

Queensland



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[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 1960

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. D. E. Nicholson, Murrumba) took the chair at 11 a.m.

QUESTIONS**MARRIED WOMEN TEACHERS**

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

“(1) How many married women teachers were dismissed by the Department in December, 1958, and December, 1959, and how many of them were re-employed in 1959 and in 1960, respectively?”

“(2) Is it true, as reported in ‘The Courier-Mail’ of September 13, that 700 married women teachers are to be dismissed on December 31 because of salary increases in the teaching service?”

“(3) If the answer to Question (2) is in the affirmative, what was the reason for the dismissal of 590 women teachers as from December 31, 1959, since he, in answer to my question in the House on March 2 last, said they were not dismissed in order to evade the payment of holiday pay by the Department?”

“(4) Is it a fact that when married women teachers are dismissed all their accumulated sick leave is cancelled?”

“(5) Is he aware of a statement by Professor Messel in ‘The Courier-Mail’ of September 20 that, if the 700 women teachers to be dismissed by the Department at the end of the year have the right qualifications, the Government’s consideration should be not whether it can afford to keep them, but whether it can afford to lose them? If so, has he considered this aspect of the matter?”

“(6) How many primary school classes are there of 35 to 40 pupils, 41 to 45, 46 to 50, 51 to 55, 56 to 60, 61 to 65, and 66 to 70?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

“(1) Dismissed December, 1958—413; December, 1959—590; Re-employed 1959—202; 1960—375.”

“(2 and 3) It should be clearly understood that temporary teachers are employed to meet Departmental requirements and their appointment is subject to termination at a week’s notice. Some 940 student teachers will complete their training at the Teachers’ College this year and will be available for appointment to primary schools at the beginning of 1961. Since there will be no significant increase in primary school enrolments, it is clear that the services of most of the temporary teachers at present in primary schools will not be required when schools open next year. Those retained will be given continuity of employment throughout the midsummer vacation. The loss of teachers by resignation during each year is approximately 500. As resignations take place, temporary teachers are re-employed so that the teaching strength of schools is maintained at a fairly constant level throughout the year. The recent margins decision will add more than £1,000,000 to the teachers’ salary bill without the employment of any extra teachers. Teaching conditions have in every way improved since 1957. In that year the salary for a Class I, 1 male teacher was £1,317; today it is £1,740. The superannuation scheme has been liberalised and classes have been generally reduced in size as will be indicated in my reply to the next question. It is impossible to reach optimum conditions on all fronts simultaneously, but the Honourable Member can rest assured that this Government will continue its progressive and enlightened policy in education to the limit of the finance available.”

“(4) Yes.”

“(5) Yes. Professor Messel, however, is apparently unaware of the true facts of the situation in this Department. Temporary teachers with the necessary qualifications have already been invited to apply for appointment to teaching posts in the secondary schools in 1961, where their services can profitably be used.”

“(6) An analysis of the July monthly returns shows that the numbers of primary school classes of the sizes mentioned in the question are as follows:—

66-70	2*
61-65	10*
56-60	43
51-55	164
46-50	536
41-45	1,080
36-40	1,317

* These are mostly cases where teachers are temporarily absent from school because of illness.

An indication of the improvement since 1957 is given in the table below—

Comparison of Class Sizes, 1957-1960

Class Size	Number of Classes 1957	Number of Classes 1960
50+	840	219
40-49	1,720	1,616
35-39	781	1,317

UNIFICATION OF ELECTRICITY UNDERTAKINGS

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Premier—

“In view of (a) Cabinet’s announced decision that the State Electricity Commission shall negotiate with the Brisbane City Council and the Southern Electric Authority for a re-organisation of electricity generation in south-east Queensland, the objective being to establish one electricity generating authority in this area, and (b) the possible overall effects of this move on the State economy in general, and the community interests of Brisbane City Council ratepayers in particular, will he kindly authorise the preparation of a statement for circulation to the members of this House setting out (a) the general proposals for unification; (b) the claimed advantages which would accrue therefrom, and (c) if it does not involve disclosure of presently confidential information, the terms in respect of present and future compensation to the Brisbane City Council involved in such merger or take-over?”

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

“These are matters for consideration by the parties to the negotiations and they will undoubtedly take into account the factors referred to by the Honourable Member. The Honourable Member may rest assured that full information along the lines suggested will be made available to the Members of this House when the results of the negotiations are being considered.”

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) asked the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity—

“In the event of Southern Electric Authority of Queensland taking over the Brisbane City Council electricity undertaking, will the Government absorb the complete undertaking into a Regional Electricity Board when the present agreement with the Southern Electric Authority of Queensland expires?”

Hon. L. H. S. ROBERTS (Whitsunday—Minister for Public Works and Local Government), for **Hon. E. EVANS** (Mirani), replied—

“The opportunity for taking the action suggested by the Honourable Member will not arise under the present agreement with the Southern Electric Authority until 1968, and it is obviously not possible, nor would it be desirable for me to attempt to forecast the action that will be taken by the Government of the day.”

PROBATE AND SUCCESSION DUTY, PUBLIC SERVICE SUPERANNUATION

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) asked the Premier—

“(1) Is he in agreement with the present practice of including the Widows Pension under The Public Service Superannuation Act of 1958 in the amount of a deceased public servant's estate in order to arrive at the rate to be charged for Probate and Succession Duty purposes?”

“(2) If not, will he take steps to amend Section 83 (2) of the Public Service Superannuation Act to ensure that a payment out of the Fund is not included in an estate when assessing a rate of duty and to also ensure that such payment is not subject to duty or taxes as at present?”

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

“The whole matter of Succession Duties on benefits flowing from a Superannuation Fund is, at present, receiving the attention of the Government.”

DRAINAGE AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS, HOUSING COMMISSION HOMES, GARBUTT

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

“(1) Is he aware that during the wet season the area bounded by Dearness, Peel and Sunderland Streets in the Townsville suburb of Garbutt becomes waterlogged, the water lying for long periods, in some cases for weeks on end?”

“(2) Could arrangements be made for filling to be placed under the Housing Commission Homes in this area to alleviate to some degree the uncomfortable conditions which exist during that period, especially for mothers and children?”

“(3) The disposal of waste water from bathrooms, kitchens and laundries being also a year-round problem, could concrete sumps be supplied with hoses attached to assist in the broadcasting of the water as is done in the Commission's homes at Aitkenvale?”

“(4) Considering that some of these homes were built over ten years ago, could the interiors of these and the permanent flats in the Garbutt area be painted so that housewives may enjoy brighter surroundings?”

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Justice), for **Hon. T. A. HILEY** (Chatsworth), replied—

“(1) No complaints in this regard have been made to the Commission's District Inspector or to the Commission's Head Office.”

“(2) When in 1954 a contract for 22 houses was let in this area the Townsville City Council required 6 inches of filling

under each house as in the opinion of the Council these 22 sites were subject to ponding and the Commission provided such filling accordingly. However an inspection will be made of the area to determine whether any filling is desirable and practicable on other sites in the area.”

“(3) Arrangements will be made to provide hose distribution systems to the rental houses in this area.”

“(4) External repainting has been carried out or is in course of being carried out to practically all the rental homes in the area. Consideration will be given to internal painting of the houses subject to the wishes of the tenants in respect of any increases in rents necessitated by capital costs involved.”

TULLY CATTLE-FATTENING SCHEME

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) asked the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation—

“With reference to the Tully Fattening Scheme and keeping in mind that it would be very foolish for the Government to grant land to settlers if finance were not available for the initial development of that land, what financial assistance was recommended and will be forthcoming to allow new settlers to clear and fence the land and purchase the initial store cattle for fattening?”

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier), for **Hon. A. R. FLETCHER** (Cunningham), replied—

“The blocks to be opened will be opened under the “Group” provisions of the Land Acts, which require that to be eligible to participate at the ballot an applicant must furnish satisfactory proof that he is in a position to pay the provisional valuation of improvements within the period allowed, and in addition, is possessed of cash, readily convertible assets, or stock of a sufficient value to enable him to establish a reasonable equity in the portions applied for. The successful applicant may seek financial assistance from the Agricultural Bank or some other financial institution.”

TOWNSVILLE ABATTOIR BOARD

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) asked the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry—

“(1) What is the total (a) capital and (b) other indebtedness of the Townsville Abattoir Board?”

“(2) What is the amount of further capital expenditure approved and or envisaged?”

“(3) What is the annual amount of interest and redemption paid by the Board?”

"(4) For the year ended June 30, 1960, what was paid in the aggregate for (a) wages and salaries and (b) other working expenses?"

"(5) Who are the Members of the Board and what allowances and/or payments did each receive for the year ended June 30, 1960?"

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick) replied—

"(1) (a) Total loan liability of the Townsville District Abattoir Board at July 31, 1960, was as follows:—State Government Insurance Office, £115,391; Public Curator, £11,946; Commonwealth Bank, £65,486; Treasury, £21,500. Total, £214,323. Interest accrued to July 31, 1960, on the above loans was £5,282. (b) Sundry Trade Creditors at July 31, 1960, were £3,411."

"(2) There is an amount of £8,000 approved to be drawn in 1960-1961, being the undrawn balance of a loan of £10,000 raised in 1959-1960 for a pipe line (£2,500) and an outlet drain (£7,500). If an alternative solution cannot be found to the effluent problem of the Board, a further £10,000 will be required to complete the outlet drain. This further loan has not yet been approved. The Board has also asked for a loan of £25,000 for the construction of saleyards on its property, and this is being investigated at present."

"(3) Interest paid by the Board in 1959-1960 was £12,035 and redemption £12,113."

"(4) (a) £41,145. (b) Operating and Administration expenses, £35,113 (depreciation £9,933 was also charged)."

"(5) Chairman, Alderman Cecil James Strube, Townsville City Council; Alderman John Alan Sherriff, Townsville City Council; Alderman Harold William Greenslade, Townsville City Council; Colin Patrick Craven, Divisional Veterinary Officer, Townsville (additional member); William Geoffrey Middleton Whitman (additional member). William Harold Favell Wordsworth, representative of the Shire of Thuringowa, has resigned and arrangements are at present in hand to appoint John Richard Brabon in his place. The Chairman's allowance for the year ended June 30, 1960, was £150, and members' fees and expenses were £450 5s. 11d. Details of how this is paid to individual members is recorded in the Board's books and not in my Department. These books are under constant review by officers of the Auditor-General's Department."

FLYING DENTIST SERVICE, COOKTOWN AREA

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

"(1) Is he aware that the time lag between visits from the Flying Dentist Service is causing grave concern to parents of school children in the Cooktown area?"

"(2) Will he see that more frequent visits are made to Cooktown and that the children from the Bloomfield School are included in the service?"

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

"(1 and 2) The Flying Dentist Service is not under the jurisdiction of my Department. It is suggested that the Honourable Member direct these questions to my colleague, the Honourable the Minister for Health and Home Affairs."

MAREEBA RURAL SCHOOL

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

"What progress has been made regarding the development of additional land for the provision of recreational facilities at the Mareeba State Rural School?"

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

"Before proceeding with the acquisition of additional land, it was regarded as prudent to obtain a detailed report on the suitability for development, of the parcel of adjoining land needed for the enlargement of the Mareeba School site and of the cost that would be involved. The District Architect submitted a preliminary report and has now been requested to make a further investigation and to furnish his report as early as can be arranged."

MINERAL LEASES, THURSDAY ISLAND

Mr. ADAIR (Cook) asked the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity—

"(1) Is it a fact that on June 3, 1960, the Roonga Tin Pty. Ltd. lodged an application for mineral leases Nos. 24 and 25, containing 20 acres and 320 acres respectively, with the Acting Warden at Thursday Island?"

"(2) Is it a fact that an authority to prospect the area was issued to the Cape York Tin Pty. Ltd. on March 1, 1960, up to March 1, 1961?"

"(3) Was the Warden's Office at Thursday Island advised of the issue of the authority to prospect? If so, on what date was the advice forwarded?"

"(4) What are the names, occupations and addresses of the directors of Cape York Tin Pty. Ltd., and will he enquire whether these people are acting for a Japanese company?"

"(5) Is he aware that certain areas near the Cape were prospected by a team of Japanese technologists working for a Japanese company and that the said areas were not included in the authority to prospect?"

Hon. L. H. S. ROBERTS (Whitsunday—Minister for Public Works and Local Government), for **Hon. E. EVANS** (Mirani), replied—

“(1) Yes. Both applications were rejected because the area applied for in each case was not available—being included in the Authority to Prospect mentioned in the next answer.”

“(2) The issue of an Authority to Prospect to Cape York Tin Pty. Ltd. was approved on February 22, 1960, and the relevant Proclamation was approved by the Governor in Council on February 25. The document of Authority to Prospect was issued for a period of one year commencing March 1, 1960.”

“(3) The Acting Warden at Thursday Island was advised by letter dated February 26, 1960, of the approval of the Authority to Prospect and that the relevant Proclamation, defining the area, would appear in the ‘Government Gazette’ of February 27. He was also supplied with an advance copy of that Proclamation. A copy of the documentary Authority to Prospect was forwarded to the Acting Warden at Thursday Island on March 10, 1960.”

“(4) To be qualified to hold mining titles in Queensland, a company must be incorporated or registered in this State. Cape York Tin Pty. Ltd. has that qualification. The names, occupations and addresses are not required to be recorded at the Department of Mines and are not so recorded. It is thought, however, that this information would be available at the office of the Registrar of Companies.”

“(5) It has been mentioned in correspondence received that considerable financial capital might be available from overseas and that two Japanese spent some months in the locality. The information available here is that the Japanese inspected the area included in the Authority to Prospect as well as other lands not so included.”

ASSEMBLY HALLS AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

“In view of the interest in the current Education Week and the evidence displayed by the activities in secondary schools of the interest in such things as music, art and debating, will he indicate if he is prepared to give consideration to the provision of Assembly Halls at secondary schools to encourage these important aspects of education?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZHEY (Isis) replied—

“The Departmental viewpoint is that assembly halls should be provided at secondary schools and when the necessary classrooms have been completed to meet the vast expansion in secondary school enrolments, the erection of assembly halls will be given further consideration.”

RESUMPTIONS BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Mr. HOUGHTON (Redcliffe) asked the Minister for Public Works and Local Government—

“(1) Can a Local Authority resume land for public purposes and then later dispose of that land to persons or corporations for use as residential or industrial purposes?”

“(2) If not, will he investigate a report in ‘The Courier-Mail’ that such a proposal is under consideration by the Toowoomba City Council?”

Hon. L. H. S. ROBERTS (Whitsunday) replied—

“(1) No, except where the Local Authority undertakes the function of housing and sells the houses so built or where it has resumed land for a Local Government purpose and the land is no longer required for that purpose. In such latter case the approval of the Minister is required to the disposal of the land.”

“(2) The Honourable Member should be aware that no Local Authority can resume land save with the approval of the Governor in Council. He can rest assured that, before any Proclamation is issued for the resumption of land, the legal powers of the resuming authority to take the land are carefully examined.”

DISTRICT ALLOWANCES AND MEANS TEST, DENTAL CLINICS

Mr. HANLON (Baroona) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

“(1) With reference to the Means Test applied to patients at dental clinics is regard paid in the distant areas of the State to the fact that wages in some cases because of special district allowances are higher than those for corresponding wage earners in the City but because of higher cost of living are of no greater value in real purchasing power?”

“(2) If this fact is not taken into account, will he have the matter examined to equalise treatment between country and city dwellers of the same financial circumstances?”

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga) replied—

“(1) Yes.”

“(2) See answer to (1).”

MERGERS AND TAKEOVERS

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

“(1) In view of his statement in Parliament on Tuesday, September 20, that mergers and takeovers were intensifying the trend to make Brisbane a ‘Branch Managers’ City,’ will he outline the Queensland industries, as distinct from retailing firms, which have been taken over by southern manufacturing industries during the past two years?”

"(2) Can he inform the House whether any of these industries ceased manufacturing in Queensland in full or partially since such 'takeover'?"

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

"(1 and 2) The particulars asked for by the Honourable Member are not available from the records of my Department. However, for the information of the Honourable Member generally, I may say that it is common knowledge in business circles that Australian commercial, industrial and financial leadership has, for many years past, been centred mainly in Sydney and Melbourne, and that, in recent years, this trend has been intensified by modern developments in mass production, mechanisation, automation and air transport, as well as takeovers. These modern developments all have a tendency to promote centralisation within the Australian economy rather than decentralisation."

