

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 1960

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

“An inspection of the bridge was carried out ten days prior to the Honourable Member giving notice of his question, when the only defect found was some loose decking. Action was taken to divert a bridge gang from other work to carry out necessary repairs and these have now been completed.”

**ELECTRICITY METER IN TUCK SHOP,
MITCHELTON STATE HIGH SCHOOL**

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

“(1) Is it a fact that the Parents Committee of the Mitchelton State High School has been advised that it must install a separate electricity meter in the school tuck shop and pay for all electricity used?”

“(2) If so, does this pinch-penny attitude reflect Government policy of discouraging the great voluntary work for students carried out by such Committees?”

“(3) Is he prepared to review the Government's decision in this matter?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

“(1) The Mitchelton State High School Parents and Citizens' Association has been advised that a sub-switchboard is to be installed in the lunchroom, which is being provided under subsidy, and that provision must be made for the metering of power and light in the lunchroom on separate tariffs. The Association has not been advised that it 'must pay for all electricity used'.”

“(2 and 3) The ever-increasing use of electric power in State School buildings makes it necessary to keep an accurate check on consumption. Principals, Head Teachers and School Committees have been instructed that additional electrical equipment is not to be installed in school lunchrooms without Departmental approval and that any irregularities in the consumption of electric power are to be reported to the Department. The sub-metering of lunchrooms will facilitate such a check and will also enable advantage to be taken of lower tariffs in high schools, where lunchrooms are in daily use as compared with weekly use in primary schools. It might be necessary on account of the increasing costs of electricity in school tuck-shops to call upon school committees to bear part of the cost of light and power. The proceeds from tuck-shops, in the main, add to the revenue of the school most of which attracts governmental subsidy. It is somewhat anomalous that the Department should subsidise revenue to which it has already contributed.”

TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER, 1960

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

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

LOANS SINKING FUNDS

Mr. SPEAKER announced the receipt from the Auditor-General of his report on the operations of the various sinking funds of the State for the year 1959-1960.

Ordered to be printed.

QUESTIONS

RAILWAY BRIDGE, DIGGER STREET, BURANDA

Mr. BROMLEY (Norman) asked the Minister for Transport—

“Because of the shaky condition of the railway bridge in Digger Street, Buranda, the fact that it is used extensively by vehicles of all sizes, that children use this bridge on their way to and from school, that the noise created by vehicles is keeping people awake at night, together with the fact that to my knowledge and to the knowledge of residents in that area, the bridge has not had any maintenance for many years, will he give consideration to repairs being carried out immediately? If not, why not?”

PAINTING OF SCHOOL FURNITURE

Mr. BROMLEY (Norman) asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

“(1) When the internal painting of a School is to be done, will this include the painting of furnishings such as presses, tables, chairs, desks and forms?”

“(2) If not, will he give consideration to this painting where necessary, as new paint on walls and ceilings often emphasises the shabbiness of furniture?”

“(3) If he agrees, will he consider the use of a high-gloss paint on infant's cupboards because of the easily washable surfaces?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

“(1) Approval for internal painting of classrooms, offices, &c. in school buildings does not provide for painting of furniture, which is usually stained and varnished.”

“(2) Any application made by a Head Teacher for painting of classroom or office furniture will be submitted to the Department of Public Works for consideration.”

“(3) See answer to (2) above.”

ERECTION OF STEPS, BURANDA STATE SCHOOL

Mr. BROMLEY (Norman) asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

“Regarding my representations to him on behalf of the Buranda State School Parents and Citizens Association for the erection of steps for easy and safe access to the school oval and his written replies thereto, will he again refer the matter to the Department of Public Works for the work to be undertaken without cost to the Association?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

“It is the responsibility of the Department of Public Works to ensure that school grounds are placed in a usable condition and the funds made available to that Department for ground improvements are intended to meet that responsibility. This Department, by way of subsidy granted under the School Ground Improvement Subsidy Scheme, does assist School Committees to provide and improve recreational facilities in School Grounds. The oval at the Buranda Schools which was provided without any cost to the parents, is probably the best available to the children of any metropolitan Primary School and it is considered therefore, that the provision of access steps should be regarded by the Committee as a project attracting subsidy under the above-mentioned scheme.”

STATE ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES AND PROVINCIAL CITY WARDS

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) asked the Minister for Public Works and Local Government—

“Will any of the four major provincial cities be divided into two wards on the 1960—T

basis of their State electoral boundaries as provided for in the Local Government Act for the 1961 Council Elections and, if so, what are the names of the cities and what actuated the division?”

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

“I have no information of the matter raised by the Honourable Member.”

PAPERS

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

Report of the Agricultural Bank for the year 1959-1960.

Report of the Chief Inspector of Explosives for the year 1959-1960.

Report of the Queensland Health Education Council for the year 1959-1960.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Order in Council under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1958.

Report of the Queensland Trustees Limited for the year 1959-1960.

Regulations under the Registration of Firms Regulations of 1953.

Regulations under the Liquor Acts, 1912 to 1959.

Orders in Council under the Maintenance Orders (Facilities for Enforcement) Acts, 1921 to 1959.

Orders in Council under the Supreme Court Act of 1921.

Orders in Council under the Landlord and Tenant Acts, 1948 to 1957.

Regulation under the Hospitals Acts, 1936 to 1955.

By-laws under the Dental Acts, 1902 to 1959.

By-laws under the Pharmacy Acts, 1917 to 1959.

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY; MINISTER FOR DEVELOPMENT, MINES, MAIN ROADS AND ELECTRICITY.

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (11.24 a.m.), by leave: As hon. members are aware, the Hon. E. Evans, M.L.A., Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity, has proceeded overseas on Government business.

His Excellency the Governor has therefore, by virtue of the provisions of Section 8 of the Officials in Parliament Acts, 1896 to 1959, authorised and empowered the Hon. O. O. Madsen, Minister for Agriculture and Forestry, to perform and exercise all or any of the duties, powers and authorities imposed or conferred upon the Hon. the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity by any act, rule, practice, or ordinance, on and from 9 October, 1960, and until the return to Queensland of the Hon. E. Evans.

I lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the Government Gazette Extraordinary of 7 October, 1960, containing this notification.

Whereupon the hon. gentleman laid the "Government Gazette Extraordinary" on the table.

METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADES BOARD (LANDS) BILL

INITIATION

Hon. A. R. FLETCHER (Cunningham—Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation): I move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill relating to certain lands now held by The Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board upon trust for fire brigade purposes."

Motion agreed to.

INSPECTION OF SCAFFOLDING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier), for **Hon. K. J. MORRIS** (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry): I move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Inspection of Scaffolding Acts, 1915 to 1959, in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

INSPECTION OF MACHINERY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier), for **Hon. K. J. MORRIS** (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry): I move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Inspection of Machinery Acts, 1951 to 1958, in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

EVIDENCE AND DISCOVERY ACTS AND OTHER ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

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

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Evidence and Discovery Acts, 1867 to 1959, and various other Acts, each in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

COMPANIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

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

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Companies Acts, 1931 to 1955, in certain particulars, and for other purposes."

Motion agreed to.

LAND TAX ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Chatsworth—Treasurer and Minister for Housing): I move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Land Tax Acts, 1915 to 1959, in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

SUPPLY

COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT— RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

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

Debate resumed from 29 September (see p. 544) on Mr. Hiley's motion—

"That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1960-1961, a sum not exceeding £1,365 to defray the salary of Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor."

The CHAIRMAN: Before calling upon the Leader of the Opposition to make his address I desire to make a statement.

On 23 August last the hon. member for Bundaberg commented on certain action taken by me in November, 1957, when an hon. member turned on a small radio receiver in the Chamber during the debate on the

Railway Estimates. In the course of his remarks the hon. member for Bundaberg said—

“If the Chairman or Speaker could not act on the day on which the incident occurred, neither the Speaker nor the Chairman had any right to base his decision or any ruling on what appeared in the Press the day after.”

As the hon. member's views may have caused doubt in the minds of other hon. members as to the correctness of my action on that occasion, I asked the Hon. the Speaker if the incident could be referred to the Clerk of the House of Commons for an opinion. With the Speaker's approval, extracts from the 1957 “Hansard” and the recent remarks of the hon. member for Bundaberg were duly forwarded. In the reply received the following opinion was given—

“It seems to me that the Chairman's action was entirely proper.”

Government Members: Hear, hear!

The CHAIRMAN: As my action in 1957 may have established a precedent, I make this statement for the information of all hon. members, and to have it recorded in “Hansard.”

Mr. WALSH: I rise to a point of order, if I might discuss it on a point of order rather than as a question of privilege. Am I to understand that action will be taken by either Mr. Speaker or yourself on any statement that might appear in the Press or complaint that might be made by anybody sitting in the public gallery or in any other part of the precincts of Parliament House? I take it that the Press are regarded as strangers in the gallery.

The CHAIRMAN: When such a case arises a ruling will be given.

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (11.31 a.m.): The point has been reached in the deliberations of this Parliament at which we have to examine what is unquestionably the most important matter this Parliament has the opportunity of discussing—the Budget introduced a little more than a week ago by the Treasurer.

The Budget, as usual, contains a tremendous amount of statistical information setting out the funds available to the State. It also provides the Treasurer with the opportunity of submitting to the Chamber his views on the general financial pattern in Queensland and in the Commonwealth as a whole. Indeed, very frequently the presenting of the Budget poses some questions of very great importance that are not circumscribed because of the geographical boundaries of the State or of the Commonwealth.

I view this Budget as a budget of frankness. In saying that I am mindful of the fact that the Treasurer has not shirked his

responsibility in giving reasonable explanations of the financial policy he is committing the Government to follow. For instance, in an earlier Budget statement he said it was part of a deliberate policy of the Government to use up surplus funds standing to the credit of certain trust accounts because, by so doing, the State would be in a better position to argue to Commonwealth authorities that we were virtually bankrupt and required assistance. I have never been ashamed to admit that I was not afraid to wear the mantle of the mendicant to Commonwealth authorities but the Treasurer has stated it was a deliberate policy and he has carried it out. We have seen the effect on the Governments' position. Financially, the effect has been cushioned, to some extent, over the years by the utilisation of these funds, and by the disposal of surplus material in some of the suspense accounts that make considerable amounts of money available for Government purposes. But he has now reached the end of the barrel in that regard. He then sets out to make a case for a revised formula for application to Queensland.

The Budget that the Treasurer introduced last week is an apologetic Budget, one that for the first time in many years shows a slowing down of the tempo of development of the State. He indicates in the Budget that the railway Department will not be able to carry out its mechanisation programme as he would like to see it; he points out that the tempo of public works expenditure will have to be curtailed and that the impact on the Budget of the margins decisions has prevented certain expansion taking place. He points out that the expenditure on certain State assets that are not revenue-recovering is diminishing and the heavy impact on State finances of the services the Queensland Government are making. He has drawn attention to the very high public debt of this State, now in the vicinity of £320,000,000.

For his frankness in directing attention to these things I suppose the Committee should be grateful, but he has established records in other directions, too. When the Labour Government left office the statement of accounts for 1956-1957 revealed that there was a surplus of £15,230, which I understand was £77 above the estimate given by the then Treasurer. I point out that over the years, whatever the result of the year's operations, Labour Treasurers were able to forecast fairly accurately the final nature of the State's accounts. However, when the present Treasurer took over, he set in motion a series of policies that have resulted in three successive deficits. In 1957-1958, when he may have been excused, perhaps, on the ground that he was committed to some of the financial policies of his predecessors, there was a deficit of £1,514,308. The following year, when we should have expected him to be responsible for his own financial policies, there was a deficit of

£1,190,856. In 1959-1960, when he forecast a surplus, there was a deficit of £164,675. For this year, of course, a deficit of almost £250,000 is envisaged. So that the Treasurer has the distinction of having three deficits to his credit and one coming up.

In order to justify that position, the Treasurer has attempted to divide the Opposition from time to time when we have directed attention to certain aspects of our economy, notably, in previous years, the failure to deal completely with the problem of unemployment. He said we could not have our cake and eat it, too; that we could not on the one hand criticise him for deficit results while we were on the other hand advocating the expenditure of more money.

I point out on behalf of my party—and I think it is a view with which the Treasurer concurs—that there should be a general endeavour in times of prosperity to have a balanced budget and that, when times are bad, we have to do as the Treasurer said on one occasion he was prepared to do, that is, spend until it hurts. I think that is a fair policy to adopt, but, if we are going to continue in deficit, the funding of these deficits has to be undertaken, and no-one is more alive to that than the Treasurer. It leads in the following year or succeeding years to the application of extra money for the retirement of those deficits. If the Government overspend as a Government, ultimately their over-spending will catch up with them in the same way as overspending catches up with an individual.

The Treasurer based his financial plan largely on the hope that if he could demonstrate that the State could not live within its income and if we dissipated or used surplus trust funds, we could make demands, as the other States have done, for an augmented reimbursement from the Commonwealth. I will be very happy if he gets extra money from the unsympathetic Federal Government, but experience has shown that those hopes do not materialise. Despite the fine words of Government members from time to time, say, when elections are pending or when they want to heal some breach that seems to be developing, extra assistance is not given. We have heard those persons making all sorts of optimistic forecasts about what their friends in Canberra will do for us. I have here an extract from a statement by the Deputy Premier on 4 March, 1958, in which he said—

“Although we have been the Government for only six months, the hon. the Premier and the Treasurer, owing to their capacity and ability to present a case infinitely better than the hon. member for South Brisbane and his Treasurer were able to do, were able to convince not only the Federal authorities but the other State authorities that Queensland had been badly served in years gone by.”

He continued—

“No decent case was presented on behalf of Queensland for many years.

“They have demonstrated not only to hon. members opposite who themselves failed in the matter, but have demonstrated also to the people of Queensland as a whole that by presenting a good case Queensland has received the second highest allocation of any State in Australia.”

That was the statement of the Deputy Premier, but subsequent events proved that other leading members of the Government repudiated his optimism, and indeed the people who repudiated it have been none other than the Premier and the Treasurer. On many occasions they have said publicly they did not consider Queensland was getting proper and fair treatment from the Commonwealth authorities. Indeed, more recently when an attack was delivered in this Chamber by a prominent private member of the Government over the failure of the Commonwealth authorities to help in the matter of the development of roads in the Channel Country, we found a senior Minister of the Government rebuking the Commonwealth Government for their failure to help Queensland.

We had the spectacle of the Premier rebuking a Liberal Senator, Senator Wood, for his expose of the neglect by the Commonwealth authorities of the financial requirements of this State. Even after that incident occurred in the House, when one might have expected some statement in the heat of the moment, we find on studied reflection that the Minister attacked another hon. member, Mr. Murray, the member for Herbert, who left the Country Party and joined the Liberals. This feeling became so bad that the Country Party and Liberal Party tried to plug the gap by saying there should be a liaison to establish better relationship between the Federal and State members of the coalition. Then the Treasurer himself was obliged to come into it. He was reported in “The Courier-Mail” of 6 October as follows:—

“The State and Commonwealth Governments were ‘getting together’ as never before, to work out Queensland’s future development schemes, the State Treasurer (Mr. Hiley) said yesterday.”

Out of an expenditure last year of £50,000,000 by the Commonwealth authorities, less than £750,000 was allocated to Queensland. However, the chief finance man for the Government says co-operation was never better. Then we find that at the Cabinet meeting in North Queensland there was a great “splash” about a £6,000,000 development scheme for roads in North Queensland. The way that was presented in the Press and the way it was announced, we were led to believe that in addition to the £600,000 to be spent in the Channel Country, £6,000,000 was to be spent in the North. It is only one of those paper proposals. It is a scheme to be submitted to the Commonwealth authorities. We had

the spectacle of Commander Jackson being brought out to this country to implement the spending of £100,000,000 in Queensland, as advocated by the then Federal Minister for Development, Hon. R. G. Casey, over a few years. He flew over Mt. Morgan and other parts of the country and talked about the magnificent potential and all sorts of places where the money should be spent in developing the country. He talked also about the hungry people in Asia with covetous eyes on this country and said that £100,000,000 should be spent here. This man from England was brought out at an enormous salary and he talked about this development with £100,000,000 that came to nothing.

Despite all the pleas, we find that last year the Commonwealth Government allocated £750,000 for capital works programmes in Queensland compared with the total of £51,000,000 for the rest of Australia. That is a measure of the co-operation that exists.

Then we find that so-called plugging of the gap. The Government treated a former member of the Cabinet very shabbily. He tendered his resignation and wanted to be a free man in this Parliament so that he could have his say. We find that again party politics dominated and that the Premier had a private audience with him to try to talk him out of any attack he might make on the Government. It is little wonder that he wants to attack the Government. He pointed out that the Government are spending less on irrigation this year than the Labour Government spent despite the overall increased allocation of funds. Less money is now being spent on irrigation and other developmental projects. This member of the Country Party made the statement that in rural matters the Labour Government treated the country areas better than the present coalition Country-Liberal Government. It is little wonder the Government want to silence these people, yet they speak about democracy and the freedom of the individual. They want to choke freedom of expression when it assumes the serious proportions of attacks against the Government. They used a very persuasive talker, the Treasurer, to try to heal the breach by saying that the measure of co-operation was never better. However, there is a pitfall in having persuasive talkers like the Treasurer trying to pour oil on troubled waters. We had the spectacle just recently of the Prime Minister trying to do that, and he did far more serious damage. I will have something further to say about that later. The Treasurer, as he has done on previous occasions, will try to gloss over the attacks that will be made on Government policy generally by perhaps saying that the Budget itself has not been attacked but there has been some generalised criticism of the Government.

It is well known that the Standing Orders provide that the fullest possible freedom shall be given to hon. members in this debate. We can discuss international affairs or national affairs or any subject we choose. The Treasurer tried to get some relevance

in his objections previously by saying that there was less justification for a broad canvas being taken on this debate because the Government had intimated last year their intention months before the Parliament assembled as to which Estimates would be discussed. He said that therefore there was no need for hon. members to take up time in the debate on the Financial Statement on matters that could be discussed when the particular Estimates came forward. He also said that the practice would be followed in later years. I have heard no pronouncement by the Government this year as to which Estimates will be debated.

Mr. Hiley: I can tell you now.

Mr. DUGGAN: I am not talking about what I can be told now.

Mr. Hiley: I thought you wanted to know.

Mr. DUGGAN: Yes, I do.

Mr. Hiley: Every one that was not on last year will be on this year.

Mr. DUGGAN: We were promised last year that we would get in future, as we were given last year, some months' notification of which Estimates would be discussed. Now, upon my challenging the Treasurer for his failure to carry out that promise—not he personally, as no doubt the Premier would make the announcement—we have the belated intimation that the Estimates that were not discussed last year will be discussed this year. If we attempt to anticipate these matters, or to forecast them, we are charged with being clairvoyant or with using our imagination as to what may or may not be introduced.

Mr. Hiley: You do not need to be clairvoyant. That has been the practice now for some years—alternating so that hon. members may have an opportunity to discuss every department at least every second year.

Mr. DUGGAN: If that is so, without checking it is extraordinary that the matters that seem to be most vital at present—Railway Estimates and the Labour and Industry Estimates—will not be discussed. I do not know whether that is coincidental or whether it fits into this rhythm that has been mentioned or whether it simply fits into the Government's book.

Mr. Hiley: Would you prefer to return to your practice whereby some Estimates were never discussed?

Mr. DUGGAN: I do not mind that because hon. members opposite just talk the thing out anyway when it suits them.

Mr. Dewar: In those days we had two Estimates and we did not know what they would be.

Mr. DUGGAN: The hon. member's colleagues were the people doing all the gabbling on those occasions. As a matter

of fact, the only criticism I can offer of that policy is that a perusal of "Hansard" will disclose that unfortunately a good deal of time was taken up by the members of the then Opposition with twaddle about painting lavatories, putting doors on railway carriages, and so on. It was little wonder that they were in Opposition.

If the Treasurer wants to adopt this attitude I do not mind. The hon. member for Brisbane, a prominent personality, has often been quoted by me. He makes no bones about the way he wants to fight politically—boots and all. With him you know where you stand and I admire him for that. The Government pose as great democrats facilitating the machinery of Parliament and safeguarding the rights of the people, but they play the game very savagely to suit their own political ends.

We intend to attack the Government generally on the ground that all their optimistic expectations have not been realised. Firstly, there has been a grave betrayal of the statement that, with their confreres in Canberra, they would put value back in the pound. The second claim was that this tempo of development would proceed apace. We read only in yesterday's paper, confirmed in this morning's "Courier-Mail," of a possibility of £6,000,000 being spent on Mount Morgan. About two years ago I was told to hold my peace on that because otherwise we might prejudice negotiations that, if people kept quiet, would come to fruition. Not wishing to be a knocker on the realisation of some great scheme of that kind, I obeyed the request and refrained from criticism. Now we find that that grandiose scheme has fallen flat. I do not mind if the reason was beyond the control of the Government and if they could say they had fought hard. Those are the ordinary hazards of Government, I suppose, and I do not mind if the Treasurer, confronted with a situation where, with a big railway deficit facing him, has to increase rail fares and freights. That is only being realistic about his obligations. I do not mind if he says manfully, "Those are the things we have to face up to." Always when an election is pending we have promises that these problems will be cured. Unfortunately, with a Press that is very helpful to them, they get a tremendous measure of support.

For instance, I am going to say something about education. When the Budget was introduced no mention was made, of course, of there being £500,000 less for irrigation, but there were big headlines in "The Courier-Mail" and "Telegraph" about the expenditure of £4,500,000 on school works and education. I guarantee that if a Labour Government had been in office there would have been headlines about the £500,000 less for irrigation and never a word about the £4,500,000 additional for education. The Press have cushioned considerably the pressure of criticism against this Government, because

on every occasion they do not publish the things that the Government have not done and give bold headlines to proposals that are nebulous in character.

Mr. Pizey interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: I do not approve of inaccurate statements. If the hon. gentleman will restrain himself, I was about to pay him a compliment, and it is not often I do that. I should like to say, in case the Minister's interjection has been recorded in "Hansard," that we on this side of the Chamber believe that no useful purpose is served if criticisms are inaccurate and the allegations are unfounded. If they are put forward in good faith, it is all right, but I do not approve of allegations being made when they are known to be inaccurate. I believe it is right to criticise the Government when the Deputy Premier and others run around making these extravagant claims about what is going to happen and those things do not materialise. When the Estimates for the Education Department were under consideration on a previous occasion, I told the Minister that, of all the departments of the Crown, I did not wish to make any party political capital out of the Education Department. I think the Education Department should receive the full co-operation of all members of this Assembly and that we ought to do all we possible can to provide the greatest volume of funds for educational requirements. We are living in an age when we should have an educated adult population, and we should be preparing our children, who will take our place in the community, to play their part.

Mr. Hughes: By the New South Wales method of instructing teachers?

Mr. DUGGAN: That is an interjection that I intend to ignore, because it is diverting me from the important thing that I want to say. I think the Education vote should not be the plaything of party politics. The Minister is a hard and sincere worker. As I said in the House the other day, if we address a question to the hon. gentleman seeking information, invariably he is courteous enough to realise that and he couches his reply in dignified language. I pay him that compliment. He is working very hard in his department. He has done a great deal of good, and we do not seriously criticise what he has done. However, I want to disabuse the public mind of the fact that this Government have done spectacular things and that previous Labour Administration neglected education.

Let us see what is happening now. The figure for education in the Estimates for this year is £17,500,000. No doubt the Treasurer will contrast that with the £11,000,000 provided for education by a previous Labour Government, as the Minister for Education has done on previous occasions. But every Government in the Commonwealth has been confronted with the problems of increasing school populations and the need to vote increased facilities. Although the population

of New South Wales is not three times as great as the population of Queensland, the Parliament of New South Wales voted £50,000,000 for education in their current Estimates. Victoria, which has not three times the population of Queensland, also voted over £50,000,000 for education this year.

Mr. Pizzey: They count their loan money in theirs.

Mr. DUGGAN: It does not matter. They are spending over £50,000,000.

Mr. Pizzey: We are spending £25,000,000.

Mr. DUGGAN: It is all very well for the Treasurer or the Minister for Education to say that, speaking in money terms, the expenditure here is very much greater; but, irrespective of what Government were in power, any Government worth their salt would have been required to make provision for approximately £17,000,000 for education this year.

I am glad that the Government are providing £17,000,000 for education but they are no more entitled to make political capital out of it than we would be to attack the Department of Education merely to gain political capital. The welfare of the children and the beneficial results that accrue to the community from having suitable syllabi and curricula to provide adequate training both academically and technically are what count.

