Mr. ROBERTS: That is so, the Houghton, too.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. ROBERTS: The hon. member has been in a mirror if he is talking about

people being dumb. We are talking about unemployment and, without the slightest shadow of doubt, Opposition members will be unemployed after the elections and I fear for the hon. member for Maryborough. He has slipped to such an extent that, should it be necessary for him to apply to re-enter the Department of Education, I am afraid there would not be a vacancy for him.

When we took over the Treasury benches we did not forget the 700 railway men who were to be sacked; they were foremost in our minds. Though the present Leader of the Opposition was not the Minister responsible at the time, my information is that that thought had been there on paper long before it was to be carried out.

I have here the Monthly Review of Business Statistics prepared by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Canberra, dated November, 1959. It is all right for hon. members opposite to talk about unemployment today, but let us go back a little. This gives the average monthly figure of unemployment sickness, and special benefits, for the years from 1949-1950 to 1958-1959. Here are the figures from 1952-1953 onwards—

1952-1953	4,281
1953-1954	3,169
1954-1955	1,408
1955-1956	1,511
1956-1957	2,343
1957-1958	5,588
1958-1959	4,883

We took office in August, 1957, and without doubt the figures for 1957-1958 represent a legacy left to us by the previous Labour Government. A dissection of the figures for 1959-1960 shows the following:—

July	3,008
August	2,608
September	2,902
October	3,121
November	4,502

Page 7 of the same publication gives details of wage- and salary-earners in civilian occupation. Expressed in terms of thousands the figures for males are as follows:—

June, 1956	282.4
June, 1957	282.6
June, 1958	282.8

At the present time the figure is 285.8. The figures for females are as follows:—

June, 1956	93.7
June, 1957	95.8
June, 1958	95.9

At the present time the figure is 98.9. The total for all persons at June, 1957, was 378.4 whereas the present figure is 384.7.

On numerous occasions we heard hon. members opposite say that we were not able to hold people in Queensland. In the Federal Parliament the Opposition have said that immigrants were not prepared to stay in Queensland. If that is so how have we increased the employment that I have just

referred to? We have been taking up the lag left to us by the previous Government. In the last three years we have fulfilled our loan obligations in every way. People in the South have made inquiries about Queensland. There has been an influx of southerners into this land of plenty.

(Time expired.)

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (3.29 p.m.): Unemployment is a tragedy, not only because it affects the worker but because it mainly affects the women and children. Consequently I deprecate any attempt by anybody to treat unemployment as a joke or to regard it as a party political propaganda instrument. In North Queensland, particularly round Townsville, we have a large army of unemployed. They are the usual men on seasonal unemployment but unfortunately this year they have been unemployed longer than they were in previous years. Last year we had a relatively short meat season and because of circumstances known to every hon. member we had a short sugar season, too. Consequently, our number of unemployed although perhaps not greater than in previous years will be out of work for a longer period. That affects the women and children. I regret very much that during the whole of this debate—except for perhaps a passing reference by the hon. member for Bundaberg—there has not been one constructive suggestion as to how the problem should be tackled. The Opposition, in launching this motion, are concerned—as everyone knows—only in trying to get as much political propaganda as possible out of the unfortunate plight of the unemployed. I have something to say to the Minister concerning a practice in the building industry. We know that employers pick up a regular number of apprentices every year. We find in North Queensland—and this may apply in the South, for all I know—that big home-building concerns are giving out special contracts for labour only, and these are picked up by groups of carpenters who have to work at top speed in order to make a profit, consequently they cannot employ apprentices even if they wanted to do so.

Mr. Power: It is a breach of the law.

Mr. AIKENS: If it is then it is rampant in North Queensland today. These building contracts are let out by big business houses and building firms and the carpenters form themselves into groups and take up the contracts. In a few years' time, if that system continues, there will be no apprentices in the building trade in North Queensland. I bring this to the notice of the Minister for Labour in order that he may take such steps as are necessary to remedy the position.

Mr. Morris: I took action on a similar case two days ago.

Mr. AIKENS: I hope that the hon. gentleman's action is as sudden and effective as the action that the Minister for Transport is talking about border-hoppers.

Mr. Morris: I do not want a vague statement; I want the name of the firm.

Mr. AIKENS: I will give the hon. gentleman the names of the firms—two of the biggest building firms in Townsville.

When a motion comes before the House I ask myself whether I should support it, or oppose it, or regard the matter with lofty disdain. When this motion was brought before the House—that the House do now adjourn—obviously no-one could seriously vote for it on that basis because if that were carried the House would adjourn and nothing more would be done today.

Mr. Thackeray interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: I do not come down here to loaf and bludge like some members of the A.L.P., who will be unemployed after the next election. Let me suggest in all seriousness that there are many A.L.P. members who are almost permanently unemployed, if we can judge by their attendance at the House and their attendance in the Chamber and the contributions that they do not make but should make to a particular debate. We all came down here with our teeth sharpened expecting to have a debate on the Bill of Rights and the Abattoirs Bill. The Government withdrew the Bill of Rights because they realised at the last moment fortunately that it was not a Bill of Rights but a Bill of Straight Lefts and Uppercuts. (Laughter.) At least they were sensible in that respect. Then they withdrew the Abattoirs Bill and the House was left in a state of legislative doldrums. The journalist friend of the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. David Berry, made a suggestion in the "Sunday-Mail" to the A.L.P. to save its face by bringing down this Resolution. The Leader of the Opposition ran to Mr. David Berry during the recent Q.C.E. meeting and got him to publish an article in "The Sunday Mail" stating that there was a left-wing ticket being circulated and a lot of his election nominees had been defeated. Dave Berry obliged the Leader of the Opposition. He published that article on the Sunday, right in the middle of the Q.C.E. meeting selecting A.L.P. candidates. It scared many of the left-wing delegates into Duggan's corner.

Mr. Mann interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: And you were the man who suffered.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: He was king of the castle until the Dave Berry article appeared on the Sunday. He was king with the Trades Hall left-wingers, but on the Monday he and some of his mates were relegated to the political dust-bin.

This motion was moved because the Australian Labour Party, having neither the ability, the political nous nor the guts to

take advantage of the fact that the Government have foolishly opened a session of Parliament on the eve of an election, saw in Dave Berry's article on Sunday the opportunity to get a little bit of cheap political propaganda. I am not going to become embroiled in any cheap political propaganda at the expense of the wives and children of the unemployed. Let there be no mistake about it: I am seriously concerned about unemployment and I apply myself to the problem every day. The people of Townsville, the workers of Townsville and district, know it, because they can see me every day of every week of every year among them, unlike the A.L.P. nominee who is going to run against me in this campaign and who used to spend all his time on the South Coast, where he and the hon. member for Hinchinbrook were known as King Farouk and Queen Narriman. They know me and know I am there. They know that I uphold their principles strictly. Consequently, when the Minister for Labour and Industry called a conference in Townsville recently, to grapple with the unemployment problem, I was the only Labour member of Parliament at that conference. I ask the Minister for Labour and Industry, "Is that not so?"

Mr. Morris: Yes.

Mr. AIKENS: Consequently the workers and people of Townsville hold me in high regard and at least they know I am honest and sincere in everything I do.

Let us look at the unemployment position. I refused to be used in a political propaganda stunt. I challenged the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on the statement he made when the Treasurer was introducing his budget last year. The Treasurer has referred to it: it is indelibly imprinted in "Hansard." When the Treasurer in the year before last was introducing his Budget which provided for a deficit of £1,000,000 and some odd hundreds of thousands of pounds, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition challenged him in these terms, "Why don't you bring down a balanced budget?" I said, and it is printed in "Hansard," "Don't you think it is better to have a big deficit than an army of unemployed?"

Mr. LLOYD: I rise to a point of order. I refuse to accept that. I challenge the hon. member for Mundingburra to produce the "Hansard" in which it appears.

Mr. AIKENS: I will. By way of interjection I said, "Do you not think it better for the Treasurer to budget for a big deficit than to have an army of unemployed?" and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition squirmed around that, just as the Leader of the Opposition squirmed around the Trades Hall boys in the last session of the recent Labour-in-Politics Convention.

Let the Leader of the Opposition go up to Townsville, which is a big railway centre, and try to convince the railwaymen that he is interested in their welfare. If we had

had a government in this State for the last three years led by the Leader of the Opposition and he had pursued the policy he pursued for years as Minister for Transport, the borderhoppers of this State would be running all over the State, uncontrolled, and hundreds of railwaymen would have been walking the streets out of jobs. Locomotives and rolling stock and everything else would be laid up. At least the railwaymen know that the present Minister for Transport is trying to protect their jobs against the illegal and unlawful borderhoppers who were the political blood brothers of the Opposition.

Mr. DUGGAN (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (3.39 p.m.), in reply: This has been one of the most extraordinary debates in this Parliament for some time. I shall deal first with the hon. member for Mundingburra—very briefly, because he does not merit very much attention.

We have heard from him a very impassioned plea that something should be done for the unemployed, and then, because he thinks this action has been taken by the Opposition to secure some political advantage he states that he proposes to walk out. After making that declaration he then made an impassioned plea that the work of the present Liberal Minister for Transport should be recognised by the people of Townsville.

Mr. Aikens: It will be by the railwaymen of Townsville.

Mr. DUGGAN: It is a remarkable thing that the Liberal organisation in this State, which everyone recognises is most efficiently run, has not selected a Liberal opponent against the hon. member for Mundingburra.

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. I draw the attention of the House to the fact that the Communist Party has not selected an opponent against the Leader of the Opposition. (Laughter.)

Mr. DUGGAN: It is an extraordinary thing that such a comment has raised such interest amongst hon. members opposite. By the same token might I say that I know of no Communist candidate having been selected to oppose the hon. member for Mundingburra. He will eventually reach the position when he will not get any endorsement at all because he has been rejected by the Communist Party, the A.L.P., the Q.L.P., and the North Queensland Labour Party.

Honourable Members interjecting—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I appeal to hon. members to give the Leader of the Opposition the opportunity of being heard as he has only 10 minutes in which to reply.

Mr. DUGGAN: An attempt has been made to ridicule the form of this motion. Despite the claptrap and the histrionics of the hon. member who suffers from verbal

diarrhoea, there is no opportunity given to me nor to any hon. member of this House—

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. It may be possible that I suffer from verbal diarrhoea, but I do not suffer from intellectual constipation.

Mr. DUGGAN: There is no other procedure known to me whereby action can be taken to ventilate such a matter of public importance. The Standing Orders affords the Opposition the opportunity of taking this action. Any student of parliamentary procedure will know that there is no course open to the Opposition other than the one elected to be taken by the Opposition on this occasion. Despite the fact that we have had occasion to differ with the Q.L.P., I say that I am pleased indeed that the two responsible hon. members who have spoken have identified themselves very closely and intimately with this particular matter because they realise, as all sensible people realise, it is a question that should not be made a political plaything and one that should not be dismissed as being hysterical nonsense. The Deputy Premier spoke for 15 minutes and he was followed by the Minister for Development, Mines and Main Roads, who was later followed by no less a person than the Treasurer himself. They were three senior leading and influential members of the Cabinet, and they were followed in turn by one who was discarded for appointment to Cabinet and who is now trying to rehabilitate himself and two other prominent debaters from the back benches. Those are the gentlemen who were thrown into the arena to discuss this matter which was described as hysterical nonsense.

I repeat again that there is no document more authoritative than the one we have consistently used and not departed from. We on this side quoted the figures released by the Minister for Labour and National Service at Canberra. I was challenged for using January figures, but let me refer to the first six months up to June last year and include January, February, March, April, May and June and I will show that the percentage of unemployment in Queensland was higher than in any other State.

Mr. Morris: It is not true and you know it.

Mr. DUGGAN: The figures are here. The Deputy Premier had the temerity to say that the figures I used as to factories in this State were untrue, but I remind him that they were taken from the report of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Shops for the year ended 30 June, 1959, which was tabled by the Minister himself. He then said that the figures were inaccurate and untrue. If that is so, as a Minister of the Crown he should be indicted for giving us misleading information.

Mr. MORRIS: I rise to a point of order. I told the Leader of the Opposition that

the figures he was using were a year old. I did not say they were wrong. I think he knew they were a year old and used them deliberately.

Mr. DUGGAN: Let us forget all about the plethora of figures that have been presented to us—whether they be for January, February, March, or April—and deal with the official organ of the Country Party—"The Courier-Mail"—which, on Saturday, 13 February published a report of the Premier's Conference in Canberra, and quoted the Queensland Premier as saying—

"The margins decision had accentuated an unemployment position in Queensland, which was already the worst of the six States."

It is very significant that although the Premier, for whom I have a very high personal regard, made that statement in Canberra, he did not participate in today's debate.

"The Courier-Mail" report goes on to say—

"A new bone was thrown into the ring of the Council debate by Mr. Nicklin when he claimed that the Commonwealth's action on postal charges was a major cause, with the margins decision, of the present financial position."

The Treasurer says that we on this side of the House take some delight in the fact that unemployment in Queensland is serious. Our whole desire is to focus public attention on the fact that most of the Government's election promises have been repudiated. We must accept every opportunity to expose to the public the fact that those promises have been repudiated, and that there has been a deterioration in employment rather than an improvement. The columns of the Press prove conclusively that, during the whole of the post-war period, there has never been more difficulty than this year in placing in employment boys and girls who have passed the Senior and Junior public examinations. Additional evidence of that has been heard from head-teachers of schools and the various Government employment agencies. Employers could exercise more discrimination this year in making appointments because they had a much larger field than previously from which to select employees. In every direction there is evidence of serious unemployment in the community.

One hon. member charged us with trying to take advantage of the serious unemployment in Queensland as a means of being returned as the Government. We make no apology for that. It is our job as an Opposition to expose the rottenness and barrenness of Government policy, and to try to convince the people that we should be installed as the Government in 1960. As soon as an Opposition feels that it has no job to do in attacking the Government, it should cease to operate. As Leader of the A.L.P. in Queensland, I make no apology

for what we have done. Of course we want to get back as the Government, and I am quite certain that that will happen.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your kindness in agreeing to implement the machinery of the Standing Orders for the purpose of enabling the Opposition to ventilate a matter of very great public importance. No matter what yardstick may be chosen, in every instance we have been able to substantiate our case that there has been a serious and alarming deterioration in employment in this State, which calls for a motion of censure on the Government.

Question—That the House do now adjourn—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 27.

Mr. Adair	Mr. Hilton
„ Baxter	„ Houston
„ Burrows	„ Jesson
„ Byrne	„ Jones, A.
„ Clark	„ Lloyd
„ Davies	„ Mann
„ Davis	„ Marsden
„ Diplock	„ Power
„ Donald	„ Smith, A. J.
„ Dufficy	„ Walsh
„ Duggan	
„ Foley	<i>Tellers:</i>
„ Gair	Mr. Thackeray
„ Gardner	„ Wallace
„ Hanlon	

NOES, 38.

Mr. Anderson	Mr. Madsen
„ Beardmore	„ Morris
„ Bjelke-Petersen	„ Müller
„ Chalk	„ Munro
„ Coburn	„ Nicklin
„ Connolly	Dr. Noble
„ Dewar	Mr. Pizzey
„ Evans	„ Rae
„ Ewan	„ Ramsden
„ Gilmore	„ Richter
„ Harrison	„ Roberts
„ Hart	„ Smith, P. R.
„ Heading	„ Taylor
„ Herbert	„ Tooth
„ Hewitt	„ Windsor
„ Hiley	„ Wordsworth
„ Hooper	<i>Tellers:</i>
„ Jones, V. E.	Mr. Hodges
„ Knox	„ Low
„ Lonergan	

PAIRS

Mr. Gunn	Mr. Gaven
„ Keyatta	„ Ahearn
„ Graham	„ Nicholson
„ McCathie	„ Sparkes

Resolved in the negative.

ANZAC COTTAGES AND T.B. HOMES 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 (3.58 p.m.): I move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to enable the Public Curator of Queensland to sell for an estate in fee-simple certain lands held by him in trust as sites respectively for an Anzac Cottage or a home for an ex-soldier or an ex-sailor affected with tuberculosis.”

The background to the Bill is a very interesting history. The purpose of the Bill is to enable the Public Curator of Queensland, who is the trustee of the Anzac Cottages and T.B. Homes Trust, to sell surplus land appurtenant to any cottage or home, or to sell in certain circumstances the land and any cottage or home erected thereon free of the trust provisions so as to have available funds for the maintenance and repair of other cottages or homes.

There are 50 Anzac Cottages in all, 38 in Brisbane and the remainder in country centres. Of the 26 T.B. homes, 22 are in Brisbane, one in Ipswich, and three in Stanthorpe.

The Anzac Cottages were originally administered by the Anzac Cottages Committee of the Queensland War Council. The Queensland War Council was established by Order in Council dated 25 September, 1915, and comprised the Premier of the day (the Hon. T. J. Ryan, M.L.A.) and four other Cabinet Ministers including the Secretary for Public Lands, the Mayors of North and South Brisbane, the Commissioner for Railways, the presidents of the Chambers of Commerce and Manufactures, and the Director of Labour.

The objects of the Anzac Cottages Committee were:—To acquire suitable areas of land, whether by gift, purchase, or otherwise, and to make arrangements for the erection thereon of cottages to be occupied by homeless widows or other female dependants or descendants of persons who had enlisted in Queensland for military or naval service with His Majesty's Forces in the 1914-1918 war, and who died while in such service, and to obtain gifts of money and goods for this purpose. The rules of the committee also provided that if, on the termination by death, or for any other cause, of any tenant's occupancy of an Anzac cottage, if no member of the class of person previously mentioned applied the cottage could be re-let to any person for such period and on such terms as the trustee thought fit.

The Anzac Cottage Committee was required by its rules to cause all lands acquired by it for the erection of cottages to be vested in the Public Curator upon trust in perpetuity, to hold and administer subject to the rules. The rent of the cottages was fixed at the sum of 1s. 6d. per week, plus rates. All moneys received as rent are paid into a fund administered by the Public Curator for the maintenance in good order and repair of the cottages, and for the payment of all fire insurance premiums thereon, but not on any furniture therein.

The T.B. homes scheme was set up by the Queensland War Council in 1924, and the Public Curator was requested to act as trustee. The homes were to be occupied by Queensland returned sailors and soldiers suffering from tuberculosis, subject to the payment of a weekly rental based on a minimum flat rate of 8s. per week inclusive of insurance and rates. In the event of the death of the

occupant ex-soldier or ex-sailor his widow and family were to be allowed to remain in occupation of the home during the pleasure of the trustee. The Queensland War Council was terminated by Order in Council on 3 November, 1932, and the Public Curator assumed full control of both trusts. With the passage of time, some cottages and homes are in urgent need of repair. Others are in sewerage areas in the Greater Brisbane area. Owing to the small weekly rental there are no funds available to effect repairs or install sewerage. The Public Curator as trustee has, therefore, sought power of sale to enable him to dispose of cottages or homes which no eligible person is available to occupy, or to sell any cottage or home to raise moneys to repair other homes or cottages. The power of sale sought also includes the sale of surplus lands appurtenant to the cottages or homes. The procedure adopted in respect of any land purchased or given to the trustees for the erection of cottages or homes was for the land to be surrendered to the Crown and a deed of grant in trust under section 180 of the Land Acts to be issued to the Public Curator as trustee, as a site for an Anzac cottage or T.B. home, as the case may be, and for no other purpose whatsoever.

It is necessary, therefore, to obtain the approval of this House, in principle, to the granting of a power of sale of the land comprised in these deeds of grant in trust, before any of such land may be sold, freed and discharged of the relevant trust provisions.