ENGINEERS, DEPARTMENT OF IRRIGATION
AND WATER SUPPLY

Mr. BAXTER (Hawthorne) asked the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation—

"In view of the alleged shortage of engineers in the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, is it true that an engineer grade II. is practically fully engaged taking, developing and indexing films, whilst the Commission has an official photographer employed at the Rocklea section of the Department on other duties such as labouring, &c.?"

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier), for **Hon. A. R. FLETCHER** (Cunningham), replied—

"It is incorrect to say that an Engineer II. is engaged practically full time in taking, developing and indexing films. The Engineer referred to is employed in the Construction Branch of the Commission and is mainly occupied in carrying out engineering duties including writing specifications, inspection of structural work, pipe specials, and other engineering materials, and design of job layouts. Because of the importance of technical photography for the Commission's works it has been found desirable to use this officer's services in directing photography work and a small portion of his time is allocated to these duties. The normal duties of the Rocklea Officer include taking, developing and printing photographs and attending to his laboratory. He occasionally provides assistance during slack periods in other directions, including material testing."

DISABLED MESSENGER, DEPARTMENT OF
IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY

Mr. BAXTER (Hawthorne) asked the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation—

"Is it true that a messenger, disabled, with only one arm, and married with three children aged six, five and four years respectively, employed in the Irrigation and Water Supply Department for many years is to be given notice of dismissal, whilst another messenger will have to be engaged to do the work now being performed by this employee?"

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier), for **Hon. A. R. FLETCHER** (Cunningham), replied—

"A temporary messenger who has been employed for two years has been given notice of dismissal from the Irrigation and Water Supply Department. The Public Service Commissioner will arrange for his employment as a relieving messenger in other Government Departments as opportunity arises. The Honourable Member's statement that another messenger will have to be engaged to replace him is incorrect."

MOTOR MECHANIC COURSE, TECHNICAL
CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL

Mr. BAXTER (Hawthorne) asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

"(1) Is it a fact that pupils enrolled for the motor mechanic course at the Technical Correspondence School, Brisbane, have to wait up to three months to have their corrected papers returned to them? If so, what arrangements if any have been made by the Education Department to have this situation rectified?"

"(2) How many instructors have recently been compelled to go off on sick leave due to the excessive strain placed on them by the extra work entailed by this lag?"

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

"(1) Due to the increase in work this year in the Motor Mechanics section of the Technical Correspondence School, there is delay in some cases in the return of papers to apprentices. The delay is being overcome by the use of part-time instructors and overtime for full-time instructors. Another full-time instructor is being appointed."

"(2) No motor mechanic instructor has been compelled to go off recently on sick leave due to excessive strain placed on him by the extra work entailed by this lag."

CONTRACT FOR STATE HOUSES AT WULGURU,
JOLLY LIVING BUILDING CO.

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

“(1) Has the Jolly Living Building Company recently been granted a contract for the construction of Queensland Housing Commission homes at Wulguru, Townsville?”

“(2) If so, and as this company has had a number of prosecutions for breaches of the Award covering ‘Labour only,’ how does he reconcile this fact with his reply to my interjection during his speech on August 25, as reported in ‘Hansard’ No. 1?”

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Justice), for **Hon. T. A. HILEY** (Chatsworth), replied—

“(1) No. That firm’s tender for houses at Wulguru, Townsville, was accepted on May 21, 1959, and the Building Agreement was signed on June 4, 1959.”

“(2) If any contractor shows out in repeated default of awards he will be refused further contracts.”

COST OF PAINTING BURDEKIN BRIDGE

Mr. COBURN (Burdekin) asked the Premier—

“What is the total cost of painting the Burdekin Bridge?”

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

“Sixty-nine thousand pounds for three coats of paint.”

STAFF CLASSIFICATIONS, PRINCESS ALEXANDRA
HOSPITAL

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

“(1) Is it not correct that all the staff classifications at the Princess Alexandra Hospital are acting and/or temporary in which case staff can be transferred back to the General Hospital on their old classifications without redress?”

“(2) Is an amendment to the Hospitals Acts necessary to correct this anomalous position? If so, when will the amendment be submitted for consideration?”

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga) replied—

“(1) No. There are a number of permanent appointees holding classified positions but there are also classified positions at the Princess Alexandra Hospital held in an acting capacity. It is, I understand, the desire of the latter Officers and their Union that this arrangement operate pending the passing of the necessary legislation to confer on clerical Officers of both Boards the legal right to be considered for, and appointed to, classified position in the service of either Board.”

“(2) An amendment of the Hospitals Acts to confer legal rights as mentioned in (1) on clerical employees of the two Hospitals Boards will be submitted as soon as possible.”

ADDITIONAL FACILITIES FOR BANYO HIGH
SCHOOL

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

“What action is being taken to meet the demand for additional space and facilities at the Banyo State High School, which will be necessary, following the closure of the Industrial High School in Brisbane?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

“It is anticipated that the closing of the Industrial High School will have little effect upon the enrolments at Banyo State High School. The Department of Public Works has been requested to provide additional classrooms and science laboratories to cater for the increased enrolments expected in 1961.”

ACQUISITION OF LAND, ZILLMERE STATE
SCHOOL

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

“What action has been taken to acquire land adjoining the eastern boundary of the Zillmere State School?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

“It has been approved that the Land Administration Commission be requested to acquire a parcel of land on the eastern boundary of the Zillmere State School for the enlargement of the school site.”

POLICE INQUIRIES, TRADE UNION
LEADERSHIP, CAIRNS

Mr. WALLACE (Cairns) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

“In view of the fact that members of the Queensland Police Force in Cairns have been making enquiries regarding the leadership of various unions and membership of the Cairns and District Trades and Labour Council, has an instruction been issued to the special section of the Queensland Police to investigate the leaders of the trade union movement over the whole State or only in specified cities and towns, and what is the purpose of the investigation?”

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

“I have no knowledge of, nor have I given, any instruction, for any members of the Police Force, or any section thereof, in Cairns or anywhere else, to make enquiries regarding the leadership of any Trade Union. There is, however, a Special Branch of the Queensland Police Force

which was created by a Labour Government for security purposes, one of its main functions being to obtain up to date information with respect to disruptors in the industrial sphere. The present Government has not departed in any way from the policy followed by Labour Governments. However, no instructions have ever been issued, either recently or at any other time, by me to this Special Branch. Further, the Honourable Member's question was referred to the Police Commissioner, who has advised me as follows:—"There has been no instruction issued to the Special Branch of the Queensland Police Force to investigate the leaders of the Trade Union movement, either over the whole State or in specified cities and towns; but the Special Branch continues to make its usual enquiries regarding any disruptive and subversive elements throughout the State."

MACKAY FISH BOARD REVENUE

Mr. GRAHAM (Mackay) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

"What revenue has been received by the Mackay Fish Board for each month from April to August inclusive, 1959 and 1960?"

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Justice), for Hon. T. A. HILEY (Chatsworth), replied—

	1959		1960
	£		£
April	196		206
May	332		350
June	212		312
July	275		290
August	226		295

PAYMENTS TO MEMBERS OF MACKAY ABATTOIR BOARD

Mr. GRAHAM (Mackay) asked the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry—

"Do members of the Mackay Abattoir Board receive payment for attendance at meetings of the Board? If so, what amount was received by each member of the Board since its inception?"

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick) replied—

"Members of the Mackay District Abattoir Board receive payment for their attendance at meetings of the Board. The Board was appointed on May 15, 1952, and consisted of four (4) members. There have been changes in the personnel of the Board at various times and the following persons have been members of the Board at some time or other:—Alderman John Patrick Casey, Mackay; Alderman James Cosmo Mant Chataway, Mackay; Councillor Herbert Woodyard, Pioneer; Councillor Charles Jesse McLennan, Pioneer; Thomas Anthony Kruck (additional member), (Queensland Meat Industry Board); Councillor Charles McKinley, Pioneer; Alderman Ian Alexander Christie Wood,

Mackay; Alderman Charles Simon Tait, Mackay; Councillor Kenneth James White, Pioneer; Alderman Reginald Horn, Mackay; Councillor Gustave Ernest Muller, Pioneer; Alderman Michael John Beirne, Mackay; Alderman Bernard Page Western Wood, Mackay. Details of amounts received in fees by individual members of the Board are not recorded in my Department, but the finances of the Board are regularly examined by officers of the Auditor-General's Department."

VALUATION OF LEASEHOLD LAND FOR STAMP DUTY PURPOSES

Mr. BURROWS (Port Curtis) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

"In cases of valuations of leasehold land for stamp duty purposes, is it a fact that the Department invariably insists on the Valuer-General's value, which is on a freehold basis, being taken regardless of the fact that conditions of some leases could and do considerably discount their value?"

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Justice), for Hon. T. A. HILEY (Chatsworth), replied—

"No."

CALLIOPE RIVER RAILWAY BRIDGE

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

"(1) Is there any doubt in respect to the safety of the Calliope River Bridge on the North Coast railway line?"

"(2) When was the last inspection of this bridge made and is any action contemplated following any report made as a result of such inspection?"

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

"(1) No."

"(2) February, 1960. The steel girder spans of this bridge are of an old design necessitating restriction of speeds run by trains passing over it. This is not entirely satisfactory on a main line of this importance. A new design is to be prepared for the replacement of this bridge and a bridge site survey for this purpose will be carried out in the near future."

DIVERSION CHANNEL, LITTLE TINANA CREEK

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

"As on 26 September, 1956, the Treasury Department advised me that a diversion channel 500 feet wide with its bed level at Little Tinana Creek of 20 feet above Low-Water Datum, which would reduce the flood height in Maryborough by four and one-quarter feet, would cost £1,451,000, and as a recent report in 'The Maryborough Chronicle' stated that a

departmental mistake had been made and that the cost of such a diversion channel would be approximately £500,000.—

(1) Was a new estimate given?

(2) If so, by which department and when?

(3) What was the amount of the new estimate?

(4) What was the cause of the apparently serious error?"

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Justice), for **Hon. T. A. HILEY** (Chatsworth), replied—

"(1) Yes."

"(2) By the Department of Harbours and Marine in May, 1958."

"(3) £581,000"

"(4) The work involved would be the excavation and shifting of approximately 6,000,000 cubic yards of material. The site has never been probed nor has any real investigation been made of the likely nature of material which would require to be excavated and shifted. With such a substantial yardage of material involved every 1s. per cubic yard in cost represents approximately £300,000. The original estimate was based on an estimated cost of 5s. per cubic yard. Later enquiries suggest the possibility that this figure was too high. The later estimate is based on an estimated cost of 2s. per cubic yard. I would emphasise that at this stage a final and detailed estimate has not been made."

RAIL REBATES, DROUGHT-STRICKEN AREAS

Mr. JONES (Callide), without notice, asked the Minister for Transport—

"In view of the severe drought conditions that exist in Central Queensland, would the Minister give urgent consideration to declaring that area drought-stricken for 50 per cent. rebate on rail freights?"

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

"In reply to the hon. member, as from Thursday, 29 September, the area from Bundaberg to Mackay, including the branch lines from Byellee to Monto, Port Curtis Junction to Biloela, and Capella to Blair Athol, will be declared drought-stricken for railway freight concession purposes.

"I might add that the records of the State Treasury Department reveal that it is many years since such a large area of Queensland has been declared drought-stricken and the Government, through the Railway Department, are doing everything within their power to move starving stock from outback areas and to get many thousands of tons of fodder to those areas, where it is urgently needed.

"In all instances where the areas have been declared drought-stricken a rebate of 50 per cent. is being allowed for the purpose of assisting primary producers to endeavour to withstand the present disastrous drought conditions."

UNIVERSITY HOSTEL, TOWNSVILLE

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South), without notice, asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

"(1) In view of the fact that the Federal Minister for the Interior has approved of the sale of the Migrant Holding Centre at Stuart, Townsville, to the Queensland Government, will he inform the House if the buildings are to be used to accommodate country students attending the University College at Townsville?"

"(2) If so, will the property be vested in and controlled by the Education Department or the Townsville University Association or any other body?"

"(3) In view of the fact that speed is the essence of the matter, will the Minister see that the removal of all legal obstacles to the acquisition of such property and the vesting of it in such body as may be determined is given a top priority?"

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

"I wish to say that, owing to the efforts of the hon. member for Herbert, Mr. Murray, M.H.R., it is expected that the transfer will be effected very soon. It is intended, too, that these properties be granted in trust to the University of Queensland for a specified period to be controlled by trustees, under the name of the University of Queensland, Townsville, Hostel for Men and Hostel for Women."

"There is another one at Duncraigie, which is being transferred from the Department of Health and Home Affairs. When that trust is set up it will comprise representatives of the two universities, the Government and the North Queensland University Development Committee.

"The hon. member may rest assured that I am watching this, if not day by day at least week by week, but I am afraid there are some legal obstacles that I cannot just push aside. Everything will be done to get both hostels under way in time for the University year of 1961."

PAPERS

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

Report of the Licensing Commission for the year 1959-1960.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Regulations under the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1957.

FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
FOR INCREASED BEEF PRODUCTION

Mr. RAE (Gregory) (11.42 a.m.): I move—

“(1) That this House is of the opinion that it is vital to the future welfare and prosperity of this State and the Commonwealth for every encouragement to be given to increasing beef production for both home and export markets, and to attain this objective the Federal Government be requested to subsidise on a pound-for-pound basis all State expenditures on roads constructed to open up the beef-producing areas of the Channel Country and the Cape York and Gulf regions. In addition, the C.S.I.R.O. and State Department of Agriculture be requested to jointly implement an intensive campaign of research with the objective of increasing beef production.”

“(2) That Mr. Speaker be requested to convey a copy of this resolution to the Right Hon. the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth.”

I propose to demonstrate to hon. members the need for decisive and urgent action to show that the Government have very much at heart the interests of the people of the Channel Country, the Gulf of Carpentaria, and the Peninsula, who have been sadly neglected for many years. I think I should zone these areas in some way and give hon. members a brief description of the country about which I intend speaking.

The Channel Country lies in the south-western corner of Queensland and is flooded by rivers such as the Bulloo, the Thomson, which joins the Barcoo and finally forms what is known as Cooper's Creek and, in times of heavy flood, runs into Lake Eyre, and the Hamilton, Burke and Wills, Georgina, Diamantina, and Mulligan. In seasons of good rainfall, all those streams contribute to the growth of pastures that very few improved pastures can match for nutritive value in cattle-fattening.

Mr. Aikens: It would fatten an axe handle.

Mr. RAE: It would, with the right rain. Uncle Tom has left his cabin to come to my assistance, for which I thank him. The land in this area actually does not rely on the local rainfall, which is only about 5 to 9 inches annually, little more than enough to fill house tanks and a few other tanks with a quick catchment. I know this country very well, having been around it, up and down it and seen it from every angle. Its success is dependent upon the rain in the north in the monsoon season which extends from somewhere about January through to April, although heavy rains have fallen in May. After the rain the floods come down with the water up to 50 miles wide; in some parts it has been known to extend even 70 miles. These floodwaters permit of

the growth of grass which, for fattening purposes, has no parallel anywhere in Australia.

Mr. Beardmore: In the world, possibly.

Mr. RAE: I should say that the hon. member is right. In the past bullocks have been turned off up to 800, 900 and 1,000 lb. in weight. The main point of my speech today is to draw attention in this modern age to the need for adequate transport to get the cattle out of the Channel country. In former years stock have been moved on the road by the droving system. Bullocks were allowed to grow to 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9 years of age, but today the demand is for young fat beef. If we are to be at least a fair competitor on the world market we must present the young beast that is required for the chilled-beef trade.

Mr. Aikens: With a minimum of fat.

Mr. RAE: Yes. The housewife does not like paying for a lot of hard fat, and I do not blame her. Indeed, this is so the world over. I am talking more about the world market. If we are to compete successfully on the Smithfield market and overcome the stranglehold which at the moment is being more or less applied by the Argentine, we have to produce the goods. Undoubtedly we have country favoured by Nature that is capable of producing the required article. The land is there, the opportunity is there for us, it is all a matter of how we, as a Government, can do the most to encourage the growth of a quick and efficient transport system for the removal of the stock from this area. The Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity, and his Cabinet colleagues, have seen the need for it and have undertaken to do something that really should have been done long ago by former Governments.