Mr. Hiley: If you are in any doubt about it let me assure you that both the Minister for Education and I consider that we have done better, but we still do not think it is good enough. We must do better still.

Mr. DUGGAN: I have said that. I do not think we can spend too much on education. I am trying to dissociate myself from any party political propaganda. I am leading up to a subject that has some relevancy to what I am saying now.

In 1954-1955 the Labour Government's vote for education was £8,700,000. In our last year of office the figure was £11,300,000, representing an increase over the three-year period of 29.8 per cent. Since the present Government have assumed office admittedly in money terms the figures have gone up from £12,300,000 in 1957-1958 to £15,100,000 in 1959-1960, but this represents only an increase of 22.7 per cent. On a percentage basis we had better figures in our last three years of office. So why all this cheap clap-trap about what this Government are doing for education? The problem is common to every Government. I have the figures for every State. The pattern is familiar everywhere; it is not confined to Australia. Many countries have the same problem of providing sufficient funds for educational expansion. I read in the "Time" magazine that in some parts of America they are obliged to have two periods of instruction

a day—one in the morning and one in the afternoon because of the inadequate classroom accommodation in the schools. The problem is not peculiar to any one country. The Labour Party has nothing to be ashamed of in the field of education.

In the course of this debate we have the opportunity to make a very broad canvas. The Treasurer very properly has drawn attention to some of the financial problems confronting Australia. In my opinion No. 1 problem is inflation. Our cost structure has become so difficult that future years will be even more difficult for Australia unless greater courage and business acumen is exercised at top level in the creation of a better and sounder policy. Whilst it is only right that we should attack the Government—and we will do so when we think it is justified—at the same time I give the assurance that we will be happy to help the Treasurer, whoever he may be. Our co-operation will be forthcoming in any plan that can achieve desirable results. If we are to have a spirit of co-operation one of the first prerequisites is the understanding that we are all anxious to improve the economy of the country and the economic wellbeing of its citizens. We may proceed along different paths but we should both have the same goal. Our party worries more about those who are most in need of help than those at the top who are best able to stand some of the results of private competition. That is where the great difference lies: the method of utilisation of the resources available to the Government. We think those on the lower wage scale are entitled to a higher percentage of the national income—the primary producer and the small wage-earner—rather than those behind the Liberal administration of the State. But how can we have the desirable atmosphere of goodwill and co-operation when one of the main reasons why the Treasurer is having financial difficulty in meeting the cost of the increased margins application? How can there be contentment when a High Court Judge gets an increase in salary of £2,000 a year and an increase from £4,000 to £5,000 in retiring pension, yet the wage-earner cannot get a miserable increase of 16s. or 25s. a week from the authorities? Admittedly Sir Owen Dixon is probably one of the greatest jurists we have ever had. No doubt he could earn much more in private practice, but that is not the point. The point is that no measure of co-operation from outside can be expected if judges and public servants are given these tremendous increases while people on the lower-wage scale, who have to face up to the exigencies of the era in which we live, are refused these paltry increases.

That brings me to the next point, which is the method currently used to win elections. Elections should be fought on the overall advantages or defects of the Government's

policy, and I feel that, generally speaking, a Government should command a majority of the votes of the electors. This Government do not command that vote. Even making allowance for the juggling that went on, about which I have spoken on previous occasions, the Opposition vote at the last election, in terms of percentages, increased to a greater extent than did that of the Government. Yet the number of seats held by the Government in this Chamber is disproportionate to the vote received.

In this State, and in the Federal sphere, elections are fought and won not on Government policy but on the parties' ability to arouse the people emotionally and introduce into the campaign matters foreign to the freedom of a democracy. I refer to Communism, and I feel it is my duty as Leader of the Opposition to make some observations on this subject.

We are living in an age in which the march of Communism has reached alarming proportions. It has permeated to a greater or lesser degree into every country in the world. It has made spectacular gains in some countries. Red China in particular poses a special problem to the democratic countries. If we are going to resist this challenge we must uphold parliamentary institutions. I said recently at a trade-union congress that I did not think democracy was the most efficient form of government. I make no apology for that. The main weakness of democracy is perhaps the slowness with which it works but, as I said years ago, and I say it again today, despite the imperfections of democracy it is by far the safest form of government and I want to retain it.

When I say it is not the most efficient form of government I mean that on financial or international questions it cannot move as decisively or as effectively as authoritarian governments can. If we are going to prepare for a heavy defence programme, we have to condition the people to the acceptance of higher taxation by a campaign demonstrating the dangers of the times in which we live, whereas the authoritarian regimes, once the facts have been analysed, can move with lightning-like speed. The democracies cannot do that but I believe, with all the sincerity at my command, that the democratic form of Government is by far the safest and hon. members on this side are as anxious as any other section of the community to preserve it in its freest possible form.

I deplore the present vogue of smearing reputable members of the community. I acknowledge the Communist effort in material things. They have achieved great things. In this space age they probably lead the world in scientific development. Unquestionably, in Red China they have done much for the material wellbeing of the people, but they have done it at the cost of personal liberty. I firmly believe that it is better that people enjoy a full measure of

personal freedom and liberty than bear the chains of regimentation, discipline and terror which characterise authoritarian regimes, whether they be of the Left or the Right.

Mr. Hilton: Do you abhor the state of affairs in Red China?

Mr. DUGGAN: Yes. I object very much to the emotional atmosphere in Australia which prevents us from getting a clear and impartial picture of these things. If we can get a clear, objective picture of these things, we can condition our thinking to the most appropriate steps to be taken, but that is difficult when we have people talking of threats to the nation. Now that the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party has raised the matter, I shall deal with one aspect, not for reasons of bitterness but merely for the purpose of showing how these statements can militate against a proper examination of a position. If we were presented with a factual and impartial picture we could analyse the results, but I challenge anyone to analyse the position, having regard to the flood of literature with which we are presented, whether it comes from the Communists or anti-Communists. It is very difficult to know how much is truth and how much is lies or falsehoods. It is very difficult for the ordinary person to make up his mind objectively.

I think a very great disservice has been done by constant smearing tactics. I have here an American publication. I do not think anyone could say that American views are not more anti-Communist than those held in any other large power in the world. Indeed, a large section of the population is almost hysterically anti-Communist. These people felt constrained recently to put out through their public relations authority a reaffirmation of some of the great democratic statements of people such as Herbert Hoover, and Truman and even the statements of such authorities as Cicero, Magna Carta and Pitt, and other great leaders of the past who spoke of the need to preserve liberty. Famous American journalist, Drew Middleton dealt with McCarthyism and traced it back to the period of the Tudors and the Stuarts. But now we have the Deputy Premier of this State smearing others. I do not mind if he attacks the Comms., or if he hates the Comms., but I think it is wrong that there should be a hysterical approach to these matters, which inflames public opinion against decent, law-abiding people in the community who are not Communists. I regret that in the highly charged emotional atmosphere that develops on these things the State seeks to abrogate to itself powers that are the very antithesis of democracy. We find such an example in the Crimes Act.

Outside this Parliament and the State there are men with no fixed political views, but who are democratic in their thinking. They are very much concerned about some aspects of the proposed amendment of the Crimes

Act. I cannot speak for my colleagues in the Commonwealth Parliament, but for myself and my colleagues of the Opposition I can say that if we formed the Commonwealth Government and we could see that there was need to clothe the Commonwealth with power to deal with persons guilty of subversive activities we would see that the Commonwealth Government was so cloaked with power. But we must be careful that in this process of dealing with such persons we do not enmesh ordinary citizens through the operations of an Act provision that transfers the onus of proof from the Crown to the individual. The onus of proof is on the Crown. That is a cardinal principle of British justice and something on which a democratic structure must rest. Yet we find in a section of the Crimes Act that that principle is changed, and the onus of proof is placed on the individual.

William Pitt in 1760 had this to say on the subject—

"The poorest man may in his cottage bid defiance to all the force of the Crown. It may be frail; its roof may shake, the wind may blow through it, the storms may enter the rain may enter,—but the King of England cannot enter; all his forces dare not cross the threshold."

Those sentiments were expressed a long time ago.

Mr. Ramsden: That was a long time before Soviet Russia.

Mr. DUGGAN: Problems existed even in those days. The Wars of the Roses went on for many years, and they had other divisions in the community.

A great disservice has been done by smearing. I have already said that in referring to the statement of the hon. member for Carnarvon I was doing so not in a spirit of bitterness. I pay him a compliment in that I do not think he was a party to it, and, if he was confronted with a similar situation he would not release a document of this kind.

I do not want to go back to the split in the Labour Party. I think we should let the past bury its dead. But in the last election campaign, on the occasion of my policy speech—and it is the democratic right of the Leader of a party to make his policy speech—I was confronted with a very concerted, organised measure of disruption, and some of those people were the representatives of known candidates of that particular party.

I have never made any general reflection on the police. I did not give their names, nor have names ever been mentioned by my colleagues from the public platform, but it was obvious who two of these men were. One was the political opponent of the Treasurer. They were very vociferous, and instead of being asked to leave they were brought into the front seats nearer the microphone.

A Government Member: Was this during the last election?

Mr. DUGGAN: Yes, in the last election.

This document is dated 5 May, 1960, and it emanated from the Strand Building, 130 Queen Street. It was distributed by the Queensland Labour Party, and it contains the instructions to their branches. It says—

"The Australian Labour Party policy is to ignore the Queensland Labour Party and to ignore the issues which led to the formation of the Queensland Labour Party.

"Our answer must be to make them only too well aware of our existence. This attack must be pressed home on all fronts and wherever possible. The A.L.P. by ignoring these issues hopes to have them glossed over.

"The only way to have these charges answered and their evil effects remedied is to attack by letters in all the Country Press, either saying what A.L.P. policy is on these matters, or asking them to state what it is. The A.L.P. Leader, Mr. Duggan, must be forced, either by heckling or through other means to deal with these questions in ALL his meetings."

The word "all" is in capital letters. At the end we find the words "But not by our candidates," which have been deleted. They realised that some of their candidates were doing it, and it was crossed off their circularised instructions. I exempt the hon. member for Carnarvon from it. It is unworthy of the dispassionate attitude and democratic principles that should be adopted to give the Leader of the Opposition the opportunity to make his election speech and state his case. It was organised heckling.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: If the hon. member wants to know how regimented these things were, when their own meeting, that is, the Q.L.P. meeting, took place they had white cards. If a person did not have a white card he could not get halfway down the hall. There was no possibility of getting near the microphone to make objections known.

Whether it is the Queensland Labour Party, the Australian Labour Party, or any other party, in this country with 10,000,000 people, compared with 600,000,000 people under the Communist regime in China, and with another 90,000,000 in Indonesia, and 450,000,000 in India and so on, we must face these problems realistically and get the people together and not divide them by smearing people as Communists when they are not Communists. To do such things to men in the A.L.P. and other places is to do a very great disservice. It is easy enough to make political capital of these things.

Last year the former hon. member for South Brisbane asked the Premier to use his influence to prevent any trade with Red China. The Premier said that when the hon. member for South Brisbane was Premier he did not make any protest about £2,000,000 worth of goods being sent from Queensland to Red China; that was his reply.

Included in a number of statements that I have here is a very strong plea by Mr. McEwen, the Acting Prime Minister, for the development of trade with Red China. No-one could accuse him of being a fellow-traveller. Again, the statement has been made by Mr. Doug. Forbes, a well-known financier and company director in this State—I do not agree with his politics, but I have a very high regard for his personal integrity and his contributions to commerce—when addressing the Millaquin Sugar Company meeting the other day that we should consider the development of our trade with Red China. Then we have the Commonwealth Government promoting a visit by the trade ship "Delos." It spent two days in Shanghai. Mr. Ivan Morris, of Morris Woollen Mills, who, I understand, is a very keen Liberal supporter, was there, and Mr. Rod Colquhoun, the Queensland manager of Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd., who is not known for his communistic activities. There were many others, and they spent at least 10 days touring the South Pacific. If you want to go further than that, I have here a photostat about Sir Anthony Eden—who was not known to be a Communist, of course—inviting Khrushchev and Bulganin to Britain. The photostat is taken from Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 28 April, to 5 May, 1956, and it deals with all the pomp and ceremony tendered them. They lunched with the Queen, and they were taken to Calder Hall to look at the atomic power station.

On the other hand we read in the "Australian Worker" where the British Labour Party spokesman on defence and international affairs, George Brown, met Khrushchev and Bulganin and engaged in very bitter and very heated debate. It broke up in confusion. When Khrushchev and Bulganin left England they were reported as saying that if they were to stay in Great Britain they would embrace the Conservative Party because they felt they would get along much better with the Conservatives than with the Labour Party.

Again in Keesing's Contemporary Archives we find where the British Board of Trade asked Britain's leading businessmen to visit Russia. And who went? The companies represented included—

Austin Motor Export Corporation,
Leyland Motors,
William Asquith,
Blaw Knox,
The Brush Group,
Crompton Parkinson,
Davy and United Engineering,

Enfield Cables,
Forestal Land Timber and Railways,
Johnson and Phillips,
Lancashire Dynamo and Crypto and associated companies,
Lobnitz and Co.,
Thomas Robinson and Sons,
Rose Brothers,
J. Sagar and Co.,
J. Stone and Co. (Holdings),
Mullard Overseas,
Ruston and Hornsby,
U.D. Engineering Company.

They said they were able to develop trade worth about £402,000,000.

Mr. Tooth: What is all this relevant to?

Mr. DUGGAN: My point is that it is all right for hon. members opposite, with their Sir Anthony Edens, their Rod Colquhoun, and their Doug. Forbeses or their Mr. McEwens, to meet these people and do these things, but if any Labour man is even seen looking at a newspaper in the Library, or if he walks within 15 yards of a Communist official in the Trades Hall, he is accused of being engaged in some subversive activity.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: There has been no greater offender in this Chamber than the Deputy Premier.

Mr. Richter: Don't you think it is because of the company you keep?

Mr. DUGGAN: What's that? I have never had lunch with Bulganin or Khrushchev, and that is more than some hon. members opposite, or their counterparts, could say. As a matter of fact, when some Russians visited Queensland and a conference was held, the Deputy Premier and some of his ministerial colleagues gobbled down the Vodka at Lennon's Broadbeach Hotel. They thought it was wonderful. You could not get near them, as a matter of fact. I will not name one particular gentleman because he cannot defend himself. I know one very important person in Queensland who asked the British High Commissioner, "I wonder what sort of a fellow he is. I'd like to meet him." I am sure I would offend someone in the gallery if I were to tell hon. members what Lord Carrington said about him. You would need a scythe or an axe to cut out the Liberals who wanted to go along and meet that man. I deplore this tendency to charge the atmosphere with emotion.

Mr. Knox interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: The hon. member is one of those smart young Liberal orators who want to challenge everyone on everything. I will take him on any time, anywhere, to debate any of these subjects.

Mr. Knox: Give us the answer.

Mr. DUGGAN: These so-called bright young orators get themselves into trouble, and he is one who will get into trouble if he thinks he can talk his way out of these matters when decent people outside are becoming concerned about this constant cry of "Wolf!". When the real danger comes, the Government will not get united and concerted action by the Australian people because they are sick to death of the way these things are used for party-political manoeuvring from time to time.

Menzies was returned to power in 1949 on his promise to put value back in the pound, but today, eight or nine years later, the pound is worth only 6s. or 7s. At every election he brings forward the Communist bogey. He is preparing the ground with the Crimes Bill at present. Because Sir Garfield Barwick and he are away, the introduction of the Bill will be deferred till the New Year, and then he will be creating another atmosphere to fight the 1961 election on Communism. This great saviour goes over there and meddles in international matters. He says he is going to make a name for himself, and he makes a great outburst and secures only five votes out of 50 in the United Nations General Assembly. He has alienated the support of people who are friendly to Australia, and I refer specifically to Mr. Nehru, the leader of 450,000,000 people. When the Prime Minister went through the door of the United Nations building, he rubbed shoulders with the Premier of Ghana and said, "It is good to see you again." They are old friends—this dates back to 1957—but the Premier of Ghana did not vote for Mr. Menzies' resolution. Every commentator whose reports I have read in the last fortnight, and particularly in the last four or five days, admits that one of the greatest blunders and tragedies has been this meddling of Matty's going overseas and worsening relations with people who are potentially friendly. He failed on Suez, he failed in the United Nations, and he is wrecking the Australian economy. Instead of putting value back in the pound, he is creating this emotional atmosphere for an election.

I should be very happy to have more to say on this subject, but I realise that the Treasurer will probably say, as he did on a previous occasion, "The leader of the A.L.P. protesteth too much." If one does not make statements of this kind, one is branded a fellow traveller or criticised for not attacking the Communists. I have attacked the Communist philosophy, and I say it is repugnant to the Australian people. If one does not protest, one is said to believe in these things: if one protests, as I am protesting now, hon. members opposite say, "You protest too much."

So that I will not be charged with neglecting entirely some of these financial implications, I shall deal now with what I believe the

Government should do. When I was Minister for Transport, there was no more vociferous critic of the Railway Department than the present Minister for Transport. On every possible occasion attack upon attack was mounted against the Labour administration and myself because of what was happening in the Railway Department. The present Treasurer made some interesting speeches on the Estimates dealing with transport, and in 1956 he had this to say at page 214 of "Hansard"—

"The most significant feature of the Budget is the attempt to obtain £5,800,000 in new revenue from the Railway Department . . .

"I suggest that most of the increases in railway charges will come as a further whip to the cost structure of this community. That illustrates the point I want to make that any tax which is bound up with production costs, which becomes reflected in the price structure of the community, operates as a whip to secondary inflation, cost inflation, and is something a wise Government should seek to avoid . . .

"My second comment is that we cannot possibly collect £5,800,000 extra in railway revenue.

"My third comment is that there is no answer to wage increases."

Despite the statement by a man who is admittedly well experienced in the compilation and collection of figures that we could not collect £5,800,000 extra, the report of the Commissioner for Railways for the year ended June, 1957, showed that there was an increase of £5,306,098 over the earnings in 1955-1956. I looked back through "Hansard," and when I embarked, with the complete approval of my former ministerial colleagues, on this modernisation programme, the present Treasurer did not criticise what was being done. He deplored the fact that more was not being done in the modernisation of the railways. When I left the Railway Department, I think we had approximately 50 diesel locomotives, but the full economic impact of their use was not reflected until the early stages of the Liberals' administration. I think this Government have ordered only 10 new diesel locomotives, so the modernisation has not proceeded.

Speaking in the 1956 Railway Estimates debate, the Treasurer said—

"I am wholeheartedly in agreement with the department's policy of complete dieselisation of the State's railway services."

On getting tracks laid more quickly, he said—

"There is an English Morris track-layer, and maybe the Oliver would be suitable for the purpose."

"I should like the Minister to tell us why in Queensland no use is made of L.C.L. containers."

"It is my conviction that Roma Street is not large enough. . . . Mobile

cranes, fork lifts, and conveyor loaders are needed. . . . To get proper handling the department may have to consider completely new yards elsewhere."

"I should like the Minister to consider the development in marshalling yards in America of the hump system."

"The Minister might also consider some of the recent developments in France . . . pneumatic tyre bogies . . . the pot type of concrete sleeper."

And so on. His speech was filled with all these suggestions for spending millions and millions of pounds, yet when they had the opportunity what did they do? There have been reduced votes for modernisation. I am sure that the Minister for Transport has been glad to have his financial adviser at Cabinet meetings to extricate him from his difficult position. But despite all that has been said about what the Government would do in the last financial year there was the greatest increase in railway losses in memory, notwithstanding statements to the contrary. The difference between revenue and working expenses reached the staggering figure of £2,632,543. This is at a time when the Treasurer said, according to his previous Financial Statement, that we were living in a period of unprecedented prosperity. He referred to improved mineral and agricultural production, and painted a very glowing picture of the great economic development taking place in Queensland. When I was Minister for Transport and closed one branch line there was a howl of protest from the then Opposition about this very unfortunate and sad action taken by a Labour administration to cut off rail access to Brisbane for the rural community. Now this Government have closed five branch lines, five more may be closed, and 50 other lines are being examined. What did the Press have to say about it? Only small obscure articles about concern expressed at meetings of the Q.D.O. Had the Labour Government done it, imagine what headlines there would have been! When we closed one branch line the Press gave it great headlines. In their 1957 policy speech the Government said that they would run the railways like any other business, yet the Treasurer has said in his Financial Statement that the Government will have to consider very, very seriously further increasing the charges for unremunerative services. He also says that probably on the balance of things it would be better if the railways did not carry any passengers at all. Imagine what would happen in the metropolitan area! I think one of my colleagues intends to speak about the electrification proposal, so I shall not deal with that because it is a subject in itself. There is a great deal of uneasiness in the Railway Department. The tables in the Treasurer's Statement show increases in the numerical strength of most departments—I think there is a reduction in the Department of Health and Home Affairs—which reflect the progressive development that one would expect

with the increase of population and development of the State, but the increase in the Railway Department permanent staff is only one.

There was some disagreement in Cabinet whether increased railway charges should precede the appointment of a business administrator. Quite recently newspaper headlines referred to the chaos at Roma Street in the handling of goods. I realise there are many physical and financial difficulties. I pay the Treasurer the compliment that he is generally fair in his examination. My attack is not directed at him personally but at his colleagues who never lost an opportunity to flay me when I was Minister for Transport. The increase in losses is greater in Queensland than in New South Wales, where the Labour Government this year expect to be in a much better position. Despite the impact of margins the New South Wales Government showed a surplus last year and are budgeting for a surplus this year. Victoria also is budgeting for a surplus. Yet in this Liberal State of Queensland we are faced with a deficit!

The Treasurer invited consideration of ways and means so that we could make some contribution. I have deliberately chosen a fairly broad pattern this morning, rather than make a detailed criticism of particular aspects of Government policy. That will be done by members of the Australian Labour Party as the debate proceeds. I am very much concerned—and I am certain the Treasurer is, too—at the developments in relation to the promotion of trade. In his speech in June to the Sydney Country Party conference, the Minister for Trade, Mr. McEwen, said—

"The Export Development Council—a very authoritative body—has advised the Government that Australia's annual export earnings, which are now running at about £900,000,000, must be expanded by an additional £250,000,000 over the next five years."

But, in its statistics of international trade the International Monetary Fund shows that between 1953 and 1959, when on its reckoning world exports rose in value from 75 billion dollars to 102 billion dollars, or by 36 per cent., Australia's exports remained virtually stationary. According to Mr. McEwen we did not even keep pace with the expansion in the value of world trade in a period when world trade as a whole showed a vigorous expansion. These figures give the percentage increases in exports between 1953 and 1959—

	Per cent.
World total	36
U.S.A.	11
United Kingdom	30
Japan	170
Canada	24
West Germany	120
France	47
Australia	1

With a threat of inflation the Menzies Government suggest that we should increase our export earnings over the next five years by £250,000,000, when, for the period to which I have referred there has been an increase of 1 per cent.

This Government, largely reliant as it is on rural production and mineral wealth for developing this State, will have to make some contribution. A stock-taking will be necessary to show how these needs may be met.

The present Federal Government have failed to arrest inflation, but having satisfied the tall poppies they now embark upon a deliberate policy of trying to freeze wages at lower levels and in order to do that they want a pool of unemployment. They have relaxed import licensing regulations, thereby releasing a flood of goods on to the Australian market that are in no way essential to our economy. Only yesterday the Press told us of American glassware that was coming in; American cigarettes are coming in tremendous quantities; timber is being imported in very large quantities. All sorts of goods are flooding the Australian market, with the result that over the last three months we have had an adverse trade balance of £83,000,000. I am certain the Treasurer does not view the position with any degree of equanimity.

Mr. Hiley: I have not the faintest doubt that the mid-summer night madness will soon draw to a close.

Mr. DUGGAN: I am glad to hear that; we are thinking on parallel lines. Whatever else might be said this is a predominantly primary-producing State. I hope secondary industries will become more important in the future, but I have very little hope that the trade gap will be closed by the present Federal authorities.

The Treasurer will no doubt have more accurate figures on the Mt. Isa scheme than I have. I had a report on it some years ago but I do not remember the details now. I think the increase in production meant an increased export earning of £30,000,000 a year. Queensland has obtained a loan for the scheme from the Commonwealth at 5½ per cent. interest repayable over 30 years, but the other States got 80 per cent. of their money for nothing, with repayment periods ranging from 45 to 50 years.