The Bill is being introduced only after the Public Curator has assured himself that there is no other means of financing repairs or installing sewerage. The number of eligible persons available to occupy Anzac cottages is decreasing, and in order to assure the comfort of those remaining it is essential that the power of sale be granted so that funds may be available. The decision as to whether any particular cottage or home should be sold is not left with the Public Curator. Under the provisions of the Bill, hon. members will note, that the Public Curator has to satisfy the Governor in Council as to the necessity for the sale of any particular home or cottage and he has to obtain the approval of the Governor in Council for such sale. The Bill further provides that the net proceeds of such sales must be placed in special maintenance funds and used solely for repair and maintenance of other cottages or homes.

I commend the measure to hon. members as a very worthy one, and one which will ensure improved housing accommodation for dependants and descendants of some of those who made the supreme sacrifice in World War I., and for ex-sailors and ex-soldiers suffering from tuberculosis.

Mr. Duggan: Are the rentals still 8s. a week, or have they been increased?

Mr. MULLER: Rentals are not being discussed at the moment. When the scheme was launched after 1914 the rent was fixed at 18d. a week, and I have no knowledge of

an increase. As a matter of fact I know the rent has not been increased. The T.B. homes were rented at 8s. a week, but they carried rates too. Again the rental was low, but I think the main point is that the need for these cottages has almost disappeared. I commend the idea of the War Council and the committeemen whose names have been mentioned on their action after the first war in making provision for war widows. The rental of 18d., of course, was a nominal one, and accrued rents would not cover repair of those places. As years went by the need for T.B. homes became less, but no provision was made to raise extra money. The Public Curator now finds that he has a number of unused homes on his hands with no power to sell any of them and no fund from which he can draw to maintain or repair them.

It may seem strange that the Bill is being introduced by the Minister for Public Lands, but from the explanation I have given hon. members will realise that, while the Public Curator may have some power, the main point is the land on which they are erected, and the land will have to be sold.

We are not giving the Public Curator a completely free hand to do as he wishes, but, whenever he thinks in the interests of the Crown and the people it is desirable to dispose of some of the homes, he will submit his proposal to Cabinet, and the Governor in Council will have power to permit the sale.

The homes and cottages have a very interesting history. They served a very desirable purpose. It seems unusual to have a rental of 18d. a week, unless we have regard to the circumstances and the value of money in the years that followed World War I. The position is very much different now from the position in those years. The homes were not mansions, but they were a home and shelter for widows and served a very useful purpose.

I am quite sure hon. members will support the measure as a worthy one. It gives the Public Curator power to cater for those who still require such homes.

Mr. DUGGAN (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (4.10 p.m.): I do not think that such a Bill as this calls for criticism from the Opposition. These homes were used extensively after World War I., but Government assistance has been provided in recent years for the treatment of those suffering from the unfortunate disease of tuberculosis. Those who served this country well in times of war are entitled to have every sympathetic consideration extended to their families. The cottages were made available at a low rental. It is a wise provision that the relatives of the soldiers can continue to live in these homes at the pleasure of the Trust at a rental determined by the Trust.

Apparently the Public Curator of Queensland has no fund upon which he can call to

restore these cottages to modern-day requirements. The cottages for which there is no available person to occupy them will be sold to raise money for the repair of other homes or cottages. The question arises as to what will happen in two or three years' time when these funds are reasonably exhausted.

Mr. Nicklin: The number of homes will become fewer and fewer.

Mr. DUGGAN: I appreciate that. The Public Curator will be selling more and more homes. It is a sensible provision to enable the Public Curator who has no funds for the purpose to meet the cost of bringing them up to a better standard of repair.

There is no occasion to criticise the Bill. We approve of it and trust that it will achieve the results that the Minister expects.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona) (4.14 p.m.): I have some knowledge of these buildings. From information I received from the Public Curator when I was Attorney-General these cottages erected on land donated for the purpose got into a bad state of repair as years went by. The rent for them is insufficient to keep them in the standard required, and many got into a dilapidated condition. The Public Curator discussed the matter with me. It was not the function or the responsibility of the Government to find the money required and we suggested that the Commonwealth Government might contribute towards the repair of buildings erected by the Patriotic Fund. The number of people eligible to occupy these homes is becoming fewer. It does not require a man with a first-class mathematical brain to understand that the rentals were not sufficient to meet maintenance costs. On many occasions the rents received were not sufficient to pay the rates. The Bill has my entire approval, and I am sure the approval of all other members of the Q.L.P. I have every confidence that the Public Curator will see that the right thing is done. The proceeds from the sale of the properties will be paid into a special maintenance fund under the trusteeship of the Public Curator, and will be used for the maintenance of properties that are not sold.

Mr. WALSH (Bundaberg) (4.16 p.m.): I have no substantial objection to the provisions of the Bill as outlined by the Minister. However, there is room for some perturbation, especially when one remembers that during World Wars I. and II. thousands of pounds were collected from the public specifically to help returned soldiers and their dependants. It would appear that one of the purposes for which the money was used was the provision of homes for unfortunate ex-service men who contracted tuberculosis.

I remind hon. members that only the other day the Government introduced a measure providing for the sale of lands that were originally made available specifically for returned-soldier settlement. After only a relatively brief period, the Government are

allowing those lands to be sold to anyone, whether he be a civilian or a returned soldier. I questioned the wisdom of that the other day.

Mr. Muller: The present Act allows it to be done after a period of 10 years.

Mr. WALSH: Ten years is a reasonable period, but the Minister has brought down legislation making the conditions applicable to properties on returned-soldier settlements similar to those that apply to all other types of group settlement. However, I am not dealing with that matter now; I am merely using it as an illustration.

I hope that the Government will give serious consideration to a suggestion that I am about to make. I stress the point that these funds were contributed by the public for a specific purpose; they held the belief that at all times the money would be used to help returned soldiers. They are therefore entitled to expect that, in the future, the rights of returned soldiers will be considered. I suggest that if any of this land is sold, priority should be given to ex-service men.

I am not doubting the wisdom of disposing of the land. The Minister has pointed out that because of the low rentals charged, it has been impossible to accumulate enough money to effect repairs to the properties and install the modern conveniences required by local authority by-laws. However, the public should be assured that the funds to which they have contributed will still be used in the interests of ex-service men. The Government should give serious consideration to inserting in the Bill a provision that whenever a sale is held, priority will be given to ex-service men.

Mr. GARDNER (Rockhampton) (4.20 p.m.): The Bill is designed to deal with a problem that certainly calls for action. It brings to mind a case in Rockhampton that I am handling at present. A war widow from World War I has lived in an Anzac home for many years. One of her daughters resides with her and she does not want to go to an Eventide Home. Am I to understand that on the death of the widow the property will revert to the Public Curator for disposal and that there is no possible chance of its being passed onto the widow's daughter who has been looking after her for many years?

The Bill has many good features. War widows do not receive very much money and all of those affected are fairly old, well up into the pension group.

I am rather sympathetic to the suggestion put forward by the hon. member for Bundaberg, namely to give another returned service man or woman an opportunity to purchase such a home, and I urge the Minister to give it serious consideration.

The Bill seems to be very sound and will clear up matters that have long needed clearing up. Hon. members would do well

to interview those who live in an Anzac Home at a rental of 1s. 6d. a week. Not very many know all the circumstances. When those people become pensioners they look forward to relief from rates. I support the Bill.

Hon. A. G. MULLER (Fassifern—Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation) (4.23 p.m.), in reply: The hon. member for Bundaberg suggested that the Public Curator be restricted to selling the properties to ex-Service men or women.

Mr. Walsh: Give them priority.

Mr. MULLER: One cannot help but commend the thought but one has to be very careful in the circumstances. The hon. member could scarcely suggest that the properties are in the same category as those under war service land settlement. In the latter case, after the land is held for five years it may be sold to another ex-Service man and after 10 years it may be sold on the open market. The soldiers or their widows never actually own these properties.

Mr. Walsh: That would not prevent you giving priority in the sale.

Mr. MULLER: The position is different. If the market is restricted the return from the sale of the homes will not be very high.

Mr. Walsh: Not necessarily.

Mr. MULLER: If it is confined to ex-Service men and women the Public Curator might not be able to raise enough funds to provide for those who still desire to live in those homes. I said earlier that the demand is not what it used to be. I am informed that the Public Curator has a number of these properties empty and in a bad state of repair. If the sale is restricted to ex-Service men and women there might be less demand for them. It must be realised that no-one wants a broken-down shack. In most instances it would be difficult to sell a sub-standard building. People would not want to pull it down or remove it; they might just as well buy new timber.

What the Public Curator desires to do—and I applaud him for it—is to cater for those who need homes and to provide them in a decent state of repair.

Mr. Walsh: I hope he does not sell any to oil companies for service station sites.

Mr. MULLER: The hon. member can rely on this Government being straight. He should not get the idea that such things will happen while we are in office.

Mr. Walsh: I said "sell any to the oil companies".

Mr. MULLER: Such things will not happen. Of course, if an oil company is a legitimate purchaser and is prepared to pay the value, what does it matter? It is not a case of selling it to any combine at all.

Hon. members will realise that unless something like this is done the buildings will deteriorate still further. I shall consider the points raised by the hon. members for Bundaberg and Rockhampton. They can be discussed at a later stage of the Bill, but my first reaction to the suggestions is that they are not practical.

Motion (Mr. Muller) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

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

ROCKHAMPTON HARBOUR BOARD AND THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCKHAMPTON BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. J. A. HEADING (Marodian—Minister for Public Works and Local Government) (4.29): I move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced with respect to an agreement between the Rockhampton Harbour Board and the Council of the City of Rockhampton."

The Bill is a very short and simple measure that we should get through fairly quickly. It enables the Rockhampton City Council to undertake certain financial responsibilities of a contingent nature that it desires to undertake in respect to the development of Port Alma. The House will recollect that the Government appointed a committee to investigate the possibility of establishing a soundly-based port at Rockhampton. One proposal placed before the committee was for the development of Port Alma as the port of Rockhampton. This proposal was strongly supported by the Rockhampton City Council and the Harbour Board as a realistic and economic proposition. Indeed, the Council, in giving its support to the proposal, made an offer to guarantee the interest and redemption of loan liability to be incurred in the development of the new wharf facilities which would be immediately required and which are estimated to cost £500,000. That was the estimated cost, and the agreement was made between the City Council and the Rockhampton Harbour Board. The committee endorsed the proposals for the development of Port Alma. The purpose of the Bill is to enable the Council to give the undertaking which it offered to give when it supported the adopted proposals.

The Council's undertaking has been written into a draft agreement between the parties, and this draft is included as a schedule to the Bill. The net effect of the draft is that the Council meets each year the operating

deficit, if any, of the Board as disclosed in the Board's budget. The agreement will have a term of 40 years, this being the term of the loan which will be required to construct the new breast wharf. When the Bill is printed hon. members will see the various safeguards therein to protect the Council's interests. The Board and the Council have agreed to the draft. Any liability of the Council under the agreement will arise only in the contingency that there is an operating deficit in the Board's budget. The opinion of both the Board and the Council is that very little call, if any, will be made under the agreement. If any call is made, the maximum amount of call will be a sum equal to the interest and redemption of a loan of £500,000, which is the estimated cost of the new breast wharf.

Mr. Burrows: Did you say the "new breast wharf"? Do you not mean the first part of the new breast wharf?

Mr. HEADING: The first part. Under the agreement between those two bodies the Council will guarantee to a certain point.

In terms of the Bill, the Council has twice to advertise the fact that it proposes to make the agreement, and has to advertise the purport of the agreement and to state that at least 10 per cent. of the electors of the city may demand a poll on the question of whether the Council should enter into it. Electors have one month after the date of the last advertisement in which to demand a poll. If a poll is demanded it must be held. If the result of the poll favours the making of the agreement, the Council is empowered to make it. Likewise, if no poll is demanded, the Council is empowered to make the agreement. If the vote at poll is against the agreement, then the Council has no power to make it. Once the agreement is made it has the force of law and it can be varied only by the mutual agreement of the parties with the approval of the Governor in Council. If there is any difference between the two parties the whole has to be referred to the Governor in Council. They cannot reduce the rate charges at the wharf without the approval of the Governor in Council. I commend the Bill to the Committee as a measure to assist those who are prepared to assist themselves.

Mr. DUGGAN (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (4.34 p.m.): The Minister for Public Works and Local Government publicly announced some time ago his intention to retire from office. The hon. gentleman has had a long and useful association with this Assembly. As I mentioned the other day, he is a very kindly gentleman; and I would not—unless public importance and interest demanded—attack him very strongly during the period between now and his contemplated retirement. It is customary to accord to senior members of the Chamber who have been very friendly and courteous a measure of tolerance that might not be extended ordinarily to a Minister when introducing a Bill, but the Minister has developed

a very disarming technique of introducing a Bill which has important implications by saying that it is a very simple one, that he is merely respecting the wishes of those who consulted him on the matter. You will recall, Mr. Taylor, that in introducing the Valuation Bill, he used a similar statement although it was a very contentious and controversial measure. The Minister in his charming and affable way said that all he wanted to do was to give effect to the wishes of those affected by the Bill. He has said very much the same thing this afternoon.

I think public attention should be focussed on what I believe is a somewhat unusual departure from the operations of local government, in that a local authority is contemplating the acceptance of fairly heavy financial responsibility for the conduct of an operation that is normally outside the limits of local government.

I do not know of any similar instance in Queensland of a local authority that is prepared to indemnify or guarantee to the Crown redemption of a sum of money that could be of the order of £500,000 to maintain a port. The fact that the council has gone to the trouble of making these submissions to the Minister for Local Government shows that this matter has been canvassed, if not among the public of Rockhampton, at least among members of the council. The fact that they have agreed to make these submissions indicates that the council considers in the interests of Rockhampton it should be a desirable undertaking for the council.

I have a very worthy respect, generally speaking, for the wishes of local authorities, and as a general rule I do not care to intervene or interfere with the wishes of persons elected to local authorities. They have a mandate to carry out certain responsibilities and it is not the function of Parliament or other bodies to try to negative that purpose. But it seems to me in this instance that there would need to be very strong and compelling reasons why the local authority should be given power to involve ratepayers in what could be an expenditure of £35,000 or £40,000 a year for redemption, apart altogether from any liability that might accrue from a deficit in harbour board operations.

I think we should compare the views of members of the Government with the utterances of those hon. members when they were on this side of the Chamber. Going back through the pages of "Hansard," I find that the Premier on 23 August, 1951, on page 104 of volume 201, had this to say—

"The main complaint I have against the Government's approach to the problem of expenditure of loan money is that they place too much emphasis on the spectacular projects that cannot be accomplished within a reasonable time and pay too little attention to carrying out works that will bring industries to their full productive capacity and increase the wealth production."

He went on to say in the same speech—

“Too much money has been wasted in this State on things that are not necessary. I do not say they are not desirable but they are not necessary at the present time.”

On 20 March, 1951, speaking on the proposed construction of the rail link to the Callide coal field, the Premier had this to say—

“Taking everything into consideration it would be particularly difficult to discover at the moment any other way in which scarce labour, materials and money could be expended so uselessly, wastefully and unjustifiably.

“The Battle of the Ports is being revived today and the only excuse I can see for the proposal is that it is nothing more than a political sop to Rockhampton.

“What effect will the building of the railway have? I ask the hon. member for Port Curtis to take notice of this. It will help to keep Gladstone, one of the best ports of the world, the Sleepy Hollow of the Central District. It will be taking away the legitimate trade of Gladstone.

“The Government are doing everything they possibly can to divert this coal trade over a railway line away from the port of Gladstone . . . a port that has done everything possible to build up the trade, and, do not forget the best port we have on the coastline and one of the best ports in the world. Now it is proposed that it should just remain there rotting, doing nothing.

“In view of these facts, we should give this matter very serious consideration before we vote half a million pounds to take away from the port of Gladstone, trade that rightly belongs to it geographically, and is its by right, and should be its on account of the fight its public bodies have put up for it, and the progressive steps already taken by the port authority to provide the necessary machinery and facilities.”

“It is a shame that the Government have taken this action which will have such a detrimental effect on the development of Gladstone.”

In the same debate, the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads, when speaking on the building of the Callide coalfield line, said—

“It is really a faction matter, the question again of Rockhampton versus Gladstone. The Attorney-General has won again at the expense of the people of Port Curtis.”

It is desirable, I think, that those views should be embodied in “Hansard” because, when we were the Government and decided to spend certain money, we were accused of offering a political sop to the people of Rockhampton. I strongly suggest that at the present time much of this measure has been motivated by the desire to advance the Liberal Party’s prospects in Rockhampton

at the expense of the A.L.P. and the Q.L.P. and that that accounts for the way in which the Mayor of Rockhampton, the endorsed Liberal candidate, is prepared to support the scheme. I should like to see Rockhampton develop into a very great city. It has tremendous potentialities for sharing in the development of the State and I would be the last to deny Rockhampton the opportunity of extending facilities to serve the city and the great hinterland that lies behind it. If it can be shown that it is desirable that the port facilities be developed I would not stand in the way of the development. It is significant, on examination of this proposal, that the Government have not taken into account the effect that this development might have on other ports. The Government set up a committee of inquiry of which Sir Arthur Fadden was the chairman and despite the pleas made by the hon. member for Port Curtis no copy of the report was made available to Parliament. The Treasurer, when the report came from the committee appointed to examine the general economics of the position concerning Port Alma, sent me an advance copy, which I appreciated. That action has not been repeated. I do not know whether it is because of political expediency that the appreciated gesture has not been repeated or whether it is because the report is not a comfortable one for the Government. I think, before we authorise a Bill empowering a local authority to spend £500,000 and involve the ratepayers of the area in a huge annual commitment if the venture is not financially sound, we should have the opportunity of assessing the recommendations of both bodies to examine the steps to be taken to develop Rockhampton. The Treasurer will know that the Rockhampton Harbour Board, in common with many other harbour boards, has experienced difficulty in meeting its financial obligations to the Treasury. Some measure of relief has been extended by the Government to the Rockhampton Harbour Board. We cannot quarrel with help harbour boards have had by the writing off of various amounts. On this occasion the Bill is conditioned very largely on the political prospects of the Liberal candidate for the area. I have strong reason to believe that is the case, and one of the reasons why the Bill has been introduced. Certainly there are safeguards. Local ratepayers will be able to requisition for a poll and if the poll is held and the people are against the proposal, the agreement will be cancelled.

If the people of Rockhampton do not elect to take advantage of the provisions of the Bill, I suppose our case falls to the ground. If they are not sufficiently interested, much of our criticism must lapse. I am not implying, of course, that there is some indifference on the part of the people. The Treasurer should be the first to acknowledge that, as far as possible, we should try to develop ports in those areas that are best suited to the purpose. We claim that

Queensland has a chain of ports, and the previous Labour Government did something about setting up some over-riding control so that there would not be unhealthy development of one port to the detriment of another.

The Minister is merely giving effect to the wishes of the people of Rockhampton. I have no quarrel with that. They understand the implications of what they are doing. If they are prepared to enter into the arrangement, I can see nothing wrong with the proposal. However, I hope that the widest possible publicity will be given to the financial implications of the agreement. If that is done and the people do not demand a poll, it will show that they back the council in this matter. It has never been my desire to interfere unduly with the wishes of elected representatives on municipal bodies. However, there are other important considerations that should be ventilated here to give those interested an opportunity of examining the proposal in great detail.

I am sure that the hon. member for Port Curtis will want to speak on the Bill. The hon. member for Rockhampton, too, who is a member of the Rockhampton City Council as well as a member of Parliament, is sure to take part in the debate. I repeat that the Australian Labour Party is in no way opposed to the taking of steps by any competent body in the State to bring to the attention of the Government its claims for recognition and financial help. If the submissions that it makes to the Government are sufficiently strong and finance is available, I am all for helping it. However, in 1952 the Premier admitted that politics were largely involved in these matters, and he should see that there is no repetition of what happened some years ago.