Mr. Aikens: They would not know a dill-berry from a gooseberry.

Mr. RAE: Some hon. members in this Chamber could not stay with a Shetland pony, but that is beside the point. If they listen they might learn. I will be constructive because hon. members are responsible citizens charged with an obligation to do their best for Queensland. One way in which they can do a good job is to keep quiet while another hon. member is endeavouring to convey a picture of the actual existing conditions.

We have had many inquiries into the development of the beef industry in the past. Governments and interested organisations have appointed bodies to report on the Channel country. I have read with interest some of those reports with great interest. The first was presented in 1945 by Messrs. Sunners, Fletcher and Crosser. It gives a very full coverage of the problems involved and of the steps to be taken to encourage the development of the area.

In 1949 the Department of Public Lands sent officers to the area to report and perhaps to submit a plan to encourage property owners to turn off a more suitable beast.

In 1952 Mr. J. H. Kelly also reported on the matter. He had his finger on the pulse. I did not know him but he must have been competent because he seems to portray the realities of the situation—the problems and conditions—in that part of Queensland in an easy pleasant way.

Nothing was done by previous Governments to help these people. They did not tackle the problem with determination and knowledge to ensure that water, loading ramps, holding yards, and barrier fences were provided at strategic points, nor did they do anything about the tick problem or the dog menace.

Mr. Graham: None of those things were ever undertaken by past Governments?

Mr. RAE: They called for reports, but why call for a report and then refuse to act on it.

Mr. Graham: What about the dingo fences?

Mr. Duggan: Why not direct your remarks to the Premier? He has had more reports than any other Premier in 15 years.

Mr. RAE: I am talking about the Channel country. I know the hon. member would like to hear my story. He gained first-hand knowledge of the area but in a difficult way.

Mr. Duggan: That is right and I am all the better for it.

Mr. RAE: What I have to say will help him in time to come. Because of the difficulties and lack of interest, these huge properties were allowed for many years to more or less run themselves. They were vast areas and many of the stock were unaccounted for. The manager was probably some interested person because that country has an appeal. He probably started as a ringer and gravitated to manager. The difference between a ringer and a manager in the outback is that the manager has all the worries, although usually he enjoys the privilege of living in a very pleasant home.

The quality of cattle has deteriorated so much through the complete misuse of these vast areas that it will be many years before we can make up the leeway.

Mr. Aikens: It is a national scandal.

Mr. RAE: I agree it has been a national scandal. Cattle from the Territory and the Gulf are brought down to a line somewhere between Birdsville and Windorah. It is not practicable to walk cattle farther south as they lose quality, and, with expenditure on droving of £200 or £300 a week, at 2s. or 3s. a head the profit from fattening would be lost, and it takes cattle a long time to come good after a long droving trip.

The best property-owners are the smaller organisations and the smaller men who are striving to their utmost to produce attractive cattle. I refer to men such as Milson from "Springvale". The Australian Estates Company is doing a wonderful job—really outstanding. I venture to suggest that it would be difficult to find any better tenant, or any tenant who is putting back into the land as much as this company, that is, in a sound, solid way, by introducing good bulls and going in for classing and heavy culling. Those procedures are of great national importance. Some of the other companies hold properties so large that they are out of all reason, and they show very little interest in developing the industry. Their effort is so weak that it is both shameful and damning. In that respect I refer to the Vestseys and the Kidmans, and I suppose men such as Collins White and a few others.

Mr. Aikens: They should be run out of country.

Mr. RAE: It cannot be denied that they employ a mere handful of men and that their cattle are of a very ordinary standard. Even if, under the scheme we envisage, the beasts were taken to fattening areas they would never reach the standard set by the smaller landholders who, in order to keep their head above water, have to produce a beast that is attractive to meat-buyers. The landholders I criticise have not carried out fencing or water commitments, and in this respect I think the time has arrived to level a very strong attack at the administration of the Department of Public Lands. The renewal of leases of properties cannot be justified where nothing has been done for the good of the nation or the State.

Mr. Duggan: Mr. Muller tried to do it and he was sacked by his Cabinet.

Mr. Aikens: The graziers got rid of him.

Mr. RAE: I am telling the story and my only hope is that benefit will come from it.

If we are to develop the land and take advantage of its great potential for subdivision, and thus make sure that those who hold it take an interest in it and strive to produce a quality article, the officers administering the land laws will have to break away from old rigid rules and hard-and-fast standards. We want men of imagination and a policy of clear thinking. We want a completely new line of thought.

Mr. Graham: And considerable courage.

Mr. RAE: It will require considerable courage, but it will have to be done.

Mr. Aikens: You have to put a different type of grazier on the map.

Mr. RAE: I would not say that. We have many graziers of an excellent type.

An Honourable Member: The Kidman type?

Mr. RAE: Well, I am not so happy about him.

An Opposition Member: The hon. member for Roma?

Mr. RAE: The hon. member is making use of Parliamentary privilege. I do not think that is right.

I am concerned primarily with the need to produce a chiller-type of beef that is attractive to the world markets, and how we can best produce it. The scheme that the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity has presented to me is, I feel, the first step in the right direction. In former years there has been reliance on the drover. The cattle are driven through sandhills, and in many places are without water. There is no fencing, there are stony ridges to cross, and they are possibly on the road six weeks to three months. Fat beasts may leave a property with an average weight of 800 lb., but on the way to the abattoirs at Rockhampton or Townsville they may lose weight and kill at about 680 lb., 700 lb. or 720 lb., the latter weight being that of only the very good beast.

Coupled with the droving there is the great uncertainty in the price range. This is an important feature and accentuates the need for road transport. Much can happen in two or three months in the price of any commodity. It is important to realise that at the time of mustering the cattle, preparing the camp, and cutting them out to get a mob of 500 or 800, the owner or the manager may have heard that the beasts are worth £45, and they possibly get near enough to it. The buyers are not fools; they know if they do not offer that price, Borthwicks, or the C.Q.M.E. Co., or Swifts, or some other concern, will come in next year and get the first offer. By the end of six weeks the cattle may be worth £75 or £80 a head.

These things may appear small, but they are very important. If cattle could be taken from Monkira to Quilpie by road transport, and then from Quilpie to the selling point by rail, we envisage that their transport will take only four or five days. That is a very important consideration; there is no bruising, and no loss of weight, or at worst the very minimum loss. The owner has every confidence that his beasts will sell at the top price, £40, £50, £70, or whatever it is. He gets his cheque quick and lively and everybody is happy that a smoothly-run contract has been successfully negotiated.

Mr. Tucker: Did you read where the Commissioner for Railways said in Townsville that stock transported by road were always kept apart from those transported by rail and the buyers said that those transported by road were always bruised? Is that right?

Mr. RAE: There is some merit in the hon. member's inquiry. The transport of cattle by the old-style road transport—usually a small four-sided lorry with battens up the

sides, bouncing along at up to 50 miles an hour—would certainly produce far more bruising than rail transport. However, road transport is vastly different today. We have the Marion Downs scheme and we have the likes of Eric Ballard, a big haulier in Longreach. Today he has lorries designed and divided into compartments, which permit the carriage of stock in a way that possibly excels rail haulage. They are improving every day. McGraths of Rocklea are to be commended for their interest in this type of transport. They are producing carriers and freighters that measure up to world standards. Actually America is the only country going in for it in a big way but our people are learning fast and accepting this pattern and they are able to compete very favourably with the railways in hauling cattle.

We have in the area, especially in the Channel Country, basically a flat terrain—sandy, with a few sandhills, but mostly flat and one that lends itself to road haulage. The scheme that the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity, and the Cabinet generally, propose that we form some of the road in concrete or bitumen, where it is necessary because of possible flooding, but in the other parts a flat grading will suffice. Such a road will permit of transporting cattle at 40 to 50 miles an hour.

Mr. Aikens: Will you deal with this aspect: what is the good of putting the roads in and using road trains if the Vestey's and the Kidmans and other graziers of that type will not improve their stock and will not increase their herds?

Mr. RAE: That is another story. They should be called upon to improve their herds. But I will deal with that later.

If we solicit Federal interest, and get Federal help, in putting the scheme under way, it will help the Commonwealth as well as the State. Since the retirement of Sir Arthur Fadden from Federal politics, we in Queensland are sadly lacking in representation from the present members who are said to be on our side.

Mr. Duggan: I quite agree with you there.

Mr. RAE: They lack solidarity; they lack forcefulness and they lack the courage to put Queensland first in their representations.

Mr. Muller: They lack common sense.

Mr. RAE: They lack many things; they are not really with us. I feel they are really not in touch with our needs. I realise I am levelling some of this criticism at our own men and possibly I will not get any bouquets for that, but it does not worry me. Our representation has deteriorated since Sir Arthur Fadden left. He was responsible for giving the men of our areas a big taxation reduction for the water scheme, one of the greatest things ever done for Queensland. It will be a long time before we get another Sir Arthur Fadden; he was a good man.

Our present representatives must pull their socks up and get cracking if they are to become worthy of the people's votes.

The water rebate allowed by Sir Arthur Fadden has been the means of saving all the cattle in that part of Queensland. It has been of benefit not only there but also in the sheep areas, the coastal belt, the Gulf, and the Peninsula. In my opinion, the present drought would have been the worst in Queensland's history had that relief not been available.

I wish to refer now to the types of cattle, a matter to which the hon. member for Townsville South referred by way of interjection. I must confess that I do not know the country in the Peninsula very well. I have flown over it, but that is a bad way of seeing country. I have been to Cooktown and the Air Force Station at Jacky Jacky in the Far North. The country I have seen is very desolate and rather hard looking, but as one travels west towards the Gulf it lends itself a little more to breeding. It is softer country, and I think the soils and grasses are more suitable for bone and muscle development. The beasts that I know and have bought myself could only be described as the worst cattle that I have seen in my life. They would have no equals as unattractive beasts, and that applies to cattle in the areas almost down to Mareeba.

Mr. Muller: I would say you are right.

Mr. RAE: Thank you.

Mr. Aikens: Poor breeding.

Mr. RAE: There must be something lacking in the soil, because the bone and muscle development is not there. I understand that Droughtmaster cattle are now being bred there with some degree of success. Fortunately, present beef prices give the grower a better reward for his efforts, and he is able to buy bulls of a better class.

Mr. Beardmore: Previously they depended on mickies to get calves.

Mr. RAE: I can understand that. The hon. member for Cook tells me that there are more unbranded cattle than branded cattle there. Is not that another twist of the tail in regard to land administration? That is why I contend that without closer settlement, fencing, and water facilities, we can never hope to develop this country.

Mr. Pizzey: They were not given roads previously.

Mr. RAE: A very big road has been put in, and I understand that cattle can be brought down on it. However, they prefer to ship the cattle to Cairns and Townsville, a method that has proved very successful.

Mr. Adair: Yes.

Mr. RAE: I would like to congratulate Mr. Archer on his excellent report. A Devon breed was used there originally, and that run-out Devon is now being crossed with the Droughtmaster. I think that in a few

years, if the Department of Agriculture and Forestry keeps a close watch on the area, the quality of the cattle can be improved.

In the Gulf country we find evidence of mismanagement of vast areas, and an attitude of "What we can't get today, we can get tomorrow." Many huge tracts of country are so completely out of control that the personnel working them have no real love of their job, the beasts they are working or the conditions under which they work. That extends almost through to the Northern Territory, which has been a haven for all sorts of peculiar and odd people who cannot get a job anywhere else. Of course, I am not referring to the managers or the head stockmen but to many of the people who work windmills and do this and that about the place. They "shoot through" on Mum and get out there to avoid alimony. It is a haven for the hunted.

An Opposition Member: What about the owners?

Mr. RAE: They live in Melbourne or Sydney, or elsewhere.

The Barkly Tableland is the very backbone of the cattle industry—indeed it is wonderful country. I should now like to refer to the very sad and untimely passing of Samuel Hordern, a young man of 51 years of age. Mr. Hordern and his friends have really done something for this land of ours. He was a man of national outlook who was interested in the real development of a very wonderful country. He went into the industry very seriously, and fortunately with a great deal of money. He did a great job. He and his friends started off with the Santa Gertrudis breed and were responsible for many other stud undertakings. The way in which they have raised the standard of the beasts under their control is amazing. It is very gratifying to see what they have done. I shall not go into the merits or demerits of the Santa Gertrudis animal itself, but here was a positive step in the right direction by a handful of people who were determined to improve the standard of beef cattle.

Mr. Aikens: How are they getting on now that the Hooker mob have their hold on it?

Mr. RAE: I do not know much about that story. I think a great deal of nonsense has been talked about it and I have seen no proof that they have acquired these huge estates. However, I shall not go into that because I would be departing from the subject under discussion.

The Brunette Downs people, together with other owners, managers and others interested in the area have organised an annual bull sale. It is inspiring to see the very keen competition amongst them to get the best for their properties. These people should be helped and encouraged. They should be given security of tenure. Undoubtedly they are doing the right job; they are putting down water facilities and fencing their

properties fully. Every improvement is worthy of inspection. Their men are provided with first-class quarters and suitable amenities. If we are to do the right thing by them we must help them; we must crack down very severely on those who abuse the vast areas under their control by not doing anything at all. That brings me back to what I have said previously about the Kidmans, Vestey's and the rest. Over the years these people have done very little to raise the standards of their properties, but they have taken all they could out of them, and this line of policy should no longer be tolerated.

To get back to the need to have the Commonwealth show some interest in this road scheme, when it was first brought to my notice by the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity, he said to me, "Within a fortnight they are opening the aerodrome at Windorah." I said, "Who?" He said, "Mr. McEwen," who was then Acting Prime Minister. He said, "I would like you to go along and have a discussion with him and his men. You will be called upon to speak on this road question of ours." The road, as far as Windorah is concerned, is one of the major points in this scheme. The road we want will go from Quilpie to Eromanga, to Windorah, to Currawilla—

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

Mr. RAE: I went out to Windorah, which is only a small place, but a very important centre. I had prepared myself with figures and details concerning the road scheme that this Government are determined to have carried out. I thought to myself, "Here is a kindly character; surely a man in this position must have some heart."

Mr. Aikens: Black Jack.

Mr. RAE: I could not think of any better name. He made the speech of his life, according to the people who stood in the hall or sat on their haunches. It was a great story but there was nothing about the Channel country roads; there was nothing about doing anything towards helping us to do something for Queensland. There was a mighty lot about his knowledge of some Romney Marsh stud that he has at Goulburn or somewhere, and I feel that his whole entourage, who came in a special plane, were saying to themselves, "The sooner we get out of this place the better." No words were spoken that would give me or the people out there any encouragement at all. I feel there is a great gap between the Commonwealth's interest and ours in the people we represent, and that is not good enough.

Much has been said about this road scheme and I will quickly outline the proposed route. It is to start at Quilpie, run from Quilpie to Eromanga, from Eromanga to Windorah, from Windorah to Currawilla, from Currawilla to Monkira and from Monkira to Bedourie. That would serve the southern portion of the Channel country. If the road

hauliers and road-transport people get interested enough to put up the huge sums of money that are necessary, we could feed those areas at the right time with the right class of stock. They, in turn, could bring in beasts to fatten according to where the rains or floods are at the time.

A proposed road would go to Boullia, out through Cluny, to Brighton Downs, to Diamantina Lakes, to Elderslie, to Winton where they truck thousands of head of cattle a year—87,000 last year and an average of about 65,000 to 80,000 every year. Then we want a line from Boullia to Dajarra. These facilities would be of tremendous benefit. I know the Minister for Main Roads will do his job, and I urge the Railway Department to play its part too, because speedy transport makes the difference between a £20 or £50 margin, or whatever the figure might be, on today's cost structure.

Mr. Beardmore: The saving in time.