Labour members and others from timber areas will be interested in that industry. The increased imports are alarming. For the seven months ended 31 July last imports of undressed timber, including logs for milling here, were valued at £12,345,000—almost a 100 per cent. increase in the last seven months on the value of £6,800,000 for the corresponding period in 1959. Those statistics show a 100 per cent. increase in timber imports. All along the line we have this problem of trying to curtail wage costs, to which the Treasurer referred, and of trying allegedly to make industry efficient. I am

in agreement with that. I do not think Australia can shelter behind inefficient methods in secondary industry any more than it can in primary industry. We have heard various statements about stabilised prices and inefficient farming methods, and we read recently of the vast food stocks being held by the United States, brought about by its policy of stabilising prices, but only a country such as that is able to sustain such a programme. We do not find that the Government say to motor-car manufacturers, "We will guarantee the sale of so many Holdens, Falcons or Hillman motor vehicles." Those manufacturers have to find a market. But in some of our rural industries we find a tendency, whether it is economic or not, to the view that we have to sustain a certain volume of production.

We find a decline in the volume of eggs available to the English market, and in the volume of meat marketed in Great Britain. All these matters show disquieting signs of a shrinkage that could endanger the economy of the country. In wool production we are not making the same relative increase as other wool-producing countries, and according to the "Financial Review" there has been a tremendous increase in the estimated world production for 1959-1960. The estimate is 5,593 million pounds of greasy wool, an increase of 4.6 per cent. over 1958-1959. Russia showed the largest increase with 9.3 per cent., the United States being next with 7.8 per cent., and Australia showing an increase of 6.2 per cent. World production is expected to increase further this year, but Australia expects to be down 5 per cent. on last year. In addition, as the Treasurer knows, values are down.

We have also the threat of synthetic fibres, and the adverse trade balance, from their viewpoint, of Japan with Australia. That country has taken steps to conserve its funds for expenditure in Australia and, with very great technological advances in that country, it is quite possible that the development of synthetic fibres will be accelerated. The wool people say they have no fears about synthetic fibres. We know the advantages of wool, which is a natural fibre, but I do not share the complacency of those people who do not fear the tremendous increase in production of synthetic materials. They make inroads into the price of wool, on which Australia's economy is so dependent. I think we must see that a greater measure of national revenue is directed towards improved railheads, assistance in the form of roads and improved watering facilities, and intensification of research by the C.S.I.R.O., the Wool Bureau and other bodies.

The Treasurer referred to meat production. Apparently the volume of meat for the hamburger trade is less than it was previously. I think the departmental statistics for the dairying industry reveal a drop in cattle numbers. The hamburger trade fortunately provided a good avenue for disposing of old bulls and culled cows, but the present cattle

numbers are considerably less than they were previously. With the build-up of herds in America, we cannot expect the same volume of exports of hamburger meat. I do not want to be regarded as a Jonah. The views I have expressed are contained in the department's publications.

Mr. Hiley: Even if the demand persisted at the same level we have not got the same reserves in culled cattle and dehydrated meat to suit the hamburger trade.

Mr. DUGGAN: That is so, and with the drought we are now faced with the problem of replenishing our herds in the years that lie ahead.

I personally think the financial and economic problems transcend in importance these other emotional matters, and I should like to hear the Treasurer's views. If time permitted, I should like to see compiled a clear and impartial assessment of the problems, so that we could then tackle them in the interests of Australia. I am concerned at the fact that far too much party-political capital is made out of these things, and that we are losing the race to stabilise costs and maintain our economic standards, of which we are very proud. There must be a concerted effort and we must apply pressure at Government level to preserve them.

Because of the drought the future for grain in the State presents a problem of some magnitude. It was originally estimated that this year's grain crop would be in the vicinity of 16,000,000 or 17,000,000 bushels. Now, the most optimistic forecast made by Mr. Garsden, the manager of the State Wheat Board, is that we will be very lucky to get 6,000,000 bushels, and with the continued deterioration in the weather it may well go below that figure.

The barley crop this year will be down. The bulk of the crop is exported to Japan. They are not so dependent on barley now because of the drought conditions, and the intensification of rice production in Japan, so we have the prospect of a decline in the availability of markets for our grain. We have to be realistic in our approach to this problem. The economic picture for exports in this State is not as bright as it should be.

That brings me to a point I made the other day as to whether we are to be the plaything of international politics because of the common market proposals. The Australian case has not been presented strongly enough. Great Britain will do what she thinks best in her own interests—and I do not blame her—and the other countries will do the same. If there is any advantage to be gained by these six or seven nations, they will take it. It seems to me that Great Britain has missed the bus a little, and I urge that the Australian case be more decidedly ventilated than it has been. There has been a tremendous acceleration of trade between the common market countries, which must ultimately keep out countries like Australia. Our prospects of having grain

admitted to the European market seem to have been reduced because of the preferential treatment given to members of the common market. I urge the Treasurer to face up to this challenge, and I feel sure he will. I urge him to accept the advice of the Federal Minister for Trade to increase our production to a rate comparable with the growth countries. Unless we can increase production it does not matter how much we are spending on schools or hospitals, because ultimately we will not be able to retain or sustain the amenities we have. The Labour Party is as conscious as anybody of the need to come to grips with this problem.

In times of inflation the wage-earners and those on fixed incomes who have some savings are the people who feel the effects most. A keen businessman very often knows the proper time to vacate an investment and get into something else. I crave the indulgence of the Committee to allow me to repeat what I said previously. When Sir Arthur Fadden resigned he became a director of Hookers, and he was responsible for an advertisement that appeared in "The Courier-Mail" which said, "Invest your money with Hookers and let inflation look after your investment." He instanced a building that had been bought by Hookers, and gave the purchase price, and he said that the same building changed hands in 1958 for about three or four times the figure he quoted, and he suggested that was another reason why people should invest with Hookers. I do not pick out Hookers just because it was Hookers; many other firms are in exactly the same position. When Sir Arthur Fadden was a member of the Government he was fighting against these inflationary trends, but when he entered private enterprise he was the first to point to inflation as a means to influence the flow of capital.

Whatever justification the Treasurer may think there is for it, I ask him to think over his three deficits in a row. I ask him as an intelligent man, who is conscious of these problems, and who applies his mind to them, "To what extent can we have some measure of stability in the country, with these inflationary trends, and how may we preserve our entry into the world markets, instead of permitting ourselves in national matters of trade and foreign affairs to be dominated by eloquent statesmen who make pretty speeches and win the argument but lose the decision?" That seems to me to be what is happening at the present time. Apart from the problems of local development that we have on our minds, we have long-term problems affecting the growth of the country.

On the financial side, as the Treasurer knows, the Deputy Premier is one who has talked most about the need for the influx of foreign capital. There are differences of opinion as to whether that is as desirable as at first sight it appears to be. We have a tremendous inflow of investment, but the servicing of that in the form of expatriation of dividends is assuming great dimensions and

our net inflow is not as spectacular as a cursory examination of the picture would lead us to believe. Indeed, it is far from encouraging.

Our financial picture overseas is reflected in this extract from the "Australian Financial Review" of 11 August, 1960—

"Loan Failure in London.

"Underwriters of the £14 million London cash and conversion issue of Australian 6 per cent. stock 1977-1980 were left with 52 per cent. when applications closed last week."

Despite that very high rate, it is obvious that the investing public over there realised there was little prospect of success and they held on, with the result that the stock can now be purchased—or it could be purchased when this extract was taken—at a return on redemption yield of about 6.4 per cent.

In the same paper—the "Australian Financial Review" of 11 August, 1960,—this appears:

"When Lombard, the commentator for the London 'Financial Times,' said last week that 'it is by no means clear as yet that intensive foreign investment has been of great net benefit' to Australia, he was voicing doubts which we in this country should consider much more seriously than we have been doing.

"He cites, in particular, the fact that the foreign exchange position has been saddled with heavy annual burdens of a continuing kind exceeding the original foreign investment—and correctly cites the case of General Motors as an example."

That is the type of case that should be quoted more. They bring some foreign money into the country, plough the profits back over the years and then start paying dividends of 100 per cent. and the like, which have to be paid in foreign exchange. The extract continues—

"He makes a number of other relevant points, among them that 'Australia's economic growth does not appear to have been materially faster since her popularity as a foreign investment outlet rose sharply in the mid-1950's,' and that 'outgoings on the servicing of foreign capital are now running at double the rate they were in the early 1950's—the additional burden representing about half the average annual inflow of foreign capital for the past three years.'

"In fact, if we compare the years 1951-52 and 1952-53 with 1958-59 and 1959-60 we find that the net annual debit on account of investment income in the balance of payments has risen from £59 million a year to £108 million.

"Over the same period, the apparent net annual 'direct' inflow of private foreign capital (excluding the balancing item) has risen from about £60 million a year to about £120 million a year.

"The position is thus really more serious than Lombard suggested.

"The plain fact seems to be that private foreign capital is very expensive for Australia.

"Most particularly does this apply to American capital."

We have to take cognisance of these matters because there is a constant urge, of course, to have these people come here. I think that, generally, the recruitment of capital is desirable, with certain controls. Of course, controls are anathema to foreign investors. I do not think it is reasonable that we should have firms like General Motors, with no Australian shareholding at all, enabled to bring in something to the order of 3,000,000 dollars of foreign capital, to plough profits back over the years and build up funds employed amounting to £60,000,000 or £70,000,000—all the result of ploughing back profits in Australian money—and then to start paying 100-per cent. dividends. The effect of that, added to the effect of the operations of other foreign companies here, can be very, very serious to us if we have, as the Federal Minister for Trade realises, a diminution in our earnings from primary industry.

Mr. Hiley: On what you have to say about inflation, have you pondered what would have been the inflation in Australia if, during a period of sustained migration, there had been no migration of capital?

Mr. DUGGAN: I think you have to put some price on development, and inflation is part of that price. I think one must face up to this fairly because it is a calculated risk. It is a risk we must take in a period when development is required and a severe drought threatens. When a country has a population of only 10,000,000, it either has to be very strong technologically or have very firm friends. I do not think Australia is sufficiently strong technologically, and I do not think we have strong friends. Great Britain traditionally would want to assist us, but she has her own problems at home. Turning to the United States, I do not think she is worried about Australia other than for investments. If war should come—and that is a possibility that we must face up to—the United States would be interested in Australia, I think, from the point of view of a suitable base to mount a counter-offensive. That is why I am very sorry that Mr. Menzies has made a complete hash of developing our friendships overseas.

The only redeeming feature seems to be the metal market, and even there the influence of America and her tariff barriers is felt. The volume of investments in other countries is another factor. Comalco's previous senior partner is interested in tremendous bauxite deposits in Greece, and in the widest possible international field there seems to be a desire to accelerate the development of bauxite deposits in

Ghana because of the fear of Russian penetration there. All that is having some effect on the development of our own deposits. Mr. Whitlam, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Federal House of Representatives, referred to this matter of national development recently, and now that the Snowy Mountains scheme is almost complete, if we had the advantage of a planning authority we might be able to deal more effectively with this problem. If we had a coal-field at Callide or Blair Athol and £35,000,000 to £40,000,000 was expended, we could generate power and make it economical to develop our bauxite deposits. Electricity could be reticulated to farms, and so on, and there could be a link with the regional electricity boards. Poverty-stricken countries seem to be making good progress, while we, rich in resources, do not seem to be developing our resources quickly enough.

I appreciate the Treasurer's frankness in dealing with these problems, but I believe, without being unduly objective or adopting undue party bias, that there is a lack of desire on the part of the Federal Government to help Queensland over its mounting difficulties. The difficulties mentioned in the Budget are very real, but they are matters over which the Treasurer has a measure of control. However, they are mere repercussions of wider policies made elsewhere.

We must arouse in Queenslanders the feeling that we should all fight for Queensland. I would be the first to expose any irregularity in a Government department that was not in the best interests of the people. The Government will find a very real desire on our part to assist, both here and in other public places, in putting forward plans for the development of Queensland and in arousing public interest in them. As times goes on, the commitments to which the Treasurer has referred will become greater; as he said, the cost of the public debt services is a very real problem. Subsidies to local authorities will probably have to be cut. The Treasurer said that the Government were maintaining the interest rate for the present financial year but they would have difficulty in maintaining the volume and nature of the subsidies to local authorities in the succeeding year. As the Government have a mandate for a further two years it is obvious that the Treasurer will have to deal with this matter in his next Budget. I should like to know what he is likely to do because the curtailment of funds to local authorities would have repercussions and reactions on trade and commerce generally. It would reduce spending and create local unemployment.

I should like to ask the Treasurer whether he could embody details of present subsidies in some printed form. I think he agreed to do that when I made a similar request previously, but I have no recollection of having received a copy. If it is available I should be very grateful to have it to check on the movement in recent times.

Mr. Hiley: You want the various percentages for various classes of work?

Mr. DUGGAN: Yes.

Mr. Hiley: I think I supplied that.

Mr. DUGGAN: I have no recollection of receiving it, but if it has been made available I ask the Treasurer to excuse me for again asking for it.

I have deliberately chosen a broad pattern today. I hope the Treasurer will not accuse me of going on a Cook's tour, but in a general way all the subjects I have mentioned are appropriate in this debate; they are matters of real concern to all Queenslanders. I hope that as detailed criticism comes from hon. members on this side the Treasurer will be made well aware that not only do we share the general anxiety about the financial future of the country but also we are very cognisant of the short-comings of the present Government in matters of detail in their administration.

Mr. HODGES (Gympie) (2.15 p.m.): Before I touch on the Budget, I read with interest this morning some of the points raised by Mr. Speaker in relation to the appointments and amenities of Parliament House. I endorse to the hilt everything Mr. Speaker said about the lack of amenities, space and accommodation in this building. It is deplorable that the seat of Government of this State should lack in every way the essential appointments necessary for upholding the dignity and prestige of a House of Parliament. It is disgraceful that many thousands of pounds worth of valuable records, books and manuscripts, many relating to the early history of Queensland, should be stored in the old horse stables in the grounds of the House.

The Librarian and his staff have done a wonderful job trying to preserve these valuable documents, but it is not becoming for the Parliament of Queensland that the overflow from the Library should be stored in such primitive conditions that do not lend themselves in any way towards the adequate preservation of valuable records.

The office accommodation provided for hon. members on both sides of the Chamber is also deplorable. I think one could go further than Mr. Speaker did when he said there were one or two to each office. I think two is probably the smallest number in any office; the number goes as high as eight or ten. It is not possible for any hon. member to interview his constituents in private under such conditions. I think the time is long past for extensions to Parliament House to provide adequate and necessary accommodation for members to carry out their work in a manner befitting their position.

The entrance vestibule from Alice Street, although quite serviceable, is not in keeping with what one would expect of the front door of the Parliament House of Queensland. This is the first House in Queensland

and it should be a showcase for the State, not to provide any extravagant benefit for members but because it is the House of the Parliament of Queensland. I am quite sure that no member of this Parliament is seeking to live in pomp or splendour while certain sections of the community are labouring for existence. However, I feel that this House of Parliament should be something of which visitors and the public can be proud.

There are many other features of the Parliamentary buildings that need immediate attention. For example, I could speak at length about the Lodge and other appointments.

Mr. Mann: We could all tell a few stories about the Lodge.

Mr. HODGES: The stories the hon. member could tell would be beyond my comprehension. I could not hope to understand them. I was referring to the amenities and accommodation that should be provided in the Lodge. This Government and previous Governments have passed laws covering the accommodation that must be provided by employers for employees, and I do not understand why the State itself should be exempt from those laws.

I could speak of other aspects, but the Speaker is "on the ball". He realises his responsibilities, and I am quite sure that by his determined effort, with the assistance of hon. members we will in the near future be able to show the public and visitors a House of which we are justly proud.

Much money has been spent in recent months to make the building presentable, but never in my life have I seen anything so disgraceful as the laying of the carpet in this Chamber. It cost a great deal of money, but if hon. members look closely at it I think they will conclude that the firm responsible for laying it should be brought to order, and made to come back and lay the carpet in a manner in which a carpet should be laid in any home in the State. It is a bad advertisement for the firm, and it is certainly disgraceful to think that a carpet of such value should be laid in such a disgraceful manner.

Mr. Thackeray: What is wrong with it?

Mr. HODGES: If the hon. member looks closely at it he will see the faults.

I have departed from the subject I meant to discuss. I have mixed feelings about the Budget. I congratulate the Treasurer on giving a straightforward and honest account of the financial position of the State. All aspects have been disclosed fully. They have not been disguised in any way.

I extend my sympathy to the Treasurer. He is fully aware of the many avenues for development that have to be delayed because of the limited finance available to him and the Government. But even with restricted revenue we should try to evolve a policy of

diverting capital to major construction projects with earlier productive potential than the large-scale public projects on which the greatest proportion of capital has been expended in the past. The contribution of those latter projects to production is necessarily delayed, and the more inefficient the manner in which they are executed the longer will their contribution to production be delayed.

In my opinion the latter type of development is more inflationary in nature than the former, because additional income is not balanced by corresponding increases in production of the goods and services on which it is spent. No doubt the Treasurer and Cabinet Ministers will castigate me for this view and say to me, "Very well. Withdraw the amount spent in the construction of schools, hospitals and housing throughout the State so that we can provide funds to carry out developmental work for the purpose of providing additional income for the State." I agree that up to a point we could struggle along with fewer of the luxuries. However, the State is in the same position as any business or any organisation and has to find the necessary income before it can expand into the necessary semi-luxuries that are required for the stabilisation, promotion and advancement of the State.

Mr. Coburn: Where are you going to get trained personnel if you do not train them in the schools now?

Mr. HODGES: I understand that. They do not have to be discontinued completely. We will have to accept them in a minor degree so that we may add to the income of the State, and as time progresses we will be able to provide them in even greater proportions.

It is all very well for me to raise subjects like this, but I sympathise with the Treasurer because he has to get results with a very restricted income.

Mr. Coburn: He said he gave very serious consideration to them, with balanced spending.

Mr. HODGES: I agree. There are ways and means of getting increased revenue, and no doubt the Treasurer has looked into them. For instance, there is the legislation of S.P. betting and the licensing of cafes and such things. The Treasurer could adopt the method of further taxation, either direct or indirect, adopted by Treasurers not only in this State, but in other States and the Commonwealth. However, the State does not want any further taxation, either direct or indirect, because taxation retards development. We must have money to carry out the large developmental programme that is necessary for the State to fulfil the role that is expected by the Commonwealth Government and the people of the southern States. The Commonwealth Government should realise the part we are playing and give far greater monetary assistance and consideration than they have

in the past. The development of Queensland is essential for the protection and survival of Australia. I say "Australia" because Queensland, as the most highly populated northern State, is expected to be the bastion against infiltration by our Eastern neighbours. We all know how the Eastern nations are fuming at the moment, and we do not know when they will decide to infiltrate our shores, and our country. In addition to the very forceful approaches to the Commonwealth Government made by the Treasurer and the Government, we should seek from vested interests in the southern States a percentage of their invisible exports to help us develop the State. It is only a matter of time before the invisible exports of southern vested interests will far exceed our visible exports. Those interests are achieving their wealth in the South only through the protection they are gaining from Queensland. So it is up to them, in association with the Commonwealth Government, to divert some of their earnings to the development of Queensland. We in turn give them added protection so they can still sit by in their smug complacency and expand still further on the credits we earn from primary industry.

Even though Australia is a very young country lacking in secondary industries, I still think too much development in the South could react against Queensland, especially when the southern States develop secondary industries sufficiently to use them to subsidise their primary industries and thus soften the blow of taxation from the States. When that point is reached, the southern States will make further demands for a departure from uniform taxation, which is something Queensland could never afford. The Commonwealth Government, and in particular the Federal members of Parliament representing Queensland electorates, should come to the fore to help Queensland meet the threat. No doubt it will take us some time to reach the position that New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia have reached, but they have got there only at our expense. Now is the time for Queensland to approach the Commonwealth Government for its due consideration.

In the minds of the Commonwealth Government the Brisbane line definitely exists. They do not seem to be able to jump over the border of New South Wales. The Brisbane line has them blocked completely when they are considering an extension of services and assistance.

No doubt everyone is fully aware that the land is the natural heritage of the people and that on its continued development and increasing production much of Queensland's progress depends. Increased productivity from the soil is not just a matter of food and clothing; it means expanded industries, jobs, homes, motor cars, and all the modern appliances—in fact, all the requirements of the people. Ultimately it means the survival of the State and of the Commonwealth.

With immigration and the natural increase in population, the area of land available for each of us is being steadily reduced year by year. Each year there is a progressively greater demand on the natural resources of soil and water, and the way we conserve them and develop them will decide the population that Queensland will be able to carry in the future. The conservation of Queensland's water supply for stock and for irrigation is a task of immediate priority. Today we are in the throes of a prolonged dry spell and primary production is already at a standstill. This has happened in years gone by, and the cost to Queensland has been tremendous. Had the amount spent in each drought year in the past been allocated for water conservation and irrigation, a dry spell such as the one that we are experiencing now would not upset the economy of the State to such a great extent.

To illustrate my point, hon. members may recall that there was a dry spell in 1957. In the Gympie district, which is a primary-producing area, deliveries to the milk and butter factories declined by 25 per cent.; but supplies from irrigated farms showed no significant decline during that period. It must be obvious, therefore, to our administrators, both State and Commonwealth, that irrigation and water conservation should receive top priority in any budget. It seems very strange to me that Governments will not make available more money for that purpose, but are prepared to spend far greater amounts to assist producers to save their stock during each dry spell. If the dry spell is very prolonged, after the producer has committed himself for several hundred pounds for the purchase of fodder, he might eventually lose his stock and have to walk off his farm because he cannot meet his commitments. The amount of money that governments are prepared to advance to producers during dry spells should be appropriated to the Vote for conservation and irrigation so that primary producers will be able to overcome difficulties such as this without facing bankruptcy, as most of them do after each long dry spell.

Water conservation and irrigation are absolutely essential if we are to level out the violent fluctuations caused by drought, or even by normal dry spells. These fluctuations not only upset the economy of the State but also seriously upset the efficiency of individual farm production. In view of the evidence that must be available to State authorities and the knowledge that dry spells and droughts cost the State many millions of pounds, I must express my disappointment at the small allocation to the irrigation Vote in this budget. I know of nothing more essential than water to sustain progress in primary or secondary industries. It is absolute rot, humbug and wishful thinking to imagine that decentralisation in the country is possible when even semi-drought conditions can cut off supplies essential to

primary or secondary producers. There is no need for me to stress the point, which I am sure is well known to every other hon. member, that, with the exception of the air that he breathes, water is the most vital requirement for the existence of man. When one considers the fact that it takes 1,100 tons of water to produce a ton of wheat, 65,000 gallons of water to produce a ton of steel, and 10,000 gallons of water, or even more, to produce a ton of paper, one can see that, with our population and standard of living increasing, the demand for water in Australia assumes frightening proportions.

Australians have every reason to be alarmed at the lack of water conservation, not only in Queensland but throughout the Commonwealth. If something is not done immediately to enable Australia to become a future food bowl for the world, as a primary-producing nation we will be faced with the position confronting many other countries today, of trying to import food for the people but being unable to get it. The State is not entirely to blame for the present position. It is a national matter of great seriousness. But even though it is a Commonwealth or national matter the State should accept some responsibility. Both the State and the Commonwealth Governments can do more than has been done in the past. If we face the position realistically we must acknowledge that Australia is not doing anything spectacular in any way at all; she is certainly not doing enough.

The approach in the past has been far too parochial. I suggest that the Federal Government set up a Commonwealth Bureau of Water Resources comprised of practical men with practical ideas, practical thinkers who could approach the problem on a comprehensive national basis without regard for State boundaries. Much of this national developmental work such as water conservation, and roads in certain instances, could and should be financed from the Commonwealth defence vote. Such major schemes would result in increased productivity and population, which in turn would bring about increased industry. In my opinion this would serve more effectively as a defence measure against any threat to our security than the spending of many millions of pounds on conventional methods of defence that become obsolete in a very short space of time.

Some of the vast defence vote should be used to subsidise hydraulic research stations and to train young engineers in the various aspects of hydraulics and water engineering generally. In view of the immensity of the defence vote I think that the Commonwealth Government should allocate at least £100,000 annually for post-graduate scholarships valued at from £2,000 to £2,500 a year. In that way we could encourage young engineers to study for the higher degrees of hydraulics and water engineering. Neither the State nor the Commonwealth have done very much

along these lines. The paucity of our efforts is reflected in the fact that the Snowy Mountains Authority had to call upon the United States of America for much of the design of Tumut Ponds and some of the other major works associated with the Snowy Mountains project. If the Commonwealth Government will not accept their responsibility, or have to be shown their responsibility, as a State Government we should show the way and thus ensure that future generations will not come into the same category as past and present generations, that is, if I might use the term, "planet plunderers".