I hope that this will not develop into haggling over the respective merits of Gladstone and Port Alma. I hope, too, that the Minister will act solely on the basis of the claim for Port Alma, and subsequently on any claim that might be raised on the grounds of development at Gladstone. It is a matter for great regret that the report by Sir Arthur Fadden—I understand it has been completed and no doubt has been the subject of Cabinet consideration—has not been made available to us. In passing, I ask the Treasurer to indicate his intention on the release of Sir Arthur Fadden's report.

I reserve judgment on the Bill until we have heard the submissions of further speakers and have had the opportunity of examining it in detail.

Mr. GARDNER (Rockhampton) (4.49 p.m.): I support the Bill. It brings to an end a very delicate situation that has developed in Rockhampton. It will also bring into being a project that will create a good deal of work in that city. Acting on a report that had the backing of the Rockhampton City Council as well as the business

interests of Rockhampton and the community generally, the Government are giving power to the Rockhampton Harbour Board to construct an up-to-date port at Port Alma and build an access road. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that it is not the general practice for city councils to assist other shires but in that respect the Rockhampton City Council is rather unique. In the past it has assisted the Rockhampton Harbour Board, and it has co-operated with the Livingstone Shire in the construction of a scenic road. It is still paying an annual commitment towards the maintenance of that road. Had the council not done that at the time, when the Labour Government were in power, that seaside road would never have been constructed.

On another occasion the Livingstone Shire Council asked for help from the Rockhampton City Council, the Mount Morgan Shire and the Fitzroy Shire to provide bathing facilities for Central Queenslanders at the seaside resorts of Emu Park, Yeppoon and Sandhills. The Rockhampton City Council played a leading role by offering to pay 40 per cent. of the cost, and its actions were approved by the Labour Government of the day.

In 1956 and in the early part of 1957 the proposal to construct the road to Port Alma emanated mainly from me and my ideas on finance following great disappointment at the failure of the Commonwealth Government to honour the promises made in 1952 by the late Senator McLeay and Mr. Casey. They came to Queensland and said that a great deal of money was available for the development of ports in Queensland, but when the acid test was applied, the money was not forthcoming. After lengthy agitation, the first step in the construction of the road to the salt works was approved by the Government. The hon. member for Bundaberg, who was Treasurer at the time, agreed to a subsidy of £7,400. With only 8 to 9½ miles remaining to be completed it seemed foolish to leave a dead end and agitation to continue the road through to Port Alma has gone on ever since. The case put up to the committee of inquiry—and I gave evidence before it—was sound enough for approval to be given for the construction of the road and of additional wharfage at Port Alma in due course.

The hinterland of Central Queensland has a great potential. In 10 or 15 years' time I think that the people of Queensland will heartily approve of the action of the men who have taken such an active part in the construction of the road in the interests of Rockhampton. I have said on previous occasions that self-help is the best way of getting things done. The Rockhampton City Council were not unanimous, but as they were elected as the direct representatives of the people they decided in the first instance to agree to

an expenditure of £60,000. If that expenditure were exceeded they decided they would stand up to the full responsibility on a basis submitted to the Government at that time. They have accepted the full responsibility of what they have done. It is true that it is a big undertaking and a big responsibility. For a time it will be a big liability, but with increased trade and the development of Central Queensland and its hinterland, I should say that the prospects are reasonably sound, and I agree with the Committee's recommendation.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the rail link from Biloela to the Callide coalfield. He quoted a statement made by the Premier who was then the Leader of the Opposition. When that railway line was constructed it appeared to be a very wrong move, but I should say that it has turned out to be the saviour of the Callide coalfield. Hon. members will recall the amount of money that was spent to build a road from Gladstone to the coalfield, and the great number of trucks that carried coal day in and day out to Glasstone and the progress that Gladstone made. But we ended up losing markets. When that happened it brought to a standstill the bringing of Callide coal over the range by trucks. The Capricornia Regional Electricity Board has been taking approximately 1,000 tons of coal a week, which has been delivered by rail right to the powerhouse in Rockhampton. For a number of years the 50,000-odd tons of coal taken annually by the Capricornia Regional Electricity Board has saved the Callide coalfield. We are hopeful that in due course we will be repaid for the establishment of Callide by the erection of a further powerhouse in that area.

It is true that the Rockhampton City Council has committed itself to a very big undertaking, but it went very thoroughly into the agreement. The points that appealed to the Council were that when the Budget is framed by the Rockhampton Harbour Board it has to be submitted to the Rockhampton City Council for approval. If by chance we are dissatisfied with the budget as submitted we have the right to confer with the Harbour Board, and in the event of disagreement we can go back to the Treasurer who will act as an arbiter. I think that is a fairly sound and reasonable proposal. No doubt the Government realise that the Rockhampton City Council will be confronted with a problem in the initial stages of this great development. I believe that in due course the people of Rockhampton will be satisfied. The general feeling in the Rockhampton community about the construction of the road is one of satisfaction. We may not have 100 per cent. support on the Council, but the great majority agree with the proposal. We have had disappointments in the past, but we decided that we were not going to be dependent on outside assistance. We have asked the Government for help, and under this agreement the Harbour

Board and the Rockhampton City Council will have power to co-operate to construct this road and the breast wharf at Port Alma to cost approximately £500,000. We realise that the Rockhampton ratepayers could be taxed to the extent of £31,000 for interest and redemption, but once it is established there will be great improvement and the responsibility is not a strong deterrent. It is true that the Government have been very fair in dealing with the matter.

Mr. WINDSOR: They are a fair Government.

Mr. GARDNER: So was the Labour Government fair as far as Rockhampton was concerned. The Labour Government did an extremely good job; they let us operate the port and they gave us a fair deal. This Government are fair too. Providing we meet the payments they are prepared to extend repayments over 40 years. The £8,000 to be paid by the Harbour Board represents 4 per cent. on capital and interest as agreed upon. We think that the second clause of the draft agreement is very sound. The payments will be based on the position as it exists at the end of the year, and the payment in any one year from any accumulated surplus is not to exceed £4,000. We think that the agreement is very sound. The potential of Central Queensland merits this bold step. Central Queensland is rich in minerals, copper, gold, and coal, and has the largest cattle-raising area in Australia. In the hinterland lies Peak Downs, which has developed into a great grain field. Ampol have set up an oil depot at Port Alma where reclamation work is being carried out. If we are successful in achieving our ultimate aim—the development of fertiliser works—we will have done much for the development of Central Queensland. It is important that those who live in the area should recognise its great potential. The salt works that started in 1956 are being developed on very sound lines, and it is expected that in due course 10,000 to 15,000 tons of salt will be shipped through Port Alma. Once the road is constructed we can expect the establishment of further industries.

I pin my faith to Central Queensland. The scheme is worthy of support, and the Council is supporting it, on the ground that self help is the only way in which we will ever be able to get a port or a road. The Council is supporting it in the most practical way—through its pocket.

I commend the Bill to hon. members for the reasons I have given.

Mr. BURROWS (Port Curtis) (5.6 p.m.): I commiserate with the Minister in what may be his last administrative act in this Chamber. In my long association with him I have always found him to be very honourable, but in this matter I see the hand of Esau. I want it to be clearly understood that I completely exonerate the Minister from any ulterior motive associated with the Bill, but I regret to say that there is something very

sinister and wicked about it. I want it to be clearly understood, I repeat, that I am not in any way impeaching or questioning the Minister's honourable character.

I do not intend to beat about the bush. The Bill is nothing less than a conspiracy against the port and people of Gladstone, as was stated by the Premier in the passage quoted earlier by the Leader of the Opposition. All the improvements and the development there are to be allowed to rot.

I point out at the outset that this is not a Bill designed to develop a port in Rockhampton. That thought is a fallacy. The Bill is designed to create a port halfway between Rockhampton and Gladstone, approximately 30 miles from those cities.

You, Mr. Taylor, the Premier, the Treasurer and virtually every other Minister have congratulated the people of Gladstone and the Gladstone Harbour Board on their enterprise and their effort in developing the port. Mr. Speaker, when chairman of the Sorghum Board, approached the Gladstone Harbour Board, and the Harbour Board handled sorghum at a loss in order to help that primary industry and Central Queensland. For several years considerable quantities of sorghum have been exported, but not a-quarter of the sorghum now grown in Central Queensland would be grown but for the installation of a conveyor belt at Gladstone which enabled sorghum to be handled at an economic cost. As the Minister for Public Lands would know, sorghum-growers at one time had to sell their produce at £10 a ton delivered to Belfast. But for the economic loading cost and the sympathetic consideration of port authorities in Gladstone, sorghum-growing would not have been possible. At one time the growers got very little for this grain and even now do not get sufficient, but it would be much less but for the sympathetic consideration and enterprise of the Gladstone Harbour Board. All that work has to be thrown out.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out to the hon. member that the Minister outlined the details of the Bill and it does not call for a general discussion on the port of Gladstone. I have no objection to the hon. member's making a passing comparison but I do not want the debate to develop into a discourse on the advantages of Gladstone.

Mr. BURROWS: Naturally, I accept your ruling, and do not question it in any way, Mr. Speaker, but I say that the Bill is part of a conspiracy to get a certain gentleman into this Parliament in order to boost the number of Liberal members.

Mr. Gardner: He will not get here.

Mr. BURROWS: It will be a bad day for Queensland if he is elected.

Mr. Gair: How they came to endorse him I do not know.

Mr. BURROWS: He is well known—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BURROWS: He is the Mayor of Rockhampton and I will show the Committee the influence of this Rasputin. I am not saying anything out of order when I refer to him in those terms. I will refer to a letter he wrote to show the influence he has on the Government. A draft agreement was submitted to the Rockhampton City Council and the Rockhampton Harbour Board. A letter was sent to the Treasurer in reply but time will not permit to read various passages from it. It was signed, "Yours sincerely, R. Pilbeam, for and on behalf of the Rockhampton Harbour Board and the Rockhampton City Council." This man dominates everything around Rockhampton and has a Rasputin-like influence on everyone with whom he comes in contact. He is not even the deputy chairman of the Harbour Board, but he assumes the responsibility of the Rockhampton Harbour Board. There is an agreement between two parties and he gives the approval of both parties. When I was a boy I was told nobody could serve two masters. This document in my hand implicates both the Rockhampton City Council and the Rockhampton Harbour Board and it was signed for and on behalf of both parties by R. Pilbeam. Is there any wonder we are suspicious. The necessity for the Bill originated from the Leader of the Liberal Party, the hon. member for Mount Coot-tha. He promised to build a road to Port Alma. The Rockhampton City Council contributed £12,000 for a start and was committed to contribute another £68,000, or £80,000 in all. It is estimated that the road will cost a further £30,000 to bitumenise. The Rockhampton City Council has agreed to contribute towards that. A committee was appointed by the Government to report on the development of Port Alma. If anything smells to high heaven, this certainly does. When a move was made by Rockhampton interests to get the Minister for Labour and Industry to honour his promise, Gladstone asked that before large sums of public moneys were spent on the building of a road to Port Alma and on other improvements at that port, a committee of experts be appointed to investigate the whole subject of one overseas port for Central Queensland, embracing the claims of both Gladstone and Port Alma.

Such a committee was appointed after a Cabinet meeting held in Rockhampton on 30 July, 1958. What was Rockhampton's reaction? Immediately it became known that Gladstone was to be included in the scope of the inquiry, they opened a strong and bitter attack both on the Government and Gladstone, by every means in their power, but particularly through the Press, radio and political organisations. In this attack, nothing was more unfair than the partisan attitude adopted by the Rockhampton

Regional Station of the Australian Broadcasting Commission (4RK), which is another Pilbeam-controlled organisation, which pushed and is still strongly pushing the barrow of Port Alma, and absolutely neglecting to give information to the people of Rockhampton and Central Queensland that in any way favours Gladstone. In the van of this attack on the Government and Gladstone was Pilbeam. This man has taken over more activities in Rockhampton than Myers or any of the other large combines.

What was the result of this campaign? The Government capitulated, and on 7 October the Premier announced that Pilbeam, Hinchliffe, who is chairman of the Rockhampton Harbour Board, South of Dalgetys, and Rudd of Walter Reids, were to be invited to Brisbane, presumably to tell the Government what they wanted done in respect of Port Alma. This could have only one result, for, as the "Rockhampton Bulletin" said, "These discussions might turn out to be the most important in Rockhampton's history."

This proved to be correct, for when the Premier and the Liberal Treasurer met the Rockhampton delegation, which included three representatives of vested interests, it was informed that Port Alma would not be closed, that the chairman of the committee already appointed would be sacked, that a road would be built to Port Alma and a new concrete breast wharf constructed. What a fallacy! This amounted virtually to telling the committee that the Government themselves had appointed, what findings it had to bring in. However, worse was to follow. The Treasurer visited Rockhampton and assisted the harbour board there to prepare its case for submission to the committee—this from the man who had to receive the report from the committee and submit recommendations to Cabinet on its findings. That matter has already been discussed. When I queried it, the Treasurer admitted it.

As I said before, they were lost and sent out an appeal. The Treasurer then went to Rockhampton and helped them to prepare the case on which he subsequently sat in judgment.

Mr. Hiley: Tell the truth! I did exactly the same for the Gladstone people. I helped them, too. I will help any public body in the State.

Mr. BURROWS: I was present when the Treasurer helped us in Gladstone. I have the case here with me. When Mr. Golding took the Treasurer to task, the Treasurer wrote some pencil notes and handed them to him.

Mr. Hiley: And he very gratefully and graciously acknowledged my help, which is more than you have ever done.

Mr. BURROWS: What I have done does not matter. I hope I shall never be as

ungracious as the Treasurer has been in this matter. When the Deputy Premier visited Gladstone to open the show I said to him, "They are very hostile here, Ken. You will be questioned about the Government's decision on the first committee's report." He replied, "What are you growling about, Jim? We have made your seat safe for you."

Mr. Knox: You know that is not true.

Mr. BURROWS: I know it is true, and the hon. member for Nundah also knows it is true. He was there, and I challenge him to deny it.

Mr. Morris: I will deny it.

Mr. BURROWS: The Minister for Labour and Industry said that.

Mr. Morris: Nonsense!

Mr. BURROWS: Didn't Peter deny Christ? And Peter was a gentleman compared with the Minister for Labour and Industry.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I trust that the hon. member will stick to the provisions of the Bill.

Mr. BURROWS: And I shall also stick to the truth, which I am afraid some of my interjectors are not doing.

The committee met behind closed doors and, as we now know, heard evidence against Gladstone. Gladstone was hanged, drawn and quartered without being given the opportunity to defend itself, which was grossly unfair and incorrect. Gladstone was given no opportunity to refute or deny. In real Star Chamber style, the rape of Gladstone and its port was allowed to take place and no body or person was allowed to say one word in their defence.

As far as I know, the committee sat only in Rockhampton, and within a few weeks of the submission of its report the matter was hustled through Cabinet. The Treasurer gained Cabinet approval of the committee's findings, which naturally were in accordance with the statement issued by the Premier previous to the sitting of the committee. Moreover, Rockhampton's case had been prepared by the Liberal Treasurer, and an officer of his department and one from a department under the Minister for Labour and Industry were members of the committee. Gladstone was up in arms about the Government's decision in the matter. I asked for a copy of the report and local bodies and political branches asked for a copy, too, but all were refused. I publicly state that the Treasurer allowed me to peruse the report, and I thank him for that.

In answer to a letter written to him by the Gladstone branch of the Country Party, the Premier said—

"The report submitted by the committee set up to inquire into the Rockhampton Ports Question never has and never will be made public."

In plain terms, Gladstone and its port have been tried, condemned and hanged without being given the opportunity of saying one word in their defence. This explains why the Bill of Rights did not come in. I respectfully suggest—and I give the Premier credit for it—that he developed a conscience and realised that, in the face of what he did and what the Government did in this matter, they could not consistently talk about a Bill of Rights.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have no recollection of the hon. member's intimating what he is quoting from, or whether he is reading a speech. I point out to him for the third time that if he does not confine himself to the details of the Bill outlined by the Minister I must ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. BURROWS: I will desist and accept your ruling, Mr. Taylor; I do not query it. The point I wanted to make was that the first committee presented a report and it was received and adopted. There is not the slightest doubt—and I challenge any hon. member to say otherwise—that the report condemns Gladstone and envisages the removal of the trade from Gladstone to Port Alma. Gladstone owes the Government about £1,000,000. As I told the Treasurer, instead of having one bankrupt harbour board on his hands he will have two. It took only three weeks to deal with the first report. As to the second report—Sir Arthur Fadden was chairman of the committee and I give him full marks. I have never seen the report. I do not know what it contains. I have had no hint of its contents. However, I give him full marks for his fairness and impartiality and for the fairness and impartiality of his colleagues in taking the evidence. At the outset he said, "This is a public inquiry and it is open to the public and the Press may be present." That report was made to the Government just about three months ago and so far it has not seen the light of day. Is there not at least room for suspicion in this matter? The Rockhampton Harbour Board and every other harbour board can pay their way if they want to. Many improvements have been effected by the Bundaberg and Mackay harbour boards. They regulate their harbour dues to meet their commitments but vested interests in Rockhampton will not allow the Rockhampton Harbour Board to do the same. It is only in the last few years that they have raised their harbour dues to 6s. a ton, whereas Bundaberg charges £1 on a ton of sugar.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! This has nothing to do with the Bill.

Mr. BURROWS: It has very much to do with this matter if you will let me develop the point. If the Rockhampton Harbour Board had levied their charges on an economic basis they would not be in the mess they are in today. But they will not

do that because it means that Vestey's have to pay them. About 95 per cent. of the cargo handled across the wharf is Vestey's. They want the harbour dues kept down. That is why Alderman Pilbeam wants the rate-payers of Rockhampton to guarantee the cost of this wharf instead of paying their interest and redemption in the same way as any other respectable and honest harbour boards do, by levying charges to meet their commitments.

Mr. Aikens: So the loss on the Rockhampton Harbour Board is a subsidy to Vestey's?

Mr. BURROWS: Definitely. There is no way in which it could be anything else but a subsidy to Vestey's.

Mr. Gair: Do you reckon that Vestey's have Pilbeam by the wool?

Mr. BURROWS: They have definitely got him in their pocket. The way he has been punting I think he has fallen on some very fertile ground.

A Q.L.P. Member: I don't think you like Vestey's.

Mr. BURROWS: I do not like anybody who wants to take away a man's life savings or impoverish a town, all for the sake of giving a big help to Vestey's. A great deal has been said about what Vestey's are giving for this road. They are giving £10,000 towards a road that will cost approximately £250,000. Swifts in Gladstone who are only a small concern compared with Vestey's gave £15,000 towards a road to their meatworks that cost £30,000. When people say that Vestey's are so generous, let them compare their generosity with that of Swifts.

It is pointed out that this was only the first section of the wharf: the second section has to come later. Mr. Fison said something like this—

"One berth such as this is certainly too short to accommodate overseas and coastal ships. If both are to use Port Alma, then another berth is needed, and moreover, the nature of the overseas trade demands two berths."

But this provides for only one. The rate-payers of Rockhampton will be expected to find £35,000 a year. The Treasurer and others may say that they disagree with that statement. I have not worked out the average of how much cargo has gone over the Rockhampton wharf over a number of years but I should estimate it at between 60,000 and 70,000 tons over both wharves a year. Before the harbour board pay any interest or redemption on the wharf they have to pay for electricity and a fresh-water scheme. It is not merely a matter of connecting to a main; they are miles away from fresh water. It is about 20 miles from anywhere. If they wanted to load coal they would have to put in a conveyor belt and they would have to spend nearly £1,000,000. If they cannot pay interest and redemption the Rockhampton

City Council will guarantee £30,000 a year. They realise that if the Rockhampton City Council does not pay them they will have to put their charges up, and they want to keep their charges below the port of Gladstone, so that Vestey's and other people will still use the wharf.