Mr. RAE: Yes. The activities of Sir Thomas Playford in South Australia and the New South Wales interests have been discussed, but I ask hon. members to put themselves in the position of landholders in the Birdsville corner. The Adelaide market is approximately £85 a head, and it is not far from the properties. The Bourke market in New South Wales, where Tancred's are operating, is about £65. The Queensland market, I should say is £25 to £35 a head below the Adelaide market. These landholders are only human and naturally they want to trade on the Adelaide market. However, the answer lies with us and the Queensland Government by providing good roads, holding paddocks, watering facilities and safe crossings of the flooded channels may be able to induce them to supply the Queensland market, and so redirect to Queensland a considerable amount of the wealth of the State to which it is entitled.

I should like to have the scheme accepted and implemented by the Government, because we are on the threshold of development and furthermore I know the hon. member for Mackenzie will be putting up a scheme for the development of the brigalow belt.

Mr. Hewitt: Even Sir William Payne claimed that the brigalow belt would be the State's richest land when fully developed.

Mr. RAE: The brigalow belt?

Mr. Hewitt: Yes.

Mr. RAE: I should say the hon. member is right. There is possibly no greater authority than Sir William Payne. I have the utmost regard for him. He is undoubtedly a brilliant man.

Now, if we can induce landholders to sell their cattle at an early age to coastal fatteners we will be doing much to develop the industry, especially quality young stock.

I have many lines of thought on the best manner of developing the industry, one being

the closest co-operation and understanding of the Government towards assisting the stud-stock breeder.

Mr. Muller: How do you like Alan Campbell's idea of building railways instead of roads?

Mr. RAE: Personally I could not imagine anything more stupid, coming from a man such as Alan Campbell. He has travelled to many corners of the world and should know the score, and I have no doubt he is quite intelligent and practical, but his extraordinary theory that railways are the answer to the problems of that country is beyond my comprehension. Railways would cost millions of pounds, and the Commonwealth Government would not be interested in the scheme.

Mr. Aikens: They are not even interested in the roads proposal.

Mr. RAE: I should say that we may be able to do something about it. I presume the Commonwealth Government are leaning towards the vested interests of New South Wales and in a manner are prepared to bypass this State to keep in favour with certain persons, but it seems ridiculous to me, if I may be permitted to get a little personal, that they are prepared to spend £2,000,000 on a bit of a lake at Canberra.

Mr. Gaven: £3,000,000.

Mr. RAE: They seem to spend money down there in millions. As I have said, it seems reposterous, particularly as we experience extreme difficulty in getting Commonwealth recognition of the needful and rightful undertakings in Queensland.

Mr. Dufficy: Will you come into the Maranoa electorate with me during the next Federal election?

Mr. RAE: I will have nothing to do with the Maranoa.

Mr. Dufficy: I want you to come with me.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. RAE: There has been a good deal of talk about inland killing schemes. I do not know whether they are feasible at present, although I have no doubt that they will be important in perhaps 25 to 50 years. At the moment, with the drought, the uncertainties and hazards of western living, fluctuating stock, and conditions generally out there, I do not see how any person, or any organisation, can run a meatworks, or an inland killing works, in that area efficiently. The time is not yet opportune. It will be a long time before we can consider that to be a sound proposal. Many people have asked me about it, but after discussing it with them I have convinced them that it would be unwise, and they have agreed.

Mr. Aikens: You think it is better to bring the cattle to the coastal abattoirs and meatworks?

Mr. RAE: They are doing a good job, but they are in the hands of too few. There are not enough people in it to develop the right competition. I think that too few control too much. I do not like it and never have. It should be open to many more people and they should be fostered.

There are also the problems of dingoes, ticks and fencing. If we in our wisdom, and the department generally, can drive home the fact that water is the No. 1 priority, and fencing No. 2, we will go far towards solving many of the complexities. Let us in this Parliament lay down a definite policy with which they must comply or they will not receive favourable consideration when applying for a new lease.

Mr. Aikens: It will need a courageous Government to take on the Vestey's and the Kidman's.

Mr. RAE: We have the Walker family in our area who started from scratch. They have done an excellent job and today they are doing things in a big way. Similar people should be encouraged and helped in every way. A good man on the land does a fine job, not only for himself, but also for the district and the nation. He is a very important person. I do not go for those who take all and put nothing back.

In moving my motion I have endeavoured to go beyond the bare statement that the prosperity of Queensland is bound up with the Commonwealth Government's attitude towards our programme of development. I have, to the best of my ability, given the story generally, not statistically, but in a way to hit hard at some one and in a manner that will bring results from the Commonwealth Government. If we can have the support of the Commonwealth Government in achieving our end, they in turn will be the richer for the interest that they show in us. It is clear to my mind that it is not a big undertaking—it is a small one—but we as a Government should not be called upon to bear the whole expense. I strongly urge that the Commonwealth Government be mindful of our wishes and that in their turn they give full consideration to our request that something positive be done on the £ for £ basis for the construction of the outback roads, which are of national importance.

Mr. PILBEAM (Rockhampton South) (12.36 p.m.): It is with great pleasure that I join with the hon. member for Gregory in advocating a form of development so important to Queensland, especially Central Queensland. It is fitting that I should—because his electorate comprises outback areas of Central Queensland and I represent the city to which flows most of the produce and most of the commerce from the Central West. Rockhampton's port, Port Alma, and the Port of Gladstone handle the products of Central Queensland. So I believe I am taking the correct course in seconding a motion so vital to the future welfare and prosperity of the

State and the Commonwealth—a motion “for every encouragement to be given to increasing beef production for both home and export markets.”

I shall deal briefly with the State's cattle history to lead up to what I have to say in support of the motion. Most hon. members will be aware that it was in 1840 that the first cattle movement took place in Queensland—from New England and the Hunter Valley in New South Wales up to the Darling Downs, thence north and west. In 1859, when Queensland was proclaimed a separate State, its cattle numbered 433,000. In the next five years the numbers doubled and in 25 years they increased tenfold. In 1899 there were 7,000,000 head of cattle in Queensland. So in a little over a half a century it was clearly established that Queensland was suitable for the production of beef cattle.

But it soon became apparent that the industry faced very many problems, cruel problems—drought, ticks, and marketing difficulties. The difficulties experienced up to 1905 had such bad effect that in that time the cattle numbers diminished to under 3,000,000. Soon after the industry learned of the existence of these problems it became apparent that it would always have to face them. Take, for instance, the drought being experienced at the present time.

By 1921 the cattle numbers had built up to 6,250,000. They decreased to 4,250,000 in 1928, but by 1945 they had built up again to 5,000,000. A brief decline followed and then by 1956 they had reached 6,000,000. There has been a slight decline over the past few years but the number is not far short of 6,000,000 now.

We must seek to lay down a pattern of development in the industry based on the experiences of those years. To do that we must examine the land tenure in the State.

On 31 December, 1958, 92 per cent. of our land, or 393,000,000 acres, was occupied in some form of tenure, 5¼ per cent., or 22,000,000 acres, was reserved for some reason or another, and 2¼ per cent., or 11,000,000 acres, was vacant Crown land. Queensland has altogether 253,838,000 acres of reasonably well-watered land—that is, land with an annual rainfall of over 20 inches—and 3,000,000 acres of this total are under crops or lying fallow, 2,000,000 acres are improved pastures, 7,000,000 acres are under forest, and the remaining 241,000,000 acres are undeveloped. If we allow 20 per cent. of this total for country that cannot be developed because it is too rough, or for some other reason, we are left with 190,000,000 acres of reasonably well-watered land awaiting development. These 190,000,000 acres could carry 17,000,000 or 18,000,000 cattle—these are the figures adopted by scientists of the C.S.I.R.O.—an average of better than one beast to 11 acres, instead of the 4,000,000 to 4,500,000 that we have now—an average of one beast to

50 acres. Most of the 190,000,000 acres lie in Central Queensland's speargrass and brigalow belt.

I can understand why the hon. member for Gregory concentrated on the Channel country, as it is mostly in his electorate, but in the time at my disposal I shall concentrate on the areas that have the greatest potential for increasing our cattle population and that will give the greatest benefit to Queensland and Australia. It should be clearly understood that there is no doubt about markets. Australia's meat consumption now is over 1,000,000 tons annually, and more than half of that is beef. Australia's population is estimated to reach 14,000,000 by 1975, and unless the number of cattle in Queensland increases substantially we shall certainly have no exportable surplus by that year. At present we export over 300,000 tons of meat, and I do not think anyone will argue that world requirements will not increase. With the emancipation in the next few years of countries that are now subject to some form of slavery, much more beef will be required for export. People in under-developed countries are acquiring the habit of eating beef, and their requirements will increase. There can be no argument that the demand for beef on the overseas market will increase.

How can production be increased? As I said before, I intend to concentrate on the areas where I believe the maximum increase can be attained. I draw the attention of hon. members first to the coastal strip extending from just north of Tully to the New South Wales border, which is a sure area for major development. Along the coast there is a speargrass belt, and it also includes a wonderful belt not far inland, in which we find a natural legume, brigalow, and the wet coastal belt in the North, which is the subject of a very interesting experiment at present. When one realises that the greatest increase in our cattle numbers is occurring, and will continue to occur, in the coastal belt, I think the whole situation will be seen in its correct perspective.

Various Government departments have given great assistance over the years in increasing cattle numbers, and in the past 10 years the C.S.I.R.O. has been engaged in the scientific research that is so necessary if we are to overcome the problems now facing us. We need to adhere to the pattern of scientific research followed by sympathetic Government support provided by suitable land tenure. I think we have the machinery for the latter in the legislation that followed the 1959 Payne Report on Progressive Land Settlement in Queensland. Finally, we must have the practical implementation by the cattlemen themselves.

Mr. Beardmore: The Payne Report was a wonderful contribution.

Mr. PILBEAM: It was. It was followed up by good legislation that has provided

the machinery that will allow the expansion we need to feed Australia's population and provide for an expanding export trade.

I shall deal with the three types of country represented in the coastal belt and suggest what can be done to give the increased cattle population we need. Under the heading of scientific research, the C.S.I.R.O. have established the framework, based at their main laboratory at St. Lucia. To deal with spear-grass development they have stations at Rodd's Bay and Brian Pastures, Gayndah; for brigalow development they have stations at Nun Bank near Taroom, Tarewinnabar near Goondiwindi and Havilah near Collinsville. Unfortunately they have no stations established for the wet coast development, but good work is being done by the Bureau of Tropical Agriculture at South Johnstone and Eucree Creek.

We have 43,000,000 acres south of Rockhampton for spear-grass development. The method that has been undertaken successfully at Rodd's Bay is to introduce the legume Townsville lucerne with the application of one cwt. of superphosphate per acre. By that simple method they have been able to increase carrying capacity three-fold. It has been proved that this method can be implemented by cattlemen in the area. By the introduction of Townsville lucerne and the application of superphosphate the carrying capacity of the area can be increased from one beast to 10 acres to three beasts to 10 acres. The map I have here identifies the area I am speaking about.

I understand that there is spear-grass and brigalow country also in the tropical parts of the State. No doubt research will be carried out in those areas. I have heard various hon. members discuss the brigalow country at the back of Bowen and further north. No doubt that country also will receive consideration. It is the brigalow country in which I am particularly interested because it is wonderful country in which Queensland's best prospects lie, not only for cattle production but also for any form of agriculture. As my authority for that statement I quote Dr. P. J. Skerman, Senior Lecturer in Agriculture, University of Queensland, who in a 1959 report said—

"The brigalow country constitutes the greatest potential of any land for development in this State. Government and private capital developing the smaller and larger holdings simultaneously can bring about a continuing increase in national wealth and more quickly lead to full development."

Experiments are being undertaken in Queensland's brigalow country. By pulling, ringbarking, spraying and various other means the brigalow is destroyed. When the land is cleared the soil is of such quality that even without the introduction of any fertiliser natural grasses and introduced grasses such as Townsville lucerne or sorghum alum will flourish.

The wet north coast centred round Tully must be considered to be in the experimental stage. The method adopted is to clear the land and introduce guinea, para, centro, stylo and glycine grasses. It has been found already, mostly by private experiment by many wonderful cattlemen who are spending a lot of money on experimentation, that they are maintaining as many as 10 cattle where one was formerly domiciled. The areas I have mentioned—the spear-grass country, the brigalow country and the far northern wet country—are fattening areas, and attention must be given to the breeding areas of the State.

Other parts of Queensland to which I refer briefly—the Peninsula country and the Gulf country—are areas that receive over 20 inches of rain annually, and so must be capable of multiplying the cattle population. In this task too much significance cannot be placed on the availability of water. The areas capable of the greatest development are those that get an annual rainfall of more than 20 inches. The brigalow country has a rainfall of 20 to 30 inches a year, the spear-grass country gets 30 to 45 inches a year, and the Peninsula and Gulf countries get well over 20 inches a year. There can be a disadvantage in the wet coast areas of the Far North in that they get between 100 and 200 inches per annum, which is fairly heavy rainfall for cattle to bear up against.

The areas I have dealt with present the best opportunities for the development of the large cattle numbers required in Queensland, whereas nobody would argue that the Channel country is capable of a tremendously increased cattle population.

The best potential of the Channel country is that, if there is a favourable season, cattle can be put in there to be fattened, taking advantage of the natural irrigation system provided by those rivers.

The idea of sponsoring these special roads is to get the cattle in and out. For that reason I fully support the motion that full consideration be given to the Minister's scheme to construct these roads and to ask the Commonwealth Government to subsidise the cost on a pound-for-pound basis.

Correct priority should be given to these Channel-country roads. The meatworks in North and Central Queensland—Bowen, Townsville, Gladstone and Rockhampton—are entitled to ask that consideration be given to the construction of top-priority roads from Boulia to Winton and from Windorah to Yaraka. The latter roads will enable us to overcome our seasonal unemployment difficulties in Rockhampton. The roads cited will enable cattle to be moved out in times of inadequate rainfall and taken to areas that could support them. The Rockhampton area already carries 2,250,000 head of cattle and could carry more with the advanced methods to which I have referred.

It is obviously of advantage in times of drought to take cattle to an area that can support them rather than to one that cannot. For that reason I strongly support the construction of the Windorah to Yaraka road and also the Boulia to Winton road on a top priority basis. Much money has been spent in the past on certain of these Channel roads. The Commonwealth Government have made a contribution under the State Grants (Encouragement of Meat Production) Act of 1949.

Mr. Hanlon: How do you mean? Do you mean they have made their contribution in allocations from the road fund?

Mr. PILBEAM: The Commonwealth Government have made available over £1,100,000 for expenditure by the Queensland Government on the Channel country.

Mr. Hanlon: Not particularly on the Channel country.

Mr. PILBEAM: Yes. The roads are those from Currawilla to Yaraka via Canterbury and Windorah, Quilpie to Eromanga and thence westerly to the vicinity of Coonaberry Creek, and from Thargomindah to Cunnamulla via Eulo and then to the border near Barringun. Over £200,000 has been spent on the Windorah-Yaraka section.

It is reasonable to expect that if the Commonwealth Government decide to advance further money they will impose some condition to the effect that roads already commenced and not completed, and roads for which they have provided the biggest proportion of money, should be completed before other roads are commenced. Even if the Commonwealth Government are not prepared to consider the whole scheme, they should be asked to consider part of it. If they offer some part of the money, we should accept it. If they suggest certain priorities for roads, provided their suggestions are reasonable they should be adopted.

Mr. Hanlon: We are not asking the Commonwealth Government to become the authority; we are asking only for the money.

Mr. PILBEAM: That is right.

Mr. Hanlon: Mr. Menzies has excused his refusal on the ground that the Commonwealth Government should not be the authority, but we are asking only for the money.

Mr. PILBEAM: In the brief time at my disposal I have endeavoured to prove that Queensland could have greatly increased cattle numbers, and that in the interests of the State we should work to this end.

I hope I have supported fully the motion and the desire of the hon. member for Gregory to get access roads to the Channel country. I apologise to him if in placing my own interpretation on the motion I appear to have suggested certain priorities for roads that could favour my area of the State. By

and large, and generally speaking, I fully support the motion. If the scheme is implemented by the Commonwealth Government, Queensland, and in fact the whole of Australia, will reap great benefit.

Mr. HANLON (Baroona) (12.58 p.m.): The proceedings this morning have proved that it is unfortunate that private members' motions are the Cinderellas of Parliamentary business. In his motion the hon. member for Gregory pointed out the tremendous importance of the beef industry to the State and the Commonwealth, and I think he should be congratulated on the way in which he dealt with the subject. His speech was of great interest to all hon. members, and I hope the hon. member's efforts will bring results from his colleagues in the Commonwealth Liberal-Country Party Government.