There should be a more comprehensive programme of conservation in education in our schools. The department of Education should assume leadership in the implementing of such a programme, to instruct our youth on natural resources in their right classification—which are the exhaustibles, such as oils and minerals, and which are the renewable factors, such as soil. The youth of this country could be presented with a very convenient picture of the effect of all human activities and institutions which have their bases in, and are dependent upon, our natural resources above all else. If this education did nothing more than destroy the ideology of Australia's inexhaustibility it would be worth while.

Such a programme must be started as early as possible; it must be started in the kindergartens of the State and taken through to the level at which public opinion can be aroused to such an extent that the Government will be forced to accept the responsibility that is theirs—that is, to see that this generation passes on our natural resources in such condition that the economic welfare of the next generation is assured. It will only be through education that an informed public opinion will be aroused. An opinion that would be strong enough to halt the destruction is visible not only in Queensland, but throughout Australia.

The Treasurer said the other day that we are receiving co-operation from the Commonwealth Government. No doubt we are receiving a little co-operation from that Government, but what I and most other Queenslanders—particularly members on the front benches of the Government side of the Chamber—want to see is some more tangible evidence of appreciation of our contribution to the economy of this country. As such contributions come from the credits earned by primary industries of the State, those industries should receive far greater recognition and assistance. What better way would there be of showing appreciation than by providing the necessary essentials to ensure continuity of production in our primary industries? No member of this Chamber will forget the lean years of 1920 to 1940, during which our herds and flocks were seriously depleted. Much of the western land suffered from wind erosion, and the primary producers of the State struggled to maintain an existence.

Mr. Baxter: And many people were unemployed.

Mr. HODGES: It has been reliably estimated that a return to such conditions—no doubt that could take place—at the present-day level of prices would mean a reduction in primary income to Queensland exceeding £60,000,000. What has been done by the Commonwealth Government to assist this State in the conservation of water for primary production purposes? Queensland possesses more than half the surface water supplies of the Commonwealth, so it has ample scope for the development of irrigation and water conservation. We must develop and become more conservation conscious not only in this State but in the Commonwealth as a whole. It is essential that we engage in development of that nature. With world population increasing almost alarmingly, we must recognise our responsibility to supply some of the requirements of other countries. We must be in a position to meet the demand when it arises and so take advantage of the opportunities. It is too late to act only when the demand exists. More progressive nations will have taken steps to increase output and markets will be lost to the State and the Commonwealth. While speaking of water conservation, let us consider the position in the other States. At one stage Queensland was very prominent in the production of wheat, wool, sugar and beef, but Victoria and even arid South Australia are now making very significant contributions. Victoria has outstripped Queensland by 50 per cent. in the production of wool and 70 per cent. of our beef, six times in mutton and lamb production and three times in butter. That state of affairs has been brought about by water conservation and irrigation.

Mr. Baxter: Those figures are wrong.

Mr. HODGES: They are correct, and I can substantiate them.

I am sure that if we embarked even now on a comprehensive plan for water conservation and irrigation we would be able to catch and even pass the States that are leading us at present. Australia is facing a very serious position because of lack of planned water conservation. At the next Premier's conference we should press the Commonwealth Government to accept full responsibility for a comprehensive plan for conservation, control, storage, diversion and application of all the water of the Commonwealth. Water is essential to life. I have given examples from my own district of what can be achieved through water conservation in a prolonged dry spell such as we are experiencing at the moment. Instead of having one or two projects similar to the Moogerah and Borumba dams, three or four could be under way at the same time. I said earlier that much ill-feeling could arise because some hon. members were not able to obtain certain public works for their electorates, but there are only two alternatives—

the expenditure of money on productive works, or on non-productive works such as public buildings.

Mr. Baxter: Don't tell me insurance is not productive. Don't give me that.

Mr. HODGES: I mean non-productive having regard to the revenue of the State. The Government must have the temerity, the political ability and stamina to divert money to work such as the conservation of our natural resources so as to raise funds for public buildings, works and amenities for the people of the State.

Mr. Hanlon: You realise that an increased Education Vote could mean a drain on the Irrigation Vote, and so on?

Mr. HODGES: As I qualified it, yes.

Mr. Hanlon: So you have done something we did not do. It is simply a transfer from one section to another.

Mr. HODGES: I am saying that it should be a national matter, not a State matter.

Mr. Hanlon: We agree with you.

Mr. HODGES: The State has more than enough to handle with its restricted resources. As the Commonwealth Government will reap the profits that will accrue from the conservation of water, soil and forests, it should accept the responsibility of providing the necessary capital to undertake those projects.

Mr. BROMLEY (Norman) (2.57 p.m.): The previous speaker, the hon. member for Gympie, spent a lot of time criticising the Government's actions. As we know that criticism was well merited. We have seen that when a Country Party member rises to speak most of the Liberal Party members walk out. That has happened repeatedly and it happened again with the hon. member for Gympie, whose criticism of the Government was very interesting. He spoke at length on what the Government should do, what they have not done, and what the Federal Government should do. Of course, we all know they are incapable of doing it.

During the Budget debate last year it was claimed by many Government members—and this cannot be denied—that this year's Financial Statement would prove the merits of the Government's anti-worker policy. The words "anti-worker" are mine, not theirs. Irrespective of that, it is an anti-worker government.

Mr. Pizzey: Do you think you treated your employees as well as we have treated ours?

Mr. BROMLEY: That Budget was an employers' budget, and it is the same this year.

Mr. Hiley: Every Crown servant will tell you that you people were the worst employers in the State.

Mr. BROMLEY: We listened to the Treasurer's dulcet tones; he endeavoured to imitate a proud knight in shining armour and delivered the Financial Statement very grandiloquently. I repeat that he delivered a Budget that was entirely an employers' Budget—an anti-worker Budget. I and my colleagues on this side would be prouder to present a Budget, when we are in the position—as we will be in three years' time—to present a Budget that will provide benefits for all sections of the community, not only for sectional interests. Not only do the members of the community richly deserve these benefits but we of the Australian Labour Party regard them as their heritage, their birthright. They include social justice, economic security, full employment, a continued rise in the standard of living—not a continued rise in the cost of living as we have under this Government—free and complete education, progressive reduction of the hours of labour, the right to enjoy in all phases the results of scientific and technological advances, and, last but not least, freedom of speech.

Mr. Aikens: You should have been here when your Government were in power and I tried to exercise freedom of speech.

Mr. BROMLEY: You could always get a fair go, anyway.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BROMLEY: We in Queensland have not even a public forum. We are the only State in the Commonwealth without a public forum, where anybody has the right to go and express his feelings in free speech without a police permit. I think it is high time one was provided.

Speaking of permits reminds me that under the present Minister for Labour and Industry we are fast becoming a police State—a State of secret police. I join with hon. members, particularly the hon. member for Kedron, in their condemnation of the Minister for his statements read from a police dossier about suspected communists. The Minister's outbursts were typical of a McCarthy-ite and comparable with the workings of a depraved mind.

Mr. Windsor: He is not here. Don't mention that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I should like to draw the attention of the hon. member for Norman to the fact that recently emphasis has been placed on Standing Order No. 114, which says that interjections are not allowed except with the permission of the hon. member who is speaking, and that they must be in the form of questions.

The hon. member is not obliged to listen to interjections. Finally, I remind him that he must always address the Chair, not hon. members on my right or left. When he says "You" he means the Chair. I am sure he did not mean that when he used the word a few moments ago.

Mr. BROMLEY: I apologise to you, Mr. Taylor. I assure you, in all sincerity, out of due deference to you, that any statement I made was not aimed at you.

The Minister for Labour and Industry mentioned Messrs. F. Nolan, T. Chard and H. Gurnett. The Minister well knows, as do all members of the Liberal and Country Parties, that we of the Australian Labour Party sign a pledge that we are not members or supporters of any other political party, including communists and fascists. I know the three men very well. Two of them are loyal members of a branch of the Australian Labour Party in my electorate; they worked very hard to have me returned as the member for the district. Do not forget that a Communist Party candidate opposed me at the last election. These men worked very hard for the defeat of the Communist candidate and other candidates and for my return as member for Norman. Friends of the two gentlemen referred to by the Minister for Labour and Industry wrote to the Press and said this—

"These two gentlemen, Messrs. H. Gurnett and T. Chard, referred to in Parliament by Mr. Morris, are foundation members of the Bennett's Road Branch of the Australian Labour Party."

Their friends rose to their defence. But when the Minister for Labour and Industry was referred to recently in this Parliament as "a little mongrel"—I am quoting "Hansard" when I say that—no member of the Government party rose to his defence, nor did any of his friends deny it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member cannot refer to that incident. The incident occurred and the remark was withdrawn. I ask the hon. member not to refer to it again.

Mr. BROMLEY: I know personally that these gentlemen are very good and decent citizens, and the attempt of the Minister for Labour and Industry to blacken the character of people by taking advantage of Parliamentary privilege shows that he has a small mind as well as a small stature.

The Treasurer said in his Financial Statement that the number of unemployed continued as before, but it is a proven fact—and this is borne out by figures—that our percentage of unemployed is higher than that in any other State. People are leaving the State to seek employment elsewhere. Only recently, as we know, over 200 men were dismissed from the railways and others are in the process of being dismissed. The Treasurer said that more would be dismissed as further railway lines were closed. It has also been announced by the Government that 700 teachers are to be dismissed.

Mr. Pizzey: Not re-employed.

Mr. BROMLEY: They are going to be dismissed. I shall have more to say about that later.

The Treasurer went on to say that cattle-slaughtering was well below the level of the previous year because of the rate of previous killings. That is quite true, and it is well known that the dollar-hungry graziers, in their haste to ignore the Australian market and the future of the Queensland cattle industry, pandered to the Yankee dollar and sold every beast they could, including—and this is most important—many of their breeders. So much for their national outlook! We all know that they slaughtered many of their breeders.

Further proof of the strong leanings of this Government towards the sectional interests that they represent is to be found in the huge rebates in railway freights allowed to graziers. The Treasurer knows, although he did not say so in these words, that the excessively bad management of the Minister for Transport is clearly shown when the cash collections by the Railway Department are £2,637,217 less than working expenses. There was a deterioration of £1,582,543 in comparison with the expected deficit of £1,054,674.

Deviating for a moment, we find that the excess in estimated revenue for the State in taxation, which covers stamp duty and succession and probate duties, was £1,187,312. In the next breath the Treasurer naively talks about the unknown factors that were the main reasons for the excess expenditure in the Consolidated Revenue Fund. I suggest that they were unknown because of the incompetence of the Government. Of course, nobody could foresee the tragic Medway Creek disaster. I suppose that is one of the unknown factors the Treasurer speaks of.

The Government are running the State on a hit-and-miss method. Surely they must realise that with the continued lifting of price-control the cost of living must continue to rise and people will get less value for their pound. Not only has the debt of the public risen but the Public Debt of the State has risen tremendously. The whole economic structure has been affected to such an extent that public loans are becoming increasingly difficult to fill. The position has been aggravated by hire-purchase companies and others offering such high rates of interest and virtually usurping the function of the banks. The solution could lie in the fulfilment of Labour policy in the establishment of our own Queensland Savings Bank.

I do not intend to go into further details about loans at this stage, other than to say that the obvious proof of the Government's unpopularity with their Federal colleagues is the poor response to the Government's plea for a greater hand-out when they received only £235,352 extra compared with New South Wales' £11.1 million. What a miserable hand-out from their Federal colleagues! It is typical of the Federal Tory Government's attitude to Queensland.

The Treasurer summarised the position by saying that to combat the loss in the railways there is no alternative but to increase railway fares and freights. Of course, we know that has been already done. So do the people who use the railways! The Treasurer pointed out that they must confine the operations of the Railway Department to the paying or near-paying lines. With the present maladministration the Queensland railways are fast degenerating to only the main line or, should I say, the Chalk-line between Roma Street and Brunswick Street. I suggest the people will not take that "line" down!

On behalf of pensioners I acknowledge with gratitude the concession of half fare for 50 miles. I particularly thank the Minister for the concession granted from the main Brisbane stations to Landsborough, which is over 50 miles. I can assure the hon. gentleman and the Government that the concession is very much appreciated.

I am sure that the oil companies, motor companies, rubber companies, and all others interested in road transport, are attempting to dictate to the Government about the closing of all railway lines. There is a great deal of truth in that statement, just as there is in the remarks of the Treasurer when he said, "There is little expansion and indeed contraction in some of the services of the State." But I cannot agree with him when he says that the Budget is dominated by the impact of the margins. Previously he has said that the cost of living, prices, etc., would level out when price-control was abolished. That that has not happened is the dominating factor. Not one quarter has passed without the upward spiralling of the cost of living making it harder for people, particularly those on fixed incomes, to make ends meet. Meat is now being priced off the tables of many wage-earners. No longer does the butcher greet his customers, if any, with the old saying, "Pleased to meet you with meat to please you."

It is incumbent upon this Government to reintroduce complete grading of meat and once again restore price control over this very necessary adjunct to the family meal. The sooner the Government reintroduce price control to all commodities the better for John Citizen. I know that, in their hearts, hon. members of the Government realise that what I am saying is true in relation to the cost of living but, of course, it is against their natures to admit it is or that they are wrong.

The sum of £25,500 is being allocated this year to the department of the Commissioner of Prices. In view of the large number of items that have been decontrolled, such an expenditure would be laughable but for its tragic effect on the public purse. Very few items are price-controlled today and the public are suffering because of it.

Another cause of the high cost of living—which I do not expect the Government to

admit—is monopoly control of industry and commerce and the fixing of prices for commodities at the maximum that wages can bear. Wages are lagging behind prices and have no effect whatever on the price structure. In fact, it is time this Government and the Commonwealth Government remembered the passing of the Australian Industries Preservation Act in 1906 and took proceedings against monopolies under it. It may be interesting to hon. members to hear some of the provisions of that Act. I do not wish to unnecessarily take up the time of the Chamber, but I feel it is of sufficient interest to warrant my quoting several of its clauses.

The Act was designed to repress monopolies and restrain unfair competition, especially in the commercial trades. Other provisions were designed to prevent the dumping of goods in Australia. The anti-monopoly provisions of the Act are designed to prevent—

“(a) Entering into a contract or engaging in any combination with intent to restrain trade or commerce to the detriment of the public.

(b) Entering into a contract or engaging in any combination with intent to destroy or injure by means of unfair competition any Australian industry the preservation of which is advantageous to the Commonwealth, having due regard to the interests of producers, workers and consumers.

(c) Monopolising or attempting to monopolise or combining or conspiring to monopolise any part of trade or commerce with intent to control to the detriment of the public the supply or price of any service, merchandise or commodity.”

It is becoming increasingly obvious that Australia today is more and more under the control of these monopolies and that the country, if it is not already, will soon be owned by a few families or organisations.

The Budget promises little or no relief of the shocking housing shortage either by the building of rental homes or homes for sale. Less money is being made available for mental hygiene, State schools and health services, and not enough money is provided for technical education, which is so necessary in these days of scientific and technical advances. Fewer instructors will be employed at the Teachers' College. Further attacks are being made on what was once known as “free hospitalisation.” In fact, the Budget as presented is a shocking indictment of a “standstill” Government who are doing little to develop the State. After all, we must judge the Government on their Budget.

I now turn to other matters that are not given the consideration they deserve. They may have been considered, but no action whatever has been taken in respect of them. These subjects are raised from time to time in the Chamber and outside it. One problem I have in mind is the rise in the consumption of alcohol and the relation it bears to the

road toll, juvenile delinquency, broken homes, and so on. At present in England and Australia compulsory blood alcohol or urine alcohol tests are not demanded of drivers or pedestrians involved in accidents. I agree with the Australian Road Safety Council that such tests should be made. Compulsory tests would be of great benefit in combating the tremendous accident rate. At present 8 per cent. of road fatalities are caused through intoxication. We often read a newspaper headline such as, “Driver had been drinking,” or words to that effect. The Medical Journal of Australia in a recent editorial pointed out that a relatively low concentration of alcohol in the tissues causes deterioration in driving performance and increases appreciably the likelihood of an accident. Education and legislation may be needed to prove to the public that drinking and driving do not mix, but I doubt whether this Government have the gumption to tackle the problem.

Mr. Pizzey: You had 40 years in which to do something, but what did you do?

Mr. BROMLEY: The problem calls for bold action, but something must be done. To answer the interjector, I point out that the alcohol problem has grown tremendously in the last few years under a Liberal-Country Party Government. (Government laughter.) Hon. members opposite may laugh, but that is the truth. They laugh at anything that affects the welfare of the people. They laugh at my statement that tragedies such as broken homes and delinquency are caused by the consumption of alcohol. Hon members opposite are adopting a typical attitude; indeed, they are still laughing.

Mr. Hiley: We are laughing that such words should come from a party that has always been closely allied with the liquor industry.

Mr. BROMLEY: The Government are not interested in the protection of the public or in legislating for their benefit, and judging them by their legislation, I am not surprised. Not very long ago they interfered in the administration of the Art Gallery and Queensland lost the extremely useful services of a very competent Director, Mr. Robert Haines.

Mr. Pizzey: Tell us how we interfered.

Mr. BROMLEY: They are always asking for information. They say, “Tell us this and tell us that,” but when we advance constructive ideas we find that they are too ignorant to take any notice of them. We had a further example of maladministration in relation to the Conservatorium of Music. The Government, by their bungling interference, caused the resignation of the very capable Director, Dr. Lovelock. On the subject of knowledge, it is obvious that the Government are not interested in learning anything. Perhaps it is opportune now to refer to the lack of educational facilities, the shortage of teachers and the overcrowding

in school classes. For good education primary school classes should be limited to 35. Two-thirds of them exceed 35, and some go as high as 70.

Mr. Pizzey: Do you know what the average at the Buranda school is? It is 38.

Mr. BROMLEY: I know that, and I thank the Minister for reiterating it. However, I am not concerned only with my electorate. I am concerned with the whole of Queensland. The Australian Labour Party are concerned with the good of the public throughout the State, not only one electorate. I know what a good school the Buranda school is, but I am concerned with the classes in other areas in Queensland. Is it fair to the pupils or the teachers that classes are overcrowded? It cannot be said that it is fair to the pupils or the teachers. The teachers are not receiving adequate training before being sent out from the training centres. Many people have come to see me, and many have written to me, asking me to mention this matter. They say they are not receiving adequate training at the Teachers' College. With the advancement of technological science complete education from the kindergarten to the secondary school stages must be extended and the secondary schools must also be extended. Everyone agrees that we must spend more time, trouble and money on education. This Government have done the right thing in setting up a committee of inquiry to seek advice from a wider source of information than the Education Department.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. BROMLEY: The Australian Labour Party are delving intensively into this problem. Let us hope the Government are big enough to accept the advice of the committee that they have set up.

There is an urgent necessity for a complete canteen service for students and apprentices attending the Central Technical College. In the past representations have been made frequently on this matter, and with the increase in the intake of students and apprentices the need is mounting. The enrolment is now 13,000 students, and there are 450 teachers. The courses will continue to expand rapidly, and the new manufacturing processes and new materials will create a greater demand for men with the latest technical training. To keep pace with industry, the development of training facilities must be kept to the forefront in regard to this demand.

During the last 12 months there has been much ado about racial and colour prejudices, not only with our own race, the aboriginals, but with coloured races throughout the world. It concerns many people, especially the Australian Labour Party, and I intend to speak briefly on this subject as it particularly affects our aboriginals. If all people, especially members of the Government parties, were to study keenly the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of

the United Nations, the aboriginals would receive a better deal. This applies to all members of the human race. Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights says—

“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”

Article 2 says—

“Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.”

Article 3 reads—

“Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person.”

Likewise Article 22 says—

“Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realisation, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organisation and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.”

Article 25 states—

“(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

“(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance.” and so on.

Are our aboriginals receiving these considerations? Let me take them one by one. Certainly all human beings are born free, but, because the discrimination against the coloured people is widespread, there are still many who inflate their self-esteem by looking down on them. There are not enough organisations sufficiently interested in trying to combat this. Racial and colour discrimination by word or action should become morally impermissible and, if necessary, legally punishable. We believe all people are entitled to all rights and freedoms without distinction because of race or colour. But all our aboriginals have not full rights. For instance, they have not the right to vote, to stand for election, to choose freely an occupation, to choose freely a place of

residence, to equal Social Service and Repatriation benefits, or to organise societies. Therefore it is high time a target date was set for full citizenship. Integration has much to recommend it for there are many aspects of tribal life that could be superior to modern civilisation. The aboriginals, with proper assistance for assimilation, could most likely advance eventually to full citizenship and still retain many aspects of native culture which, through investigation, have proved of benefit in relation to some phases of their general health standard.

The present Act relating to aboriginals should be repealed and a policy of re-establishment commenced. Power to correct most of the worst anomalies is vested in the Queensland Government.

The new programme should consider the following basic questions and aims:—

(1) The granting of full citizenship status and the elimination of any racial discrimination.

(2) The provision of finance, technical and educational assistance to raise living standards to that of white citizens.

(3) The development of self-reliance and self-advancement by the coloured people.

(4) The preservation and promotion of valuable aspects of native culture for the benefit of the coloured people and ultimately for all.

To implement this policy financial expenditure will be necessary and I think the Commonwealth Government should be asked to assume a large share of the responsibility. The Commonwealth Constitution should be amended where necessary.

Recently, together with other members of the Australian Labour Party and ministers of religion, I had the privilege of attending the opening ceremony of an aboriginal co-operative store on Cabbage Tree Island in the Richmond River of New South Wales and I think that venture will be a great success. It will certainly help in the assimilation and integration of aboriginals in the area. Similar organisations could and should be set up here with Government assistance.

Recently, questions have been asked in the Parliament about the raw deal ship painters and dockers have received at the hands of this Government and other employers and about the refusal of the Government to employ dockers in accordance with the award. The Treasurer also stated recently that they had no employees at present. As a matter of fact, there are Government employees at the Cairncross dock. One man at the Port Office has been employed by the Government for approximately 14 years at casual rates, and two men have been employed at South Brisbane for approximately two months at casual rates. The man at the Port Office has been employed for approximately 20 years in all.

I think I should outline some of the history of this dispute because it will be of great interest to hon. members. In answer to a question by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Lloyd, the Treasurer said that the Government had no employees, but he also said that men had been employed on a casual and a permanent basis and that he was aware that Commissioner Horan had said that an employer should be free to employ labour on either a casual or a permanent basis and that the employee should have equal rights in this respect. The story of the dispute is this, briefly: On 29 February, 1960, Commissioner Horan brought down a new Federal award for the Ship Painters and Dockers' Union. The employers appealed against it to the Full Court, and on 27 May, 1960, the Court, comprising Judge Wright, Judge Gallagher and Commissioner Apsey, handed down its decision. The Court cut one week off the annual leave provision, chopped out completely any retrospective payment of 1s. 0d. an hour, decreased the lost time factor by 10 per cent., and of 17 margins they decreased nine, increased two, and left six as they were. The majority of the reading of the rest of the body of the award was left as the Commissioner had brought it down. The award provides for either weekly hiring (permanent with a guarantee of six months' work) or casual hiring. On this question, Commissioner Horan stated—

"This award provides as the superseded one did, for both permanent and casual employment, and it leaves the employers and employees free to determine which form of contract they enter into with each other, again as the superseded award did. This Commission, in my opinion, cannot direct an employer to employ a particular person, nor can it direct an individual to work for a particular employer."

He went on to say—

"In the event of any employer desiring to employ labour on a casual or permanent basis, he should be free to do so just as an employee should be free to elect whether he will accept permanent or casual employment. To direct otherwise, even if the power to do so exists, would in my opinion, be an unwarranted interference with the freedom of the individual."