Mr. Power: Are they much below Gladstone?

Mr. BURROWS: No, I understand they are the same as Gladstone on meat. At one point the rivalry was so great that those who were shipping wool were getting a premium from the harbour board.

(Time expired.)

Mr. WALSH (Bundaberg) (5.32 p.m.): If I accepted everything that the hon. member for Port Curtis said about Mr. Pilbeam I would agree that that gentleman was responsible for much of the progress in Rockhampton. But I do not accept it. Everybody knows that throughout the period that the hon. member for Rockhampton has been a member of this House he has consistently advocated the requirements of the port of Rockhampton and of Rockhampton generally. He did it long before he was a member of this House—when he was a member of the Harbour Board and Rockhampton City Council. The present Mayor of Rockhampton is cashing in on the foundations that were laid by the hon. member for Rockhampton and many others who were associated with the Harbour Board and the Rockhampton City Council over the years. I have no doubt that the hon. member for Rockhampton will continue to be the Q.L.P. member for that city.

As I understand from the outline of the Bill given by the Minister it is more or less one to authorise the Rockhampton City Council to undertake certain financial commitments in regard to the development of Port Alma. It will enable the Rockhampton City Council to guarantee the interest and redemption on the amount of money involved, I take it, in the construction of the breast wharf, which is estimated to cost £500,000. The period of the loan will be 40 years. Let it be remembered that in the long run this matter rests with the people of Rockhampton. All that this Parliament is doing is providing the machinery whereby the local authority can enter into an agreement with the Rockhampton Harbour Board. I take it that the approval of the Treasurer and the Minister for Public Works and Local Government or the Executive Council will have to be sought. Machinery is provided in the Local Government Acts for the necessary procedure. If 10 per cent. of the people demand a poll the Council must agree to have it, I take it.

Mr. Hiley: They must.

Mr. WALSH: In its own interest it should. If we stand for democratic rights, what

fault can we find with the proposal. The people of Rockhampton will be asked to shoulder the financial responsibility. The Bill merely provides that they be given the final decision in the matter.

Mr. Aikens: Are you sure that the poll provisions of the Local Government Act will apply to this measure?

Mr. WALSH: I accept the word of the Minister. I have always found him to be very honourable and I have no reason to doubt his word that that is so. The hon. member for Rockhampton confirms his statement. He says it is provided in the agreement.

In any case that is not the only matter that arises. The ratepayers of Rockhampton have undertaken substantial financial responsibility for the construction of the road. I think they have to meet 40 per cent. of the cost of the road to Port Alma if it exceeds a certain figure. In this instance I am interested only in the people of Rockhampton, just as the hon. member for Rockhampton is interested in them. Their financial responsibility for the construction of the road has been advertised and they have given their approval to the scheme. No petition has been lodged by ratepayers, so obviously they signify their approval. They have not questioned the right of the council to undertake those commitments.

A further aspect is relevant. I think the Harbour Boards Act covers legal processes to recover revenue sufficient to meet the commitments of the Harbour Board. I take it that the Harbour Board will be expected to comply with those provisions. In other words, if the Harbour Board area covers a number of local authority areas, financial responsibility would have to be accepted by those Harbour Board areas, which is the usual thing in regard to loan expenditure on such matters. If a Treasury loan or debenture loan is obtained, the Harbour Board is responsible for the expenditure of the money on works, but it has power under the law to levy on land within the Harbour Board area, so the matter affects more than the ratepayers of Rockhampton.

Mr. Hiley: Levy on lands? Their power is to levy on goods that pass to and fro through the port. They have no power to levy on land.

Mr. WALSH: I do not know, but that power certainly did exist. It may have been taken away by the Government. Harbour Boards certainly did have power to raise revenue from land within the Harbour Board area, and there was also power to put in a receiver, if the Harbour Board fell down on the job. We would be asking a lot if we expected the Rockhampton ratepayers to assume the whole responsibility or guarantee the commitments of the Harbour Board for the development of Port Alma when the whole of the district would be likely to benefit from that work. I put the

question whether there is not some responsibility on Harbour Boards in the first instance to face up to their responsibilities. It does not matter whether revenue is obtained through rates on land or from dues. The Government would have to be satisfied that a Harbour Board had discharged its full responsibility.

The position of the Harbour Board, rate-payers of Rockhampton and property owners within the Harbour Board area has been made more difficult by the fact that the Government have withdrawn the subsidy on developmental work undertaken by Harbour Boards. Where the 20 per cent. applied previously it would have been a substantial help to this harbour board or any other harbour board.

I realise the justification for some developmental work at Port Alma but, as the hon. member for Port Curtis knows, I have never entered into an argument as to the merits of Gladstone or Rockhampton as ports in their particular spheres. Gladstone is a natural port and does not require the expenditure needed at Rockhampton. Many years ago, prior to a Labour Government, the government of the day, whether rightly or wrongly, decided to establish a port at Rockhampton and it is there to remain. It must be remembered that it was the policy of all governments to encourage the development of both ports. Prior to World War II. there was a policy in operation which placed penalty rates on wool transported beyond the ports to Brisbane. That meant, of course, that the bulk of the loading would have to go to the Central Queensland ports. There was a proposition put up by the then Commissioner for Railways, Mr. Davidson, to the anti-Labour Government that if the port ban on the transport of wool to Brisbane was allowed to continue the Railway Department's finances would suffer to the extent of an additional £100,000 a year. It was clear that governments of the past, irrespective of policies, were keen on the necessity for the development of Port Alma. My attitude to both places was that there was going to be extensive industrialisation where products such as pyrites and coal were to be exported and that there was scope for an industrial port, and that Gladstone was ideal for the handling of primary products such as butter and other land products.

We have had a great deal of propaganda and publicity regarding the establishment of a pyrites or sulphate of ammonia works in Central Queensland but that matter seems to be lost in these proposals. We have heard nothing further about the proposal although the Premier said some time ago that he was about to make an announcement. It appears that the executive of the firm was in America; we have not heard anything since. I do not think it is for us to dispute the necessity for some provision to be made for a local authority that seeks financial assistance to

help another public authority or to assist in the developmental requirements of a port. If the Government are satisfied that the Rockhampton City Council, on behalf of the rate-payers, can carry this responsibility, well and good. Let us have more of it. I should like to have seen the Government appoint a royal commission to go into the question of transport in this State, similar to that appointed in 1938 when port development and road transport matters were suggested. I must concede that the Government have not handled this situation too skilfully. A committee was appointed consisting of Mr. Field, Professor Lavery and the Director of Secondary Industries, Mr. Young, each with a knowledge of what he was doing. However, I think that the examination of the development of any port should be entrusted to more experienced people. It is a pity, too, that the shipping companies should not come out into the open and give their views on the justification for the expenditure of money at Port Alma at the expense of Gladstone, or vice versa. We should not quibble if oil companies want to assist in the development of Port Alma. As long as the Government do not grant an oil company any concessions that will enable it to exploit the consumers in the area, we should not object.

Mr. Hiley: You would not suggest that we should appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into transport matters before we approve of anything like that, would you?

Mr. WALSH: I do not think that would be necessary, but an examination of the economics of the ports generally would be involved. I realise that revenue from the oil companies is a money-spinner for any port. It will be of great advantage to Rockhampton if it can get an oil company to establish itself there. I think the Townsville Harbour Board gets over £50,000 a year in dues from oil companies. In the very early development of the new port of Bundaberg, I recommended to the chairman of the harbour board that he seek the establishment of an oil depot.

The Bill provides that the ratepayers shall have the final say on whether the council should assume the financial responsibility involved. That is the important matter, and the Bill has my approval.

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Cooorparoo—Treasurer and Minister for Housing) (5.48 p.m.): In view of the numerous references that have been made to the part I played in the background of the measure, my colleague who is in charge of the Bill has suggested that I might say something, and I think it is appropriate that I should.

I should like to tell hon. members how the Government have approached the whole matter of the development of Central Queensland's ports. First of all, I hope that Parliament has seen the last of the hatred, malice, envy and jealousy that have soiled

the performances of the people of Central Queensland and the objective approach to their port equipment over the last two generations.

Mr. Walsh: You are not saying that about the hon. member for Rockhampton, are you?

Mr. HILEY: On the contrary, I have never had any complaint about the approach of the hon. member for Rockhampton to the matter. I have always found him fair. His attitude has not been clouded by jealousy for the neighbouring port of Gladstone. That is more than I can say for some other people.

The Rockhampton Harbour Board has been in a mess for 40 years. The only action by successive Governments has been to write off recurrent and progressive sums that have totalled a vast amount. No attempt was made to come to grips with the fundamental faults of the Rockhampton area, where there has been an uneconomic unit, or to apply corrective measures to make it a worthy member of the list of Queensland's economic ports. It was because of that that the Government set up the first committee. When its report became available, rightly or wrongly the Government felt that a significant advantage would flow from the construction of an access road and a new breast wharf to replace one of the existing island wharves, and changed practices that would bring to an end the tremendously heavy and recurrent drain on the harbour board's finances through attempting to keep the river port open.

What has been Rockhampton's classic mistake over the last 40 years? It has been trying to keep open not one port for Rockhampton but two. Money has been poured into the river without accomplishing anything, so the deep-sea port has been starved of funds and neglected for opportunity. The Government are not prepared to destroy either of the Central Queensland ports. They have not lost faith in the development of Central Queensland. I am sorry that amongst the Jeremiahs who wail in the Chamber are some who think there is nothing but destruction and despair ahead. Heavens above, go back 20 years. What was the grain export from Central Queensland and what was the coal export? Both have grown significantly in the last 20 years. Can any hon. member who knows Central Queensland and who knows its potential justify thinking that the present volume of trade is the be-all and end-all for the ports of that area? It certainly is not the view of the Government.

Mr. Burrows: That is why Gladstone has been rated as a "B" class port by the Stevedoring Commission. Its wharf-lumpers work four months of the year and handle three times as much cargo as goes through Rockhampton ports and it has the capacity to handle 20 times the amount.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HILEY: The hon. member has had the opportunity to make a speech. I gather that his second speech is once again to put up his plea that there should be only Gladstone and no Rockhampton. I have been busily trying to tell the Committee in his absence that the conviction of the Government is that in view of the present volume of trade in Central Queensland and its possible development and with our faith that that trade will grow, there will be in the years that lie ahead room for two economic ports in Central Queensland. It is the Government's deep desire to avoid developing one port at the expense of the mortality of the other. I say that with all the emphasis of which I am capable.

On the report presented, it was clear to the Government that the early economy of the port of Port Alma would, in the judgment of the Government, need some assistance and it was for that reason that the Government said, "We look for some guarantee to protect the public purse against the hazard that appears possible in this and we insist on the preservation of the full rights of the citizens of Rockhampton to determine the matter by ballot."

Mr. Burrows: Did you get a guarantee with Bundaberg?

Mr. HILEY: In our judgment that was not necessary. We did not think the initial economy in the case of Bundaberg would pass through a period of inadequacy.

Mr. Burrows: Did not the sugar interests give the guarantee at Bundaberg?

Mr. HILEY: The previous Government had no doubt about Bundaberg and this Government, who succeeded them, are in no doubt that the volume of the sugar trade and other traffic passing through the port of Bundaberg render its economy sufficient not to need a guarantee. The hon. member for Bundaberg saw no reason, and I in turn see no reason, why we should come in with a supporting guarantee.

Mr. Burrows: No. The sugar interests will pay 20s. a ton, or more if necessary.

Mr. HILEY: It did not need a guarantee.

There is the explanation of the steps that the Government have taken, but I want to correct some of the statements that have been made. Again I do not attempt to make any hurrying or lengthy reply to all the hysterical comments wherein terms such as "sinister," "wicked," "tainted from one end to the other" were bandied about. When expressions like that come from a man who I am sorry to say is so tainted with bitterness and hatred that all objectivity of thought and expression are lost, no one in or outside the Chamber pays the slightest attention to them, and I do not propose to waste any of my time replying to them.

Let me deal with a few of the things he said. He suggested that the Government have been directed by the Mayor of Rockhampton who writes in a dual capacity to tell us what to do. He was careful not to read the letter that was signed by Mr. Pilbeam for and on behalf of the Rockhampton Harbour Board and the Rockhampton City Council. Mr. Pilbeam happens to be a member of the Rockhampton Harbour Board and also the Mayor of the Rockhampton City Council. As long as the letter was written on the proper authority of both bodies—which I have not the slightest reason to doubt—I cannot see that there is any impropriety in writing in a dual capacity. He did not write simply as “Pilbeam” leaving us to deduce that he was writing on behalf of either or both bodies, but signed his letter “Pilbeam, For and on behalf of the Rockhampton Harbour Board and the Rockhampton City Council.” The Government could not have the slightest misunderstanding about it. In the course of that letter he made certain requests, and I should like to read to the Committee the reply that went to him. After the matter had been examined and discussed by Cabinet the following letter was sent over my signature:—

“Dear Mr. Pilbeam,

I have for reply your letter of 24th ultimo in which you advised me of the discussions which your Council has held with the Rockhampton Harbour Board and the submissions in regard to the repayment of the Harbour Board's old loans which both bodies had resolved to forward for consideration.

The submissions were—

(i.) That the Government waive all interest charges on these loans;

(ii.) That, in return, the Rockhampton Harbour Board undertake to liquidate the full amount of the capital indebtedness of £474,533 10s. 2d. by annual instalments of £8,000 over a term of 60 years;

(iii.) That the Rockhampton City Council's guarantee include this provision of the repayment of £8,000 per annum in the Harbour Board's budgets as a basis to determine the Council's liability; and

(iv.) That if the above submissions are unacceptable, both bodies would accept the Government's proposals subject to a maximum annual payment of £4,000 on account of the balance of the old loans.

I have given a good deal of thought to these proposals and because of the fundamental differences between these and the Government's original proposal, Cabinet's direction in the matter was sought.

Cabinet decided that the Government should adhere to the proposal notified to your Council and the Harbour Board on 3 November, 1959, with the proviso that

during the term of the Agreement the maximum excess payment required from the Harbour Board in repayment of the remaining indebtedness on the old loans of £316,191 10s. 2d. be £4,000 per annum. Upon the termination of the Agreement such payments would, of course, be determined in accordance with capacity to pay as outlined in my letter.

The two main considerations in our approach to this problem are—

(1) The necessity to place the Harbour Board on a reasonably sound footing for the future; and

(2) The Government's responsibility to preserve the State's interests.

In view of the many concessions which have been made to the Rockhampton Harbour Board in the past it was felt, on balance, that the proposal to waive all interest charges on the old loans could not be agreed to.

However, in accepting the limitation of £4,000 payable on the residual balance of the old loans, Cabinet appreciated your desire to have a clear-cut commitment so that long term financial planning would be possible.

It is noted that the Draft Agreement is acceptable to both bodies in all other respects. In view of Cabinet's acceptance of the proposed maximum payment of £4,000 on the balance of the old loans, action will be taken to finalise the Agreement and to introduce the legislation early in the resumed session of Parliament next year.

I thank you for your expressions of appreciation and assure you that the Government will feel amply rewarded when the successful development and operation of the port.”

The letter which I have just read will, I think, completely refute the suggestion that the contents of the Bill brought forward by my colleague had been dictated and written entirely according to the wishes of the Mayor of Rockhampton, Mr. Pilbeam. On the contrary, those who took part will bear me out when I say that at several stages in the discussion, on several facets of the agreement Mr. Pilbeam submitted cases. He presented them strongly but was not able to persuade the Government that it was the wisest course and in the interests of the State. And we made it clear that we could not accept all the submissions that he made. The agreement reflects the official consideration of Cabinet, drawn and based on the letter that I read.

The hon. member for Bundaberg, when referring to the powers of Harbour Boards drew a rather wider picture than is the case. He suggested that in the event of default by a Harbour Board, the Harbour Board Act provided for the appointment of a receiver and this receiver, in addition to being able to impose harbour dues on

ships that berthed and goods that passed over the wharves, had power to impose a levy in the way of a rate on lands in the area that constituted the Harbour Board. The first part of the statement is right. The Harbour Board must look for its revenue to the harbour dues and wharfage charges levied on ships and goods. The only case in history of Harbour Boards' being given power to rate lands in the area was in the special case of Mackay, when the Forgan Smith Government agreed to establish a harbour there. In order to finance the vast sum necessary provision was made to confer a residual power on the Harbour Board to impose a charge on the landholders in the area to provide as a special payment for the cost of the harbour. But that is not repeated in the general pattern of Harbour Board law. In bringing forward this Bill that does allow a charge in support of their guarantee we are expressing an already current power in a slightly varied manner.

Mr. Mann: The harbour has been a god-send to the town of Mackay.

Mr. HILEY: It was a power peculiar to Mackay. The Rockhampton Harbour Board has not, nor has any other Harbour Board, power to levy a tax on the land in the area. The capital costs of the Harbour Board must be met by harbour dues on ships that berth and goods that cross the wharves.

The hon. member for Port Curtis did refer to the fact that in the Rockhampton report reference is made to a second berth. That is perfectly true, but I inform the Committee that at the deep-sea port of Port Alma at the moment there is an island wharf, difficult of access. It is a two-berth wharf. One of those berths has deteriorated greatly and is really too dangerous to be used. One breast wharf, a new concrete wharf, to be built will replace one of the island wharves. The discussion in the report about the second wharf contemplates some future stage of development when it is visualised that the remaining island wharf will be no longer suitable for use and will have to be replaced by a second breast wharf. That is not part of the proposal now being considered or part of the guarantee of the Rockhampton City Council. That is a matter to be considered in the future when the need clearly arises.

When the new breast wharf is built, Rockhampton will possess at Port Alma a new concrete breast wharf and a screw-pile island wharf, and will continue to use both when two berths are necessary. As the second island wharf becomes older and continued repair unwarranted, it will be necessary for the harbour board to consider a second concrete breast wharf, and the economics of that proposal will be a new problem to be considered when the need arises.

Mr. Mann: There is plenty of opportunity for reclamation there.

Mr. HILEY: Yes.

The hon. member for Port Curtis referred to bulk-loading facilities at Gladstone and the part they played in the development of the port. His statements are perfectly correct. I should say the bulk installations at Gladstone have been the key to the development of a cereal trade and a coal export trade.

The Rockhampton committee, far from setting out to destroy the economy of Gladstone, was at particular pains to recommend to the Government—and the Government adopted the recommendation—that because bulk-loading facilities in Central Queensland were well taken care of by the installation at Gladstone, the Rockhampton Harbour Board should not be allowed to install bulk-loading facilities without special Government approval.

We have found in administering harbour boards that it is a dangerous thing to allow in places where there is only a trifle of trade very expensive installations which involve a high burden of interest and redemption, that is, for a slightly used asset.

The view of the Government when we received the report of the Rockhampton Committee was that the point was very well taken, and the Government instantly assented to the view that Gladstone, having incurred this expense, was entitled to protection in the bulk-loading field.

Mr. Burrows: Only in respect of coal, but not in respect of grain.

Mr. HILEY: Bulk-loading facilities are confined to the screw-winding device, which is a trifling one. Those who know anything about the handling of grain would realise that very few exporters will choose the screw-loading method.

Mr. Burrows: A pro forma or imaginary budget was drawn up for the Rockhampton Harbour Board.

Mr. HILEY: And it assumed that there may be a trifling amount of grain exports by screw-loading.