At 2.15 p.m.,

In accordance with Sessional Order, the House proceeded with Government business.

CITY OF BRISBANE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

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

Debate resumed from 21 September (see p. 422) on Mr. Roberts's motion—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the City of Brisbane Acts, 1924 to 1959, in certain particulars.”

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba) (2.16 p.m.): I listened with interest to the Minister's introductory remarks. However, I should like to look at the legislation before I comment on it. It has been brought about by matters that the Government should have known full well when they introduced the previous legislation that brought about 28 seats in Brisbane. At that time our leader and other members on this side of the Chamber clearly indicated that once that legislation was passed, this Bill would have to be introduced. Numerous matters could be discussed and many things said about the redistribution of electoral boundaries. I am prepared to wait till a later stage before commenting on the Bill.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (2.17 p.m.): We on this side of the Chamber are placed in the position that we do not care to accept the Bill. Our objection is based mainly on the fact that when the Bill covering the redistribution of State electorates was introduced we opposed an increase in the number of electorates within the city of Brisbane from 24 to 28 on the grounds that it would tend to bring about an over-abundance of electorates in Brisbane compared with the rest of Queensland. It is on that basis that we dislike the present Bill, and it is on that basis only that we are putting forward a case on this occasion.

It has become obvious to many people in Queensland that with the increase of the number of State electorates in Brisbane from 24 to 28, and with the two additional electorates in the south-eastern corner, there will be approximately 50 people in this Parliament representing one-third of the State of Queensland and comparatively few representing the remainder of the State. There is a very small voice in this Parliament speaking for the people living in the far-out regions of the State.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will keep to the Bill.

Mr. LLOYD: I am trying to lay a basis. I realise I have drifted slightly away from the Bill, but I have made the point that the Government have made this Parliament representative of only a very small section of the community of Queensland. Having made that point, I shall now deal with the Bill. We have either to accept or reject the Bill. Our arguments are such that we do not like to accept it. Of course, we realise the numerous difficulties that will be presented if we do not support the legislation. For instance, the increased responsibilities of aldermen of the Brisbane City Council nowadays make their position in public life rather difficult. They have so many tasks to perform that they have very little spare time. Certainly they have a greater responsibility than any other aldermen in Queensland, particularly of provincial cities.

Mr. Ramsden: They have enough time to be able to sit in this Chamber, too.

Mr. Hanlon: Only through special circumstances. What about your own member over there?

Mr. Ramsden: Just a general observation.

Mr. LLOYD: I was waiting for that. I did not intend to indicate to the hon. member for Merthyr that the hon. member for Kurilpa was sitting on his side of the Chamber. He, and possibly several other aldermen of the Brisbane City Council who were elected as Labour members in the Parliament, did not know the Government's intention on this legislation. I would not put it past this Government, and nor would we as responsible members of the Australian Labour Party, which is without doubt the most powerful political organisation in this country.

A Government Member: Don't you believe it.

Mr. Graham: The votes prove it.

Mr. LLOYD: The votes prove it. I would not put it past this Government that if the hon. member for Sandgate and the hon. member for South Brisbane had resigned as aldermen of the Brisbane City Council, they would have used the Act to appoint their own political supporters in their places—a

very good reason why those hon. members should remain as aldermen until the next Council elections.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will get to the subject of the Bill.

Mr. LLOYD: I am purely and simply replying to an interjection by the hon. member for Merthyr. If I have to defend hon. members on this side of the Chamber I will do so; I am entitled to.

Aldermen of the Brisbane City Council have to accept greater responsibilities than they should be expected to as aldermen of a local authority.

Under the ward system, which we support, the Brisbane City Council has divided the amount of loan allocation for capital works expenditure more or less equally amongst all the wards of Brisbane. Since the war many districts have expanded so much that they have not been able to keep pace with the normal demands for services. Because of the division of loan allocation for capital works expenditure, many outlying areas, like Mt. Gravatt, and perhaps Kedron in particular, have not been able to receive the ordinary amenities needed in a community.

Mr. Hughes: That is money, not aldermen.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! I should like to draw the attention of hon. members to the fact that this matter is a very simple one. The Bill deals purely with the alteration of the number of wards of the Brisbane City Council. If I allow one hon. member to advert to the subject of the administration of the Brisbane City Council or to draw an analogy with another city council, I am allowing him to depart from the principles of the Bill. Although the hon. member will be allowed to develop his remarks if they relate to the wards, they must be confined to the subject of the alteration of the wards.

Mr. LLOYD: I quite understand, Mr. Taylor. At the same time, I am giving some reasons for the redistribution of the seats in Brisbane. Our argument is that 24 wards in the City of Brisbane is sufficient. However, as the Government have seen fit to increase the number of State electoral districts in Brisbane from 24 to 28, it is essential that they should now increase the number of wards from 24 to 28. If we accept the principle that it is necessary to increase the number of wards in Brisbane from 24 to 28—and we do not necessarily accept it—it is obvious that a redistribution is essential in the metropolitan area. We are not convinced at present that the cost of printing new rolls for City Council elections makes it necessary to increase the number of wards from 24 to 28. We believe that 24 aldermen are sufficient to look after Brisbane, but we also believe that there should be a re-distribution of the City Council wards on the basis of the growth of the city since 1950. For instance,

the population has increased by 140,000 since 1949, the year of the last electoral distribution.

The Minister has yet to convince me that the cost of printing new rolls for the wards would be prohibitive. The salaries of four new aldermen would be approximately £6,000 to £7,000, and that cost would have to be met by the ratepayers of Brisbane. The Minister said that new rolls would be needed for each City Council election, and he said in his introductory speech that the cost of printing those rolls would more than offset the salaries of the additional aldermen. They are compiled on a police canvass, and I cannot see what additional cost would be involved if boundaries were established on a street-name basis, as they are under the State Electoral Act, and a canvass was made in an election year.

Mr. Aikens: The police only make a canvass for a State election.

Mr. LLOYD: I will correct the hon. member for Townsville South on that point. They also make a canvass for the Brisbane City Council elections. The cost of compiling the rolls is taken into consideration in the charges imposed on the Brisbane City Council in the election year. In other words, the Council has to pay for the roll for its own elections. It is headed not "State electoral roll", but "Brisbane City Council electoral roll". Where is the additional expense involved?

We do not believe that we should be extremely difficult about this matter, but every elector in Brisbane is entitled to justice. In our opinion there has been no equitable re-distribution since the one in 1949. It is not necessary to increase the number of wards to 28; 24 is sufficient; but a re-distribution under the City of Brisbane Acts could give more justice to people in the out-lying suburbs of Brisbane.

If we have the opportunity later of moving an amendment, we shall be happy to do so but if such amendment departs from the principle of the Act it will be impossible for us to do so. In that event I am afraid we shall have to accept the Bill as it stands. We are in favour of the ward system but we do not favour the unlimited extension of electoral representation in Brisbane. We have previously indicated that we do not like the Liberal Party's domination of the Government which has led to the extension of the number of wards from 24 to 28. Under the present circumstances the country people are more entitled to representation than people in Brisbane. We shall examine the Bill when it is printed. Our objections to it are very clear. If we have to accept it there is nothing more we can do, but I make the point very clearly that it has resulted from the definite attempt by the Government to gerrymander State electoral boundaries in order to give the Liberal Party extra representation in the city of Brisbane. It

is unfortunate that it has become necessary to introduce the Bill. I reserve further comment until I see the Bill.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (2.33 p.m.): The Bill is another example of the "grease the fat pig" policy, not only of this Government but also of the previous Government. As I understand the constitution of the City of Brisbane Acts there may as well be no aldermen at all because the Town Clerk in Brisbane is the virtual dictator of municipal affairs in this city. If the Minister really wanted to do something for the people of Brisbane he should have been prepared to put two electorates into one ward, with one alderman representing each batch of two electorates, and have at least no more than 14 aldermen in all. I should have been quite happy if he had put four electorates into one ward, and had one alderman representing one batch of four electorates, and so have only seven aldermen and a mayor for the city of Brisbane. We all know very well that a Brisbane City Council alderman is merely a glorified message boy. He has no authority and no say whatever in the administration of the city; certainly he has no say whatever in the distribution of funds.

I am not going to speak very long but I wish to point out that the Bill is in another way another example of the Government's "greasibus omnibus porkibus" policy—which, of course, is Latin for "grease the fat pig"—because down here people are allowed to vote for their own alderman in their own ward as defined by their own electoral boundaries, a concession not extended to the great provincial cities of the State. In the past, of course, the argument was advanced that the rolls were too complicated because of the country electorates that came into the provincial cities—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: I am not going to digress, Mr. Taylor.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not think the hon. member was in the Chamber when I told the hon. member for Kedron that the Bill related only to the wards of Brisbane being increased in number from 24 to 28. I cannot allow the hon. member to refer to cities other than Brisbane. If he is endeavouring to draw an analogy I point out to him that the occasion is not one when an analogy is required.

Mr. AIKENS: I thank you for your very illuminating ruling, but I really think you should allow me briefly to draw my analogy and then rule on it. That is in accordance with a very sound principle.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have told the hon. member that this is not an occasion to draw analogies and I cannot allow him to proceed along those lines.

Mr. AIKENS: As always, Mr. Taylor, I am prepared to bow to your ruling. I simply want to ask the Minister why we cannot have two wards in Townsville—Townsville North and Townsville South—and have five aldermen for each ward.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! This is the last time I will warn the hon. member. If he refers again to any other city but the city of Brisbane I will ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. AIKENS: In view of your consistent fairness in this Chamber, Mr. Taylor, and the way in which you hold the scales of justice equally between each side of the Chamber, I bow to your ruling. Because of your erudition and your knowledge of etymology, you do know what an analogy is. Consequently, you are capable of passing an opinion on an analogy. On one occasion when the hon. member for Brisbane occupied the position you now occupy, I told him he did not know what an analogy was—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Townsville South to resume his seat.

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (2.36 p.m.): Unfortunately, because of an engagement I was not able to be here at resumption and I am grateful to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for having indicated, in a general way, our attitude to this Bill.

A Government Member: He did not say much; it was certainly very general.

Mr. DUGGAN: I shall have something specific to say at a later stage.

I think this is the first Bill the Minister has introduced and I should like to take the opportunity of offering him my congratulations on attaining ministerial rank. He fought very hard for it over a number of years. He served his party faithfully and well in the capacity of Whip and earned the rank he now occupies. I offer him my very sincere congratulations. It is a great privilege to serve the community at Cabinet rank. I cannot wish him a very long term of office, but I hope it will be a fruitful one whilst he is there.

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. In view of your cast-iron ruling in relation to me and the action you took, I would draw your attention, Mr. Taylor, to the fact that the Leader of the Opposition is not speaking on the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! It is the practice of the Chair to allow the Leader of the Opposition to express some complimentary remarks to a Minister on the introduction of his first Bill.

Mr. DUGGAN: I am grateful for your tolerance, Mr. Taylor. In view of the reference to your erudition and knowledge of

etymology, you recognise someone who has some stability of character and who, unlike the hon. member for Townsville South, is not likely to abuse Standing Orders. It is for that reason you have given me that opportunity for which I thank you.

Mr. Aikens: There is no greater offender in the Chamber than you.

Mr. DUGGAN: I have been thinking, as a result of the talk of cast-iron ruling, that it would be much better if the rules allowed the hon. member for Townsville South to be put in a cast-iron chamber for a while.

It is rather ironic that the Minister should now be charged with the responsibility of introducing a Bill that I understand, on unimpeachable authority, he was very strongly opposed to when he was of less important status in the Government. I refer to the discussions that took place in the Caucus councils of the party on the redistribution measure that was, of course, complementary to the one we are now debating.

It is largely because of the circumstances surrounding the introduction of the Bill that I should like to speak. The Minister, I think, did very well for a new Minister, with his bland manner and easy way when introducing the measure. He seemed to indicate that it was so obviously the sensible thing to do and would obviate much difficulty. I compliment him on his adroitness in introducing the measure on that level; that there would appear to be no controversy; that it was merely a machinery measure to be implemented because it was considered uneconomic to have a number of rolls for a lesser number of aldermanic seats than Parliamentary seats for the metropolitan area, and that it seemed to be obviously good business and common sense to proceed on those lines.

The Opposition is prepared to accord this measure the consideration it deserves on that level, but before we do, I say that this is merely a liability being foisted on the people of Brisbane because the measure is a necessary concomitant of the redistribution Bill introduced by the Government last year to save their political hides.

That is perfectly true and well known, and with your permission, Mr. Taylor, I should like to direct attention to the following question asked by me in this Chamber on Friday, 14 November, 1958—

“In view of (a) his repeated declarations that his Government is a fair one and dedicated to a fair go to everyone, and (b) the claim that the Industrial legislation now before the House was designed only to ensure clean ballots in the trade unions,—

(1) Does the reported ‘horse-trading’ at last night’s meeting of the joint Liberal and Country Parties, by which the Liberals forfeited their ‘one vote one value’ policy in return for the creation of an additional four metropolitan

electorates, indicate the Government's conception of fair and clean procedures in government?

(2) Is it a fact notwithstanding that the personnel of the Redistribution Electoral Commission has not been appointed the Parties have agreed on the basis that the redistribution should ensure the certain return of twenty-five Country Party members in the country and fourteen Liberal members in the metropolitan area?

(3) Does not the intention of inflate the importance of the metropolitan area by the creation of four additional seats give credence to the general impression that this is a Queen Street Government?

(4) Will not the creation of such new seats demand the municipal wards redistribution by inflicting four additional aldermen with consequential greater charges on the rate payers of Greater Brisbane?"

The Premier's reply is a classic example that may be quoted on some subsequent occasion. It reads—

"I can accept no responsibility for the wild and erroneous statements of the Honourable Member, nor am I in any way responsible for the speculative writings of newspapers.

"The art of political kite-flying is as old as free Government itself and I am surprised at the sublime innocence of the Honourable Member in expecting me to take serious notice of his clumsy efforts in this subtle art.

"May I also remind him that Dame Rumour was always a lying jade."

That was the Premier's reply on that occasion. Not only was the question that I directed to the Premier completely responsible, but it was also completely accurate. Yet we found the Premier dismissing what was common gossip in the lobbies, that owing to the Liberals' inability to obtain increased representation unless there was some agreement on the creation of additional seats in the metropolitan area, they would always be subservient to the Country Party wing of the Government. Obviously if the Government parties were able to agree on a lower quota for some of the country electorates and could be assured of 25 seats for the Country Party—incidentally increased to 26 seats—and the Liberal's prognostications of getting at least 17 members from the altered boundaries in the metropolitan area were correct, my account was accurate.

Mr. Aikens: I think you then referred to it as horse-trading.

Mr. DUGGAN: I do not need any assistance from the hon. member in explaining my case.

This is a very appropriate occasion to say that the reason we are to get four more aldermen in Brisbane is not because the

need for them has been demonstrated either to the Brisbane City Council or any of the recognised political parties, whether they be C.M.O. or A.L.P., nor is it because justification for the increased number has been shown; it is merely because there are now 28 members of Parliament representing the metropolitan area. As a matter of convenience and in order to save expense I acknowledge the advantage of using the State rolls as against having rolls altered on the basis of 24 aldermanic seats, the rolls being culled from the 28 parliamentary electorates. It is indisputably true that in that respect the measure is a sensible one.

Mr. Hooper: The hon. member for Kedron did not say that.

Mr. DUGGAN: He did.

Mr. Aikens: He said something entirely different.

Mr. DUGGAN: The hon. member is only saying that because he thinks I did not hear it.

Mr. Aikens: Do you want me to tell them where you were?

Mr. DUGGAN: Yes.

Mr. Aikens: I would not embarrass you by doing it.

Mr. DUGGAN: I will tell the hon. member that I was—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Hon. members should not engage in exchanges across the Chamber.

Mr. DUGGAN: I was certainly with a person with a much higher status, and who is more readily accepted in the community, than the hon. member.

Mr. Aikens: You were with one of the oil company executives.

Mr. DUGGAN: You are an unmitigated liar!