In the statement that I have just read, he reiterates the provisions of the superseded award that have been in operation for the past 20 years, and the custom and practice that has been in existence in Brisbane has not changed one iota. The men have been offering for work. There was no dispute there as far as they were concerned other than with the terms of the award. They are not only offering their labour, but their labour is being accepted. When the decision of the Full Court was handed down, the Metal Trades Employers' Association in Brisbane and the Department of Harbours and Marine informed a large number of

members of the union that they would be engaged only on the flat permanent weekly award rate. Members of the union were prepared to accept similar conditions to those agreed upon between the Metal Trades Employers and the union in the South, including over-award rates, or to otherwise remain casuals. In the past the casuals or permanent casuals had been paid a base rate of £16 15s. a week. In the new award casuals are paid a base rate of £18 13s. 2d. a week, while permanent will decrease to a base permanent rate of £15 11s., which is a decrease of £1 4s. a week on the base rate they were receiving previously. The present base permanent rate over 52 weeks of £808 12s. includes two weeks' annual leave, one week's sick leave and nine statutory holidays. The members of the Ship Painters and Dockers' Union have stated that they were not prepared to accept permanent employment under the low-grade conditions offered by the employer. It would mean a difference of £92 a year to these men if they were forced to accept the award that the Government want them to work under. Painters and dockers who were still employed as casuals at Peters' slip were then deducted for morning and afternoon smokes, washing time, and the "Peggy" was deducted half an hour for getting the morning cribs. The Department of Harbours and Marine said that they were cutting out the 1½ hours a day travelling time to Cairncross dry dock (which has been in operation since the dock was built during the war) and cutting out fares and washing times over 5 minutes. These washing times were the subject of a Queensland Government Cabinet decision on 5 August, 1947, and again confirmed by State Cabinet on 23 October, 1947.

The members of the Ship Painters and Dockers' Union received notices from the Commonwealth Social Service Department notifying them that their claims for unemployment benefit had been rejected on the following grounds: "That you have refused suitable employment." There have been 394 members picked up by Brisbane employers and paid at the casual rate since 25 May, 1960. This proves that they are making their labour available yet the members of the union are still not receiving unemployment benefits. Most of these jobs were of short duration, but the Department of Harbours and Marine has engaged 62 members up to 16 August, 1960, and two of them have been employed—and still are—at South Brisbane dock for the last fortnight at casual rates. The Minister in charge of the department, the Treasurer, refuses to meet a deputation from the union, claiming that he will not meet them while they are on strike. The men are not on strike. As is illustrated 62 men have been picked up by the department during the time stated, and two of them are still employed by them.

The man employed at the Port Office, who has been employed for 14 years by the

Department of Harbours and Marine, is receiving from the Government £21 15s. a week. The S.S. "Moorah" was refused slipping at Peter's slip and had to be taken in ballast to Townsville at a loss of approximately £600 to this small company. That applied also to other ships because of the Government's stubbornness in refusing to open the docks for the repair of its ships. As to the S.S. "South Esk", owned by the Australian National Line, the A.U.S.N. could not do this ship in Brisbane though they said, as other firms did, that they would pay casual rates to the ship painters and dockers for approximately two months' overhaul. Because of the Government's refusal to dock the ship it had to go to Sydney for overhaul. Sixty members were involved here. Macdonald Hamilton have four Brisbane River tugs. Mr. Plumb, the superintendent of the tugs, wanted these vessels slipped at Peter's slip immediately as they were losing their pace because of barnacles, etc., and their crews had to work twice as hard with less result. Macdonald Hamilton were willing to pay casual rates to ship painters and dockers but Peter's slip will only pick up under the rates at which they want to pick up. A similar situation exists with James Patrick & Co. This firm desired to dock its vessel at Cairncross dock and pay ship painters and dockers at the casual rate, but they were denied admission to the dock because it was alleged that ship painters and dockers were on strike. According to this Government the ship painters and dockers were on strike. The Darra Cement coral barge, "Morib," under Captain Day, is at present employing ship painters and dockers inboard at the casual rate. The owners are anxious to get this barge into Cairncross, but they have been denied the use of the dock. They, and others, are prepared to pay casual rates. Private employers are prepared to pay the full rates to which the dockers are entitled but, because of the Government's refusal to meet the men, they are not employed nor are the ships being serviced to keep them in good condition. More important still, some of the ships owned by the Queensland Government are not getting any attention. Consequently they are plying in a dangerous condition and all because of the Government's stubbornness. Ship painters and dockers are making their labour available. Outside employers are prepared to pay the full rates set out in the award, but the Government will not meet the men.

In view of all the circumstances some action should be taken to reach an agreement on this matter.

Dr. DELAMOTHE (Bowen) (3.47 p.m.): First of all I should like to refer to "Hansard" of 28 September last, page 514, where the hon. member for Port Curtis made the categorical statement that the present

Treasurer could not be bettered. I thoroughly agree with his statement, even though it comes from a political opponent.

I have been very regular in my attendance in this Chamber. I had hoped to hear some solution of the problems that it is said plague this very happy State, but I have been greatly disappointed with hon. members opposite. At no stage since the opening of the Session have they done anything but engage in carping criticism. They have not offered any concrete solution of any problem.

Today I came along all agog, knowing that the Leader of the Opposition was the first speaker. I am sure we all looked forward to what promised to be a very important speech from him, but all went to lunch sadly disappointed because, not once did he touch on the Budget. At no stage did the Leader of the Opposition touch in any way on any subject in the Budget, and after all this is a debate on the Budget. He brought along a sheaf of cuttings from newspapers, and ranged over the world from Hong Kong to India and the United Nations to France, but at no stage did his statements have any bearing on the Budget items.

He spent a very long time in the role of Jeremiah, bemoaning something I could not gather. I thought as he was speaking that the area behind Mr. Speaker's chair offered a very good wailing wall, and that that was his place rather than the rostrum. He bewailed the fact that expenditure on irrigation had been reduced by £500,000, and in the next breath heaped very great praise on the Minister for Education for budgeting to spend £25,000,000 this year, at the same time admitting in a sorrowful voice that the Labour Government in their last year had spent only £11,000,000 and two years before that only £8,000,000.

He spoke about the distribution of income and referred in sorrowful tones to the difference between the tall poppies and those on the lower-wage scale. I should like to give some figures for the last financial year. The income of public companies in Australia before taxation increased by £43,000,000 to £672,000,000 last financial year. By contrast the wages bill in Australia increased by £272,000,000 to £3,311,000,000, and the net return to farmers, who after all are just as important as any other section of the community, showed an increase in income before taxation of only £3,000,000 to £453,000,000. When he speaks of tall poppies and those on the lower-wage scale, he should keep things in their correct proportion.

Mr. Aikens: What is the difference between your income and that of a basic-wage earner?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: A basic-wage earner today is much better off than I am. I receive only what I get here.

The Leader of the Opposition started to tell us something about Communism and made a somewhat emotional appeal. He

then clipped off very quickly his reference to it. I think he side-tracked himself by bewailing some action or other by the Q.L.P. during the last election campaign. I rather gathered that he was most disappointed that he had not been issued with the white ticket that he spoke about.

Let me dispose of what I have to say about Communism in a few sentences. As the Leader of the Opposition raised the matter, I think I should refer briefly to it. Knowing the objectives of the Communist Party, it seems strange that A.L.P. members should not be taking action to put constantly before the people who support them the dangers of Communist infiltration. I am not going to speak of people who are accused by name of being Communists, but I do think that instead of fervently defending Communists, A.L.P. members should in a general and particular way be publicising to their supporters the dangers of the cult.

Mr. Sherrington: We have never defended Communism. We have defended ourselves against an allegation that we were Communists—a scurrilous attack.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Hon. members should spend their time preaching and speaking to their supporters of the dangers.

The hon. member for Norman referred to several matters on which I wish to correct him. He mentioned the slaughtering of female cattle. Obviously he does not know that almost as many female cattle as male cattle are killed every year. He has not heard of spaying cows. Every grazer spays most of his females, and the American market saved him that trouble.

The hon. member for Norman made a plea for the introduction of blood-alcohol tests. That is not as easy as it sounds because it is not completely reliable. As a person who has examined many an alcoholic, I state that experiments have shown that blood from different parts of the body—the heart, the peripheral vessels and the neck vessels—will give varying percentages of alcohol. Until a thoroughly reliable test can be found, the introduction of the blood test would cause evil to many innocent people.

Mr. Mann: That is very sound.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Does the hon. member agree with it?

Mr. Aikens: Not only that, but one man can carry more alcohol than another and still be reasonably sober.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: The hon. member would be an expert.

The hon. member for Norman referred to the horrible spectre of unemployment stalking the land. I have some figures here to set his mind at rest. If he looked at Saturday's "Courier-Mail" he would have seen that the Department of Public Works advertised for 40 carpenters and 12 bricklayers

in Brisbane, and for 12 carpenters in Toowoomba. In response to that advertisement, it is interesting to note that on Saturday six carpenters and one labourer answered the advertisement, and that on Monday eight carpenters, three bricklayers, nine labourers, one painter and one storeman answered it. In reply to an advertisement for 64 tradesmen, 29 men applied.

Mr. Newton: They wanted to send them all to the bush.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: No, to Brisbane and Toowoomba. Toowoomba could not be described as "the bush."

Mr. Pizzey: We will take any qualified building worker who applies.

Mr. Hanlon: I have been trying to get the Minister for Public Works and Local Government for three months—

Mr. Pizzey: Are they prepared to travel?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gaven): Order!

Dr. DELAMOTHE: In the last financial year average earnings increased by 7 per cent., employment by 2½ per cent. and retail prices by 6.1 per cent.

The only criticism the hon. member for Norman could level at education was that some classes were larger than others. I do not think it is necessary to answer that because the Leader of the Opposition heaped praises on the Minister for Education and Migration for his large provision this year for education.

Mr. Inch: Do you mean to say that overcrowding is not worth talking about?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Of course it is, but that is a very small criticism in comparison with what the Labour Government did.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke, too, about the difficulty of filling public loans. If he had looked at the paper a few days ago he would have read that the latest loan for £30,000,000, which closed the other day, was over-subscribed by £2,500,000. That, I think, is a sufficient answer.

I turn now to the ravages of the drought in the North. At the moment what used to be the good earth is just a vast brownness—from here to Julia Creek. It is not something that came about yesterday or last week. We are now in the fourth year of deficient rainfall. To show hon. members just what it means I shall quote figures of the killings at the three northern meatworks for this year and last year. They are—

	1959	1960
	Killings	Killings
Swift's Alligator Creek Meatworks ..	93,000	44,000
Ross River Meatworks ..	96,000	55,000
Bowen Meatworks ..	49,000	32,000

That has many side effects, of course. It means a very short meatworks season and some areas are faced with early and extensive seasonal unemployment.

Mr. Tucker: A moment ago you said there was none.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Seasonal unemployment has nothing to do with the hard core of unemployment. If hon. members in other towns had done what I did in my town four months ago, they would have planned for the absorption of the seasonally unemployed and those towns would now be in the same happy position as Bowen, where every man has now been absorbed in employment.

Mr. Walsh: Tell us how you did it.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I will tell hon. members later. Continuous employment was provided for them, and they are very happy. Nobody in Bowen is going around wringing his hands and talking about seasonal unemployment.

Mr. Aikens: Are not most of the Bowen meatworkers tomato farmers, and don't they go from the meatworks back to their tomato farms?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: No, the tomato season and the meatworks season are contemporaneous.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Not only does the drastic reduction in cattle-killing have an effect on employment; it also has a very big effect on railway finances. The transporting of 100,000 fewer cattle on the Mt. Isa-Townsville-Bowen line means a very big reduction in railway revenue. Some hon. members may not know that, because the northern meatworks finished early, there are still many cattle available in the Northern Territory and on the Barkly Tableland.

Mr. Aikens: Are they fats?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Yes. The drought extends as far as Julia Creek. The hon. member for Burke will bear me out in this. Julia Creek to Cloncurry is not bad. From there out to the border is bad again. Then on the Barkly Tableland and into the Northern Territory is quite good, so that a place like Banca Banca, out on the Alice Springs to Darwin road, only last week sent 1,000 head of fats to Adelaide. Normally, with the meatworks at Townsville and Bowen still working, they would have come in there. Another 750 were sent from Eva Downs, up near Anthony's Lagoon. The distance is very much greater, of course, than it would be to take them to Mount Isa and then by rail to the coast. All those things combine to have an effect on the economy of Queensland, particularly North Queensland. The marketing of cattle in Adelaide has been made possible by the great development in road-train transport. For example,

those 750 cattle from Eva Downs were transported in one lift by several road trains direct to Alice Springs, a distance of about 470 miles, and thence to Adelaide, a further 900-odd miles.

Mr. Walsh: Would not the substantial increase in the price they get in Adelaide be a factor, too?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Yes. The difference in the price at Adelaide more than pays for the cost of transport. It costs about £12 10s. a head to transport them by road.

Mr. Aikens: Do they rail them from Alice Springs?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Yes.

Mr. Walsh: What is your opinion of tapering rail freights?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: The hon. member introduced them.

Mr. Walsh: Tell us your opinion.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Let the hon. member tell us his opinion now. He introduced them.

Mr. Walsh: It was long before my time.

Mr. Aikens: You know, of course, that the Commonwealth Government heavily subsidises the railway from Alice Springs to Adelaide?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: The hon. member apparently does not know that the Commonwealth Railways are amongst the few railways in the world that make a profit.

Mr. Aikens: They have no capital cost. They finance all their capital works through the Commonwealth Bank.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: We have to consider the Budget against the background of the economic conditions existing today. We have high and rising employment, and we have rising investment, which naturally goes with that. As a matter of fact, investments increased last year from £365,000,000 to £440,000,000, private building increased by 19 per cent., vehicle registrations by 26 per cent., durable goods by 13 per cent., houses by 11 per cent., and so on. Against that picture, we have falling exports because of drought, falling wool prices, rising imports, and the restriction of credits. That is the background against which this Budget has to be prepared. In addition to the effects of counter-inflation, we have the problem posed by the great increase in margins and its effect on the State's finances. I think the Treasurer had a particularly difficult job to arrive somewhere near a book balance. It seems that he will be unfortunate from the very beginning, because the drought that is already in existence is likely to become worse.

Dealing with the Railways, as hon. members know, there is a slogan, "You own the railways. Use them." The Railways are in

their present severe financial morass because people have failed to heed that slogan. The state of the Railways is probably the most frequent topic of conversation amongst hon. members. Apart from the action taken by the Treasurer and the Minister for Transport I think more can be done. That is where hon. members opposite can come in. Through the closeness of their association with people who work in the Railway Department I think they might help to bring about an increase in the efficient working of the department which would do a great deal to reduce the deficit.

An Opposition Member: Everybody from overseas says that our workmen are comparable with anybody.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Let the hon. member get around the railway yards and talk to the running staff. They will tell him! Let him talk to the guards, the firemen and the drivers.

The Government have made a start on closing down lines which experience has shown are no longer wanted by the people for whom they were built. When a line returns only 12 per cent. of the working expenses after many years of operation it must surely be obvious that the people along the line prefer to use some other form of transport. Long before a line reaches that stage it should be closed and the people allowed to use the transport of their choice.

Mr. Walsh: What about when there are no alternative road systems?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: If there is no alternative road system, obviously the people do not use road transport.

Mr. Walsh: You ask the Country Party member for Burnett about the closing of the branch line to Mt. Perry.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: He is very happy about it.

I am surprised that hon. members opposite are not doing something about road transport and its effect on railway finances. One would have thought that before now they would have insisted on a Federal award, and that they would have enforced it as energetically as they have enforced some others. I offer that suggestion to them in the hope that they will take action, seeing they are so closely associated with the people who drive these vehicles.

Mr. Mann: Do you support the Premier's idea of the three roads from the Gulf country?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I shall answer that question a little later on.

The Government are fully seized with the need for the rapid extension of school facilities; they are building nine new high schools and 11 new primary schools this year. One of the new high schools will be in my area. We must express our gratitude for this manna

that falls from heaven. Throughout the State the Government are coping with the rapidly increasing secondary-school population very effectively.

The same remarks apply to our system of free hospitalisation, to which the hon. member for Norman made some slanting reference. He may disabuse his mind completely of any fear that hon. members on this side of the Chamber will have anything to do with the abolition of free hospitalisation.

Mr. Walsh: The Government are silently sabotaging the free hospitalisation scheme.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: It is just as free now as it ever was.

Mr. Walsh: Have you looked at what is being charged for paying patients?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: There is not a penny being charged for public patients and there never will be.

Mr. Walsh: Many beds are being transferred from public wards to intermediate wards.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I repeat there is not a penny being charged for public patients and there never will be.

Dr. Noble: There are more public beds now than there were in 1957.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I should like to touch briefly on one matter in the Budget relative to the Department of Agriculture and Stock. It has to do with the splendid research centre that has been built at Millaroo on the Burdekin by the Department of Agriculture and Stock. There they will carry out, and have already started, research into tropical pastures and the development of new tropical breeds.

Hon. members will be interested to know that artificial insemination of beef cattle will be carried out at this centre. Artificial insemination is used extensively amongst dairy cattle but it will be used on beef cattle for the first time as a result of the American discovery of a hormone extract. Beef cows can be brought in and injected and it can be prognosticated to within one hour when they will be ready for artificial insemination. I will give the details to any hon. members who desire them as it is not a subject suitable to go into "Hansard".

Finally, I should like to touch briefly on the subject of coal and iron. It is well known that some day there will be a steel-works at Bowen. Hon. members know of the money that is being spent at Collinsville in order to utilise seams, other than the present coking seam, for steaming coal. They will all be familiar with the work that is being done to outline the real deposits of coking coal there. In that connection it may be interesting to note that, whereas the first few drill-holes put down struck an area of

igneous intrusion that completely upset all our ideas, the later boring programme has shown that the seemingly calamitous picture is not nearly as bad as it first looked. In fact, as of now, 100,000,000 tons of usable coking coal have been disclosed.

Mr. Walsh: Is it not the Government's intention to sell all that to Japan?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: No, we will not sell one ton of it. I remember the Treasurer saying to me long before I thought of being here that it should be over the dead bodies of the Bowen people that a ton of Bowen coal went anywhere else, because the whole of the industrialisation of North Queensland depends on the coking coal deposits there. I ask the Treasurer through you, Mr. Taylor, if he remembers making that statement.

Mr. Hiley: Yes.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: We agree with the statement.

With the discovery of a huge deposit of iron ore in the Constance Range area, which, to an extent, has still to be proved, some form of iron utilisation or iron production in North Queensland comes closer to reality. Hon. members will know that the Coal Utilisation Research Advisory Committee set up by the Federal Government was recently in Queensland and visited the Collinsville field. The members of that committee are working very hard on new uses for coal. Many people are interested in the problem. The committee said, "The list of research projects put forward by Queensland was a very large one." Out of this work I hope some good will come.

An interjector referred to roads out of the Gulf country to the north-western railway line and to Cairns. I think all of us agree with the general principle. There may be room for variation as to the actual route, but as those roads are designed to pivot on Burketown and Normanton they can be swung 100 miles or 200 miles either way. The idea is a good one, because it will bring out of the Gulf country many cattle that would become scrubbers, and will lead to a great increase in expenditure on improving the breeds. The scheme could be improved in one direction, that is, by including in it a road from the railhead at Collinsville to Muttaborra, to tap the large area of cattle country in that part of the State.

Mr. WINDSOR (Ithaca) (4.23 p.m.): I congratulate the Treasurer on retaining his very important portfolio. It is a big job for a big man.

A few months ago I heard the former hon. member for South Brisbane say that he led the Labour Party to victory on many occasions. The hon. member for Port Curtis interjected and Mr. Gair said, "I have in my office a letter written by you, telling me I was a better leader than Moses who led the children of Israel out of the land of

Egypt." Whether the Treasurer is or is not as good a leader as Moses, I assure him that we appreciate the job he has done. We are indeed fortunate and we are confident that he will steer the State financially to a sound and safe anchorage, just as he has provided such a harbour for the little ships of Queensland. Fishermen who have invested their money in vessels and who are earning their livelihood by providing fish for the people, and others who have used their meagre savings to purchase small boats, will be forever grateful to the Treasurer for the secure anchorages that have been provided at the coastal resorts of Queensland.

The Treasurer must feel some concern about the limited funds available to him, having regard to the rapidly-developing State, but he can do only as much as the funds will permit, although there is a great deal still to be done.

In private business, if income diminishes through factors over which no control can be exercised, something has to be done about it. We have to increase the volume of business and the efficiency of our organisation and plant, and sales have to be increased. I am certain that sacking men is not the answer. In five years of depression, and the years since then, it has been my experience when things were in a very bad state, that if I employed an extra man or two I got increased production, and that was often our salvation.

However, the Treasurer of this wonderful State cannot get capital and revenue just when it is wanted. The problem is to increase efficiency in every department, even by putting in machines to help with calculations, and by bringing plant and machinery up to date.

In the Government Printing Office there is an enormous amount of printing to be done, and I know that its efficiency has been greatly improved. Hon. members realise that the "Hansard" writers have to record every word that is spoken in this Chamber, and the efficiency with which that job is done and presented to us a day or two later calls for up-to-date plant and machinery, and skilled men to operate it. We are all indebted to the staff of the Government Printing Office for the efficiency with which they handle our speeches. We know that the Government Printing Office has been modernised and it is very satisfying to see its work and the way it is done. The photographic equipment is second to none in the Commonwealth.

I suggest that the rails on some of the railway lines that have had to be closed for economic reasons could be moved or sold and that the tracks that are left could be readily made into roadways. The gradients would be right, and the bridges, culverts and everything else forming the track could carry a large volume of traffic. Even if the track was not wide enough, it would be very easy and economical to turn

it into a roadway. Otherwise it would be a great loss to people who have been deprived temporarily of their means of communication with the capital city and the other towns to which their produce goes. If we could have such a roadway that could be built much more cheaply than it would cost to survey and carve out a new roadway to cater for these people, we would be keeping faith with them and encouraging them to remain in the district as the backbone of the country, and keep going as they have done over the years.

Mr. Newton: Back to the horse-and-sulky days?

Mr. WINDSOR: In the country the horse and sulky can still be of great value. Of course a horse cannot travel as fast and as far as motor traffic, but these suggestions could be put into operation more cheaply than a new railway line and we would be keeping faith with the people in the areas.

We have all read in the paper recently of the proposed expenditure of £6,000,000 on roads in the cattle country so that beef may be transported to the railheads and ports for export. That will be good for the industry and will help to stabilise the North. The greater distances we can transport beef without knocking it about the better; but we often overlook small economies that we could carry out, such as those I have mentioned.

This is the first opportunity I have had to voice my disgust at the display put on in the Chamber a few weeks ago when the Leader of the Opposition and other hon. members jumped up and championed the cause of the illegal strikers at Commonwealth Engineering Qld. Pty. Ltd. I have never before seen such an example of running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. I suggest to hon. members opposite that they owe a greater responsibility and allegiance to the Parliament than they do to the cause of those illegal strikers. I want to give a concrete example of what is happening in the industries of Australia, and this is absolutely true. A few months ago Mort's Dock had to shut down. They had contracts to build ships and they had 700 men employed but, through the tactics of the union with stoppages and rolling strikes, the delivery of the ships was delayed for so long that the contractors were penalised some thousands of pounds. When some of the astute union leaders found they had gone far enough (in fact they had gone too far) they came running to the Industrial Court—the very instrument they were out to destroy—seeking justice. Remember, they had destroyed the employment of 700 men, and 700 men working at a reasonable rate throughout the year can produce goods or ships to the value of £2,250,000. That has been permanently lost to the people of Australia. What ringing of joybells went on between Peking and Moscow over that!

Let me read an extract from a newspaper about what an ex-Communist had to say—

"The Australian Communist Party was still a powerful force and should not be underestimated, a former top Communist warns in a book soon to be published here.

"He said that Australian Communists are regarded highly in Moscow.

"The warning comes from former general secretary of the New Zealand Communist Party, Mr. Sid Scott, in a book, 'Rebel in a Wrong Cause'.

"Mr. Scott renounced Communism after the bloody 1956 Hungarian revolt. He believes he was a 'good Communist'—but that he was not ruthless enough for the party.

"The Australian Communist Party, he wrote, has always been zealous and shown 'extreme Stalinist orthodoxy'.

"It would be a mistake to underestimate the effectiveness of the Australian Communist Party. Its leaders are by no means brilliant, but their work in the trade unions and in industry has always been effective."

When the employees at Mort's Dock destroyed the instrument that was giving them justice and then found that they had killed their own industry, they went running to the very instrument they had destroyed to seek justice. It was too late; they had done their job.

These two strikes in Queensland, at English Electric Co. Pty. Ltd and Commonwealth Engineering Pty. Ltd., have cost industry and the people of the State £500,000. That would employ 500 men at £1,000 a year. Hon. members opposite are talking about the need to put value back in the pound, but the unions are destroying the economy of the State. I am very perturbed that these conditions should exist. The pound is losing its value because of these rolling strikes and because a minority is holding the country to ransom.