Mr. Burrows: If I remember rightly, approximately 30,000 tons, and that is the most Gladstone has ever exported in one year.

Mr. HILEY: That proposal did not weigh heavily with the Government because in our view the average exporter of grain will not choose the screw-loading method if he can command the use of a belt conveyor. The husk of the grain is unnecessarily disturbed by the screw-loading device. It does not keep as well and is subject to deterioration in transit. Exporters of grain will use screw-loading only when they cannot get a better device. Our view is that the belt conveyor device at Gladstone is a good unit and should be protected, and we think adequate protection is given. We do not visualise any heavy leeching away of bulk loading from Gladstone to Rockhampton—at least not for many

years to come, and by that time our hope is that further development in cereal growing in the district will be such that there will be trade for both ports.

Anyone who has studied the pattern of grain production in Queensland will agree that the growth of the industry in Central Queensland has been one of the very pleasing features of the last 10 years. Central Queensland has already reached the point where its exports of grain are second only to the Darling Downs. Grain has been produced very widely in the South Burnett for many years, but the Central Queensland districts are already past South Burnett in the quantity of grain produced. That gives hon. members a vista of what the Government think will be the continuous progress of the development of grain in Central Queensland.

Mr. Mann: Peak Downs?

Mr. HILEY: On the Lower Dawson.

Mr. Lloyd: The terrible failure?

Mr. HILEY: It was in the hands of the hon. member's Government. Our view is that this is a matter for the citizens of Rockhampton. Their money is concerned and they must be consulted. By virtue of his portfolio the Minister for Public Works and Local Government is the guardian of the ratepayers' interests wherever they are and he has rightly insisted on the protective procedure of a poll. If demanded, a poll must be taken. What a refreshing thing to see a group of citizens in the State prepared with their own money to back their faith in their district's development! The curse in the outlook of the average Australian when it comes to a matter of developing Australia is that he would rather lean on the Government. There is no Government money in this matter. Money will be borrowed by the Rockhampton Harbour Board on a Government guarantee. The citizens of Rockhampton will determine their own financial views.

Hon. J. A. HEADING (Marodian—Minister for Public Works and Local Government) (7.28 p.m.), in reply: The speech of the Treasurer has left little for me to say. I was not in the earlier discussions on Port Alma. This is a local government matter and that is why I am introducing the Bill. I want to stress that there will be no pressure on the people of Rockhampton. They can say "Yes" or "No" to the proposal. If 10 per cent. of them ask for a poll a poll will be held. The Council has to abide by the result of the poll. What more can anyone ask? The people of Rockhampton are prepared to levy themselves; we are only presenting the machinery to enable them to carry out the scheme.

As the Treasurer mentioned, development will eventually come to Central Queensland. There will be a lot of development in this State and the two ports will be working. There will be many people on the land as

well as in the cities. In that way the ports will be developed. I cannot blame the hon. member for Port Curtis for fighting for Gladstone. He might have used somewhat extravagant language, but, after all, he represents that area, there is an election pending, and the people of Gladstone will know what he has been doing by reading "Hansard." There is nothing more for me to say.

Mr. Burrows: We had to fight hard to get the trade.

Mr. HEADING: I should have mentioned that the hon. member for Bundaberg did not condemn the Bill; in fact, he was in favour of it. I am unable to understand why anybody should not be in favour of the proposal. We are giving the people of Rockhampton the chance to get what they want.

The Rockhampton City Council is contributing towards the cost of the road. After all, it is not much good having a road if there is no port at the end of it. Naturally, I am not surprised at the support accorded to the Bill by the hon. member for Rockhampton.

I commend the Bill.

Motion (Mr. Heading) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

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

CITY OF BRISBANE MARKET BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick—Minister for Agriculture and Stock) (7.33 p.m.): I move—

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

The Bill provides the necessary legislation to implement the recommendations of the committee of investigation that was appointed by the Government to investigate and report upon marketing facilities within the area of the city of Brisbane. While it makes no mention of the site, I am sure it is understood by all hon. members that the formation of the proposed trust is associated with the committee's recommendation that the new site for the markets be the one at Sherwood Road, Rocklea.

Some matters were raised by the Opposition during the introductory stage—most of them related to the proposed new site—and I should like now to make a few comments on them. In the first place, the Leader of the Opposition said that the 1958 committee of investigation was appointed to achieve the objective of moving the markets from their present site. That is not quite the case. The committee was asked to investigate the practicability of developing the present site and, if necessary,

to make recommendations on alternative sites. Both that committee and the 1953 Lord Mayor's committee of investigation examined the suggestion that the markets should be remodelled and allowed to remain on the present site. Even at the great cost mentioned by me during the introductory stage, it would be impracticable to allow the markets to remain at their present location, especially bearing in mind the present and future traffic requirements of the city area. Although it was said that the market group was prepared to erect an extensive building estimated to cost a considerable sum, it was thought that there would still be a traffic problem that could not be overcome.

The Leader of the Opposition, too, referred to an alternative site, to additions to the present site, and to the plan prepared by a group of Brisbane architects for the construction of a new market building in the present market area. At first sight the proposal may appear to have much to commend it but in arriving at the cost picture a great deal had not been taken into account. The market group estimated the cost at £2,500,000 but the committee thought it could easily be £3,500,000 and perhaps more. One is forced to ask: who would carry the heavy burden of expense? I stress that.

It cannot truthfully be said that the committee did not investigate the possibility of erecting extensive buildings on the present site. They did investigate it although it had been investigated by previous committees and the information was there to serve as a guide.

Mr. Lloyd: Did they take out a comparison of the cost of retaining the markets at the present site and the cost of moving them?

Mr. MADSEN: Yes. In re-building at the present site, the type of structure that would be necessary would be vastly different from one built on a new site. The suggestion was for a building with several storeys whereas on the new site, with ample space available, it would not be necessary to have more than one ground floor. The type of modern building required for the purpose is not expensive.

There was a complaint that the market group did not have the opportunity to make these suggestions, that the time was short. After all, it is almost a quarter of a century since the move was first mooted. Surely there has been ample opportunity in that time for them to submit a concrete proposal if they were really sincere in their suggestions. Rather were they stalling and seeking to delay the move a little longer. They were able to convince the previous Government and to delay action but the present Government are determined to take positive steps in the interests of all concerned.

Mr. Gair: But it is not the responsibility of the Government primarily.

Mr. MADSEN: It may not be.

Mr. Gair: It is the responsibility of the municipal authorities.

Mr. MADSEN: At the present site it is the responsibility of the municipal authorities but can the matter rest there? After all, the municipal authorities said it was beyond their financial resources.

Mr. Gair: That is the only reason that the Government come into the picture.

Mr. MADSEN: All the Government are doing is providing the machinery for the interested sections to do something about it.

Mr. Gair: Do not suggest that the previous Government evaded the responsibility.

Mr. MADSEN: Apparently they did not have the courage to proceed. After all, it has been banded about for 25 years and, although there were previous investigations and reports, nothing was done. In that time the opportunity has been lost for securing a site perhaps more suited to the establishment of a market. For the little extra distance entailed today, if the blame lies anywhere it must lie with the previous Government, who did not take action to secure a more suitable site.

Mr. Gair: You are being very unfair.

Mr. MADSEN: What other conclusion is there to come to? Surely any Government taking the long-range view could not expect the markets to remain indefinitely in that site.

Mr. Gair: The Brisbane City Council should have done something about it.

Mr. MADSEN: At least they initiated the move on this occasion by asking that some positive action be taken.

Mr. Gair: That is a different story from the one you have been telling us. If you want it that way I will give it to you.

Mr. MADSEN: I can take it, too. We do not run away from threats like that.

Mr. Lloyd: The Brisbane City Council has received considerable revenue from the markets in the past 25 years.

Mr. MADSEN: They may have, too, but there probably also have been some commitments that they have had to meet. The previous Government should have taken some action to ensure that the necessary facilities were provided to give the consumer and everybody concerned a better opportunity to make use of the markets.

Mention has been made of what has been done in other cities. Our information is that in both Sydney and Melbourne it has been found necessary to shift their markets. That is quite understandable when you see the congestion there just as we have here. Steps have been taken to re-locate their markets in other areas.

The appointment of the consumers' representative on the Trust has been discussed and a couple of amendments to the Bill have been suggested. Perhaps I could leave comment on those matters until the Committee stage.

The cost of the removal of the markets has been mentioned. It would not be possible at this stage to give a very accurate estimate of the cost of building new markets on the proposed new site. It is for the Trust to decide what type of buildings are required. It would be quite unfair to make an estimate now because after all expert knowledge will be employed in the planning of the new building and the final plan will require the approval of the Trust. We have been able to glean a great deal of useful information from the report submitted by the Director of Marketing following his trip overseas. No doubt some of that information has been used already to some extent. One concrete plan submitted for the alteration of the present markets and the erection of new market buildings on the present site includes an estimate of £3,000,000. But on closer examination it has been found that many other costs certainly would have to be met which would make the total cost even greater. I do not know that it is necessary to reply any further to statements made at the introductory stage, but it may be necessary to deal with some of the principles of the Bill at length.

One of the early provisions of the Bill covers the date to be fixed by proclamation when the provisions of the Local Government Acts and the City of Brisbane Acts which authorise and empower the Brisbane City Council to establish and maintain markets shall cease to have operation and effect. When the new markets are established and ready to commence operations these Acts will cease to have effect at the new site. The power given to the Brisbane City Council to make ordinances controlling and regulating the use of markets shall not apply with respect to the public market established by the trust under this Act. The Bill further provides that the Governor in Council may by Order in Council prescribe that any fruit or vegetable shall be exempt from the operation of the Act. A further provision defines vegetables. It also provides for the constitution of a trust. The representatives on the trust, as I explained on the introductory stage, will consist of a chairman, appointed by the Government, a representative of the Brisbane City Council nominated by the council, two representatives of the vegetable wholesalers appointed from a panel of six persons, and two representatives of the producers of fruit and vegetables nominated from a panel of six persons nominated by the Committee of Direction of Fruit Marketing. The ex-officio member will be the Director-General of Agriculture and Stock or his nominee. It also provides that if at any time the Brisbane City Council fails to nominate a representative for appointment

as a member of the trust, the Governor in Council may appoint as the member of the trust representative of Brisbane City Council a person nominated by the Minister. It provides for the remuneration of the chairman and the ex-officio member to be fixed by the Governor in Council. The remuneration of the other members is to be as approved by the Minister upon the recommendation of the trust. It follows the practice adopted with other boards. It also provides for vacancies that may occur on the trust either by death or sickness or for other reasons. It also provides for the removal from office by the Governor in Council of any person guilty of misbehaviour or incompetence. It also provides that the ex-officio member will act as chairman in the absence of the chairman. It is only when acting in that capacity that he will be entitled to a vote on the trust. It has been suggested that this will be a Government dominating trust. We want to make it perfectly clear that it is only when acting as chairman that he will have a vote. It also provides for the trust to meet at such times as it is considered necessary. The person presiding at the meetings will have an original vote, and in the event of an equality of votes, a second or casting vote.

Another provision is that a member shall not have a vote on any matter in which he has a pecuniary interest. This does not apply to an interest had by a member, including the chairman, the ex-officio member, or any acting member, in common with the other persons included in a class of persons or by reason that he holds any office under the Crown or that he is a member of a body corporate comprising more than 12 persons. The Trust is empowered to appoint and employ a manager and other officers it thinks necessary for the purpose of carrying out its functions. The Trust is to be a body corporate. It is capable of suing or being sued as a body corporate. The Governor in Council may grant in fee simple or demise in perpetuity or for a term of years any Crown land to the Trust. Subject to the Trust making payment as prescribed any land acquired shall become and be the property of the Trust.

Land vested in the Trust shall not be rateable by the Brisbane City Council.

The Trust is required to establish and maintain a public market in the area of the City of Brisbane for the sale and storage of fruit and vegetables, and for this purpose the Trust may acquire land, machinery, plant, goods, chattels and effects; erect, maintain and regulate the use of buildings, with all necessary machinery and plant; construct, or arrange for the construction of, railway sidings; construct or contribute towards the construction of roads, market-ways and approaches to markets; and lease sections of the market and provide for ancillary services and other matters and things necessary for the convenient use of the market.

The Co-ordinator-General will act as constructing authority for the Trust for the erection of market buildings and the construction of railway sidings, roads, market-ways and approaches to the market. It does not necessarily follow that the work will be carried out by the Co-ordinator-General, but tenders may be called and the Co-ordinator-General's Department will be the supervisory body to see that the terms of the contracts are carried out.

The Trust is required to provide accommodation in the market for every wholesaler of fruit and vegetables who makes application to the Trust and who, when the market is first made available for use, is carrying on business in the city area described in the Schedule to the Act, that is, the area bounded by Albert Street, Ann Street, George Street, Herschel Street to the northern boundary of Roma Street, and thence by a line north-easterly to Albert Street.

The accommodation to be provided is to be at least equivalent in area or, at the discretion of the Trust, number of sections to that held by the wholesaler in the location where he formerly carried on business. He must have an equal area and he may be given more.

The Trust may also, in its discretion, provide accommodation in the market for every wholesaler who makes application and who at 31 December, 1959, was carrying on business as a wholesaler in the City of Brisbane outside the schedule area, and has not been granted exemption by the Trust to enable him to carry on business in his existing premises. Such accommodation is to be at least equivalent in area or number of sections to that had, in the opinion of the Trust, by a wholesaler for carrying on such a business on 31 December, 1959.

Their position is safeguarded in that they will at least have an amount of space equivalent to the amount they have now, and there is no reason why they should not be provided with more if the Trust is in a position to provide it, and no doubt it will be.

For the first ten years of its operation only those persons to whom the section applies will be permitted to carry on business of wholesalers of fruit and vegetables in the market established by the Trust. Every person who make application to the Trust under this section may be required to enter into a lease of the area allotted to him for a period not exceeding 10 years. He has protection, of course, for 10 years and would be required to enter into a lease of the new area for a 10-year period on acceptance of the lease of the section.

The Bill empowers the Trust, with the approval of the Governor in Council, to borrow money by way of overdraft or temporary advance from any bank, person, or institution. The Trust is also authorised, with the approval of the Governor in

Council, to borrow by the issue of debentures, bonds or inscribed stock. The Bill also sets out the conditions under which debentures or inscribed stock may be issued by the Trust.

The Trust is authorised to pay brokerage for the procuring of a loan of any money, the borrowing of which has been approved by the Governor in Council. It is necessary to get the approval of the Governor in Council.

All loans borrowed by the Trust will be guaranteed by the Treasurer on behalf of the Government. The provisions of section five of the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Acts shall, with any necessary adaptations, apply in respect of moneys paid by the Treasurer pursuant to this section.

The Trust is required to keep proper books of accounts and submit a budget each year for the Minister's approval. The Government will have the opportunity of seeing what is going on just as they have the opportunity with other local bodies.

Mr. Mann: Will the Trust be subject to Government audit?

Mr. MADSEN: Yes.

Mr. Lloyd: Is the Trust to borrow money from the Government to erect these buildings?

Mr. MADSEN: Not necessarily. The Government can guarantee its loan. It will not be necessary for the Government actually to find the money. All books of the Trust shall be open to the inspection of the Auditor-General and the Trust will be required to furnish each year a statement of accounts and an annual report which will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. Thus everyone will have the opportunity of seeing what the Trust has been doing over the year. The Governor in Council, by Order in Council, might declare that the public market established by the Trust may be used for the sale and storage of any farm products or other commodities. The Governor in Council may make regulations prescribing all matters and things which by this Bill are required or permitted to be prescribed by regulation regulating and controlling all or any of the matters with respect to the conducting of business connected with the raising and repayment of loans under the authority of this Bill. The Trust with the approval of the Governor in Council is empowered to make by-laws for the conduct of its business.

Proclamations, Orders in Council, regulations and by-laws are required to be laid on the table of the Legislative Assembly.

I think that all people should be convinced of the need to do something about a matter that has been held in abeyance for a number of years. The Bill provides the necessary legislative power to proceed with the establishment of new markets, but as is the case with many other Bills, this Bill may

not fill the need for all time; it is at least a starting basis. It will supply something that the city has required for a long time.

Mr. DUGGAN (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (7.59 p.m.): I do not want to recapitulate the arguments I used when the Minister introduced the Bill, but I should like to emphasise once again that we acknowledge very freely that the present markets under present traffic conditions constitute a traffic bottleneck or hazard. Consequently steps must be taken to overcome that difficulty. The free flow of traffic in a modern city is a very necessary function of the authorities. If that was the only reason why action has been taken in this case we could say that there was some justification for seeing whether the markets should be shifted to another place. But there are other reasons to be taken into account. We think that the Government have not familiarised themselves sufficiently with the situation nor have they made sufficient contact with the merchants concerned to see whether plans could be evolved whereby the traffic problem may be met and provision made for the orderly marketing of fruit and vegetables. The merchants who use the markets might be able to submit an economic proposal. The Minister is adamant that the people at the markets have had ample opportunity of examining the suggestion and submitting proposals for alterations of the markets on the existing site. He says that they have not submitted any such plans to the Government's satisfaction. It is true that the present site is rather small in area and not in accord with modern requirements. Nevertheless, as I said on the introductory stage, the opinion is confidently held by people at the markets that with the expenditure of available money, a building could be provided that would meet the city's requirements for the next 50 years. The Minister has indicated that he rejects the Opposition's plea in that direction, and it is obvious that the Government propose to use their numbers to force the Bill through.

I realise, of course, that it is within the function of the Government to bring down any legislation that they believe is for the benefit of the general community. In this instance, however, the Minister has twitted previous Labour Governments on their alleged tardiness in making some provision for the removal of the markets. It is not primarily the responsibility of the Government to provide a municipal market. That is predominantly the function of the industry itself; secondly, it may be the function of the local authority. Certainly it is not primarily the responsibility of the Government. If that were so, why confine it to fruit and vegetables? Why not say that there is an obligation on the Government to concentrate all the wholesale warehouses in some convenient area where people who want softgoods, haberdashery, hardware, and so on can do their trading at a central

point? Taking it a step further, why should we not have a centralisation of selling facilities for timber and other commodities associated with the building industry? We might even reach the point where it is regarded as necessary to reserve an area for all retailing establishments. Of course, the retailers themselves have realised the benefit of concentrating their activities in the busy, populous parts of the city. For example, we have large retailing areas in the city itself, at Fortitude Valley, and in suburban shopping centres like Nundah, Stones Corner, Sandgate, and other places.

The proposal to exempt from rates the land to be occupied by the markets needs very careful consideration. We are throwing a good deal of responsibility on the Council in this matter. The markets will occupy an area of about 300 acres of land that will be very valuable in the future, and to exempt it from rating is to impose an undue strain on the local authority. It will have to build access roads to the area, and in the course of time no doubt it will be compelled to provide a transport service. Provision will have to be made for the transportation of employees to the markets early in the morning and perhaps late at night, which is a very costly undertaking.

Mr. Nicklin: When they go to the present markets, no public transport is available.

Mr. DUGGAN: It will be very costly to provide a service to a suburban area. For example, if a bus was scheduled to go to Rocklea it would be used primarily by employees at the markets, whereas busses running to the city area could be used by clerks, waterside workers, public servants, and many other classes of employees who work in the various business houses in the city.