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. First of all the hon. member invited me to tell the Committee where he was. I have said he was with an oil company executive—fishing for a job. The hon. member called me an unmitigated liar, and in accordance with the Standing Orders I demand an apology, and that the remark be withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw the remark. He called the hon. member for Townsville South an unmitigated liar. That is an unparliamentary expression and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. DUGGAN: In accordance with my desire to co-operate with you, Mr. Taylor, I withdraw it, because the term is unparliamentary and as Leader of the Opposition I should set an example in this Chamber.

But if I am obliged, when I am telling the truth, to withdraw a statement surely there should be some regulation or rule under the Orders of this House whereby a man who is telling a deliberate untruth—making a statement that he knows to be untrue—may be admonished. If the hon. member wants to know where I was, I was dining in a restaurant on Wickham Terrace with the editor of a newspaper.

Mr. Aikens: That is your story.

Mr. DUGGAN: I am not obliged to say where I was. If any confirmation is wanted, I can name the place and witnesses who were there and spoke to me.

Mr. Aikens: Go on, do it.

Mr. DUGGAN: It is a pretty poor state of affairs—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not think the hon. gentleman should persist. I think he has fully explained where he was to everybody's satisfaction.

Mr. DUGGAN: I think the time is fast approaching when we should examine the Standing Orders in an effort to prevent a repetition of scurrilous attacks of this kind.

Mr. Mann: Filthy lies.

Mr. Aikens: I expect it from him; let him go.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. DUGGAN: I can assure you, Mr. Taylor, at the risk of being rebuked by you, that whatever may be said about me, I hope it will never be said that I won my seat in Parliament because the Liberals did not run a candidate against me.

Mr. Aikens: I will deal with that in the debate on the Financial Statement. Have the guts to be here; don't forget to be here.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Mann: We have him on the run.

Mr. DUGGAN: Of course he is on the run.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. member for Brisbane and the hon. member for Townsville South continue to engage in crossfiring I shall have to apply Standing Order No. 123A and ask them to leave the Chamber.

Mr. DUGGAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Taylor. I do not want to test your ability to deal with a situation of this kind. I think I have paid you sufficient respect in the past to acknowledge your impartiality.

I was saying on this matter—and I want to make it abundantly clear—that we have never said, nor do we say now, that any criticism of the provision of an additional four aldermen in Brisbane is to be construed as an attack by us on the work they are

doing. I have always regarded the work of the aldermen of the Brisbane City Council, irrespective of the party to which they may belong, as work that demands a great deal of their time and attention. I think it would be fair to say I do not think that the work of aldermen, by the very nature of the responsibilities they are called upon to discharge, is as varied as that of a member of Parliament, but nevertheless it has a very important influence on the every-day affairs of the citizens who are affected by local authority decisions. There is the provision of transport and electricity, the reticulation of water, the provision of footpaths and the various health requirements that local authorities handle that affect deeply the ordinary people of the community.

Because they touch very deeply the ordinary people of the community, many citizens ask their aldermen to examine, in much closer detail than we as parliamentarians are asked to examine matters, proposals involving travel to inspect roads, footpaths, inadequate water facilities, and so on. Aldermen work very hard indeed. I should be the last to agree with those who regard them as over-paid or under-worked. With a budget of something over £30,000,000, the Brisbane City Council is a very important instrumentality. There is a case for a considerable number of aldermen on it.

The Opposition's point is that the Bill has not been introduced because of any complexities of Brisbane City Council administration, but because the Government, having created 28 metropolitan seats to save their political hides, now find themselves on the horns of a dilemma. Either they must face the confusion, expense and inconvenience of having different sets of rolls, or they must introduce a Bill such as this.

If we accept that there are to be 28 aldermen in Brisbane and if it is to be argued, as the Minister no doubt in his reply will argue, that, when the number of metropolitan seats was increased from 20 to 24, the then Government, of which I was a member, said in this Chamber that it was desirable on the same grounds as the Minister has indicated today—because of the saving of cost—let us be quite clear about it; it is a logical approach; but the circumstances were entirely different then. I can very well recall a former Premier, Mr. Hanlon, constantly directing public attention to the preponderance of voting power being vested in the capital cities of the Commonwealth to the detriment of the rest of Australia. With the increase of population, that is a statistical fact.

It will be recalled that we rejected very advantageous terms offered to the State if we would agree to a joint coal tribunal. It was argued that if we became parties to the arrangement, with the greater voting strength of the southern States and the Commonwealth having 51 per cent. representation

on the Coal Board the coal policy of this State would be dictated from Canberra, or New South Wales, as the case may be. Mr. Hanlon then again pointed out the tendency for population to grow in the cities. It is not something to be levelled against Labour Governments or other Governments; it is a world-wide trend. Go to New York, to London, to Moscow, or to any other great city, and you will find a continual drift to the principal cities. It is not due to Labour maladministration or to Liberal maladministration; modern civilisation has brought it about. I want to make it quite clear that, when the then Premier indicated that trend, in order to off-set it, we fixed a very low quota for the western parts of the State, where we had the vast areas referred to this morning by the hon. member for Warrego.

Mr. Aikens: And you put four extra seats into Brisbane.

Mr. DUGGAN: As I pointed out, there must be some point at which we reach optimum representation in these matters. I am certain that the A.L.P. made no approaches to the Government for any increase and I have it on what I believe to be very good authority that neither the C.M.O. nor Alderman Groom went to the Country Party-Liberal Party Government and asked for an increase in the number of aldermen on the Brisbane City Council. Therefore it is only because the Government committed themselves to a redistribution involving the creation of 28 seats that we are now faced with this position in Brisbane.

I hope I have made the Opposition's attitude abundantly clear. We have not said, and we do not say, that the aldermen of the Brisbane City Council are underworked—rather the reverse. Because of the demands and practices that have developed over the years, aldermen are called more frequently into consultation with the individual ratepayers of Brisbane, thanks to the size and complexity of the problems facing this very great municipal undertaking, the largest of its kind in the Commonwealth. That is what accounts for the heavy demands upon aldermen. I would say here and now, on behalf of the Opposition, that if the Government accept that it is desirable on general grounds that there should be 28 metropolitan members of Parliament, we must logically concede that there should also be 28 aldermen. I am not going to discriminate between the number of aldermen and the number of members of Parliament, but I do not accept that 28 members of Parliament are necessary in the metropolitan area. I say that this was designed deliberately for the purpose of creating a basis for a possible 18 Liberal seats as against 10 Labour seats in Brisbane. Hon. members opposite know that, because when their Caucus met the report given to them was that on the redistributed electoral boundaries

they could expect to win 18 seats and the A.L.P. could hope to win only 10. The report was slightly out, because 17 to 11 was the result of this year's contest. We believe that we can, and will, improve on that in due course. When that comes about, the balance will swing to the A.L.P., and I am not thinking in terms of—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman is drifting away from the subject.

Mr. DUGGAN: I respect any call from you, Mr. Taylor. I do not want to make irrelevant remarks, but no-one would deny—you would be the last to deny it—that the only reason for this is that it follows inevitably in the steps of the measure to which I have referred. The Opposition contend that no case has been put forward by the Minister justifying 28 aldermanic representatives in Brisbane other than that we now have 28 State electoral districts. If the cost of an additional four aldermen will be approximately £6,000, whereas the cost of the preparation of the rolls will be of the order of £15,000 or £16,000, as a matter of ordinary common sense the electorate will say, "If we are going to save £10,000, why not have the aldermen?" If that is the basis of consideration, it appears to be logical to accept that. However, I want to go behind that and show that every forecast and every statement that the Opposition made prior to the election has been realised by the introduction of this measure. The Premier referred to Dame Rumour and said that Dame Rumour was a lying jade, and he said that I had engaged in wild flights of fancy. In the light of subsequent events, they have not been proved wrong. The Minister for Health and Home Affairs frequently interjects and says that we have made wrong forecasts, but this is an occasion when we were 100 per cent. correct. I cast no reflections on the aldermen, but if the ratepayers of Brisbane have to pay the salaries of four extra aldermen, they will have the satisfaction of knowing that it is the price they are paying for the gerrymandering by the Liberal-Country Parties in the recent redistribution.

Mr. GAVEN (South Coast) (2.59 p.m.): In rising to participate in this debate on the proposal to increase the number of wards in the metropolitan area from 24 to 28, I should first like to congratulate the Minister for Public Works and Local Government, Mr. Roberts, on his meteoric rise to Cabinet rank. I am sure that he has earned it, and I am equally sure that administratively he will do an excellent job. He is endowed with a great deal of common sense, which is essential for a Minister who holds an important portfolio. One can always approach him and discuss one's problems with him.

The Minister said that it was a simple measure. I agree; it is not only a simple measure, but a sensible one. I am not going to get political about the matter

at all because I realise that if they so desire all political parties can gerrymander and create extra seats or reduce the number of seats, or do whatever they wish to suit themselves from time to time.

Mr. Davies: You admit there was gerrymandering?

Mr. GAVEN: I remind the hon. member who interjects that it was the Brisbane City Council that desired this legislation to create another four seats. I also remind him that the Greater Brisbane City Council was created by the party to which he has allied himself.

Mr. Davies: Tell us why they took—

Mr. GAVEN: I will tell the hon. member anything he wants to know—anywhere or at any time.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. GAVEN: In my opinion it is in the interests of the people of Brisbane and the Brisbane City Council to have 28 wards because if we take it on a population basis, a valuation basis or any other basis at all, in comparison with local authorities in other areas the Brisbane City Council are entitled to the extra representation they desire. If at any time they consider there is anything wrong with the extra representation I am certain that an approach to the Minister for legislation to reduce the number of wards would be successful.

If you will permit me to digress for one moment, Mr. Taylor, I should like to put the hon. member for Townsville South straight. We amended the Local Government Act about two years ago, giving the opportunity to create wards in the Townsville area or in any other provincial city if they so desired, by making application to the Minister.

Mr. Aikens: Who has to make the application?

Mr. GAVEN: The local authority.

Mr. Aikens: Oh! Whacko!

Mr. GAVEN: Who else would make it? Ten per cent. of the people also can petition, if they so desire.

I rose primarily to raise one point: I do not know whether the legislation goes quite far enough. The boundaries of the City of Brisbane and the Albert Shire meet at Woodridge. The Albert Shire Council area includes about 560 square miles, and extends from the New South Wales border to the City of Brisbane at Woodridge. The boundary line divides properties. It means that some property owners at Woodridge or Eight Mile Plains have half their land in the Brisbane City Council area and half in the Shire of Albert. They receive rate notices from each local authority.

Mr. Hanlon: You must always have a line.

Mr. GAVEN: Yes, but there can be a line of demarcation that does not run through people's properties. I know of no other area in Queensland where the local authority boundary splits privately-owned property. Boundaries are usually roads, streets, or some natural geographical feature. I urge the Minister to introduce further amending legislation to alter the boundaries between the City of Brisbane and the Albert Shire so that property-owners will receive only one rate notice.

As I said before, the measure is a simple and sensible one. As the Brisbane City Council have asked for the legislation, it is only right, fit and proper that we should accede to their request. If at any time they consider the increased number of wards is not desirable we shall be only too happy to reduce the number.

Mr. HANLON (Baroona) (3.5 p.m.): I think the Bill might very well be better named and better described as the "Chickens Come Home to Roost Bill," because as the Minister clearly admitted, it is purely and simply the result of the redistribution of State electoral boundaries carried out by this Government. I do not think there can be any denial of that. The argument that the Minister advanced for increasing the number of aldermen in the Brisbane City Council was not because of a need for extra aldermen on the Brisbane City Council but because of the addition of four State electorates in Brisbane under the redistribution of State electoral boundaries.

Four additional State members of Parliament and four additional aldermen in the Brisbane City Council—and this affects the ratepayers in my own electorate who, like the rest of Brisbane, are in a cleft stick in this matter—affect the ratepayers of Brisbane. The hon. member for South Coast claimed that the Brisbane City Council had asked for additional aldermen. I do not know whether that is so or not, but I am certain the Brisbane City Council had nothing to do with the redistribution under which four additional State electorates were created.

As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, we are not trying to establish that there should not necessarily be as many aldermen in the Brisbane City Council as there are State members of Parliament in Brisbane. We are pointing out that when the Government's redistribution Bill came before the Chamber we said there was no justification for more than 24 State members of Parliament to represent Brisbane. Naturally, if there is no justification for more than 24 State members there would not be any call for more than 24 aldermen.

Mr. Richter: Didn't your Government previously increase the number from 20 to 24?

Mr. HANLON: It is true, as the hon. member says, that the Labour Government

in 1950, or whenever the previous redistribution took place, increased the number of members of Parliament and aldermen to 24. It is also true that in 1859 this Parliament started with 62 members, or thereabouts. However, that does not necessarily mean that we should follow the hon. member's line of thought and, every time we increase the number of members of this Parliament we must do so by 62, or whatever we started with. Obviously, the interjection is not at all relevant to the discussion or to the argument I am advancing.

The introduction of this Bill demonstrates the hypocrisy of hon. members opposite and their party officials outside. They set the Government up as a paragon of virtue who look at all things purely from the point of view of the interests of the people and who legislate purely in the interests of the State as a whole.

Obviously, four additional State members of Parliament and—when this Bill is passed—four additional aldermen in the Brisbane City Council will mean considerable extra expense to the public of Queensland as far as the members of Parliament are concerned and to the ratepayers of Brisbane so far as the aldermen are concerned. That position has been brought about not in the public interest or because the Government genuinely think that four additional members are required, or because the ratepayers or the Brisbane City Council think they want four additional aldermen, but purely and simply because of a dog fight between the Liberal and Country Parties. There is nothing noble about that, yet hon. members on the other side of the Chamber and their officials outside continually lecture the Labour Party about internal squabbling and its dire consequences to the State.

I will agree that perhaps a disturbed Labour Party is certainly a very bad thing for the State, but members of the Liberal-Country Parties lecture us about disruption in the Labour movement and at the same time introduce legislation of this sort simply because of some argument between the two parties. That cannot be denied.

I am going to quote from the record of the debate that took place on 2 December, 1958, when the Government brought down the Electoral Districts Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow the hon. member to refer to the Electoral Districts Bill. I have already explained that the purpose of the Bill is to increase the number of wards in Brisbane from 24 to 28. The hon. member cannot refer to another Bill in this debate.

Mr. HANLON: I have no wish at all to question your ruling, Mr. Taylor, but I point out that I am not dealing with the Electoral Districts Act. It was the Minister who introduced the subject, and I was intending to quote from that debate. I think you should

permit me to refer to it where we said that if the Electoral Districts Bill was passed the Government would have to increase the number of aldermanic seats. It was pointed out that the Government would almost certainly be obliged to do it in the interests of economy and convenience, otherwise there would be confusion. May I have your permission to refer briefly to those sections of the previous debate?

The CHAIRMAN: As long as the hon. member relates his remarks to the increase in the number of aldermen in the Brisbane City Council, he has my permission to proceed.

Mr. HANLON: I appreciate your permission to refer to those pertinent matters. I will not go into them in greater detail than necessary.

In my speech on 2 December, 1958, I said at page 1837 of "Hansard"—

"The Premier failed to answer the original questions advanced by the Leader of the Opposition and other speakers on this side as to the reason why four extra seats were created in Brisbane. When the Leader of the Opposition mentioned that it would automatically mean an additional four aldermen, the Premier remarked either in the House or to the Press that that would not necessarily be so. The hon. gentleman said that you need not have 28 aldermen because you had 28 members. If that is so, let the Premier tell how it will be avoided."

I now turn to the Premier's reply. He referred to my speech and said—

"Under the Bill there is no necessity for any alteration in the number of aldermen."

The Leader of the Opposition said by way of interjection—

"In that case you are going to increase the cost of the compilation of the rolls."

The Minister has advanced that argument today as a reason for the increase in the number of aldermen. He has spoken of the difficulties associated with rolls.

The Premier in reply to the interjection by the Leader of the Opposition said—

"Not necessarily. What would be wrong with having the number of aldermen in the Brisbane City Council area, with one alderman to look after two electorates?"