Another great cause of loss to the people of Queensland is alcohol and drinking, and I hope that all hon. members will take careful note of what I have to say on this subject. Alcohol is a pickpocket that takes £40,000,000 out of the pockets of the people of Queensland each year. It is money down the drain.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. WINDSOR: The hon. member said it was nothing to laugh about, and he castigated us. I never did laugh.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is addressing the Chair.

Mr. WINDSOR: I certainly think the stage has been reached when the excuse offered in criminal and other courts, "I was drunk", or "I had been drinking", should no longer be treated with seriousness.

Some little time ago in a Brisbane court, when passing sentence on two men on a charge of having dealt indecently with a 16-year-old girl, the judge said he believed that "the offence would not have taken place if the two men had not been inflamed by liquor", and that if the men had been sober he would have treated them very differently.

I certainly do not know why people who commit crimes while under the influence of liquor should be treated differently from others. The drinker takes liquor of his own free will, in most cases he knows what effect it will have, and if he commits a crime while under its influence surely he should pay the full penalty. Week after week we have appalling proof of the diabolical connection between drink and many cases in the courts.

This is not a theory that needs corroboration. Drink is ever present in the courts—it gloats over the distress and discomfiture of witnesses in coroner's courts; leers at the accused in murder and sex cases; attends maintenance proceedings as a right; and rears its ugly head in the divorce courts. We all know that is true.

Mr. Davies: Do you advocate closing all the hotels?

Mr. WINDSOR: I am not answering any questions. I am giving hon. members an instance of what is happening. The most ghastly thing I have ever seen in my life was the sight of hundreds of soldiers being shot to pieces in Ypres, France. Today in Australia we have 300,000 alcoholics who are worse than dead because it takes so many more people to look after them and keep them out of harm's way.

Mr. Houston: What is the answer?

Mr. WINDSOR: I do not know what to do.

Mr. Houston: You are the Government.

Mr. WINDSOR: Everyone should take it up. No-one seems to be strong enough on his own to tackle this problem.

Mr. Houston: What do you suggest?

Mr. WINDSOR: I am suggesting what a big robber it is. If we could stop it the Treasurer would have enough money to carry on with all the good work he is attempting to do for this wonderful State of Queensland.

Mr. ADAIR (Cook) (4.42 p.m.): It is the usual custom of the Treasurer to give the Committee a good outline of the budget, but it contains nothing new, particularly for the far North of Queensland. Apparently the Government are going to develop a little further the old projects and developmental schemes like the Tully Falls, Barron Falls and Tinaroo Falls irrigation schemes. The Mareeba area, the most prosperous tobacco area of the State, produced over £3,000,000 worth of tobacco last year. If it were fully

irrigated it could produce twice or three times that amount but unfortunately the Government do not intend to spend very much this year on the extension of the irrigation channels. It is a great pity that this rich tobacco area is not being developed to its fullest extent by the extension of the irrigation channels. However, I appeal to the Minister to extend the channels into the Mareeba and Dimbulah areas. The Tully Falls hydro-electric scheme is nearing completion and little employment will be available on this project. The men recently employed there could with advantage be transferred to the extension of the channels further into the Mareeba and Dimbulah areas.

The Mary River area beyond Molloy is another important tobacco centre. Already the farmers are beginning to harvest their crop, which is a very early one. The tobacco there is very forward; they are picking at present.

The extension of power lines from the Barron Falls and Tully Falls hydro-electric schemes into rural areas is progressing very slowly. It is very important that electricity supplies be made available to allow tobacco-farmers to pump water from the irrigation channels on to their farms. Development of the Cairns scheme is progressing very slowly indeed and it is up to the Government to see that the work is pushed forward at a faster rate.

As I mentioned, the Mary River area is a rich tobacco-growing area but, up to the present, only a small part of it has been opened up. Irrigation is obtained from the Mary River itself and large tracts of country in the vicinity could be opened up. It is rich land but very little has been done with it. That area could be developed immensely. I ask the Minister to do what he can to push its development ahead. It is an isolated area but, if developed, would prove one of the main tobacco-producing areas in the Mareeba district.

At the recent Cabinet meeting in Townsville the Government produced a scheme for the construction of roads into the Gulf and the Channel country. It is a scheme for which the Government will have to obtain financial assistance from the Federal Government; it will cost £6,000,000. These roads are very important for the development of that country.

I know what the construction of the Mulligan Highway has done for the Cape York peninsula. Cattle are at present being transported by cattle train from that area down as far as Laura. If these roads are constructed to the Gulf and the Channel country it will give a tremendous boost to those areas. I sincerely hope that the Government is successful in getting financial assistance from the Commonwealth Government to enable them to go ahead with their construction.

The roads to be constructed will run from Burketown to Camooweal, from Normanton to Julia Creek, from Croydon to Neila and from Georgetown to Mount Surprise. They cover a vast area in which many cattle are bred. Those cattle could easily be transported over good roads in good condition to the saleyards at Cairns and Mareeba, the meatworks at Townsville and the fattening areas on the coast.

I have no faith in the promises of the Federal Government. In every election campaign Senators and Federal members visit the North, going even as far as Thursday Island. They tell the people what they will do to develop the North if they are returned to office. This process has been going on for years. I do not think they have any intention of assisting the Queensland Government to develop the northern portion of the State. We did not receive one penny from the Federal Government towards the cost of the Tinaroo Falls, Tully Falls and Barron Falls schemes, and I do not think we are likely to receive a penny from the Federal Government towards the cost of new roads, although I hope I am wrong in that statement.

I have referred to the great benefit derived from the building of the Mulligan Highway. Road trains carry cattle from as far north as Laura. The people of Cooktown never thought that in such a short space of time they would be able to get their cattle out of the district by road.

Mr. Ewan: They are doing a good job.

Mr. ADAIR: An excellent job. I hope the Government extend the road to Coen and even further. That road would allow road transport of the greater percentage of cattle from the Peninsula.

I regret that the "Wewak", which has done a marvellous job, will no longer be carrying cattle from the Peninsula to Cairns. I was the first member of Parliament to be approached by Mr. Rex Johnstone and Mr. Cummings of the Marine Contracting and Towing Company with the request that the Labour Government subsidise sea transport of cattle. In the first year the amount was £10,000 and the Government guaranteed the company for £9,000 to put diesel engines in the barge "Wewak." I was present when the first load of cattle was brought from Princess Charlotte Bay. The graziers were amazed at the way in which the cattle were embarked, and they were moved to the wharf in Cairns in 36 hours, arriving at the meatworks in prime condition. Up to the time the "Wewak" sank recently it had carried 40,000 head from the remote parts of the Peninsula. The company built loading yards at various points, and the barge was ideal for that type of work, being able to moor in about 6 ft. of water.

Mr. Ewan: How many would they transport in one trip?

Mr. ADAIR: Recently, up to 380 a load.

Mr. Hiley: That is with the second deck.

Mr. ADAIR: Yes. They were taking 380 a load.

It used to take 10 to 12 weeks to drove the cattle 500 to 600 miles from that area, and they would lose up to 1 cwt. Drove can be done only at certain times of the year. After July the water along the route is not plentiful and the feed is out, and they cannot drove them.

Mr. Ewan: Their feet would not stand up, either.

Mr. ADAIR: No. I have seen cattle in the saleyards at Mareeba limping around the yards.

It takes 10 to 12 weeks to drove from that area. The "Wewak" brought these cattle down, and it did a wonderful job. Rexie Johnston told me over the week-end that they have an opportunity to buy a barge larger than the "Wewak". If they get the insurance of £40,000 on the "Wewak" they will buy it, and it will be more suitable for the job. I should like to see them buy it, and if they need help in its purchase I believe the Government should assist.

Mr. Windsor: How long does it take them to go by boat?

Mr. ADAIR: It takes 36 hours, and the cattle are brought down in prime condition.

The Clauson Company, who are carting cattle from remote areas in the Gulf country, intend to start carting from Cape York Peninsula. However, they will not be able to do the same job as the "Wewak" has done. They cannot get into the same shallow water. The only suitable means of transport is a barge similar to the "Wewak". Not only did this barge cart the cattle from the remote areas of the Peninsula, but it carted bloodstock into the area by the hundreds that could not get there by drove. It also carted all the requirements for the graziers in the area, such as bulldozers and graders for the building of aerodromes. The graziers now have an air-mail service once a week, and the planes land on the aerodromes they have built there. They now have three means of transport: road, air and sea.

It is nearly impossible for the Government to build an all-weather road right up into the Peninsula. There are the Palmer, McIvor, Annand and Laura Rivers, which, when in flood, make it nearly impossible for an all-weather road to be built. It will be necessary to have sea transport for these cattle as road transport will not be able to carry all the cattle out of the area.

Another important matter that I have raised before, and that I will keep on raising until I am successful, is the construction of the missing link from the Daintree River to Bloomfield. It would open up a large area of cattle-fattening country—the richest

cattle-fattening country I have ever seen. I do not know exactly how many beasts to the acre it will carry. I have heard that it will fatten two, but certainly it will fatten one beast to the acre. It is recognised as being the best cattle-fattening area for its size anywhere in Queensland.

The butter factory there now has only two suppliers. The trouble is that the cattle-fattening people are coming in and buying the dairy farmers out. It will not be long before the butter factory at Daintree will close down and the area will go over to cattle-fattening.

The construction of the road will open up a rich area of flat country around Bloomfield. The first sugar mill in the North was built at Bloomfield and the large areas of low-lying land close to the coast would lend themselves well to the planting of guinea grass and the like for cattle-fattening—areas at Bailey Creek, Tribulation and further north to Cooktown, where graziers already are felling timber and preparing the land for cattle-fattening, with good results.

I saw an area of 100 acres of giant guinea grass planted. A grazier named Norm. Watkins had 100 beasts on it and I was there when he sold them. He was paid £40 to £45 a head for steers and £30 to £35 a head for spayed cows. Immediately he sold them he put another herd on the same land. He told me they would fatten on the same area of grass. Just outside Cooktown other graziers are going in for cattle-fattening and I am sure it will be a real success.

It is important to the people of Cooktown that the missing link be constructed. It is only 24 miles from the Daintree River to Bloomfield. I have driven a Holden car from Cooktown down to Bloomfield. The road was good. With the construction of the link it would be the finest tourist drive in the State. Over the McDowall Range is the China Camp area and, within three miles, the Roaring Meg Falls, an ideal falls for the Government to harness for the generation of hydro-electricity. It has a drop about the same as the Barron Falls and a larger flow of water at present because it is a 100-inch-rainfall area. The area is the richest timber belt anywhere in Queensland, with both softwoods and hardwoods. At the present time a company is syphoning from the top of the falls water for the hydraulic treatment of alluvial tin. The man in charge of the company also did control the Gilmore mine outside Irvinebank and they did all right there. I am sure he will do well there and that development will proceed.

I regret that the Forestry Department has not spent one penny on the construction of roads into this area. Roads costing thousands of pounds have been build by the department in other areas and very little timber has been carted over them, yet in this area, where the best stands of millable timber in the State are available, no roads have been built. The Department would be well

advised to construct roads, because it would assist in developing the area and would also be of benefit to the Cooktown area.

I listened to the speech of the hon. member for Ithaca and his reference to alcoholic liquor. In my electorate—I have mentioned this previously—excessive drinking of methylated spirits takes place at Thursday Island. Last year over 1,500 gallons of methylated spirits were used on the island, and I believe that the greater part of it was drunk. The police have informed me that 90 per cent. of the people arrested for drinking offences have been drinking methylated spirits. In New Guinea the drinking of methylated spirits has been stopped to a great extent. Anybody, whether white or coloured, wanting to buy methylated spirits has to get a permit from the police, and something similar could easily be done at Thursday Island. Methylated spirits could be sold by one reliable firm on the island, and people could get a permit from the police to purchase the amount they required. At present a person can go into a store and buy as much methylated spirits as he likes. One can go into the store and see the fellows buying it. Some of them drink it neat, and others mix cordial with it and drink it that way. In my opinion the best way to stop this practice is not only to put a restriction on the purchase of methylated spirits but also to allow the natives to drink alcohol.

I came down from Cairns on the "Sunlander" on Sunday, and there were about 30 Torres Strait islanders on the train. I saw them go into the bars on the railway stations. The man in charge of the bar does not know whether they are entitled to drink. At Thursday Island only St. Paul's boys and Hammond Island boys are allowed to drink, but when they go trochus fishing and come down as far as Mackay, they go into the hotels in Cairns, Mackay and Proserpine. Whether they are St. Paul's boys, Hammond Island boys, Bardu boys, or whoever they are, they can all get a drink, but at Thursday Island they are not entitled to drink.

Mr. Hughes: The obligation is on the publican.

Mr. ADAIR: Yes, to police the hotel and see that they behave themselves. I believe that they would behave themselves if they were given the opportunity to drink. In any of the hotels on Thursday Island one can see St. Paul's boys and Hammond Island boys drinking. There is no difference between a St. Paul's boy and a Bardu boy, or between a St. Paul's or Bardu boy and a Murray Island boy. I have been told that they are of different blood.

Recently I asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs if he would give consideration to amending the Torres Strait Islanders Act with a view to granting exemption to islanders with the necessary qualifications. The Minister replied that at the present time anybody who wanted to leave the island could go to Cairns or

wherever he liked. He said that no restriction was placed upon them, that they were allowed to go their own way. That is not so. At any time a Torres Strait Islander may be ordered back to the island. The aboriginal can be exempted. I have got exemptions for dozens of aboriginals. As long as an aboriginal has not had a conviction it is no trouble for me to get him an exemption. But that is not so with the Torres Strait Islander, even though he is far superior to the aboriginal. The Torres Strait Islander is far superior physically to the aboriginal. Most Torres Strait Islanders are educated to a certain standard. They live at the missions in much the same way as white men. A snap inspection of their homes would reveal that both inside and out their homes are as clean as white men's homes anywhere in the State. They take a pride in their homes. The restriction on these islanders should be lifted; they should have the same rights as aboriginals; they should be eligible for exemption. Many Torres Strait Islanders want to get down the coast to go cane-cutting, but they have no opportunity to do so because they have to get permission from the Department of Native Affairs before they can leave the island. Many of them come down to Cairns on trochus luggers and then get work in the area. Many of them are working on trawling boats for only £23 a month. Most of them have wives and families to keep, and the cost of living is high on Thursday Island. It is easy to understand why they want exemption to get down the coast and earn more money. I know that the department's argument will be that while they are under its protection they are protected and that once they leave its protection they are open to the risk of not getting work. But I still maintain that they should be given the opportunity to go where they want to. All around the North one will see these islanders working on railway construction. The foremen employing them say that they are excellent workers. Two of them are gangers in the Cairns area.

I have seen these men working and I know they are good workers. Some of them are doing a good job cane-cutting around Cairns and Innisfail. It is entirely at the discretion of the department whether they are released and allowed to go down the coast. Many of them would go if given the opportunity.

The Minister also said that Jarnu Nona, the king of the Islanders, does not want to be free. He naturally would not. He is the wealthiest Islander up there. He is on Badu. What advantage would it be to him to be free? He already has everything that a free man has. He has the nicest home on Badu; he has all the drink he wants. Anyone who goes to his home can get as much drink as he can consume—any kind of liquor. But the Badu boys cannot get any.

Mr. Hanlon: He does not really speak for the Islanders?

Mr. ADAIR: No, he is speaking only for himself. He does not want the boys to be free either because, if they were free, he would not have them on his pearling boats. He has his own boats and he is doing well out of them. Incidentally, he is not too popular with the boys. If you try to talk to an Islander he will object because, by your talking to one he can be penalised.

Mr. Davies: Something like Morris's secret police.

Mr. ADAIR: I would have liked the Minister in charge to be here today to hear of some of these things. I know he would not agree with me but what I am saying is the truth. I ask that the Torres Strait Islands Act, which is an unfair Act, be amended and that the Islanders be given the right of exemption if they can qualify for it. Many of these men fought in the last war; they are returned service men. If they were good enough to fight for us surely it is good enough for us to give them the right to freedom. I ask the Minister to investigate the possibility of doing this.

I have more aboriginals in my electorate than there are in any other electorate. There would be probably over 40,000 aboriginals on the mission stations and reserves in my electorate. On race days at Coen they come in in groups of 200 to 300 and they can buy all the clothes they require—elastic-sided boots, snakeproof trousers, shirts with a bullock's head on them and 20-gallon hats—but at the police station they are limited to £20. These men might have £1,000 or more in the bank but they cannot draw more than £20, from which amount a deduction is made for the aerial ambulance. That is rightly deducted because the aboriginals in that area would use that service more than anybody else as there are more of them there. If a stock-rider breaks his leg, he is taken to Cairns by aerial ambulance. It is an excellent service. If a patient can be treated at the A.I.M. hospital at Coen he is treated there, but patients with broken limbs are always taken to the coast.

At Christmas the aboriginals get another handout of £15 to £20. Is it any wonder that they have no incentive to work? Would any person have any incentive if he knew he could not get all the money he earned? I ask the Minister to consider the matter with a view to allowing larger withdrawals from accounts than at present.

I would have no trouble in getting graziers to show me the bank accounts of aboriginal employees. In fact, aboriginals have offered to show me their account to prove what they have in the bank. They are allowed to draw out only a certain amount, and eventually their money is paid into Consolidated Revenue. Aboriginals should be given the right to spend more of their money.

Mining is a very important industry in North Queensland. We find that Federal

Ministers and Senators visit the North and tell the miners that the Federal Government are going to do something for them. They have been doing that for years, but nothing has been done. Recently they visited the Tablelands electorate and inspected mines and dredges. The best assistance they could give miners would be to cut out income tax. Mining is a peculiar industry. A farmer, for instance, can put fertiliser on the soil and grow a crop, but a miner who is working in copper, bismuth, molybdenite or tin knows that every ton he takes out of his mine is a ton less in the mine. At certain depths mining is expensive. The best assistance the Federal Government could give miners would be to free them of income tax. Gold production is free of tax, but it has not the use of other metals. No man works harder than a miner. When prospecting he has to live under hard conditions in the ranges. He has to carry his gear by pack-saddle or on his back. I know two brothers who are working a mine at Watsonville. I do not know the amount of ore they would produce if they worked during the whole year. At the moment they produce only £3,000 worth of tin a man and then stop working. They will admit frankly that that is their practice because they do not see any use in producing more and giving it to the Federal Government in tax. The dirt in their lungs will gradually eat them away. I have seen many miners, some of them young men, with this disease. Some miners contract miner's phthisis and have a slow death. They regard their mines as banks, and they do not intend to root out all the tin in them for the benefit of the Federal Government. I know other miners at Irvinebank who are working a lode that has produced for years. Probably it can keep going indefinitely. So far it has been mined for 22 years, and they have worked it only 10 to 12 weeks a year. They get out £3,000 worth a man, and then stop. Unless the Government make the mining industry free of tax to encourage production, production is not likely to be increased. The price for tin in Australia is about £200 a ton less than the overseas price. Tin is mined in Malaya and the Philippines and goes straight to America and comes back to this country. Tin is produced at Mt. Garnet, but they have not paid a decent dividend yet although they get up to 10 tons of tin a week. The price of tin is not high enough to pay a reasonable dividend. I know the requirements of the miners; I mined there for years; I have had to get my living from the mountains. It is not like cane-cutting where, if a man does not work hard enough, he does not make a living. In mining you have to find the mineral and then dig it out.

I have pointed out to the Minister on several occasions, and I have pointed it out to the Ministers in the previous Government, that the only assistance that will help, apart from freedom from income tax, is to put diamond drills into the area. If the

miners can only get down to them all the old mines will produce again as well as they have ever done. Most of them are now full of water and the timbers are rotting out. They will have to be pumped dry and re-timbered, and the cost is too great. If two or three diamond drills could be rented out or leased to the miners as in the South, in the coal-mining industry, they would look after them and they would be able to drill and find what is underground. If they hit a tin lode or a copper lode they could sink a mine and develop it. I urge the Minister to look into this. The 90-Mile Mine is in this area. It is a rich producer of copper.

Mr. Davies: Where is that?

Mr. ADAIR: It is out past Cunjevoy on the Mt. Garnet road, on the way to Hughenden. The mine was discovered some years ago and worked by my father. It has proved to be a rich copper mine. The gold in the copper pays for the cartage of the ore from the mine to Einasleigh, and from Einasleigh to Mt. Morgan. The copper is being mined and sent to Japan for smelting. It is a sorry state of affairs to think that minerals mined in this State have to be sent to Japan for smelting.

Mr. Davies: How long has this been going on?

Mr. ADAIR: It has been going on for six months. Even the tin has to be sent away to be smelted. Over 50 years ago John Moffat smelted all the tin mined in the Irvinebank district. It is a sorry state of affairs that we have not developed the State sufficiently to smelt the tin produced here.

Mr. Davies: The copper is sent to Japan?

Mr. ADAIR: Yes, we send the copper to Japan and the tin to New South Wales to be smelted.

I ask the Ministers concerned to investigate and consider seriously all the matters I have raised.

Mr. SULLIVAN (Condamine) (5.31 p.m.): As I am a new member of the Assembly speaking to the Financial Statement for the first time, I am sure that even hon. members opposite will not expect me to be really critical, either forcefully or constructively, of the Treasurer's Budget. He certainly impressed me with his outline of the financial affairs of the State. Although in some respects some of us might have hoped for more—particularly those of us who represent primary-producing areas—we realise that, if there is a shortage of money, some services must suffer. It is then up to the members of the Cabinet, in their wisdom, to determine which services should get the greatest proportion of the money that is available.

Mr. Walsh: Why should there be a shortage of finance these days?

Mr. SULLIVAN: That would be the 64-dollar question and the hon. member knows the answer as well as I.

Apparently hon. members opposite are fairly happy with the Budget, judging from the debate led by the Leader of the Opposition. His argument did not convey much to me. In the committees of various organisations you find that most people know their subject and you often hear some very good debates, but that could not be said of this occasion. I am not making a personal attack on the Leader of the Opposition. He is a man for whom I have a high regard, and I have known him for a number of years. But his attack did not impress me, coming as it did from the Leader of the Opposition in a young State crying out for development.

I said in my maiden speech that I looked forward to having hon. members opposite build themselves into a strong, constructive Opposition.

Mr. Davies: Did you mean that?

Mr. SULLIVAN: My word, because I believe we must have a strong Opposition. Even in playing a game of football one does not like to win by 60 to nil all the time.

Mr. Davies: What you mean is strong opposition?

Mr. SULLIVAN: There is no doubt that in three years' time we will have another overwhelming win; but, as in cricket or football or any other field, if you have strong opposition you give of your best. I know it is still early in the piece and there is time for hon. members opposite to mould themselves into that strong opposition.

Some of the newer hon. members opposite could learn a great deal if they would only sit and listen. Some of the older ones who continually interject might well give their younger colleagues a chance to listen to some of those on the Government side who are experienced in matters that really concern the State. In that way they will all learn and gradually build themselves into a strong Opposition.

In leading the attack on the Financial Statement, the Leader of the Opposition referred to the fact that rural areas have claimed that they were better off under Labour administration.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. SULLIVAN: After I explain a few things, we will not hear "Hear, hear!" from the opposite side of the Chamber. In my own electorate. I always gave the A.L.P. man who opposed me credit for being reasonably intelligent. When I read in the Press that he was going to oppose me, I realised that he was not quite as intelligent as I thought he was. He made the statement that the farmers, particularly those in the Condamine electorate, which is a wheat-growing area intensively farmed, were very dissatisfied with

the Government. This man is a farmer, and I think his statement was thrown back in his teeth by the voting that took place at two particular polling booths, one at the place where he lived, and the other in a neighbouring district. At the place where he lived 42 votes were cast and I got 42, and in the neighbouring district 56 votes were cast and I got 56. Apparently the farmers there were satisfied with the Government.

Mr. Walsh: How many votes did you get in the plebiscite against Jim Sparkes?

Mr. SULLIVAN: That is another question. We will not bring that one in here, but I will say that I finished up in a good position.

I have heard since becoming a member of this Assembly that we are a minority Government.

Mr. Davies: Forty-three per cent.

Mr. SULLIVAN: That would be right, I suppose, if the hon. member for Maryborough says it. But to my way of thinking—and there are 78 members of this Assembly and each of us is entitled to his own way of thinking, particularly hon. members on the Government benches, because we are allowed to think for ourselves—even though we are a minority Government, when one goes out into the country areas and bears in mind that 82 per cent. of the State's income comes from primary production in the rural areas and that it is earned by 13 per cent. of the people, I think we are entitled to have a little bit more to say.

Mr. Duggan: You think representation should be determined on the basis of your wealth?