As I say, the proposal to exempt the area from rates should receive very careful consideration. We frequently hear criticism by local authorities of the action of Governments in exempting themselves from the payment of municipal rates. I know, of course, that the State Government Insurance Office pays rates because it is a trading undertaking. I understand, too, that the Commonwealth Bank pays municipal rates to the various local authorities. There is no reason why fruit and vegetables should be exempted any more than timber, coal, building materials, or the produce of wholesale merchants or any other section of the trading community should be. I am rather surprised that the principle is embodied in the Bill. It is obvious that, though the Government say they have no direct financial responsibility in the matter, they indirectly want all the kudos and at the same time they are preventing the local authority from getting a reasonable return from the use of very valuable land on the perimeter of Brisbane. That should receive more careful consideration. Local authorities are at their wits' end. With the restrictions

imposed on them they are prevented from extending the range of their taxation. They can do it only by increasing electricity charges, transport charges or rates considerably. They cannot augment their income without making very heavy imposts on the ratepayers, who very often are not able to meet increased commitments. I am rather surprised at what is being done.

Secondly, the Co-ordinator-General's Department will be virtually acting as an agent for the trust in the preparation of plans. I do not see in the Bill any provision for payment by the trust to the Co-ordinator-General's Department of any supervisory expenses for the preparation of plans. True, if the Co-ordinator-General engages in the actual physical construction of the markets he is to be reimbursed by the members of the trust; but I do not see any provision in the Bill covering his superintendence of the calling of tenders, preparation of plans and so on. The Minister may be able to read into the clause that the preparation of the plans is an incidental expense to the general supervision but that is not clearly set out. Often when the layman reads one construction into a sentence the legal interpretation is entirely different. That is a matter that should be cleared up.

We propose at the appropriate stage to move an amendment to provide for an increase in the numerical representation of the trust by two. We think there should be two consumers' representatives, one from the National Council of Women and one from the Trades and Labour Council. The National Council of Women has many affiliated bodies and the Trades and Labour Council represents a huge body of unionist consumers in the State. That would give more effective consumer representation.

Then, the Minister should not have discretionary authority to limit the number of people who may sit on the trust, and he should accept without question the nomination of the people that the various sections of industry consider could adequately represent them. Why should he be given the right to reject four out of six names?

Mr. Evans: You always did it.

Mr. DUGGAN: No, we always did the fair thing, the right thing, and the decent thing. We are not like the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads, who rides roughshod over anybody and by brute strength imposes his will. If the Government talk about democracy they should be prepared to practise it. Imagine Mr. Menzies saying, "At the next Loan Council meeting I do not want to have the Premier and the Treasurer. Submit the names of six Ministers and I will select two of them to represent Queensland at the Loan Council." No doubt the nomination of the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads would be accepted by Mr. Menzies because he would not have the finesse of the Treasurer and the

Premier but I am sure that neither the Premier nor the Treasurer would be very happy to see four subordinate Ministers receiving preferential consideration. That is exactly the same principle. The Minister who interjected has been a forceful personality in the sugar industry and I know how he would feel if he won a ballot at Farleigh or somewhere else and found, when he wanted to represent the growers of Farleigh at a conference down here, that the Governor in Council had decided to select four lesser lights in the sugar industry to represent that section.

Another remarkable feature of the Bill is that to some extent it might even be said that it is a socialistic measure. It is appropriate that we should talk about this now because when the elections come round we will find statements being made similar to what we heard from the hon. member for Somerset and president of the Country Party when he very avidly used statements made by Mr. Whitlam, the Federal member who came up here to appear on "Meet the Press" when socialism was discussed generally. Some of the actions of the Government under the guise of doing things for the producer virtually amount to a socialistic system of selling fruit and vegetables. There is no difference in principle from socialising transport, electricity, or the provision of sewerage and water facilities where the public demand is clearly evident. In this case the Government elect to do that. On that ground I am not condemning the Government for taking this action, but a Government that talks so much about private enterprise, on this occasion are ignoring entirely the wishes of those in private enterprise and establishing a socialistic form of distribution of fruit and vegetables in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Hiley: Do you base that on the premise that the Markets Trust actually will be marketing the fruit and vegetables?

Mr. DUGGAN: Having virtual control of how the goods will be sold.

Mr. Hiley: They are the landlord.

Mr. DUGGAN: Where else can they go? They cannot hold a license unless they go out there. Where else can they go?

Mr. Hiley: Every agent can go there.

Mr. DUGGAN: If they do not they lose their licence.

Mr. Hiley: That is true.

Mr. DUGGAN: Exactly. They can impose any charges they think fit. As the Treasurer and everybody in the industry well knows, the C.O.D., through their contacts with members of Cabinet has been the primary force in this move to have the markets removed because at the present time, by a process of buying up agents in the market over the years, they have become a very formidable competitor against private merchants at the markets. There is nothing

to say that that trend will not extend. I am not saying that necessarily it is bad, but it is a tendency that no doubt could be accelerated in the course of time at the proposed Rocklea site. I mention this point, not because I want to get involved personally in defending or justifying these things. Nevertheless we hear these accusations made so loosely from time to time yet the Government under the guise of being the protectors of private enterprise are taking action that is more socialistic in character than all the bad things for which they condemn Labour Governments in various States and the Commonwealth.

Mr. Knox: You are agreeing with the legislation?

Mr. DUGGAN: If the hon. member has the perspicacity I gave him credit for this morning he should have no difficulty in determining our attitude towards this matter. If he has not that perspicacity I am afraid I must withdraw the remarks I made about him earlier.

I think that summarises our views in a general way except to repeat once again that unquestionably the cost of the new markets will increase generally the cost to the consumer. I do not think that can be denied. If there is to be a physical movement of commodities over a longer distance it will mean that vehicles will be on the road for a longer period of time. Certainly they will be spread out laterally over a longer area but nevertheless there will be more road miles traversed by vehicles in the metropolitan area. Additional heavy costs will be entailed in provision of siding accommodation, storage facilities, the construction of the necessary buildings, together with the reclamation of lowlying areas—only about 30 acres are above flood level. It must be acknowledged that it is proposed to transfer the markets from a site that is very convenient. The Minister has not elected to deny the statement that the geographical location of the present markets serves the requirements of most people. The only disadvantage, as I indicated before, is the transport congestion which does occur at the present time.

Mr. Hiley: It could be more expensive.

Mr. DUGGAN: It could be. It is a question of the time lost. I do not want to be pigheaded. If a submission is relevant, one must acknowledge it. I do think it will be more costly because goods coming from the North or the South would have to be shunted to Sherwood, Graceville, or Oxley and then moved to the new siding. Rail freight costs will be higher than at the present time.

Mr. Windsor: If you had done it 10 years ago it would not have cost half as much.

Mr. DUGGAN: A lot of things happened 10 years ago. One of the best things that could have happened was that the hon. member was not elected three years ago. If the

hon. member thinks in terms of 10 years he can look back in retrospect, but he will not be able to look forward to 10 years of parliamentary representation.

The Bill is an important one. No doubt the Government have been conscious of the opposition to it. In some directions they were very pigheaded, but where they found that opposition threatened the interests of Liberal candidates they were asked to reconsider it. The story was spread about that nothing would be done for five or six years. That seems to be the way they tried to placate these people. That is a sort of dishonest advocacy. I was informed of that by deputations who were not happy with the assurances given. They said they saw the Minister for Agriculture and Stock and the Premier and they received a most courteous and sympathetic hearing; and then they read in the Press that it was the intention of the Government to go on with the plan and so they lost faith in the Government. The Minister mentioned a sum of £3,000,000 to convert the facilities on the present site. Regarding the estimate on the new site, it could have been a couple of million pounds from what I have been told. That includes siding accommodation, and perhaps sewerage facilities and other things.

From an industrial point of view we do acknowledge that the present facilities do prevent the provision by employers of adequate amenities. I am not satisfied that the position should be left exactly as it is. We agree that some action should be taken. We do not think it should be allowed to drift until it is more difficult. There should be a more sympathetic examination of what can be done on the present site. Technical officers and the Government's officers say that it is not feasible to spend that sum of money on the existing site. The public would be prepared to go with the Government, but they think they have ridden rough-shod over them when they had an alternate proposal to make. The fact that some 600 or 700 people voiced objections and that there were discussions with the Premier proves that it is not a case of one or two people trying to make capital out of it. It is claimed that 80 or 90 per cent. of the circulars were roneoed and bore indications of having come from a central office, but I point out that there is nothing remarkable in that circumstance. I am quite certain that Government members during the election period will have identical notes prepared by Liberal headquarters. They will not be ideas which each hon. member has thought out for himself.

Mr. Windsor: There will be a special one for you.

Mr. DUGGAN: I should like a copy.

Any agitation of any importance ordinarily comes from one focal point. There may be more than one source, but generally speaking some leading individuals start an

organisation or campaign. I do not see anything unusual or sinister in the fact that these circulars may have emanated from a limited number of sources.

I think I have indicated in a general way our attitude to the proposal. Our views may be summarised in this way: unquestionably a traffic bottleneck exists at the moment, and there is inadequate provision of facilities and amenities for the employees of fruit and vegetable merchants. It would be fairly costly to alter the markets, but we think that that would be offset by the geographical suitability of the present site, the advantage to the city generally or an improved market area on the site, and the parking facilities that could be used at night. They would be of great benefit in overcoming the parking problem in the metropolis during the hours of darkness. The cost of removing the market would be a heavy one. Costs to consumers generally will be increased. We think a consumer's representative should be on the Trust to determine whether the proposals contemplated or envisaged by the Trust are not too extravagant. That is a further reason why a consumer's representative should be on the Trust. In the bureaucratic world in which we seem to be living, it is not unusual for such people to put up grandiose schemes that will add to the burden of consumers. They may decide to put up peaches by 2d. a dozen and potatoes by 1d. a lb. in the belief that the increases will not be felt greatly and will finance some grandiose undertaking. For these reasons it is essential that a consumer's representative should be on this particular body.

I have tried to be fair and to be reasonable in my criticism and comments on the Bill. I have taken an objective view. I have pointed out for the Minister's consideration what I think are one or two weaknesses of the Bill, but generally speaking we propose to confine our criticism and suggestions to the amendment. A further amendment not dissimilar to my amendment has been circulated by the hon. member for South Brisbane. I have no quarrel with it, as our approach is a common one. Hon. members will recall that on the introductory stage I said there was need for a consumer's representative. It is not an idea that has come to us only at this stage. I pointed out the desirability of having a consumer's representative and that view was supported by other A.L.P. members. It was shared by the hon. member for South Brisbane who has now circularised an amendment for that purpose. We think our amendment meets the bill. If it is rejected, naturally we will support the other amendment. If it too is rejected we will be back to where we are now. Being political realists we have to face up to the position that the Minister may reject the amendments.

Those are the general view of the Opposition on the Bill.

1960—3z

Hon. V. C. GAIR (South Brisbane) (8.25 p.m.): When speaking on the introductory stage of the Bill I adopted a very fair and balanced attitude, an attitude that I customarily take towards all measures. Hon. members will recollect that I said I thought there were as many arguments in favour of the transfer of the markets from their present site to the proposed site at Sherwood Road, Rocklea, as there were for the retention of the markets at their present location. I indicated that I thought the present site was an ideal one having regard to the requirements, facilities and convenience of growers who serve the markets particularly from centres far removed from Brisbane and who were connected with the markets by rail. I said also, it was true, that the proposed site would probably be of greater convenience and a boon to the producers of vegetables and small crops in the Redland Bay and Wellington Point areas because they are on the south side of the river. I am conscious that the growers in those parts are required to transact business on occasions when they bring their produce to market. After having delivered their products to market at the new site they would still have to continue over the Brisbane River to the city to do business associated with their calling.

However, I went on to say that I did not have any great quarrel with the transfer of site, that I was more concerned about the cost involved in the transfer and who was going to pay it. Is this transfer an unnecessary imposition on the taxpayers or the ratepayers? Is it necessary? Could it be avoided? Will the transfer add to the already exorbitant cost of fruit and vegetables to the average working man in the community? Those were my points of concern with this legislation. I recognise that traffic is an argument of paramount importance in the transfer of the market site. I am not satisfied, however, that the traffic problem is insurmountable nor am I satisfied that the matter has been completely investigated to the extent of avoiding this £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 expenditure which has to be borne by somebody. We pay for everything we get. Are we in a position to pay is the question to be considered. Everyone associated with the question has an obligation and a responsibility to examine the subject to see whether the expenditure can be avoided, that there will not be any wasteful expenditure because of the caprice or the peculiarity of somebody in a bureaucratic position.

I had to correct the hon. member for Sherwood who got down to the level of making this a political issue by saying that if the former Government had had the guts they would have transferred the markets. I did not think I should have to correct the Minister, from whom I expected more. He said that this question should have been dealt with by former Governments.

I have had enough experience in the government of this State to say—and I think it is

worth while that I should say it with all the emphasis at my disposal—that during the period that I was Premier of this State—and perhaps during the period when I was a Minister of the Crown—I have no recollection of any approach being made to the Government for any help in this matter. It is true, as the Minister said, that the transfer of the markets has been a controversial matter for 25 years or longer, but because municipal authorities and councils of all political shades have regarded it as politically expedient to defer the matter, that is no reason why former Governments of this State should be asked to accept the responsibility.

This is purely the responsibility of the municipal authorities. The Roma Street markets are owned by the Brisbane City Council. As I said in my remarks on the introductory stage, it has collected no less than £500,000 in rents and has spent virtually nothing in improving or modernising the markets to meet the needs of increased business and increased traffic. By way of interjection, and in a desire to help the Minister, the Premier said, "What about the other markets?" I point out that that is a co-operative undertaking, owned by the merchants and the agents. After all, they are entitled to some consideration. What case would any State Government have for invoking the power conferred by resumption laws and saying, "You will have to move out"?

How could a State Government initiate action in this matter without first having some approach from the council? When I spoke on the measure a few days ago, in correcting the hon. member for Sherwood I said that it was entirely a matter for the municipal authorities, but that the Government were required to introduce this legislation to give the council financial assistance and to give some statutory authority to the proposed Trust. By way of interjection the Minister said, "That is true. The council has initiated the move and has asked us to proceed in the matter." Tonight, however, he made a political matter of it, and said that former Governments had fallen down on the job because they did not remove the markets from Roma Street to another site. He said that if we had done so, probably a much better site would have been available then than at the present time. That is not the attitude that I would have expected the Minister to adopt. By way of interjection I said that it was unfair and mean of him to adopt it. I challenge the Premier, who made an undertone interjection, to examine the files in his office to see whether any approach was made to my Government on the transfer of the markets.

Mr. Madsen: Can you tell us why the council and the Department of Agriculture and Stock were associated in an investigation?

Mr. GAIR: Probably because of a request for an investigation. But no positive proposal was made to my Government—or in my

memory, to my predecessors—for the removal of the markets. That it has been the subject of controversial discussion in the Brisbane City Council over a period of years, I agree entirely. But no council ever got down to doing anything about it and probably the present council would not have done so if it had not been encouraged by what has taken place under the heading of traffic regulations and the reorganisation of traffic systems. I am entitled to make that correction and the public should be told the truth. It is not the responsibility of the Government to be concerned about the markets in Brisbane any more than about the markets in Townsville or Rockhampton or anywhere else. They are strictly the concern of the municipal authorities. Unless those authorities, which are statutory bodies, elected by the people in most cases, seek assistance, financial or otherwise, to expedite or facilitate the taking over or transfer, the Government have no reason to come into the picture.

Having disposed of that, I say very definitely that I am concerned at, and not very satisfied with, the provisions in the Bill dealing with the trust and its powers. I am concerned more particularly about its powers than about the trust itself and its composition. It is proposed that the trust of six persons, representing the Government, the Council, the producers and wholesalers, shall determine that a person who elects to engage in business as a produce merchant or a wholesale merchant, or who seeks to be approved as an agent for the growers in that category, must trade in a given spot and that is the proposed site of the new market. That is taking things too far. Some in rebuttal may point to hotel licences, for which tenders are called, sites nominated and so on; but there is no analogy. It is an infringement of democratic rights for any trust to be given power to say that if I wish to establish a fruit merchant's business down at Breakfast Creek or anywhere else in Brisbane, away from the markets altogether, I should not be allowed to do so. Do we congregate all the accountants together, put them into the T. & G. Building and say, "You cannot practise outside this building"? Do we collect the doctors and say, "You cannot engage in your profession anywhere except on Wickham Terrace"? Of course not! It is ridiculous in the extreme. It is more than ridiculous; it is a serious interference with the rights of the people. It could be argued that it would be more advantageous for the individual to be established at the markets. That could be true but the fact remains that if a person elects to go somewhere else it would be his "pigeon" whether it was advantageous or not to him and he should be permitted to do so.

Mr. Hiley: Is there not a public interest in having one market that would be defeated by dispersal?

Mr. GAIR: Not necessarily. It would not be defeated by giving to the individual his normal rights in a democratic community.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the necessity to have consumers' representatives on the Trust. I went further and indicated very definitely that I intended to move an amendment in the Committee stage. I propose to move that the Board be increased from five to seven—whatever the number might be—to permit of the appointment not only of a consumers' representative, but also a retailers' representative, both of whom are very important to the industry.

I have a very good memory, too good perhaps for some hon. members of the Government. I can remember the cases that used to be put up for consumers' representatives on various boards. I recollect that as a Government we appointed consumers' representatives on the Milk Board, the Fish Board, and others. There is a very definite reason why the public should be represented on these commodity boards.

Mr. Nicklin: There is a vast difference between commodity boards and a market trust.

Mr. GAIR: The difference is only in the titles; the functions are no different.

Mr. Nicklin: Of course they are.

Mr. GAIR: No different at all. It was described as a landlord by the Treasurer a little while ago. But its functions are more than that if it has the authority to regiment people and to say, first of all, whether it will grant a license to anybody, and, secondly, where he can set up his business. Its power goes beyond that of a landlord if it has that influence and control over the conduct of the industry. Let us be realistic and factual; do not let us hedge because some bureaucrat does not want to be bothered with representatives of the consumer and the retailer. The closed set-up is the tendency today with many semi-governmental bodies. Let us have regard for the needs and interests of the people. That should be the paramount consideration of representatives of the people. Let us appoint consumers' and retailers representatives to this trust or board—call it what you will. The only difference between a commodity board and this proposed body is the name. The Government call it a trust which will control the tenants of the market and allocate space.

Mr. Harrison: But not the product.

Mr. GAIR: No-one controls price today, it is out of hand.

Mr. Harrison: I said "product," not "price."

Mr. GAIR: In effect it will control the product, too. In any case I think, very sincerely, that the time is opportune for the Government to consider or reconsider this important phase of the Bill. Let the consumer

be represented; let the retailer be represented; and then perhaps your Trust—with emphasis on the trust—will be more representative of all those engaged in this very important industry. Then perhaps the public will be more confident that the Government have acted in the best interests of the community, and not merely from pressure from some people who believe it is almost essential that the markets be moved out irrespective of what cost is involved to the consuming public.

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick—Minister for Agriculture and Stock) (8.46 p.m.) in reply: After listening to the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member who just resumed his seat, one would imagine that the markets in Brisbane are utilised only for the consumer in Brisbane and those producers who supply the market for Brisbane consumption only. That is far from the truth. The Brisbane market could fairly be described as the Queensland market. In fact, it goes far beyond the boundary of the State. We send produce to New South Wales. There is a fruit and vegetable train going north—I do not know how many times a week—with fruit and vegetables. It runs to Cairns and out to Mt. Isa. I had the privilege of riding on that train once and I noted the speed with which the goods were delivered to the various areas. Bearing that in mind, and the tonnages sent out from the market, is there any reason why this should be the responsibility of the Brisbane City Council? Surely that gives the answer to those who say it is the responsibility of the Brisbane City Council alone.

Mr. Gair: Is there any Act which controls the markets of Brisbane?

Mr. MADSEN: Yes, the Local Government Acts and the City of Brisbane Acts.

Mr. Gair: What is it?

Mr. MADSEN: There is provision under the Acts that I referred to a while ago.

Mr. Gair: The Department of Agriculture and Stock has power to carry out inspections.