I point out that I do not think 14 aldermen would be a sufficient number at all to represent the ratepayers of Brisbane in the Brisbane City Council. But the Premier's statement clearly reflects the fact that the Leader of the major party in the Government coalition advanced very serious doubts as to whether there was any need for such a Bill as the one we are now discussing. On that occasion it was pointed out to him by us that almost inevitably the Government, whether they liked it or

not, would be obliged to increase the number of aldermen in the Brisbane City Council. We put up that argument not because we thought there should not be exactly the same number of aldermen and members of Parliament but because we thought there was no need for an increase in the number of members. If the number of members of Parliament had not been increased, the number of aldermen would not have been increased. As time went by there was a good deal of confusion. I speak now as a ratepayer of Brisbane and a metropolitan Member. A good deal of confusion was created in the minds of the people of Brisbane and the aldermen of the Brisbane City Council. They were the people who were interested in Brisbane City Council elections. It is all right for us here to decide what is to happen in the Brisbane City Council, but the aldermen represent the ratepayers on that body. They did not know then what the Government's intentions were, with a municipal election to be held shortly. We had a series of articles in the Brisbane Press in which it was hinted that the Government intended to halve the number of aldermen by putting two electorates together, thus making only 14 wards. We had the other suggestions, that the Government intended to set up a number of zones, with four aldermen elected from six zones. The position of the aldermen, irrespective of the party to which they belonged, was very difficult, and, as I have said before, a municipal election was pending.

Finally, an article on the confusion appeared in "The Courier-Mail" and, because of the confusion that had been created, in an effort to clear the matter up I asked a question in Parliament on 2 December, 1959. In part of the question I asked the Premier—

"Is he aware that the Deputy Premier stated in Parliament on Friday, November 20, 1959, that there was not a word of truth in a front-page article in 'The Courier-Mail' of Thursday, November 19, 1959, which included a suggestion that his Government was considering reducing the number of wards from 24 to 14?"

I pointed out the Premier's previous remarks—

"What would be wrong with halving the number of aldermen in the Brisbane City Council area?"

His reply was a rather remarkable statement for a responsible Leader of the Government and is more or less a reflection on him and some guide to the notice that the people can take of him.

He said—

"I did make the statements he refers to, but neither could be construed as being official statements of intention or purpose. Rather were they in the nature of suggestion and comment."

In other words, the Premier implied that he had made that comment, but despite the fact

that he was Leader of the Government charged with the responsibility of bringing down such a measure as this, we could not take much notice of what he said. In other words, when the Liberal Party cracked the whip he had to dance to the tune. That is the only interpretation we can put on his remarks.

Mr. Pizzev: You don't believe that for a moment.

Mr. HANLON: If I don't believe it, I certainly say the Premier and the Country Party have given us good reason to think there is something in it, because I have quoted what the Premier said in the debate on the electoral districts. He said it was not necessary to augment the numbers in the Brisbane City Council when he increased the number of metropolitan members of Parliament, but is now obliged to say, for all practical purposes, that they must increase the number of aldermen in the Brisbane City Council. Even the Minister himself, as the Leader of the Opposition said, was opposed to any increase in the number of aldermen. The Minister was entitled to say that if he felt that way. He was one of the strongest opponents of the measure in the Government Parties.

As the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out and as I have pointed out, from the point of view of expense and convenience, ratepayers have no alternative but to accept the four additional aldermen. The Government have had to do it. It is a great pity for the people of this State, and of Brisbane, that we have not a Government who were prepared to look at the matter of electoral redistribution from the point of view of public interest, instead of making it a cat-and-dog fight between two political parties.

Mr. Windsor: You have been saying that for three years now but you still cannot separate us.

Mr. HANLON: I do not need to separate them. You can already drive a team of eight between them without any trouble, and the breach is widening every day.

It is not my purpose to dwell on that matter. As a ratepayer of Brisbane I have pointed out that the City Council is obliged, more or less, to have four additional aldermen because of the Government's policy of creating four extra city electorates. The way the hon. member for Townsville South has been talking about these four additional aldermen would lead one to think he was paying them. He has nothing to do with the aldermen of the Brisbane City Council. He does not pay for them in any way. They reside in this city and they are paid by the people of the city.

Mr. Aikens: What about the Government subsidy?

Mr. HANLON: What about the subsidies that go to every local authority in Queensland?

The people of Brisbane realise they have to meet the practical difficulties. We would be faced with an almost insurmountable difficulty if the number of aldermen was not equal to the number of Parliamentarians. The people of Brisbane will blame this Government for having four additional aldermen. I do not believe they ever asked for them, or for more members of Parliament either.

Mr. Aikens interjected.

Mr. HUGHES (Kurilpa) (3.20 p.m.): I hope the hon. member for Townsville South will be quiet long enough to hear what I have to say about the Bill because I think my remarks will merit his full attention. I can speak with some authority, being both an alderman of the Brisbane City Council and a member of this Assembly.

I support the Bill because it represents a garden variety of common sense. It is practical and, in the circumstances surrounding the recent redistribution, it is necessary for the good government of the city and the welfare of the people.

Mr. Aikens: Didn't you once say that Brisbane aldermen were only glorified messenger boys?

Mr. HUGHES: I will deal with the hon. member for Townsville South in the course of my speech. If he desisted from trying to make a circus of the Assembly we should be able to get a great deal more business done.

All I can say of the submissions put forward by hon. members opposite is that they amount to a political smoke-screen, particularly those presented by the hon. member for Barooka. I have not yet heard any practical suggestions from the other side. They are tongue-in-cheek about the Bill. First they express a wide diversity of opinion and then they throw up a political smoke-screen to try to capitalise on the Bill at the forthcoming civic elections by attempting to get more Labour aldermen in.

The Bill is economically sound. It avoids the high cost of a canvass by police of every home to bring into being a new set of electoral rolls.

Mr. HUGHES: The Bill is necessary because we have a Greater Brisbane, which was foisted upon us by a Labour Government in 1924 when the City of Brisbane Act came into being. We cannot unscramble the egg. City health services, parks, gardens and all the other domestic matters of vital interest to local authorities are the concern of aldermen and the Bill continues the principle of having elected aldermen as watch dogs of the public interest and as a bulwark against bureaucracy. Parliament would be taking a step in the right direction in supporting the Bill because, above all else, we need to protect the freedoms and rights of people, particularly against bureaucratic boards and the tyranny of autocrats when in power.

With 28 wards, the next election will result in the return of an anti-Labour council because of Labour's past performance in that sphere. The conduct of the affairs of the city of Brisbane has proved the ineptness of a Labour council. It is necessary to put in charge of the city people with a clear conscience and an understanding of domestic local-authority matters. They must have that for the council to protect their interests.

I could speak for an hour or two on the work an alderman carries out but, as I am limited to 25 minutes, I must crystallise my remarks into one salient statement. Aldermen, in their own minds, think they do the work of two members of Parliament. In the dual role of member of Parliament and alderman, I can say that there is a fit and proper place in the public life of the city and the State for each and every alderman and each and every hon. member, and if he is fully cognisant of his responsibilities he will undoubtedly be employed full-time in giving service to the city or the State.

Mr. Aikens: If they are both employed full time, how do you do both jobs?

Mr. HUGHES: Very simply. I happen to be the alderman for a ward that coincides almost exactly with the State electorate that I represent. I have not missed a meeting of the Brisbane City Council in the 5½ years that I have been an alderman.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have given the hon. member a great deal of latitude.

Mr. Aikens: I'll say you have!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. member for Townsville South interjects again, I shall certainly see that he is asked to leave the Chamber.

Mr. Graham interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Mackay to remain silent also. When an hon. member is making only his second speech in the Chamber, as the hon. member for Kurilpa is now, latitude is given to him. I ask hon. members on my left to give some consideration to the fact that when they were new members they were not constantly heckled or interrupted. I ask the hon. member for Kurilpa to refrain from discussing the administrative duties of aldermen and come back to the question whether there should be 24 or 28 wards.

Mr. HUGHES: I appreciate your interest and your suggestions, Mr. Taylor. In support of the proposal to increase the number of aldermen by four, it is necessary to infuse new blood into the Brisbane City Council and this increase will have that effect. If the 28 aldermen accept their responsibilities fully, the public will get a full measure of service from them. On too many occasions aldermen have sheltered in a bureaucratic castle fortified by a bastion of boards. There

will be quite a large number of resignations before the next election, and new aldermen will be elected to the Brisbane City Council. These aldermen, together with the four additional aldermen, will provide greater initiative, and this will do much to obviate what might be termed a bureaucratic paradise or a bureaucratic nightmare, according to whether one is on the giving or receiving end. With the passing of the City of Brisbane Act in 1924 certain chapters and ordinances were adopted relating to the conduct of the City of Brisbane, and the number of boards and the aldermen and their responsibilities. I think I can explain very shortly how four more aldermen will do much to guard the welfare and the interest of the people of Brisbane.

Mr. Aikens: Are you going to run for alderman next year?

Mr. HUGHES: No. I have already stated that it is my intention to carry out my duties until the next election; I am not seeking re-endorsement for the ward that I now represent. Because there was an inept council in 1940—in fact, it has been suggested to me that it was a corrupt council—the Labour Government then in office directed the Labour Council to bring in certain ordinances under the City of Brisbane Acts, and under the new Chapter 59, relating to the responsibilities and duties of aldermen, their administrative powers were restricted to a great extent by the setting up of a number of boards—the registration board, the administration board and so on. I believe that the four new aldermen will bring initiative and a new line of thought to the Brisbane City Council that will be of great advantage to it.

The new aldermen will do very much in upholding the rights of free citizens. They will be able to carry out their responsibilities to the people in a proper manner. At the moment they cannot exactly do that. I should like to point out briefly why I think the additional four aldermen will obviate many of the present anomalies which cannot be overcome because the present 24 aldermen are unnecessarily hamstrung. I will not go into lengthy detail about the various ways and means in which the Council functions. Boards have been set up. As individual members the four new aldermen will do their utmost to uphold the principles of democracy and the freedoms and rights of the people which, I think, at present are not being upheld because of existing circumstances.

Mr. Houston: It will not do away with the boards.

Mr. HUGHES: I certainly hope it may. I have been fighting a lone battle in the Council for many years, but the number of aldermen are so few that I have not had the voting strength to overcome the anomalies. With the additional members in the Council I most certainly hope that can

be done. They will be a bulwark against bureaucracy. They will justify their place in public life by accepting their responsibilities in matters now decided by the various boards.

I shall not take up the time of the Committee by referring to the matter in detail, otherwise some hon. members will wonder at what little authority and power an alderman has. The Bill brings into being four more aldermen who, with the other new members of the Council from April, 1961, will, I hope, be able to overcome the anomalies about which I have spoken for some time.

Mr. Houston: Tell us how they will overcome them.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would remind the hon. member for Kurilpa that he is not obliged to heed interjections or interruptions. I should be obliged if he would speak only on the subject of wards, not the administrative duties of aldermen.

Mr. Aikens: You are teetering on the depths.

Mr. HUGHES: I have no desire to sink to the depths of the hon. member for Townsville South.

If the city is to have 28 full-time aldermen the public will expect them to accept then the full responsibilities of office, and so be answerable to them in a true democratic manner. It is necessary to have four more aldermen. Let us compare the city today with the city of the past. In the past, as the number of representatives in the State Parliament was increased the Labour Government increased the number of aldermen on the Council. There is precedent, to some extent, for increasing the number from 24 to 28. It is very debatable whether it is vice or virtue in relation to the City of Brisbane Acts but I believe it is necessary to have the additional number of aldermen because the next three years will be crucial ones in the city's history.

The Brisbane City Council deals with many important matters—water supply, sewerage, roads and drainage, to mention just a few. It also faces a period of financial crisis, and four more aldermen will help to make the city—

Mr. Davies: Will they get any more finance?

Mr. HUGHES: I certainly hope the Government will do something about it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have already told the hon. member that he is not obliged to listen to interjections. I must insist that he discuss the subject of the Bill.

Mr. HUGHES: It is easy to be led astray by interjections. The Bill will increase the number of aldermen but they will help to be a bulwark of democracy in a centralised

form of city government where now the Town Clerk and various boards have great control over the life of the city. I have made my point that they, the additional aldermen, will give the Council much more talent and initiative and that will be in the best interests of the people of the city. A city that has been burdened for so long will benefit by their efforts. I hope in the city's interest that they will be anti-Labour aldermen because it has been proved that they can govern it very well. I believe they will do much to uphold the liberties and rights of the people, after giving due consideration to the requirements of the city.

This Bill is a very commonsense approach by the Government towards assisting the civic life of the city and I am confident that it will meet with the wishes of the people. It can be said with accuracy and truth that this action is being taken as a result of a request from the Council itself.

The Bill gives practical effect to that request. It upholds democratic principles, which I hope the four new aldermen will support.

Mr. SMITH (Windsor) (3.39 p.m.): The debate so far has been very interesting in illuminating the about-face of hon. members opposite. On 26 September, 1951, a Labour Government whose Cabinet included the now Leader of the Opposition as Minister for Transport, introduced a Bill to amend the City of Brisbane Acts. It is also significant to note that in their ranks at that time there was, as acting Speaker, the present hon. member for Brisbane who was then, as now, carrying on a running fight with the present hon. member for Townsville South.

May I at this stage digress to say that the most noticeable feature throughout this debate has been the behaviour of the hon. member for Townsville South. Despite his normally erratic behaviour, he has, on this occasion, at least, shown himself to be consistent. On 26 September, 1951, he said precisely the same as he said today. I do not know whether he referred to the volume of "Hansard", as I have done.

Mr. Aikens: No.

Mr. SMITH: It would do hon. members the world of good to be reminded of what was said in 1951 on the amendment of the City of Brisbane Acts.

Mr. Aikens: By me?

Mr. SMITH: First of all by the Minister introducing the Bill—a Labour Minister. After moving the motion that it was desirable to introduce the Bill, he said—

"The Bill has two provisions, the first of which is the reconstitution of the city of Brisbane and the city wards following the distribution of electoral districts made under the Electoral Districts Act of 1949."

That was one of the reasons advanced by the then Labour Minister for increasing the number of wards in Brisbane.

Mr. Hanlon: What is the point of all this?

Mr. SMITH: The Premier of the day was the father of the interjector—the Hon. E. M. Hanlon.

Mr. Hanlon: Did it not follow a re-distribution.

Mr. SMITH: That is what I said. The very reasons advanced by the then Labour Minister are now being knocked by Labour members.

Mr. HANLON: I rise to a point of order. I object to the hon. member's misinterpreting the remarks of hon. members on this side of the Chamber. We are not decrying any of the reasons advanced by the Minister any more than we decried the reasons advanced in 1951.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr. Hanlon: You are only pointing out that it goes back to this Government's redistribution of electorates. You are not in the Police Court now.

Mr. SMITH: I was pointing out that on 26 September, 1951, the hon. member for Townsville South, who was then the hon. member for Mundingburra, spoke on the City of Brisbane Acts Amendment Bill. Among other things, he said—

"One of the provisions of this Bill is that simply because 24 seats in this Parliament were allocated to the metropolitan area as the result of the recent redistribution of seats, Brisbane shall therefore have 24 aldermen on the Brisbane City Council."

He is adopting the same attitude today. He was attacking then, as he is attacking now, the proposed increase in numbers, and on precisely the same grounds.

I have had to listen to him for only three years, but he used in the speech I have referred to a phrase similar to the one he used today. He said—

"I think it is about time we asked ourselves, as representatives of the people of Queensland, where this rotten racket is going to end."

He was then criticising the Labour administration. Further on in his speech he said that he was not very much concerned about the people of Brisbane and that we should decide whether there should be 24 aldermen on the Brisbane City Council. He went on to say—

"I can remember very well and very vividly that on one occasion when I referred to Brisbane as a dirty, flea-infested and rat-ridden dump, the hon. member for Brisbane, who is now the Acting Speaker, very vociferously and emphatically from his position in the House spoke in defence of the alleged cleanliness of Brisbane."

Later he said—

"I was gratified and somewhat amused to read only a short time ago when the hon. member for Brisbane, campaigning I think, at a meeting on Kangaroo Point on behalf of the Labour candidate for the recent Kelvin Grove by-election of the Brisbane City Council, was reported in the 'Courier-Mail' as saying that Brisbane was the dirtiest city in the Commonwealth. I thank the hon. member for Brisbane for that."