Mr. SULLIVAN: Not exactly that; but on what we are able to produce. I would say that men who have sufficient of the stuff you find in tennis racquets to go out and invest their money—invest money that they borrow would be more to the point—to earn that income would perhaps be entitled to just a little bit more say than the fellow who has no stake in the land.

Mr. Duggan: There are more graziers in Hamilton than there are in South-west Queensland.

Mr. SULLIVAN: Well, as one who employs labour—I was one of the fellows who borrowed a lot of money to go on to the land when I came back from the war—I have always found that the men I employ have my interests very much at heart, possibly because they are treated well. And they treat me well in turn.

Mr. Davies: How many holidays do you give them a year?

Mr. SULLIVAN: That is an interesting point. How many holidays do we give them? Go out into the western areas where they are working 40 hours a week. Under the

old system, if there was a rodeo on for two or three days, the boss said, "Righto, boys, we will go to town and have the week-end off."

Mr. Beardmore: And they got paid for it, too.

Mr. SULLIVAN: Of course they got paid for it. With the coming of the 40-hour week, those things are all gone. If you have a yarn to the fellows employed out in the western grazing areas and ask them whether they are better off under the 40-hour week than previously, when relations were better between employer and employee, you will find that none of them are abiding by the rules of the 40-hour week. Men like those who are occupying the Government benches realise the relationship that exists. We have heard the Country-Liberal Party Government referred to as a middle-of-the-road Government. I think that is a very apt term because, as I said in my maiden speech, since I have been elected my politics are right in the middle of the road. By that I mean that if there is a fellow over there who needs representation and somebody else over here who needs representation, I give them equal representation irrespective of their political views.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. SULLIVAN: When the hon. member has the opportunity to listen to a bit of common sense he should avail himself of it.

What I say is borne out in fact by what has taken place since my election as member for Condamine. At one polling booth the tables were reversed on me. Out of a vote of 72 I got only four votes. I knew that they wanted a new school in that area and I considered that their want was greater than any other project in the area.

Mr. Houston: Wouldn't Ned Sparkes get it?

Mr. SULLIVAN: Under the new cut-up the area was represented by a Labour man.

Mr. Ewan: They needed the school all right.

Mr. SULLIVAN: They were working under primitive conditions, and probably had done so for the last 30 years. It was a sawmilling area and the children were taught school under very primitive conditions. The elections were held on 28 May; I understand that in about a month's time the new school will be opened there. I make that point only to show that I, like other members of the Government, realise that we have responsibilities to all sections of the community.

Reference has been made by the Leader of the Opposition to the support given to the Government in headlines by certain newspapers when various projects are sponsored. That might be so, but the same Press has not given such favourable headlines to members of primary-producing organisations when price rises in various food commodities

occurred that affected the multitudes in the cities. For that reason I cannot see how the Leader of the Opposition can say that the Press is one-eyed. Any time there is an increase in the price of butter the Press will run headlines for two or three days, or a week. When the rise becomes effective the producer benefits only to the extent of less than 25 per cent. of it. The last time tram fares were increased there were no headlines about it, but I should think it would have cost the average family more each week than the rise in the price of butter. Therefore I cannot agree with the Leader of the Opposition when he says that the Press are giving more support to this Government than they gave the previous Government.

Mr. Davies: Your contention is that "The Courier-Mail" and the "Telegraph" support the Labour Party as much as your party?

Mr. SULLIVAN: I should think so. So much for my reply to the debate led by the Leader of the Opposition!

Reference has been made by several hon. members to the drought conditions prevailing at present. The Treasurer referred to it in presenting his Budget and I think all hon. members are appreciative of the conditions that exist and sympathetic towards the primary-producing section of the State.

Mr. Walsh: Actually, there has not been any drought relief by the Government, has there?

Mr. SULLIVAN: I will build up to that. Do not try to bustle me; I like to go along steadily. With the drought situation as it is today we are faced this year with a greatly reduced wheat harvest. Wheat-growers throughout the different areas are presently very perturbed about their ultimate income. The Leader of the Opposition said this morning that the ultimate crop looked like being 6,000,000 bushels but the latest information I got yesterday from the deputy manager of the Wheat Board was that they estimated a crop of between 8,000,000 and 10,000,000 bushels. It might finish up at 6,000,000 if conditions deteriorate in the last couple of weeks.

Mr. Duggan: The figures I used were figures he gave me at that particular time.

Mr. SULLIVAN: That could be so. There was an inch of rain over the Warra-Chinchilla-Brigalow area, but if the season continues to deteriorate the crop might end up at 6,000,000 bushels. If that is so, we will be faced with the necessity of importing wheat. On the last occasion we had to import wheat—and very inferior wheat it was, I might say, because Queensland is renowned for the high protein quality of its wheat—it cost us 4s. a bushel to bring it from South Australia. I think the Government could well consider paying a premium to those growers who are fortunate enough to have wheat. Admittedly, that does not help

the fellow who is unfortunate enough not to have any wheat but it does help the man who has been able to grow some. Whether it should be 1s. or 2s. a bushel is not for me to determine. That is a matter for consideration by Cabinet, but I feel that an announcement should be made at a very early stage if such is going to be the case.

Mr. Walsh: Tell us what the justification would be.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I make this statement about an announcement being made now because, irrespective of whether the wheat crop is 6,000,000 or 8,000,000 or 10,000,000 bushels, it is a possibility that although we might harvest that amount it may not necessarily be the amount that will go to the board.

I know that when I say something about increased rail freights hon. members will jump on my neck. Whether or not they jump on my back or on my neck, I ask them to let me make my point.

Mr. Walsh: Tell us the justification for paying a premium.

Mr. SULLIVAN: With the increased rail freight of 4d. a bushel the wheat-farmer's income will decrease, but when the Government and the board determine the price for this season—which normally takes place in December—they will take into account the rise in freight and possibly the farmer will not be as badly hit as he imagines at the present time he will be. The point I emphasise is that the Downs farmers think their costs have risen by 20 per cent., taking into account increased freight charges, but if they were given an assurance that the freight increase would be taken into account in the determined price for the 1960 crop, all the grain grown in Queensland would go to the board and not over the border.

Mr. Houston: Should it all go to the board?

Mr. SULLIVAN: That is a matter to be decided by the individual farmers. It is legal to trade over the border, but wheat-farmers generally are loyal men, and only a very small percentage market their product over the border. If they knew that they would get an extra 4d. a bushel in the 1960 price, we would not be facing the danger of wheat going over the border.

Mr. Hanlon: Your solution is to pass the rail freight increase onto the public?

Mr. SULLIVAN: Definitely. That is the only fair thing to do.

Mr. Hanlon: Why not pass it on to Consolidated Revenue?

Mr. SULLIVAN: Where would the country finish?

If the farmers' costs are going up, is it not fair that consumers should pay more

for the product? That will be taken into account for the basic-wage earner when the quarterly adjustment of the wage is considered.

Mr. Walsh: I can appreciate the point you are making, but can you tell me whether it would be constitutionally sound for the Government to pay what would be tantamount to a bounty on production?

Mr. SULLIVAN: I will leave that question to the Treasurer.

Mr. Hiley: Either last year or the year before we did pay a small premium price, and it did stop the drift of high-protein wheat over the border.

Mr. Walsh: I agree with that, but, if somebody challenges the position, what then?

Mr. Houston: What was the carry-over last year?

Mr. SULLIVAN: It was 2,000,000 bushels. The board at the present time thinks we will have sufficient wheat to last until the next harvest, but if there is no further rain there could be a deterioration in the crop and we may have to import wheat.

What is the reason for increased rail freights? The Treasurer as custodian of the finances of the State is endeavouring to make the railways pay, and I commend him for doing so. I maintain that every service should pay its way. If the Railway Department continues to lose money other services will suffer, whether they be main roads, schools, or something else.

Hon. members opposite may tear into me as much as they like over the next matter I raise. A railwayman who was retired three years ago, after working for the department throughout his working life, told me that he has watched closely what is going on in the service. He spoke to me about the standards set and the amount of work each man is supposed to do in a day. He told me that the number of employees of the department could be cut by a third, and that the remaining employees, if they worked, would be able to do all the work done at the present time. That is the reason for increased rail freights.

Mr. Bennett: Who told you that?

Mr. SULLIVAN: I am not mentioning his name, but I know the gentleman and he is just as honest as I am. The primary producer knows that these things are going on and with the increase of 20 per cent. in rail freights he feels he is being asked to subsidise the railway employee who is not doing a fair day's work. I am not being sectional when I say that. If I had a man working for me and he was not doing a fair day's work, I would sack him. I have not had to do that yet; I employ good men and they give me a good day's work. If any man is not doing a day's work he should expect to be sacked.

During the last election campaign the Labour Party said that if returned to power they would introduce a 35-hour week. That was reiterated the other day by their Federal leader, Mr. Calwell. Nobody in this Assembly with honest thoughts for Queensland in his mind can believe that a 35-hour week is practicable when the State is crying out for development, and when it is in need of world markets. A 35-hour week would price us out of world markets. We have 10,000,000 people in Australia and we have the potential to produce. We have the brigalow belt in Queensland. Some weeks ago I took two northerners out to my electorate. They had heard of the brigalow belt and its potential, but they had seen it growing only brigalow trees. They were amazed at what could be done with the brigalow country that I showed them. Twenty years ago it was nothing but a wall of brigalow scrub and prickly pear. Today, it is some of the best country in the world and is producing wheat of the highest protein value in the Commonwealth. There are crops growing on that country that have had one inch of rain since planting time, and another inch the other day. Most of the crops were too far advanced to get any advantage from the last rain, but it is estimated that they will yield 14 bags to the acre. It does not amaze me, it appals me that any sane person could suggest that Queensland is ready for a 35-hour week.

I maintain that the magnificent brigalow belt has up to the present hardly been tapped. It is all very well for any Government, or organisation, or person to say that we must develop this great inheritance but there are many pitfalls, as those who have participated in its development up to date will recall.

Possibly the greatest pitfall concerns the finance available to the man willing to go out and have a go. No matter which bank finances him, when a settler borrows money to develop a property the system is that he pays his interest and the bank wants him to reduce the principal. If loans could be made available by the Central Bank or the Agricultural Bank to approved settlers in such a way that the redemption was not called for within a certain period—three years or five years or whatever time the bank may determine, sufficiently long so that the property can be brought into production—

Mr. Lloyd: Do you think railway freights could be eased for those settlers, too?

Mr. SULLIVAN: We probably would not have railways out in the brigalow country.

I suggest that redemption be deferred at least until such time as the property is brought into production. Remember that the settler is not drawing a weekly wage that increases every time the price of a commodity goes up. He is there to develop the land, and in the main it is Crown land so he is a Crown tenant. He is doing a job

for the State, or for the Commonwealth, as the case may be. If he can bring the property into production without being called on to make repayments in the meantime, he has the opportunity to develop the land. However, if he embarks on a plan of development knowing that within 12 months or so he has to find £1,000 or more, he will be cautious with development in order to meet his commitments.

Mr. Ewan: The first few years he is working to service his loan.

Mr. SULLIVAN: That is so.

Mr. Davies: What would you consider a fair interest rate for a settler like that?

Mr. SULLIVAN: The lower the better.

Mr. Thackeray: That is your outlook.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I do not know whether hon. members opposite have had any practical experience but they are listening to somebody now—if they are willing to sit back and listen—who has gone there and done the job. I went into it when I was five years old. Because I am big and fat and wear a well-cut suit today does not mean that I have never done a day's hard work in my life. So if hon. members opposite would only sit and listen they would learn something.

Mr. Thackeray: Not from you.

Mr. Lloyd: We agree that the new settler should be given every incentive; we are with you on that.

Mr. SULLIVAN: Now that hon. members opposite have said all they want to say, I will continue with my speech.

Our aim should be to get the country developed as quickly as possible. I have men in my own area prepared to go out and develop the land. Any hon. member on this side of the Chamber knows that, and I am sure that many hon. members opposite do, too; I do not believe all of them do not know. Men raising families have borrowed money and have been prepared to go out there and improve Crown land. They have to be given the opportunity of bringing it into production. In some cases they will go onto the land and strike a bad season, a season such as we are now experiencing. Fellows put 12 months' work into preparing their land for a crop, and to all intents and purposes they get a good strike when they plant it and everything looks rosy. Then the drought comes and their income is halved; sometimes it is taken away altogether.

Mr. Graham: How many years is it since we had a drought?

Opposition Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dewar): Order!

Mr. SULLIVAN: We are not only worrying about drought years. I went to the bank on behalf of one man, a man with a family of eight who was game enough to take on one of these properties. The lads are out there working hard and not getting any wages, but they are doing a job to develop the country. If they are given a chance of bringing that place into production before they are asked to repay the loan, the land will become an asset to the State as Crown land.

I referred in my maiden speech to legislation being introduced to allow land to be cut up within the family. I do not wish to go back over that suggestion, but apparently the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation thought it was a sensible suggestion, and I hope that in years to come we will see something done along those lines.

I maintain that the brigalow country has great potential for the production of beef. An area in the Tully district is to be brought into production for beef-raising. During the last two or three years it has been proved that the beef industry has a great future. The world is crying out for beef, and Queensland, which can produce beef, has a golden opportunity to cash in on that demand. I do not wish to be critical of our present Governor, Sir Henry Abel Smith, or to say anything derogatory of him, but I believe that he was a little bit off the beam when he made a statement some weeks ago criticising the grazing industry and saying that we did not have a satisfactory type of chiller beef in Queensland. One of the new hon. members opposite—I think it was the hon. member for Townsville North—demanded in his maiden speech, apparently on that information, that a Royal Commission should be held into the grazing industry. I would say that anybody who asserts we have not a satisfactory type of chiller beef in Queensland knows nothing about cattle. Let me tell you, Mr. Dewar, exactly what chiller beef is. Some hon. members would know, but many would not.

Mr. Thackeray: Give us a definition.

Mr. SULLIVAN: If the hon. member makes too much noise he will end up outside. He is coming to my electorate this week, and I shall be glad to welcome him. Even though there is a drought and talk of a Royal Commission into the grazing industry, I attended a cattle sale at Jandowae the other day at which 472 cattle were sold at an average price of £52 8s. a head. That was not because of the drought; it was because of the quality of the cattle. You can throw poor cattle out onto the best of country and they will not fatten. One can see it in human beings, too. If they are not the right type, they will not fatten. Queensland has an ideal chiller type of beast but there are many reasons why England is not getting our chiller beef. Possibly one of the reasons is that the freight on chiller beef is much higher than that on frozen beef.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. SULLIVAN: If hon. members opposite keep quiet I am sure they will learn something.

Mr. Thackeray interjected.

Mr. SULLIVAN: If the hon. member does not want to listen let him be quiet. Some of his colleagues are prepared to learn.

Chiller beef has to be hung so that the air can get through it, whereas frozen beef is merely thrown into the holds of freezer ships. For that reason the freight on chiller beef is about 12s. 6d. a 100 lb. more than that on frozen beef. That is one reason why England is not getting the chiller beef. Two other factors are that the home market is so strong and we have found the American market so very good over the last couple of years.

As to the suggestion for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the killing of breeding cattle, I should like anybody to give me a concrete example of what was suggested. I know that in my area they rear a good heifer calf for every female beast slaughtered. I myself do the same and I guarantee that most graziers do. There was some talk about spaying cattle and somebody wanted to know what it meant. Because of the American market the grazier has not had to fatten his old cows. For the information of hon. members opposite, to fatten an old cow the grazier must spay her. With the American market so good it saves graziers 12 months' fattening and the worry of spaying. He can sell his old cows for hamburger beef on the American market for more than he received for his fat spayed cows. That proves that the grazier is not as inefficient as many people would like to lead us to believe. In defence of the graziers—and I represent many of them—I must uphold what they request of me. I consider that in Queensland we have some of the finest chiller type of cattle anywhere in the world.

Mr. Ewan: Perfectly true.

Mr. SULLIVAN: So let us move on. Let us have a look at what has taken place over the years. I read some very interesting figures in "Queensland Country Life" two or three weeks ago, comparing post-war development in South Australia, Victoria and Queensland. Immediately after the war when the War Service Development Scheme came into operation Queensland would not come in as an agent State, but South Australia and Victoria did. May be they had a very good reason, but let me quote a few figures that show what happened because Queensland stood out. To begin with, Victoria has established and developed 2,994 farms with a total of 1,157,000 acres; South Australia, 984 farms with a total of 622,000 acres; Queensland 470 farms with a total of 219,470 acres. Yet Queensland is the State with millions of acres crying out to

be developed. Because the Government of the day would not come in on the scheme the land was not developed. Look at what has taken place in Victoria with their wool. They have shown an increase in production of 80 per cent. since the war years. Victoria, which would fit into the Gregory electorate, is producing today one and a-half times as much wool as Queensland. That is unbelievable!

Since 1957-1958 Victoria has produced beef equivalent to 67 per cent. of Queensland's production. That same small State produces six times as much mutton and lamb as Queensland does, and two and three quarter times as much butter.

Mr. Lloyd: That would appear to call for a Royal Commission into production in Queensland.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I would not say that at all. It is the result of 40 years under a Labour Government. Give us another five or six terms to continue what we have started and what has already taken place in Victoria will be repeated here.

I am pleased to see that the Minister for Justice is in the Chamber. Reverting to primary production, whether it be wheat or anything else, I want to reiterate what the hon. member for Gympie said about irrigation. I feel that we, as a Government, must face up to the fact that irrigation is one of the things most needed to develop this State.

Hon. members may drive through the country, as I drive backwards and forwards to Toowoomba each week, and see what has been done with irrigation as I see it at the Queensland Agricultural College and High School at Gatton. The increased production that has taken place there over the past three years is something of which we, as a Government or as individuals, must take notice. It is something from which we can learn a valuable lesson.

Mr. Davies: Who developed it?

Mr. SULLIVAN: As a member of this Government I will always fight for more money for irrigation. I think I said in my maiden speech that the Condamine electorate lends itself to irrigation because of its geographical situation and because of the excellent catchment areas. It is a very rich dairying and fat-lamb raising district, and production could be boosted if we could get the farmers irrigation-minded. In times of drought such as we are now experiencing, farmers could use fodder that they had grown and stored in better times. They could grow it at a price that they would find easy to bear when times were good and would not be faced with the problem of buying it at a very high market price when times were bad.

In regard to costs as applying to the farmer—and this is why I said I was pleased to see the Minister for Justice here—

Mr. Davies: Tell us something about spare parts.

Mr. SULLIVAN: That is exactly what I am going to speak about. The hon. member for Maryborough must have been reading my notes while I was at dinner. He and I have something in common because the price of spare parts to the farmer is scandalous. If the hon. member were to suggest a Royal Commission into the price of spare parts I might be with him, because I am going to give a few instances of how primary producers are being exploited in the sale of spare parts.

During the investigation into the dairying industry, it was my pleasure to take the chairman of the Commission and two of its members over a large area of my electorate to interview farmers. On one Sunday afternoon we were sitting having lunch by the road when one very keen dairyman brought a part out of his car. It resembled very much the rubber conical-shaped thing with which the hoofs of a trotter are covered. Hon. members opposite who go to the trots would know it. In fact, it was the dust cover of the clutch of a crawler tractor. Everybody had a guess as to what its price would be. The chairman of the committee, who for 17 years was Federal Commissioner of Prices and should know something of the subject, was of the opinion that it was worth 11s. 9d., but the farmer was able to produce a docket to show that it cost £8 1s. 3d.

Mr. Davies: Exploitation.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I agree.

In a general discussion the chairman told us of an investigation in Victoria into a certain make of auto-header which sells for £4,500 and the cost of every part of the header. The parts would cost £41,272, and the person purchasing them would have to pay for the cost of assembly. The farmer is being exploited in the cost of spare parts. The distributors are not giving the farmers the service they should be given. I can speak with experience on this matter. Three months ago the crankshaft of a tractor that I bought less than three years ago for £2,500 broke and had to be replaced. I found that there was no replacement part in Australia and the tractor was out of commission for three months.

Mr. Lloyd: You were lucky to be able to afford it.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I have a good bank that stands behind me.

Mr. Bennett: You are embarrassing the Liberal Party.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I am not worried about embarrassing the Liberal or Country Party; as a responsible member of the Government I express the view that we should inquire into such matters and do something about them.

Mr. Houston: Have you taken this up with the Minister for Justice?

Mr. SULLIVAN: This is a very important subject and I hope it will be thoroughly investigated. We have reached the peak in prices for our commodities, and prices may perhaps fall a little. If the costs of the primary producer are allowed to increase continuously, the position will be very unsatisfactory. If we reach the stage of having a poor farming community it will be a sorry day for the other people in the State, irrespective of their political views. Hon. members must agree that in a State such as Queensland we must have a prosperous farming community. That is not so at the present time, but we are working to that end.

I do not think, merely because I belong to the Country Party, that members of the Country Party are the only ones who deserve consideration. In the country we have small towns and people giving service—grocers, butchers and garage men. Some of them—not many—vote Labour, but they all play a part in the community just as important as that of the primary producer. Many people depend on the primary producer for their livelihood. I have invested money in a property, and that applies to every farmer near my property. I support my family and at the same time I support another family, the man having four or five children. The man who is courageous enough to invest his money in land and make a living for himself and his own family is worthy of consideration.

I think I have said enough. I always take the view that when I run out of something to say I should sit down. I sum up by warning hon. members not to be misled or hoodwinked into believing that any section of the primary-producing community is inefficient. If they do hold that view, they will never get my vote.

Queensland is not like the more favoured States in the South with their better climatic conditions. Dairying in Queensland is very difficult because of the climatic conditions, but in good seasons certain areas of Queensland are very fitted for dairying. However, it has been proved that in the summer months cows will not graze in the Queensland heat between 10 o'clock in the morning and 4 o'clock in the afternoon. They lie in the shade of trees. I do not have to prove that. I have known it all my life. In the older southern States, which are better developed, they have more money and more irrigation schemes than Queensland. Our approaches to the Commonwealth Government in the future must be to develop Queensland so that our costs of production may be reduced. Millions of people in the world today are crying out to be fed, but they cannot afford to pay our costs of production. If we can bring down our costs to a level that they can afford, we will never over-produce in primary industries.

Mr. Lloyd: I think you will appreciate that the export price of grain is most important to the grain-growing industry and the imposition of heavier railway freight on grain can price the industry out of production.

Mr. SULLIVAN: There is no doubt about that. Whether it is grain, meat, or anything else, that is very important. We must produce at a price that these people can pay. That is very important, but the hon. member is not going to get me into a corner. The only reason for freights going up, as I said a while ago—hon. members opposite can howl me down on this—is that the railwaymen are not working as they should.

Mr. DAVIES: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member has accused the employees of the Railway Department of being loafers.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member said no such thing.

Mr. SULLIVAN: That is the reason for the increased freights, and nothing else.

We know that when increases in freights in the railway have taken place, irrespective of what Government were in power, it has always followed that road transport operators have had to charge a fee comparable with the railway freight. I know that road-transport hauliers have been told to increase their prices to keep in line with the railway freights.

Mr. Houston: Who told you that?

Mr. SULLIVAN: I know that as a fact.

The road hauliers do not necessarily want to do it. They have been making a good living, but they have to keep in line with the railways. It is simply adding to the production costs of the primary producers.

I will sum up in these few words: let us all do the best we can, irrespective of our political views. Whether we be members of Parliament, whether we be in commercial life, primary producers, or workers in the railways, let us remember that Australia is a young country with a great potential, with only 10,000,000 people. We have the potential to develop and to produce. It boils down to one thing: we have all to work just a little harder.

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (7.44 p.m.): I have always felt that one thing that would leave a lasting impression on a new member of Parliament would be witnessing the presentation of the Financial Statement. Because of that, it was with considerable interest that I prepared myself for this event. I have now passed through that part of my Parliamentary experience, and I must confess to a feeling of being somewhat let down. My impression was that the Treasurer in his presentation of the Budget might well have set it to music or, failing that, it could have been heralded by an appropriate theme song. From its uninspiring and unimaginative nature, one might well have suggested, "I don't want to set the world on fire."

Mr. Ewan: No, there are too many bush-fires now.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: If the hon. member will only be patient—I have not been provocative—I will give him plenty of meat later if he wants to come in.

I feel sure that, even with the help of the devastating drought we are now experiencing, there is not the remotest possibility of the Treasurer's Budget setting the State on fire, let alone the whole world. I want to be quite fair in this matter and to state clearly that I have no political axe to grind with the Treasurer. During my short time in Parliament I have learned to appreciate his courtesy, and his answers to questions are in the main unfettered by political bias. That is in marked contrast with the Minister for Transport, who, every time he is asked a question, trots out an answer loaded with political capital.