Mr. MADSEN: They are working under the Fruit and Vegetables Acts at the present time. It is suggested that this is the sole responsibility of the City Council. In view of the produce that is going through to the south and almost every part of the State can it be argued that it becomes the responsibility of the Brisbane City Council only? The facilities are there, and the agents are there, and they attend to the business. I say very definitely that if the agents were given the choice of whether they want to be grouped in one place or over the whole city, I believe they would prefer the former.

Mr. Brookes, Secretary of the Chamber of Fruit and Vegetable Industries, said that if a change had to be made the idea of a

trust was good provided you had reasonable representation. Opinion on the removal of the markets was divided but there was a strong feeling it would be better for all activities to be under the one roof. That is accepted all over the world—a central place for markets. I have a photo. of a modern market in America which is well spaced, and there is room for a couple of lanes of traffic. A traffic census disclosed that on Monday, 6 October, 1959, between 7 and 8 o'clock there were 560 vehicles trying to gain access to the markets. Hon. members can imagine the congestion with 560 vehicles seeking access to the markets. These are the figures for the remainder of the week—

Tuesday	..	435
Wednesday	..	380
Thursday	..	520
Friday	..	520

It has been said that we can overcome the traffic congestion by building upwards. Even if several points of entry were provided, or separate points of entry and exit, the traffic still has to be handled in the streets adjoining the markets. The suggestion of building upwards would not overcome the traffic problem which the Leader of the Opposition has acknowledged.

A co-ordinated market or a market under the same roof, as Mr. Brooks described it, is accepted practice all over the world. In this type of business it is beneficial to all interested parties, the agents, consumers and producers. If we merely closed the markets and said, "You fellows can do what you like," they would be the first to ask us to provide an area where they could congregate as at present. The evidence collected in Canada and the United States on markets seems to suggest that those countries regard a market in one area as being the most suitable practice. It is adopted in our capital cities as well as in countries overseas where investigations were carried out.

Mr. Gair: If you left the problem to them, they might do a lot better.

Mr. MADSEN: That may be so but I think the hon. member will agree that it would hardly be a fair thing simply to push out these people or leave them to the mercy of the winds. The Government are endeavouring to avoid that position. We think we have some responsibility and, if the markets must be moved, we think we should provide facilities at least equal to those now provided and even better if agents can prove to the trust that they require a greater area. The photograph I have handed round to hon. members gives an indication of what can be done to provide modern marketing facilities.

Mr. Gair: At a cost.

Mr. MADSEN: At a cost, but the important point is to select the best area where markets can be established to effectively meet the needs of the city for years to come.

Mr. Gair: Although the Government suggest this is an important matter, over the years I never heard any advocacy from the Premier, who is a fruit-grower, for a change in market site.

Mr. Nicklin: Yes, ever since I came into the House.

Mr. Gair: I have never heard advocacy from you, as a pineapple-grower.

Mr. Nicklin: My word you have!

Mr. MADSEN: The Leader of the Opposition has referred to it as a socialised marketing system that has been developed and is now utilised all over the world. The trust is not a trading business. It will simply provide facilities for persons who may even be able to save on costs. For instance, instead of every agent having facilities for ripening bananas, it is possible that there will be a central unit that can be operated at a lower cost than the cost of operating individual ripening rooms.

I think the Treasurer put his finger on the spot when he said it was a matter of measuring miles against time. I am certain after considering the traffic census that in all likelihood the cost of extra miles travelled would be minor compared with the cost represented by wasted time. Furthermore, many thousands of producers are concerned in getting their produce to the markets. Perhaps hon. members can visualise a semi-trailer endeavouring to enter the markets at present. What delay would be occasioned to the vehicle and hundred of others! It would be almost impossible to calculate the time involved.

Mr. Lloyd: What do you intend to do with the produce merchants?

Mr. MADSEN: They will remain. The Bill distinguishes between fruit and vegetables on the one hand and the produce market handling heavy farm produce.

Either the hon. member for South Brisbane or the Leader of the Opposition mentioned rates, but I remind the hon. member that much of the land acquired for this purpose is already held by the Government for their own purposes. I was sorry, as Minister for Agriculture and Stock, that it was necessary for my department to hand over quite an area of the land as we were hoping to develop it for another purpose. We are placed at a disadvantage in having to acquire another site. We happily agreed to hand over the land. Rates would not have been payable in any case; rates will only be paid on the extra land acquired.

Mr. Davies: What area would the produce section represent of the whole area?

Mr. MADSEN: I am not in a position to answer that question. It was said that the Government are panicking. If anyone has turned this matter into a political controversy I should say that the Opposition brought it about when they referred to the distance of the

markets from the city. It would be a fair reply to say that perhaps if it were not for the dilatory action of former Governments it would not have been necessary to go so far. A far-seeing Government could have set aside an area for a market. The committee investigated many sites and it was prepared to examine any suggestion put forward by anybody. Everyone had ample opportunity to put forward suggestions.

Mr. Gair: I do not remembr the Chandler Council ever suggesting it. It might have conflicted with their Green Belt idea.

Mr. MADSEN: A very thorough investigation was made by the City Council in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture and Stock.

Mr. Lloyd: Where do you think this money will come from?

Mr. MADSEN: Where does any other money come from? A local authority is given authority to borrow.

Mr. Lloyd: Semi-governmental?

Mr. MADSEN: Yes. The Government naturally guarantee the loan.

Mr. Gair: Which is proof of what I said, this is a council matter.

Mr. MADSEN: I do not regard the provision of a market as solely a local-authority matter.

Mr. Lloyd: You will be diverting an increased proportion of Queensland's loan allocation to Brisbane, won't you?

Mr. MADSEN: That may be so, but is this not a very important project?

Mr. Lloyd: It is just a point.

Mr. MADSEN: It is a point, but if one put all these matters on a priority basis, where would the markets project rank in priority? It is a matter of urgency.

Mr. Lloyd: It looks as though marketing facilities will cost the consumers a good deal more than at present.

Mr. MADSEN: Is there any reason to suggest that the consumers will carry any more than the producers? I remind the hon. member that the consumers are carrying a tremendous burden now because full advantage cannot be taken of the facilities available at the markets.

The next point that was raised related to representation on the proposed trust, which is being set up for the specific purpose of providing facilities for the agents and merchants. The Government took into account the need to keep down costs by not having too large a controlling body. After all, the retailers are not being interfered with in any way. Again, representation of the City Council and the Government is surely sufficient representation for the consumer. There is a tremendous difference between a trust of this nature and a board of the nature referred to by the hon. member for South

Brisbane. After all, a board that trades in a commodity can establish a price, so that there may be need for consumer representation on it. I very much doubt the truth of the hon. member's statement that the Government, when in Opposition, recommended consumer representation. I personally remember no such happening. There is a tremendous difference between a trust that is providing a facility and a board that is trading in a commodity. I hold the view that there is no necessity for consumer representation on the proposed trust. One might just as easily say that the carriers who go to the markets every day should be represented. The number of bodies that should be represented could be taken to extreme limits. There is no analogy between the services provided by doctors and accountants and the marketing of fruit and vegetables. Everyone engaged in the trade regards the proposed step as essential. As Mr. Brooks put it, there would be a strong feeling that it would be better for all activities to be under the one roof, or in the one area.

In the preparation of the Bill we have been guided by the representations of those most interested. The producers' representatives openly supported the system of providing a panel from which to make a selection. I do not know their reasons. The growers have representatives of many branches and it may be rather hard for them to select one and pass over another. Whether it is a case of passing the buck or whether it merely simplifies their problem, I do not know, but it is a better system than having the Government appoint someone without reference to the organisation itself. The Government were wise in being guided largely by the opinions of those most affected.

It may be that many of the agents did not agree but we have not had any complaints. At least I have not had any and I think it would be usual for them to complain to me. I have had no request from the consumers for representation.

Mr. Duggan: They have lost faith in the Government.

Mr. MADSEN: I do not know. The very fact that they have not complained suggests that they have every faith in the Government. They are confident that we will give them a fair deal. That may be why the previous Government had all the requests. I have not had any and to my knowledge no member of the present Government has. The matter should not be political.

Mr. Gair: You made it so.

Mr. MADSEN: No. If it has been political at all the blame lies at the feet of hon. members opposite. It should not be discussed on a party-political basis but from the point of view of providing the greatest amount of good to the greatest number of people. That has guided the Government in bringing forth the Bill.

Motion (Mr. Madsen) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 4, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 5—Establishment of the Trust—

Mr. DUGGAN (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (9.9 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

“On page 3, line 31, omit the word—
‘five’

and insert in lieu thereof the word—
‘seven’.”

I have already indicated to the Minister that I think provision should be made for consumer representation and if that is given effect to it will be necessary later on to amend another sub-clause. We have asked that one consumer representative be from the National Council of Women and the other from the Trades and Labour Council. It seems necessary for me at this stage to amplify my reasons but I will not repeat them in the same detail later. The Minister said it would be very difficult to draw the line of demarcation if one began putting more men or women on the trust because carters, for example, might be regarded as being eligible for representation and it would be difficult to decide who should be included and who should be excluded. For that reason we have tried to make a broad pattern. For the women there should be a representative from the National Council of Women. That would include the person who is responsible for ensuring that the family income is spent wisely. We consider that the Queensland Trades and Labour Council includes a great body of unionists in the State and consequently would include men who would be carters and carriers and most other people who would be obliged to work in the capacity of markets employees. There is a need for a recognition of the consumers' point of view. It is all very well to say that the consumers have no real problem facing them in the erection of buildings, but it must be conceded that to a very large degree consumers are becoming a forgotten race by Governments. The rising price of commodities generally represents a very great problem to the housewife who is managing on a low income. If Governments were more conscious of the needs and difficulties of consumers it would be very good for the economy generally. We are living in an age when there is an increasing tendency for buying rings to operate, for the amalgamation of different firms, and for the cartelisation of sections of industry, all of these ultimately adversely affecting the consumer. Only this week I understand an arrangement was made which affected the sale of stainless steel sinks. Within a few days the price has risen something like £2 10s. a sink. That sort of thing is going on continually. There are continuous extensions of trade agreements. All these firms are concerned about is the passing on

of increasing costs. It is desirable that we should take cognisance of the consumer, particularly when we are dealing with the basic commodities of fruit and vegetables which represent such a substantial percentage of the expenditure of the family income. Fruit and vegetables are essential items in the diet of growing children. The expenditure on fruit and vegetables represents a considerable weekly sum in families where there are children.

We have had a close look at this matter. There are no politics in our suggestion. From my knowledge of some of the women who have occupied high positions in the National Council of Women, most members of that organisation are supporters of the Liberal Party. It could be said that one would expect that members of the Trades and Labour Council would support the Labour Party. There cannot be any suggestion that we have made any political demarcation at all. The National Council of Women is representative of many affiliated bodies. Therefore a representative of that women's organisation would be truly representative of women as a whole. I do not think that the Government could do better than appoint a representative of a body like the Queensland Trades and Labour Council from the trade-unionist's point of view. For those reasons I ask the Minister to consider our thoughts on the matter.

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick—Minister for Agriculture and Stock) (9.14 p.m.): For the reasons I mentioned earlier I am unable to accept the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. A trust of this nature that will simply provide facilities is quite a different matter from a board that would be trading. The term “board” or “trust” very often is used loosely but in this instance the word “trust” means the body that will merely provide the facilities. The passing of time may bring about other opinions, but for the present I am not prepared to accept the amendment.

Amendment (Mr. Duggan) negatived.

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon) (9.15 p.m.): Sub-clause (5) says, “The Trust shall not represent the Crown for any purpose whatsoever.” The Minister indicated that the Government's view is that these markets are not really the responsibility of the Brisbane City Council, and for that reason the Government deemed it desirable to take the action they are now taking. It seems rather unusual that this provision should be written into the Bill. Although the Government are setting up a trust and clothing it with all sorts of dictatorial powers it is laid down that the trust will not represent the Crown in any way whatsoever. If any person is aggrieved at the treatment meted out to him by the trust he has no redress because the Crown has no power to step in and ensure that justice is done.

Mr. Hart: Why can they not sue them?

Mr. HILTON: Under the powers vested in the trust, as the hon. member knows, they cannot sue the trust in respect to the administration of any specific power vested in the trust. Common law rights are over-ridden by the trust, and there is no provision for appeal against any injustice that may be perpetuated against a person because of that provision in Clause 5.

Mr. Hart: I think you are misreading it.

Mr. HILTON: I should like some information on that point. We find it extraordinary that the Government should set up a trust and clothe it with dictatorial powers and then say to it, "You do not represent us. You exercise the powers vested in you and no citizen has any redress."

Mr. Mann: The Government are shirking their responsibility.

Mr. HILTON: They are not only shirking their responsibility.

Mr. Madsen: You know that it is written into the legislation relating to many boards, including the Milk Board.

Mr. HILTON: The hon. member drew a distinction between the operations of the commodity boards and the operation of this trust. I know that provision is written into the legislation concerning commodity boards. It is written into the Fruit Marketing Organisation Act. I submit it is unnecessary and dangerous to have that provision, and unless the Minister can give a good reason for it I for one will vote strongly against it.

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick—Minister for Agriculture and Stock) (9.19 p.m.): As I mentioned, this provision is contained in legislation governing many of our commodity boards. The Bill does give protection to those who think they have a grievance. The trust cannot claim Crown privilege. Action could be taken against the trust the same as if it was an ordinary individual. The trust cannot claim any special privilege whatever. Being a body corporate it is capable of suing and being sued. In this case it does not represent the Crown and cannot claim Crown privilege.

Clause 5, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 16, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 17—Accommodation for wholesalers, etc., in the public market—

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon) (9.21 p.m.): Sub-clause (3) reads—

"Save wholesalers to whom the foregoing provisions of this section apply, and their heirs, successors and assigns, the Trust shall not—

(a) Permit or allow any person to carry on the business of a wholesaler; or

(b) Provide for any purpose of or connected with the carrying on of the business of a wholesaler any accommodation,

in the public market established under this Act during the period of 10 years commencing on the date when the Trust first makes the public market established under this Act available for use as such."

As I understood the Minister's statement, this provision is included by way of compensation in lieu of cash compensation. It is rather dangerous, because it is hard to visualise what will happen in 10 years from the time the markets are established. Under the Bill the Trust is absolutely unable to allow any other wholesaler to commence operations. As I said when the Bill was introduced, in the course of the next 10 or 15 years—it will be some time before the markets are set up—a genuine co-operative producers' organisation may want to transact business in the city of Brisbane, but will be prevented from doing so by the Bill. It should provide for such a contingency.

I shall not go into detail or cover points I mentioned at an earlier stage, but in my opinion there is evidence in some country centres of a strong desire among producers to form co-operative associations for the disposal of their produce more readily with profit to themselves and greater advantage to consumers.

In this Chamber last year it was revealed that co-operative packing societies outside Adelaide through good organisation and efficiency could send goods 80 miles to Adelaide, rail the goods to Alice Springs, send them 700 miles overland to Mt. Isa and still compete successfully with similar produce from Brisbane. The matter was raised by the hon. member for Carpentaria and the Minister for Development concurred, as he had seen much of that produce being sold at Mt. Isa.

I have mentioned that under the present marketing system producers suffer through low prices and lack of concerted action when the occasion demands it. I was shockingly misrepresented on statements I made recently, but that is beside the point. I do not think any action should be taken which will positively prevent a genuine producers' co-operative society from selling its produce in the markets for at least 10 years after the markets are established. I think that further consideration should be given. A genuine co-operative society should be permitted to sell its products in the market area, particularly because it cannot be permitted to sell them in any other part of the city.

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick—Minister for Agriculture and Stock) (9.26 p.m.): Unfortunately, perhaps the fruit industry is like so many other industries. I have had the unpleasant task of reminding primary industries that there is a need for them to do more for themselves. The producers have elected, in this case, to market their fruit principally through

an organisation set up under statute, the Committee of Direction of Fruit Marketing, and at the present time we are unable to deal with any other body representing the producers. We find that producers are somewhat divided in their attitude, some being strong supporters of the C.O.D. and others critical of it. It is not a matter for the Government; it is a matter for the industry to settle. Unfortunately, criticism is often levelled at such organisations when times are bad. Everything is all right with an organisation when things are floating along all right, but when there is a little recession in industry all too often the producers tend to break down an organisation that has taken years to build up. We had an instance of that in the pineapple industry only last year, when a very difficult situation arose. It does not help anybody to break down a marketing body when times are tough. That is often what happens. It has been felt that as no monetary compensation has been paid to the agents it was necessary to give them a certain period of tenure free from competition. I hope that there will be more co-operative selling throughout the State. The only growers' body we can really recognise is the C.O.D. and we have endeavoured to give it equal representation with the agents, and for the moment, that is the best we can do.

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon) (9.29 p.m.): I appreciate the Minister's comments. I have always been, by and large, a strong supporter of the C.O.D. All fruit growers are, as it were, confined to the Committee of Direction of Fruit Marketing for the handling of their produce, and there is no escape from it. Only the other day a meeting was held in Stanthorpe when a member of the deciduous group committee wanted to table a notice of motion that the growers be given a chance to ballot whether they should remain in the C.O.D. or not. Delegates from every committee comprise the C.O.D. The notice of motion was ruled out of order by the chairman. I understand, on the advice of a prominent C.O.D. man present at the meeting. I am not arguing the matter one way or the other. I do not know whether the majority would want it. However, I do not think that for all time the fruit-growers of Queensland should be compelled to remain in the C.O.D. only, which, after all, is not a co-operative society in the true sense of the word. I realise that at present it is the only organisation acting in the interests of growers and that it has done a very good job in some directions. However, it is not fulfilling all the requirements of the growers, and I do not think the legislation should be made so watertight that a future co-operative society should be precluded for a period of 10 years from operating at the markets.

Clause 17, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 18 to 26, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 27—By-laws—

Mr. FOLEY (Belyando) (9.32 p.m.): This clause reads—

"The Trust, with the approval of the Governor in Council, may from time to time make by-laws not inconsistent with this Act, prescribing all matters and things which by this Act are required or permitted to be prescribed (save any such matter or thing so required to be prescribed otherwise than by a by-law) and in particular—

"(a) Prohibiting the sale by auction in the Area of the City of Brisbane of any prescribed fruit or vegetables elsewhere than the public market established under this Act;

"(b) Prohibiting the sale in the Area of the City of Brisbane within a prescribed distance from the public market established under this Act, of any prescribed fruit or vegetables by hawkers or stall keepers, or except on the premises of the seller;"

and so on.

That indicates that all prescribed fruit and vegetables grown within a certain distance of Brisbane, or even anywhere in Queensland, must go through the markets if they are being sold for distribution in the City of Brisbane area. A little while ago, papaw-growers a short distance from the city found that the markets were offering them an uneconomic price. For example, a man who was producing papaws on my daughter's farm at Kuraby found that the best price he could get for prime papaws at the markets was 3s. a case. Each case cost him 1s. 6d., and in addition he had to bear transport costs, commission on the sale, and labour costs. What was left for them? They could plough them in or send them to the market and show a loss. It so happened that the grower met one of the hawkers who has a series of stalls in various parts in the city area, even several miles out on the Pacific Highway. He handles a tremendous quantity of goods, most of them purchased at the markets, and he retails most of them, where possible, by the case. He made a deal with the grower. He said, "I will come out with my motor truck and take your papaws. You need not pack them as prescribed by the market. I will return your cases. You will have no transport costs and you will have no commission charges and I will give you 3s. a case." Under those conditions it paid the grower to pick them, case them, and hand them over. He received the cases back, whereas he would have lost 1s. 6d. each if he had sent them to the market. So he was able to sell several thousand cases of papaws at that price. I ask the Minister whether there is provision in a glut for growers to deal in that way instead of having to send the goods to the market? The hawker cuts down on the ordinary charges and in the case I cited he enabled the grower to dispose of his product at a price that paid him.