Hon. members then had the spectacle of the hon. member for Brisbane rising to a point of order and conducting another verbal war with the hon. member for Mundingburra, in the same way as he did today, so that the conduct of the hon. members for Brisbane and Townsville South have not changed. But the reverse is the case in regard to the Leader of the Opposition and other Labour members who were then in Parliament, namely, the hon. member for Mackay, the hon. member for Mourilyan and the hon. member for Wynnum. They supported the legislation. Whether they look at legislation in a different way according to their position in the Chamber, I do not know.

Mr. Houston: What did your members say on that occasion?

Mr. SMITH: They agreed with it. I now turn to the second-reading stage of the debate.

Mr. Houston: What about the introduction?

Mr. SMITH: The introduction consisted simply of the introduction by the Minister and the unedifying spectacle of verbal fighting by the hon. member for Brisbane with the hon. member for Townsville South.

Mr. Houston: Didn't the Opposition members speak on the introduction?

Mr. SMITH: I shall not reply to the interjection. I have brought hon. members up to date on the introduction of that Bill. I now turn to the debate at the second-reading stage, which was very short. This was on 17 November, 1951, by which time the hon. member for Brisbane had attained the rank of Speaker. The Minister said—

"There is not a great deal to add to the remarks I made when I introduced this measure, but because some hon. members may be of the opinion that an increase in the number of aldermen in the Brisbane City Council is unwarranted, I wish to point out that the increase in the number of aldermen from 20 to 24 is really an economy."

Some hon. members opposite may wish they had read this before they rose a short while ago to speak, because it is very clear—so clear that one is amazed they did not understand it. However, as it did not sink in, I

will read it. I point out that I am reading what was said by a Labour Minister. It continues—

"As hon. members know, since the inception of Greater Brisbane the practice has been to divide the city into electoral wards, the boundaries of each ward coinciding with the boundaries of an electoral district in the metropolitan area. With the recent redistribution and the increase in the number of electoral districts in the metropolitan area from 20 to 24, there were two alternatives that could be adopted, namely—

(1) To retain the existing practice and increase the number of wards, and consequently the number of aldermen, from 20 to 24; or

(2) To retain the present number of aldermen.

"We must consider what the adoption of either of these alternatives would cost. The first alternative would result in the payment of extra salaries of aldermen and increased costs of incidentals. If the second alternative was adopted, the Council would have to make arrangements for the compilation and printing of its own voters' roll, because State electoral rolls could no longer be used for the purpose, as the boundaries of wards and of State electoral districts would no longer coincide. The additional salary cost resulting from an increase in the number of aldermen is estimated at approximately £3,000 a year, whilst the increase that would be involved in the compilation of separate rolls, if the wards were not brought into conformity with the State electoral divisions, would be at least £15,000 over a period of three years. Those figures illustrate briefly the point I am making."

And here is the root of the whole thing so far as hon. members opposite are concerned—

"There is nothing really contentious in the matter, particularly when hon. members realise the object of the Bill and the need for its introduction."

Mr. Houston interjected.

Mr. SMITH: In answer to the hon. member for Bulimba, the then hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha, Mr. Morris, rose and said, "I have very much pleasure in supporting the measure," so his action is quite consistent.

Mr. Houston: This is on introduction. What does your member say on introduction?

Mr. SMITH: It appears that the hon. member for Bulimba requires considerable assistance to follow the debates in this Chamber.

Mr. Hanlon: We have no dispute except that it follows your State redistribution. You cannot get away from that.

Mr. SMITH: It appears that hon. members opposite are obtuse; I sincerely hope it is

only apparent. The attitude of the Labour Government was simply this: there has been a redistribution; there has been an increase in seats in the metropolitan area and there will need to be—

Mr. Aikens: I am still against it.

Mr. SMITH: The hon. member sees rats and flies in everything. The point about it is that the then Minister said it was not a contentious matter yet many hon. members opposite, who were present in the Chamber then and supported the measure at that time, can see nothing inconsistent in their present attitude.

Mr. Hanlon: What makes you think the Bill is going to be opposed?

Mr. SMITH: If hon. members are not going to oppose it, they are going through a very peculiar form of supporting it. I submit, without any further discussion, that we approve of the motion.

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) (3.49 p.m.): It is rather amazing, and perhaps pathetic, to see the hon. member for Windsor rise to defend the hon. member for Townsville South on his conduct in the Chamber.

Mr. Smith: I did not defend him.

Mr. MANN: It is no wonder that his party did not oppose the hon. member for Townsville South in the recent election.

We complained about the unfair redistribution of the State electorates. We said that in our opinion they were unevenly and wrongly distributed.

An Honourable Member: You did the right thing.

Mr. MANN: I always do the right thing in accordance with the policy of my party.

What we are complaining about now is the wrong distribution of the electorates and the way it was done. The hon. member for Windsor went to great pains to point out what Mr. Hilton, the hon. member for Carnarvon, said upon the creation of four new seats in the House. Hon. members opposite must know that that redistribution was fair, as the results showed.

Mr. Smith: Nothing could have been further from their thoughts.

Mr. MANN: It was on those boundaries that an anti-Labour Council was elected, so hon. members opposite have no ground for complaint. We are complaining now about the unequal and wrong distribution of electorates. If four new wards are created they will be created on the same uneven boundaries. I know that you will not allow me to go into the whole matter of the redistribution of electorates and the gerrymandering that took place, Mr. Taylor, but, if you were to allow me to do so, I could describe Merthyr as one such electorate. I know you will not let me do it, but I could

tell you that it cuts right across into Hamilton—and you know the part I am speaking about. I do not want to digress.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is already digressing—I know he does not want to—and I now ask him to deal with the distribution of wards of the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. MANN: I am speaking about the ward of Merthyr. If the Bill is passed, the ward of Merthyr will be very unequal; there will be no community of interest in it.

Dr. Delamothe: In other words, you think Merthyr is murder.

Mr. MANN: It is worse than murder and hon. members opposite cannot deny it. The four extra wards will be based on existing State electoral boundaries, which are supposed to have regard to community of interest. In the ward of Merthyr to be created under the Bill there will be no community of interest. It will embrace the workers of New Farm—all the useful people—on one side of the river, and, on the other side, the people who provide the money for the Liberal Party, that is, for hon. members opposite. There will be no community of interest in the ward at all. That is why we object to the Bill. It is an unfair redistribution of the wards.

When introducing the Bill the Minister said it was an economic measure. We have no argument with that. That was why in 1951 we introduced a similar Bill, but we did it on a fair and equal distribution.

I compliment the hon. member for Kurilpa on his knowledge of municipal matters and of the work of aldermen. He knows the need for aldermen to work for the beautification of the city and other matters affecting the citizens.

The hon. member for Windsor supported the hon. member for Townsville South.

Mr. Smith: I did not support him at all.

Mr. MANN: But he did not have one good word to say about the capital city.

Mr. SMITH: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Brisbane is misquoting me when he says I defended the hon. member for Townsville South.

Mr. HANLON I rise to a point of order.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Windsor is taking a point of order.

Mr. HANLON: I rise, too.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair will determine whether or not there is a point of order. To do that the Chair must hear what the case is.

Mr. HANLON: Very well, but I will rise afterwards if he goes on, because I was stopped. I point that out to you.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member for Windsor please state concisely his point of order?

Mr. SMITH: Yes. I could not very well do it while we were being interrupted by those rude interjections.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Please state the point.

Mr. SMITH: I rise to the point of order that the hon. member for Brisbane misquoted me when he said that I defended the hon. member for Townsville South. I simply said that those two hon. members were fighting even as far back as 1951.

Mr. Aikens: And we will be fighting in 1981.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The point of order is that the hon. member for Windsor says the hon. member for Brisbane misquoted him when he said he had defended the hon. member for Townsville South. I would ask the hon. member to accept that denial.

Mr. MANN: I gladly accept his denial, if it will make him happy. I thought he was very uneasy and unhappy when he brought the name of the hon. member for Townsville South into it.

I support my Leader in this debate. We realised, although the Premier and other hon. members opposite denied it, that provision would be made for 28 wards in this city.

Mr. HANLON: I rise to a point of order. I do not wish to interrupt the hon. member for Brisbane, but I wish to point out—I do not think you would have done it wittingly, Mr. Taylor—that when the hon. member for Windsor was speaking I rose to a point of order and claimed that he was misquoting me. You told me to resume my seat, that I had no point of order on a misquotation. I feel that you differentiated between me and the hon. member for Windsor in that respect, because you asked the hon. member for Brisbane to withdraw when the hon. member for Windsor thought that he was being misquoted. I should like you to explain, for my information, the difference between the hon. member for Windsor's being misquoted and my being misquoted. I do not reflect on the Chair, but I should like an explanation of it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out to the hon. member for Baroona that the Chair has to use discretionary powers occasionally, and on the occasion of his raising a point of order I did not see a direct contradiction of anything that was said.

Mr. Hanlon: You did not give me much chance to point it out.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must not reflect on the Chair.

Mr. Hanlon: I do not say that you did it wittingly, but you sat me down pretty quickly.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Brisbane.

Mr. MANN: Before all the sideplay went on, I was complimenting the hon. member for Kurilpa upon his knowledge of the duties of the aldermen in the 24 wards of the Brisbane City Council. I wholeheartedly agree with him that their work is very important. I should also like to compliment him on his own statement—I have no confirmation of it—that he was fighting bureaucracy in the City Council. I am all for that, because I am against bureaucracy wherever it raises its head, whether in the City Council or—

Mr. Aikens interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Brisbane might not have noticed that I called the hon. member for Kurilpa to order when he adverted in his speech to matters of administration. I trust that he will also refrain from discussing that subject.

Mr. MANN: Thank you, Mr. Taylor. I compliment him on his knowledge of City Council affairs and his fight against bureaucracy in an attempt to get a fair deal for the people of Brisbane.

I think Brisbane is the best capital city in Australia, and it is very important to look after the interests of the people. If the Government are going to increase the number of wards to 28 and so bring the boundaries into line with those fixed for State electorates in the recent redistribution, it is most unfair. We contend that if the wards correspond with State electoral districts, an unfair proportion of aldermen belonging to one party could be elected. I am not going to argue with the Minister or members of the Government parties about the economics of the matter. It is quite likely that they could make a good case on that. I did not hear the Minister introduce the Bill, but I read his speech. He said there were to be 28 aldermen and the Lord Mayor, and that the election of the Lord Mayor would be conducted as it has been in the past. He also said he intended to make provision for four more aldermen on the basis of a redistribution that the Australian Labour Party claimed was gerrymandering and most unfair.

The Minister also said that there was discussion about having only 14 aldermen. I should like him to elaborate on that statement and give us the reasons why they did not make only 14 wards instead of 28.

Mr. Coburn: It would be better.

Mr. MANN: I am not going to argue about that, but I should like to hear what the Minister has to say about it.

Mr. Hanlon: The Government's own leader said it should be 14.

Mr. MANN: We want the public to know that the Premier himself denied that there would be 28 wards. If hon. members opposite want proof they can have a look for themselves.

Government Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MANN: They are wriggling and squealing now. I am not surprised at the hon. member for Somerset. He is sitting next to the hon. member for Townsville South, so he is likely to say anything. It was clearly said by the Leader of the Government that it would not necessarily mean 28 wards. That is what we are complaining about. Now that the election is over they want to make sure that they can elect a C.M.O. Council. They do not want 14 wards because they know that we could win 14 with Labourites.

Mr. Hughes interjected.

Mr. MANN: Our redistribution was fair; the present Government's was not. The Minister said that they considered having only 14 wards and in his reply I should like to know why they decided against that number. He has put up only a very simple case—that on economic grounds they should have 28 seats. We are arguing that the seats will be gerrymandered as they were for the State election. That is the gravamen of our complaint.

Hon. L. H. S. ROBERTS (Whitsunday—Minister for Public Works and Local Government) (4.2 p.m.), in reply: I have really enjoyed the private little Donnybrook this afternoon. As many of my friends know, what I like better than a fight is two fights. Today I was not able to participate in the fight. It was not really a fight from the Opposition, it was only shadow-sparring. From what I have heard so far there is little for me to answer. It appears to me that hon. members opposite know very little of what is going on. The hon. member for Kedron was only shadow-sparring because his Leader was delayed. He was a classic example of an hon. member who did not know what was going on. He made very heavy weather of his speech; he was groping all the time. He said something about our pushing in several political friends if there were vacancies. Section 18 (2) of the City of Brisbane Acts clearly lays down—

“When an extraordinary vacancy arises in the office of an alderman other than the Mayor a separate election by the electors of the electoral ward in which such vacancy has arisen shall be held to fill such vacancy.”

It is a very bad state of affairs when the Deputy Leader of a party makes such a statement.

Mr. Smith: His own party put that amendment through.

Mr. ROBERTS: That is so.

I thank the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for South Coast for their congratulations. The Leader of the Opposition was very wide of the mark when he suggested that I opposed the measure in Caucus. How would he, or any other member of the Opposition, know what goes on in Caucus, when they have not a clue to what goes on here?

There was a hue and cry this afternoon about gerrymandering. I am not going to deal with that because nobody would know more about gerrymandering than hon. members opposite. They have had a lot of experience of it and have been absolute past-masters at it.

Hon. members opposite admitted that 14 aldermen were not enough. If 14 are not enough, how would 28 be too many?

These are the people who have consistently maintained that they are looking after the whole of the people. In the metropolitan area of Greater Brisbane there is exactly 40 per cent. of the population of the State, and when the Labour Party was in power the metropolitan area had 30.7 per cent. of the seats in the State. Would anybody suggest that that was justice by a party looking after all sections of the community?

Now that the Government have seen fit to increase the number of metropolitan seats from 24 to 28, the position has been improved to the extent that today 40 per cent. of the population in the metropolitan area, although still below their just proportion, now have 36 per cent. of the seats.

It is difficult to make notes of all that is said, but it was pointed out to the hon. member for Townsville South by a Government member that it is the privilege of any local authority, regardless of where it is, to split a town into wards for electoral purposes if it so desires.

Mr. Aikens: Do you think the perennial limelighters in Townsville would want the town split into two wards?

Mr. ROBERTS: I cannot say anything about what would be done in Townsville. That is an area where the hon. member has been for a number of years and, from my recollection, he stood for election to the local authority there on a number of occasions—not very successfully, I believe, in recent years.

Mr. Aikens: The A.L.P. ganged up with the Tories.

Mr. ROBERTS: Before that, he held quite a prominent position in the local authority.

Remarks have been made here about questions that have been asked in Parliament, and great stress was laid by the hon. member for Baroona on the fact that a question was asked of the Premier towards the end of last year. He should know by this, as all experienced members of Parliament know,

that never at any time will any Government disclose their policy to the Opposition when answering questions. The Premier followed that course. He did not state definitely that there would be 17, 14 or 28 seats. An hon. member opposite said this afternoon that the Council had not asked for this increase, and he wanted to know who originated the move. The hon. member for Baroona said that this could be the chickens coming home to roost, or something of that nature. In the same vein I could perhaps say that Opposition members are fouling their own nest.

I have here a letter dated 4 December from my predecessor to the Lord Mayor. I shall not read it all, but he pointed out that Cabinet had given consideration to the effect of the State electoral redistribution in the metropolitan area on the constitution of the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. Hanlon: That was after you had increased the number of State seats.

Mr. ROBERTS: Of course. Does the hon. member think that that would be done beforehand? Would anyone, even in his nappy stage, run along to a Council and say, "We are going to do so-and-so.", or, "We are going to have 28 or 56 seats.?" What sort of a dill would he be if he went to a Council and let the cat out of the bag before it was known definitely what was going to happen!

I have with me a letter from the Lord Mayor dated 7 December, 1959. It reads—

"Dear Mr. Minister,

"I refer to your letter on the 4th instant concerning the constitution of the Council and to advise that the Council prefers to retain the State Electoral boundaries as the boundaries of wards and to continue to use the State Rolls as the rolls for election of its members.

"It is appreciated that this decision will increase the number of members of the Council from 25 to 28 but my Council believe this to be the most suitable method of adjustment.

"Thank you for the opportunity extended to give my Council's views."

Hon. members opposite would not know about such matters, because correspondence is not left lying around for everybody to read.

The Bill is a simple one. I do not suppose we can blame hon. members opposite for getting in a little practice when they can. They must realise, as Government members do, that the Bill is a very simple one. I have nothing further to say.

Motion (Mr. Roberts) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

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

The House adjourned at 4.18 p.m.