Mr. Hilton: He is out.

Mr. FOLEY: It seems that under clause 27 he is out. If that is so, the by-laws should provide for glut conditions.

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick—Minister for Agriculture and Stock) (9.39 p.m.): The hon. member should read on. Clause 27 (c) provides—

“Prohibiting the sale in the Area of the City of Brisbane of any prescribed fruit or vegetables in any market other than the public market established under this Act, except with the consent of the Trust and subject to the by-laws.

“For the purposes of this paragraph ‘market’ shall mean any place where a number of producers of any prescribed fruit or vegetables or their agents congregate for the purpose of selling or offering for sale any such prescribed fruit or vegetables;”.

The balance of the provision deals with the matter, but if it must be decided by regulation I assure the hon. member that I will take note of his suggestion because in certain cases it provides a means of finding a sale for products that could not otherwise pass through the market.

The subject of stalls has received a great deal of attention. Most of the stalls that formerly operated on roads and highways have been forced to get behind their own boundary fences and that may make a difference. I assure the hon. member that I am prepared to have a look at the matter.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (9.40 p.m.): The clause seems to give the trust a tremendous power to control the public market. So many powers are vested in the Trust that I wish to refer to a few of them and ask the Minister to explain the reasons for them. The regulating of the method of selling in the public market and certainly the prevention of every kind of fraudulent device in relation to the sale of fruit and vegetables is quite justified, but the actual selling methods to be adopted seem to give very wide powers to the Trust. There are two other powers which I more seriously question. The first appears in Sub-clause (vii.) on page 22, which states—

“. . . and providing for and regulating the storage, removal, treatment and disposal of garbage, offal, waste and sewage.” That would be quite necessary, but further down we see—

“If there shall be any inconsistency between any by-law made under this Act and any ordinance made by the Brisbane City Council, the former shall prevail, and the latter shall, to the extent of the inconsistency, become or be invalid.”

In many instances a great number of City Council health ordinances are framed for the specific purpose of protecting the public. The power taken here seems to make the Market Trust a government within a government, an empire of its own. It seems to have completely autocratic power over the

administration and the activities of merchants and vehicles within the precincts of the Trust. It seems to be taking it a little far when the Trust can override ordinances that have been made by the Brisbane City Council to protect the health of the community generally. Any disposal of sewage, garbage, offal and waste within the area of the Trust could have serious repercussions on the public. If the by-laws and regulations made by the Trust can over-ride the ordinances of the Brisbane City Council there could be some serious ill-effects.

The third matter which I think is worth while bringing up and which bears out my contention that the Bill seems to be designed to create a completely autocratic organisation and a government within a government is Sub-clause (ix.) on page 22, which states—

“Providing in relation to the public market established under this Act, for the inspection, seizure and destruction of fruit, vegetables, farm products or other commodities unfit for sale.”

That sub-clause vests in the Trust powers that over-ride the Government in these matters, as I understand at the present time that all fruit and vegetables held within the public market in Brisbane are subject to inspection by Government inspectors. These inspectors decide whether the commodity is unfit for human consumption and they can order its destruction. That power is being transferred to the Trust. I am not going to try to anticipate what action the Trust formed under its present constitution may take. But many practices have been adopted by the Committee of Direction of Fruit Marketing under the guise perhaps of more orderly marketing. Fruit has been denied to the consumer for certain reasons on certain occasions. The Trust will be composed of a chairman appointed by the Government and a Director of Marketing or his nominee as an ex-officio member, together with two representatives of the C.O.D. The chairman will have two votes. In conjunction with the C.O.D., the Government will have the greater voting strength on the Trust. It is quite possible that it could be used to the detriment of the consumer of fruit and vegetables. As we already have the machinery for orderly inspections of fruit and vegetables in the markets, and for its destruction if necessary, why should we transfer these powers away from the Government and place them in the hands of the Trust? There are many powers given to the Trust and this supports the contention of the Leader of the Opposition that this is perhaps one of the best examples of what members of the Government have for years accused the Labour Government—socialisation. Tremendous powers are to be provided for the Trust. I am rather amused at the attitude of the Government. They seek to give complete control to the Trust over the people concentrated in the area—more control than is exercised over any other section.

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick—Minister for Agriculture and Stock) (9.46 p.m.): I think the hon. member's remarks are based on supposition. As the hon. member said, it is necessary to take action to deal with fruit and other products that are inspected by my department. Provision is made for the protection, seizure and destruction of fruit.

Mr. Lloyd: I should prefer to trust the officers of your department to the officers of the Trust.

Mr. MADSEN: It can be taken that the inspection would be made by somebody who was competent. Although it is not mentioned in the Bill I am sure that members of my department will be doing the inspections. I do not think that we can expect any rougher treatment than has been the case in the past.

Mr. Lloyd: I said that your inspectors had qualifications.

Mr. MADSEN: They have to be qualified men. Certain standards are laid down, but I have had personal experience of the lenient view taken by the department when seasonal conditions have slightly altered and affected the usual standard of fruit. That is a sensible approach. Generally speaking, the standard has to be maintained. Members of the Opposition would be the first to complain if the fruit coming on to the market was not up to standard. I think the Bill gives the protection that is necessary. I am certain that inspection and control will still be carried out by the Department of Agriculture and Stock. Therefore I do not think that there is anything for hon. members to worry about.

Mr. Lloyd: Why extend the power to it?

Mr. MADSEN: It does not say it has been extended to it.

Mr. Lloyd: It can take it.

Mr. MADSEN: I do not agree there either. There is a market and provision is made for inspection. It has been stressed over and over again that the Trust will merely provide the facilities.

Dealing with the framing of by-laws that fit in with the ordinances of the Brisbane City Council, an ordinance may be altered without the knowledge of the Trust, and to some extent it might be breaking the law. The members of the Trust are to be elected by the growers and agents. They will comprise a responsible body and will not want to break the law. We must give them credit for some knowledge and standing if they are selected to represent the industry.

Mr. Lloyd: The Bill provides that in the event of any inconsistency the Market Trust by-law will prevail.

Mr. MADSEN: I should think the members of the Trust would endeavour to bring its by-laws into conformity with the Brisbane City Council by-laws.

Mr. Burrows: What would be the position if they conflict with the Health Act?

Mr. MADSEN: I should think the Health Act would over-ride any Act where health is concerned.

Mr. Burrows: Not necessarily.

Mr. MADSEN: It must be borne in mind that the trust will be a responsible body. I have no doubt that its by-laws will conform to those of the Brisbane City Council. In my opinion too much is being made of the point.

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon) (9.52 p.m.): I revert to the point raised by the hon. member for Belyando. I too should like to know why the trust will be given power to eliminate hawkers. The hon. member for Belyando referred to the great service rendered by hawkers to fruit-growers in times of glut, and we know that housewives are pleased to see them coming to the front door offering a case of good fruit at a reasonable price. Hawkers help with an oversupply of fruit, and I cannot understand why the trust should prohibit their operations. It is obvious to me that the provision is the result of under-cover concerted action to tie up this type of business and wipe out stallholders and hawkers in the city of Brisbane. If that is not so, what is the reason for it? Hawkers do a good job which is appreciated by the public. The hon. member referred to a glut of papaws. It was unprofitable to market the fruit but hawkers were able to get rid of it at a reasonable price. Such a situation could arise frequently through ineffective action to overcome gluts when they occur. The growers in that way are able to get rid of their fruit and the public is not mulcted by retailers. The provision is a definite infringement of the rights of householders and fruit-growers, and I register my protest at its inclusion.

It is useless for the Minister to refer to sub-clause (c). The power is given under sub-clause (b), and the next sub-clause has nothing to do with hawkers.

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick—Minister for Agriculture and Stock) (9.54 p.m.): The main purpose of the clause is to prevent hawking in the immediate vicinity of the markets. It would be farcical to have an established market surrounded by hawkers. The whole purpose of establishing a central point would be defeated. Hon. members will notice that the words "except on the premises of the seller" are included. Those words cover that particular type of business. If the provision was not included, hawking could be undertaken in the immediate vicinity of the markets. We had to distinguish between a retailer and a wholesaler. I think many might endeavour to operate under the guise

of a retailer whilst at the same time actually conduct the business of a wholesaler by selling in quantity. That is the reason for the clause.

Clause 27, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 28 and 29, and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

LABOUR AND INDUSTRY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry) (9.57 p.m.): I move—

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

On the introduction I said that this was a very simple Bill, purely a machinery one, yet very important. Its purpose is to substitute the word "person" for the word "institution." I explained the reason for it, and I am sure hon. members recognise the need for it.

Mr. HANLON (Ithaca) (9.58 p.m.): I realise the circumstances that brought about the alteration. The Bill extends the scope of the legislation from the use of the word "institution" to the more general term of "person." However, a couple of matters call for a close watch, and one is in relation to the interest rates. The Deputy Premier said that there had been some difference of opinion, not politically, between himself and the Treasurer as to what the highest interest rate would be under certain circumstances with a Government guarantee. A person could be anybody, including a hire-purchase company. It is a matter of whether the Government should guarantee loans at more than the normal rate charged by banks and insurance companies.

This legislation will place more responsibility on the Governor in Council and Parliament to see that the Government are not speculating too much on any advances that they might make. For example, the Minister pointed out that there might be scope to guarantee money borrowed by a business at an interest rate of 7 per cent. I realise the point that he was making. His officers may think that the business will in all probability be successful, but for some reason or another it may not be able to raise money at the ordinary bank rate of interest. Now that the legislation is being extended to cover "persons," the public interest will need to be watched closely in that respect.

The Minister said also that he did not regard it as necessary to name either the borrower or the lender. I agree, but we now have a new principle that was not under consideration when the principal Act was brought into being. I understand that in the case in point the person making the loan is also a supplier of goods. That is also a

variation of principle that requires attention from the Government. It is quite possible that a person who is a supplier of goods might agree to advance a loan covering the purchase of his own equipment by a firm in Queensland. However, because he is being called upon to make the loan, he might be inclined to add something to the price of the goods he is supplying. For example, in normal circumstances the price of the goods might be, say, £50,000. The seller might say to the purchaser, "I am prepared to advance you a loan of £50,000 as long as the loan is guaranteed by the Queensland Government," but he may not be very happy about the interest rate and may add a surcharge of, say, £5,000 or £10,000, to the price of the goods. I am not saying that everyone would do that, but it could happen. I should like the Minister to tell us whether there is any safeguard against actions such as that, for instance, by calling tenders for the supply of goods. That would obviate the possibility that a supplier of goods might use this legislation to get a higher rate of interest than the Government would agree to on paper.

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry) (10.4 p.m.), in reply: In the ordinary course of events, the Government either lend or guarantee money. They do not necessarily exercise control over the way in which it is spent. Obviously it is watched because we have a director on the board, but we do not audit the purchases made with bank overdrafts. The same applies to this. No company will pay more than the legitimate price for material or plant or anything else. It does not arise any more under this Bill than before. If it could have happened before, there is no greater reason now for its happening. I remind the hon. member that all we are doing is amending Section 29 and there is an interesting protection in that section, as I am sure most hon. members will know. For the benefit of the hon. member for Ithaca I will read some extracts from Section 29. It says—

"Notwithstanding the provisions of any Act to the contrary, in any case where the Minister, with the approval of the Governor in Council, is empowered pursuant to this Part to advance moneys by way of loan to any applicant under this Part, then the Minister, in lieu of making such advance by way of loan to such applicant, may with the approval of the Governor in Council authorise such applicant to obtain such advance by way of loan from any bank or institution, and guarantee on behalf of the Government to such bank or institution the amount or any part of the amount so borrowed with interest at the agreed rate . . ."

In view of that provision I feel sure the hon. member for Ithaca will agree that the point he raises, though quite interesting, has no bearing on the matter.

Mr. Hanlon: By extending the definition from "institution" to "person"——

Mr. MORRIS: That makes no difference on that point.

Mr. Hanlon: Previously a supplier of goods not being a bank or institution could not have been guaranteed in making a loan where it can now be guaranteed and could make a loan to pay for its own goods.

Mr. MORRIS: The hon. member should recognise that in the Act there is no limitation on interest rates. In the past it would have been technically possible for an institution to advance money to companies at 1, 2, or 3 per cent. more than the bank rate. The section says nothing about it. However, there was a protection. For an organisation or a company to get an advance it had to apply to the Secondary Industries Division. The application was investigated by the Secondary Industries Advisory Board. After investigation it had to go to the Minister—it still does; there is no variation in the practice—and then to the Governor in Council. The Minister cannot decide it. The substitution of the word "person" for the word "institution" has no bearing on the point raised by the hon. member.

Mr. Duggan: I think the chief point he wanted to establish was that you might pass on to your officers the possibility of these things occurring so that they would take administrative action to watch it.

Mr. MORRIS: I was coming to that. I suppose the best illustration I can give is what has happened under the Act. When the suggestion for an advance is made it is referred to Cabinet and Cabinet, as the Leader of the Opposition will know, considers all the facets. I imagine Cabinet has always exercised a very close control on this. I know it always has in our period of office. It is public money and there is no reason why it should be exercised any less because of the amendment than it was before. I should like to assure hon. members on both sides that one of the most searching angles of the investigation made by the Secondary Industries Division into any proposed loan is whether in fact it is desirable that such a loan should be made. The interest rate is a vitally important factor in the economic value of the loan.

Mr. Hanlon: I am suggesting now that the supplier of goods could make the loan. If the firm is going to purchase from the company that is going to make the loan, the price of goods should also be made a close study by your office.

Mr. MORRIS: That is the point I am trying to make. The officers of my department only recommend a loan or a guarantee when they consider that the guarantee is required to make the business successful and where advancing the money is not a risk to public moneys. Those are two of the most

important keys that guide the officers in this work. The fact that so far in my period of office there has not been one occasion when we have been called upon to make good a guarantee or when any company has defaulted is very clear evidence that the officers always have exercised a very tight control, as I assure hon. members they always will, at least in my term of office.

Motion (Mr. Morris) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

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

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

Clause 2—Amendments of s. 29; General powers as to guarantee—

Mr. DUGGAN (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (10.12 p.m.): The chief reason I rise is that I think the Minister has slightly misinterpreted the wishes of the hon. member for Ithaca. It does indicate one of the disadvantages that we suffer from in the Assembly when we respect the wishes of the Minister and not press him to reveal the company concerned as occurred when the Minister introduced the Bill. At that time he said he was not desirous of revealing the name of the company but that he would be happy to make available privately the circumstances of the particular case. The Minister was good enough to do that. We accepted without question the justification for the amendment to the Act to cover that case. But arising from the information the Minister gave, not in the House but outside, this possible contingency arose to which the hon. member for Ithaca drew attention. The Minister has replied to it by saying that the mere alteration of the definition will not alter in any way the interest rates payable nor lessen the degree of control that has been exercised in these matters in the past. I think what the hon. member for Ithaca particularly wanted to impress on the Minister was that the particular case to which he referred was rather an unusual one. I think the Minister would agree that there would be no cases on his files where the advance would be made in exactly the same conditions as applied in this particular case.

Mr. Morris: I don't know of any.

Mr. DUGGAN: I do not think there would be any. The purpose of his inquiry was that the Minister, apart from answering our queries in the House, should pass on to his administrative officers the information that the situation has now developed where certain firms are financing the purchase of their particular commodity because of bank stringency which could mean the weighting of the price of a commodity to cover these interest charges. When I was in America I saw very clearly that certain insurance companies owned diesel locomotives that were operated by railroad companies. The loco-

motives carried brass plates reading "This is the property of the Phoenix Insurance Company" or some other insurance company. They had an amortization method of payment. After 18 years the locomotive would be sold to the operating railroads for a nominal sum. I tried to canvass the position with the Loan Council to have a similar arrangement in Queensland. Sir Arthur Warner was successful in circumventing the Loan Council by purchasing for the Victorian Railways diesel locomotives, the finance for which was provided by way of loan by the diesel locomotive contractors. A company that supplied 10 diesels which might run into £1,000,000, might not be able to finance £1,000,000, and it would have to go to the bank and pay 6 per cent for the money. Sometimes it might clear its costs and in some cases it may be an invitation to make a slight profit. In any case, it would load the price to the extent necessary to recoup it for interest rates that might be in excess of the average bank rate for loans. Many firms have access to insurance companies where the rate is one-half per cent over the bank rate. The Minister might draw the attention of his administrative officers to the need for care because of the change in merchandising methods that might occur.

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry) (10.17 p.m.): I am quite aware of the point that is being made. I also make this point: there will be no greater danger as a result of this amendment. With the type of transaction envisaged here where the department is aware of the total purchase there is probably a much greater control than there is in the case of advancing a company by way of a loan of £5,000 or £10,000 with which to make their purchases. They may be bad buyers and we cannot always exercise control over them, but where this principle is used we can exercise control because we know the cost of our big purchases and we can insist—and in this case did insist—that the best possible price was obtained for the machinery required. I was aware of the point raised, and I should like to say that the officers of the department do watch this with great care. I repeat what I said before, the fact that in my term of office these guarantees have never been called upon and it has not cost the Government anything to make up for any losses indicates that over a period of years the machinery which was established by previous Governments is very good machinery. The efficiency of the machinery is largely due to the quality of the officers who administer it. They watch with great care the interests of the Government and protect public finance.

Clause 2, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 3 and 4, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

COLONEL DANIEL EDWARD EVANS
(**WILLIAM PARRY MEMORIAL**
BURSARY) **BILL**

SECOND READING

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis—Minister for Education) (10.20 p.m.): I move—

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

I thank my colleague the Minister for Public Works for introducing the Bill while I was away. He covered it fully.

That very great Queenslander, Colonel Evans, wanted for ever to pay a tribute to the master craftsman who trained him as an apprentice. Colonel Evans went to the Central School in Bundaberg and then to the Bundaberg Foundry. He left an amount of about £10,000 for the welfare of apprentices in the Bundaberg district.

The trustees found it impossible to interpret the benefaction. They took it to the Full Court, but the Full Court placed an impossible interpretation on it. No other interpretation was open to the Court in the terms of the will. It said first of all that it could be given to only one apprentice and that the apprentice must live in the Bundaberg district. In the next breath it said that it could be used for the payment of University fees and Technical College fees. The trustees could not carry out the intent of the benefaction, and the Bill merely makes possible Colonel Evans's intention to provide for apprentices of the Bundaberg district. I think all hon. members support it.

Motion (Mr. Pizzezy) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

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

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

Bill reported, without amendment.

SCHOOLS OF ARTS (WINDING UP AND TRANSFER) BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis—Minister for Education) (10.23 p.m.): I move—

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

Again, I thank the Minister for Public Works for introducing the Bill, which he covered fully. The Bill merely allows some old Schools of Arts to be taken over by local authorities. Provision is made for the Schools of Arts at Nambour and Oakey to be directly taken over by the councils, as they have already provided plans for suitable municipal libraries in their localities. The Clifton School of Arts is defunct. A certain sum of money will be held in trust by the Board until such time as the shire council provides a library service.

To avoid coming to the House on every occasion a similar difficulty arises over a defunct School of Arts, the Bill provides

that in future action can be taken by Order in Council. Certain safeguards are included. The Library Board has to be satisfied that a reasonable and efficient service is not being given. The local authority has to agree to provide such a service and there will be no taking over of a School of Arts without a majority vote of members of the School of Arts. I think the Bill meets with the approval of every hon. member.

Motion (Mr. Pizzey) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 7, both inclusive, and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

The House adjourned at 10.28 p.m.