I felt some sympathy for the Treasurer; I gained the impression when he was speaking that his heart was not in it. His attitude could well be likened to that of a person with a sense of guilt. This could well have been occasioned by the uninspiring nature of the Budget compared with the somewhat lavishly embellished statements contained in the Government's policy speech so recently given. It is well to refresh the minds of hon. members on some of those phrases. During his opening policy speech the Deputy Premier had this to say—

"On our assuming office in August, 1957, as I say 18 months later we found that our predecessors had approved dismissals of several hundreds of railway employees and that for the forthcoming slack season of the Christmas/New Year months, 1957-1958, not one alleviating plan was even in the planning stages."

He also said—

"We propose to continue the quadruplication of suburban railways, an absolute necessity for the handling of both goods and stock trains from the country and the first essential towards suburban electrification."

What a bitter pill it must have been for the Treasurer to have to swallow when he heard the Minister for Transport admit that the number of workers engaged on the quadruplication project had decreased from 621 in June, 1959, to 357 in June, 1960! How bitter it must have been to have to admit to the ruthless curtailment of branch lines and the loss of employment occasioned by these acts. The Premier in his portion of the policy speech said—

"I think that we have brought a fresh approach to the Government of Queensland and its problems of development and, under the stimulus, incentive and drive we have imparted, the State's progress in all its phases, has been accelerated to top gear."

I suggest that if it ever accelerated to top gear, this Government over the last three years have forgotten to let out the clutch.

Mr. Ewan: You had the brake on when you were in office.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I will come to the hon. member later on.

In the light of the Premier's statement, it must have been somewhat distasteful for the Treasurer to have to admit that the State, in paying higher salaries, would inevitably find itself employing fewer people. Where is the fruition of hopes expressed in 1957 that if a Tory Government were elected in Queensland their counterparts in Canberra would open the purse strings in warm-hearted fashion to a Government of the same political colour in Queensland?

Mr. Ewan: So they will, too.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: They are a long time doing it. The hon. member for Gregory was very outspoken in his criticism.

Mr. Ewan: You told me to be patient a minute ago. I am telling you to be patient now.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: We have waited three years. I think enough evidence has been given by members on the Government benches particularly country members, of their disgust with the cavalier treatment that the Menzies-McEwen faction has given to requests for aid from this State. This was well illustrated by the Treasurer in his comment on the fact that Queensland had received only the infinitesimal sum of £232,352 from the special loan, compared with £11.1 million received by New South Wales.

He had this to say—

"Reference has been made many times previously to the unsatisfactory features of the Commonwealth procedure in raising these loans; the component of Commonwealth revenues, the full rates of interest, and the soaring debts of the States as compared with the rapidly diminishing net debt of the Commonwealth. It is not proposed to weary the Committee with a repetition of these things. They are raised persistently at Loan Council Meetings but the criticism by the States has availed little in changing the Commonwealth approach."

If the Treasurer is completely honest—and I have no reason to doubt that he is—I think he will frankly agree with the opinion expressed by one hon. member on the completion of his presentation of the Financial Statement—"There is a no-hoper Budget if ever I heard one!" It certainly gives little stimulus to the hopes that were expressed by the Deputy Premier when, at the conclusion of his policy speech in May this year, he said—

"Queensland no longer lies dormant, but is a giant awakening and flexing his muscles, with the full co-operation of all

who believe in this State's capacity and with God's help, we will go forward together and lead Queensland to the full realisation of her high destiny."

That was what he had to say. But if this Budget without expression, this Budget without hope, this Budget without imagination or fire, is to be the yardstick for measuring the amount of impetus required to achieve these lofty ideals of the Deputy Premier, all I can say is, "God help Queensland!"

Mr. Ewan: You will have to learn your lesson.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I cannot learn it from the prickly-pear grazier from Roma. Is it any wonder that the hon. member for Gregory was so outspoken on the neglect of this State by the Commonwealth Government? I think that the Premier and the Treasurer had this amply illustrated to them when they had to seek money in every corner of the globe to enable them to carry out such important work as the reconstruction of the Mt. Isa railway line. This sorry spectacle of the Premier and the Treasurer desperately seeking money was dismissed by the Treasurer in his speech in this statement—

"During the year, agreement was reached with the Commonwealth Government whereby that Government underwrote the provisions of £20 million over a five-year period which, when added to what the State was prepared to find from its own loan resources, ensured the carrying out of this £29.30 million project."

I wonder what the Treasurer's true feelings were when he wrote that passage. I also wonder what are his feelings when he realises the crying need for such things as roads, electrical development and, perhaps most important of all, water conservation. Even Country Party members agree that water conservation is important. I wonder what are his feelings when he is reminded that Messrs. Menzies and McEwen have turned deaf ears to their pleas for help in these directions. It should be practicable for the Treasurer to convince these moguls in Canberra, who see only so far as Adelaide and Sydney, that water conservation means a whole lot more than the creation of a £2,000,000 artificial lake to be gazed upon by officialdom and the public servants in the Federal capital.

Mr. Ewan: How much did your city council lake over the road cost?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Is the hon. member trying to suggest that water conservation is not important?

Mr. Ewan: Tell us how much the city council lake in the Botanic Gardens cost.

Opposition Members: Your crowd!

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Whilst realising that we must do our duty by our country by

giving heed to its beautification, I maintain that the Treasurer would be doing the inhabitants of the drought-stricken pastoral areas a great service if he were able to convince the Federal authorities that water conservation in those areas is of far more importance than the creation of a plaything for the inhabitants of the Federal capital.

To say the least, I am disturbed at the attitude of the Treasurer expressed in his opinion of the workers of the State. We have heard him imply that ship painters and dockers are lazy and indolent. Only half an hour or so ago we heard the hon. member for Condamine say that railway employees were not doing their job. That sort of thing is not new because over the years the present Government and the people they represent have been making similar attacks on the workers of this State. Let me assure the Treasurer and the hon. member for Condamine that happily that opinion is not shared by most employers in Queensland. During the recent Commonwealth Engineering Limited dispute I had occasion to discuss many of the aspects of the dispute with the company's manager, Mr. Harrison. In the course of our conversation he told me that he was a former member of the Thailand Legislature. He said that on arrival in Australia he had heard many references to the laziness of the Australian worker, but he had been prepared to keep an open mind on the matter and to let subsequent events prove whether this opinion was true or false. It must be remembered that he was speaking during a period of strike against his company. He said that he was now very adamant in his defence of Australians; he said that the worker in Australia, particularly in Queensland, is not as described in the opinion expressed by the Treasurer and the hon. member for Condamine. He expressed the opinion that if you gave the Queensland worker a job and asked for his co-operation, he compared more than favourably with any other worker with whom he had been associated. I give him full credit for his attitude in striving for better employer-employee relations. This attitude could well be copied by hon. members opposite when approaching the problem of getting over an industrial dispute.

As our Leader said this morning, this debate affords the opportunity for broad discussion so I should now like to deal with a matter that I feel will have far-reaching effects on the electricity supply policy in this State. The proposed take-over of the electricity undertaking of the Brisbane City Council is causing concern and alarm among the ratepayers of this city. The alarm is being caused by the secrecy and the furtive approach, which can only lead one to believe that a situation is being developed somewhat resembling the sleight-of-hand tricks practised by amateur magicians—now you have it; now you have not.

Mr. Low: We have had it all right.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I wholeheartedly agree that the people of Queensland have had it under this Government.

Mr. Davies: Fifty-seven per cent. of them have had it.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: To be perfectly frank and straightforward in our approach to the problem, the proposed take-over could only be to the detriment of the already overburdened pay packet of the wage-earner. I would go so far as to say that it would also be to the detriment of industry as a whole. I should like to quote the words of the present Treasurer during the debate in 1952 on the Southern Electric Authority of Queensland Bill, in the second-reading stage, when he had this to say:

“ . . . but when it comes to taking over the electricity undertaking of councils that may be involved, the only measure written into the Bill is the provision that new authorities can take over the loan undertakings of the Council. It seems to me again that where there is a local equity in the electricity undertakings that relate to a narrow group of people, it is then conferred on the wider group of beneficiaries. The Brisbane City Council has built up a fine electricity undertaking, it has built up a considerable equity, entirely at the expense of the ratepayers of the city of Brisbane. Had the ratepayers of the city of Brisbane authority not to channel back earnings or profits of the undertaking to repay indebtedness or give benefits that fall within the compass of the Greater Brisbane undertaking, the loans would not have had the sinking fund instalments paid off the debts incurred. Therefore, whatever equity exists in the Brisbane City Council undertaking has been built up by the ratepayers in the Brisbane City Council areas.”

Mr. Ewan: Who wrote that?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Those are the words of the present Treasurer.

He continued—

“When you come to consider the possibilities of this Bill you find that the undertaking that was provided by a narrow background can be put into the hands of a wider authority, that wider authority will be merely called on to take over the balance of the indebtedness. I wonder whether that is full justice to the people who have provided that equity.”

Those also are the words of the present Treasurer. That is true of the situation now being threatened to a flourishing asset that belongs to the people of Brisbane.

In dealing with such a matter it is well to retrace some of the history of the development and growth of the Electricity Department of the Brisbane City Council. I think its history should be brought to the notice of hon. members of this Chamber because it is of great interest. It is appropriate at this stage to mention that the generation and

distribution system of the Brisbane City Council supplies energy to a third of the population of the State, a further third being served by regional boards and the remaining third by the Southern Electric Authority.

The history of the Brisbane City Council undertaking is very interesting. In 1919 persons in the Bulimba area decided they would move to obtain electricity supplies. A public meeting was called and a Mr. J. H. Hindman attended as an observer on behalf of what was then the City Electric Light Company. Mr. Hindman, however, was an astute and capable person with great vision. It was not long before he was addressing the gathering on the benefits that would accrue from the establishment of a publicly-owned utility. He knew that it would mean not only cheaper electricity but also better service.

It is not difficult to imagine the fate that befell Mr. Hindman when his employers learned of his actions, but to his everlasting credit this did not daunt him or dampen his ardour. He immediately approached the then Premier, Mr. Theodore, for Government approval of an additional franchise and, by the use of loan moneys, set up the Bulimba Electricity Supply Board. Having thus established the nucleus for greater effort, he approached the shire councils of Balmoral, Coorparoo, Toombul, Kedron, and Sandgate and asked them to become members of the board. It is interesting to note that not one of those he approached was a Labour council. In spite of the avowed policy of anti-Labour Governments or parties in regard to publicly-owned utilities, he was able to convince them of the advantages of such an undertaking. From the amalgamation of these shires was created the Metropolitan Electricity Supply Board, which was then purchasing energy in bulk from the City Electric Light Company for distribution to the consumers. Such suburbs as Hamilton, Windsor and Stephens were the next to follow. On 1 October, 1925, the Greater Brisbane City Council was established and through failure to come to a satisfactory arrangement with the City Electric Light Company for the bulk supply of electricity there was a need for the establishment of a power-house, to be owned and controlled by the Brisbane City Council. It was commenced in 1928. Mr. Hindman was appointed manager of the undertaking from its inception in 1925, and he held that position until his retirement in 1952, at which date the assets of the Brisbane City Council electricity undertaking had increased to approximately £26,000,000.

In recent years the construction of the Tennyson power-house has put a seal of service on an undertaking that, through the foresight and acumen of one man, sprang from a humble beginning. The completion of the Tennyson power-house will be accomplished in 1964.

What has this meant to the residents of Brisbane? Having only an obligation to provide service to the public and not being encumbered with an obligation to shareholders, the undertaking has been able to supply electric energy to consumers at the lowest possible price. Indeed, so successful and efficient have been the operations of the department that it has been able to provide not only cheaper electricity but also has been able to pay amounts of up to £300,000 annually into consolidated revenue of the Brisbane City Council. These sums have provided for such things as the rents of council buildings, the subsidising of rates and the payment of aldermen's salaries.

It is well to recall that the energy service provided by the department cannot be bettered in Australia. It has a 24-hour emergency service and I have no hesitation in saying that interruption periods caused by breakdowns have been cut to the bare minimum. It is generating yearly 580,202,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity. The Brisbane tramways are supplied with 34,110,600 kilowatt-hours of electricity. It is interesting to note that in the city council area the proportion of energy consumed is 60 per cent. for domestic users and 30 per cent. for commercial and industrial users. Because the supply of electricity to the Tramway Department has been merely an interchange between departments, the Electricity Department has been supplying energy to the council at bus-bar rates. In other words, it has been supplying the tramways at only a fraction above production costs. It needs little imagination to realise that this has helped to keep tramway fares as low as is economically possible. Any increased cost to the tramways for energy can result only in an increase in tramway fares. Perhaps the most important feature is that this undertaking has never been subject to special grants by any Government. It has always functioned so that it can repay both principal and interest for any loans it may have acquired.

How will the proposed take-over of this system affect the people of Brisbane? Any negotiations entered into will relate only to the generation of electricity. The Southern Electric Authority will not be interested in taking over and maintaining the power lines carrying the energy to the various parts of the city. Justice will not be done in any take-over of the power-houses because the depreciated value of a station is not its true value. Its true value is in its productivity of generation and the profits that are made by this productivity.

What will be the situation if this generation becomes the property of the Southern Electric Authority? It cannot be denied that there is need for the construction of an additional power-house in Brisbane. The power-house that was built in 1928 is fast becoming obsolete. In a few years' time an additional power-house will have to be

constructed in the city. There is no indication that any greater sum of loan money will be available to the Southern Electric Authority than is now available to the city council. In other words, for future development the Southern Electric Authority will have recourse only to the same proportion of loan money as is now available to the Brisbane City Council.

It is true, however, that the Southern Electric Authority has recourse to variable interest stock, issued at a guaranteed interest rate 2 per cent. higher than that payable on Commonwealth loans. Because the authority, as a monopoly, will not care about the possible result of borrowing at an increased interest cost, knowing full well that its shareholders can be protected by increased tariffs, it will not hesitate to use this inflationary form of finance. That can mean only one thing—the additional interest costs will not be absorbed in the authority's profits; it will mean increased tariffs for the supply of energy.

I am mindful of the fact that, because the Brisbane City Council undertaking has been able to provide electricity at a lower cost and still make a substantial profit, it has deterred the Southern Electric Authority from increasing tariffs. My information is that the Southern Electric Authority has refrained twice from increasing its tariff because the Brisbane City Council would not agree to increase its tariff. The Southern Electric Authority have been loathe to increase their tariff because of the wide discrepancy it would show in relation to City Council tariffs.

With any such take-over, apart from the ethics involved and apart from the injustice occasioned by the destruction of the people's asset, the final result of a system operated merely for the profit of shareholders can only mean an increase in tram fares and rates and a general lowering of the spending power of the pay packets of the wage-earners. Any increased cost of electrical energy supplied to industry will lead to increases in the price of manufactured goods. I say quite adamantly that the people of the State, and for that matter the people of Australia, are fast becoming discontented with the trend to take away assets that have been established by the people and that rightfully belong to the people.

In the case of the take-over of the Redcliffe Town Council supply, the Southern Electric Authority was forced to purchase the undertaking; but that will not be so with any proposed take-over of the Brisbane City Council undertaking. Such a take-over will be only on the basis of acquisition by the Southern Electric Authority of the council's electricity undertaking and the transfer of the balance of its indebtedness. To use the vernacular, it will be handed to the Southern Electric Authority on a plate. The Brisbane City Council has no mandate

from the people to perpetrate this act of political vandalism, nor have the members of this Parliament the right to indulge in political banditry. It would be interesting to know the reactions of the ratepayers of Brisbane to the coming municipal elections being decided on the question of this take-over. In all fairness and justice to the ratepayers, the opportunity should be afforded them to express their feelings on the matter. I am more than confident that their answer would be an emphatic no. It leads me to conclude that the Groom-led Tory council is anxious to conclude this monstrous breach of public trust before it suffers the inevitable defeat it now faces because of public indignation at the political larceny it is being a party to.

A Government Member: What is your name—Clem Jones?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I notice that hon. members opposite have been very silent. Perhaps this is a little over their heads.

I think the time has come for the setting up of a central publicly-owned authority to control the generation and distribution of all electricity in Queensland. We have the example in England of a publicly-owned undertaking generating and distributing energy to the whole of that country and doing it so efficiently and economically that successive Tory Governments have never seen fit to interfere with its structure.

Mr. Walsh: You would not oppose the activities of the regional boards, would you?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: If the hon. member was following my speech, he would know that that is what I am more or less advocating.

Mr. Walsh: That is not a central authority.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The Tennessee Valley Authority in the United States of America is publicly owned and is being operated in a country that to a large extent has privately owned electricity undertakings. It has been competing so successfully with private enterprise that private enterprise is very worried about the final result. I think we could well afford to follow the examples of England and the Tennessee Valley Authority. The Southern Electric Authority's franchise expires in 1968, with provision for its acquisition as a fully Government-owned undertaking. If there is any need at present for a take-over of the city council undertaking, it should be as the nucleus of a publicly-owned undertaking that would then absorb the present Southern Electric Authority at the expiration of its franchise. That would give the people a publicly-owned utility in conformity with the present standard of service provided by the Brisbane City Council.

I should like to sound a final note of warning here. Let Government members not delude themselves into thinking that public subscriptions to loans will increase when

money is required for such things as water supply and sewerage following the excision of the electrical undertaking from the Brisbane City Council. With the taking over and removal of the gilt-edged security for investment in the electrical undertaking, the public will not be interested in providing money for such non-productive activities as sewerage. Money has been forthcoming up till now only because of the soundness and solidity of investments in electrical undertakings.

I wish to refer now to an incident in this Chamber that I think is a travesty of democratic justice and must cause grave concern to persons who cling rigidly to one of the greatest freedoms, the freedom of thought and expression. It is obvious that certain members of this Chamber are indulging in a particular brand of McCarthyism of their own. It is particularly noticeable among Government members belonging to the Liberal Party.

These political puppets who are dangled on the ends of strings held by the Minister for Labour and Industry are engaging in a particularly scurrilous campaign of character assassination by inference directed against members of the Australian Labour Party and its supporters. If these attacks were directed in a general way towards the Australian Labour Party it would cause no concern to me, nor would I bother even to answer their malicious and untrue statements. But when this campaign reaches the stage where character assassination by implication is being indulged in under Parliamentary privilege against persons who have no right of redress, then I consider that the situation calls for notice to be drawn to their entirely un-Australian attitude. Not for one moment would I be naive enough to attempt to whitewash any self-confessed Communist mentioned in the speeches of hon. members, but when we have a man who is the Secretary of the Electrical Trades Union (I am referring to Mr. A. H. Dawson) having the implication thrown at him because of his visit to Red China he must have Communistic tendencies, the privileges of this Parliament are being grossly misused and it is time they were drastically overhauled.

Mr. Ramsden interjected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Possibly that would come from one who is being dangled on the end of a string by the Minister for Labour and Industry. Is it any wonder that public opinion of this Parliament is very low when public persons are slandered here without their having any right of redress? I refer particularly to an incident that occurred in the Chamber during the Address-in-Reply debate and to the actions of the Minister for Labour and Industry on that occasion. His reference to Communists and his refusal to divulge the source of his information or to table the paper from which he was reading was none other than the act of a person

devoid entirely of any semblance of honesty, decency or a sense of fair play. This method of villifying a person by suspecting him of something is foreign to the ideals of the Australian way of life. It bears the mark of character assassination by inference, a concept that no true Australian would want to be associated with. The actions of the Minister for Labour and Industry do him no credit, nor will they do credit to other members of his party. But despicable though his actions may have been, worse was to follow.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I can see that the puppets even talk!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the hon. member that he must not refer to any members of the Chamber as puppets.

Mr. HANLON: I rise to a point of order. Only a week or so ago the Deputy Premier made a collective reference to hon. members as gutter snipes.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The matter has been dealt with, and I have ruled that the hon. member for Salisbury shall not refer to hon. members as puppets.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: In deference to you, Mr. Taylor, let me say that if I did mistake them for puppets, I apologise.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. SHERRINGTON: In reply to an interjection by the hon. member for Baroona, who has done nothing but credit to the name of the Australian Labour Party and has contributed much to the debates in this Chamber, the Minister implied that his name could well be among his list of suspected Communists. The action of such a responsible person as a Minister in implying that this member of the Australian Labour Party subscribed to the ideals of a foreign doctrine must be construed as a serious attack on the morals of all hon. members on this side of the Chamber. It bears a marked resemblance to a similar incident that occurred in the Federal House during the Communist Party Dissolution Bill debate when Prime Minister Menzies implied that if that Bill became law the hon. member for East Sydney would be lucky if he were not declared.

It is well to remember the words of the late Ben Chifley on that occasion. I do not think any person could accuse him of being politically biased. I would say that hon. members on both sides of the House admired him for his integrity; so, it is well, as I say, to recall his words:

"No-one has the right to damn a man publicly or privately by casting aspersions upon him in this House. One could well understand such actions if they were to stem from some new or irresponsible member but when they come from a senior Minister in the Cabinet of this House it

would seem to open up limitless possibilities of persons being penalised, and indeed crucified, under the protection of Parliamentary privilege." It must give great satisfaction to the Honourable the Minister to know that he can publicly besmirch the names of persons, knowing full well they have no redress and knowing also that he need not divulge the source from where his inferences have sprung. As one who has always held a sense of fair play to be the greatest asset a person can have, I feel that the actions of the Honourable the Minister are deserving of the severest censure. I can well understand how gleefully the McCarthyists in the Government welcomed the proposal for an alteration to the Crimes Act. I am quite sure that the undemocratic features that that Bill contains, particularly in regard to the onus of proof, would have a great appeal to their perverted sense of democratic justice.

These members who speak so hypocritically in this House of the freedom of democracy, of our great institution of British justice, cheerfully support and willingly subscribe to the ideals of an Act which is entirely barbaric in its contents. How must they enjoy the prospect of a situation whereby, under the laws of the land, they will be able to destroy any person who raises voice in opposition to their system of dictatorship.

McCarthyism was not countenanced in the United States, nor will it be countenanced here in Australia. I would suggest that this coterie who indulge in this type of psychology could well re-examine their outlook before they become objects of distaste among men who do honestly and truly support the ideals of British justice."

I should like to refer briefly to other subjects raised during the Address-in-Reply debate, one of the most important being unemployment. One of the disturbing features of the debate was the number of references to unemployment statistics. Government members gain nothing by attempting to paint a picture of a prosperous State under their management at a time when there is growing unemployment. Australian Labour Party members have often been accused without foundation of using threats of unemployment to discredit hon. members opposite, but we would be insensible to the present situation if we did not take a realistic view of what is happening at the moment.

Mr. Ewan: Who wrote this for you?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am not a member of the Country Party; I write my own speeches.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I rise to a point of order. I draw you attention, Mr. Taylor, to the fact that the hon. member is reading his speech.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The reading of speeches is a matter that has received consideration on previous occasions. Hon. members are allowed to quote from copious notes, and there are occasions when the reading of a speech is permitted. If hon. members trace the history of Parliament they will find such an occasion 20 years ago. I ask the hon. member for Salisbury to proceed with his speech.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Thank you, Mr. Taylor. I have witnessed the reading of speeches by Government members on many occasions since I have been in this Chamber.

The Minister for Labour and Industry, by quoting a long list of statistics, sought to prove, first, that a number of industries had been created in the State and, second, that there was very little, if any, unemployment. His summing-up was at complete variance with the practical views of many hon. members, even Government members, on the subject of unemployment. He cannot escape the fact that there have been threatened dismissals of hundreds of railwaymen, nor can he dispute the fact that seasonal unemployment has been aggravated in the beef industry by a shortage of cattle, nor the fact that employment in the sugar industry has been affected by a shorter season. He cannot deny that a number of railwaymen arrived at the gates of Parliament House in an effort to draw attention to their dismissal by the department.

But having listened to the oratorical genius of the Minister for Labour and Industry, I have no doubt that given the time he could have proved that they were not unemployed railwaymen but were really wealthy investors seeking to create industries in the State; or if he could not have convinced hon. members that they were wealthy investors, I feel sure that he could have convinced us that they were wealthy Japanese tourists he had been able to attract to the State as a result of his last tour of the Orient.

As one who during the depression years suffered the degradation of long periods of unemployment and who witnessed humiliation and deterioration of man's self-respect among those who had to take their place in dole queues, I would be hypocritical if I was not alarmed by any growth of unemployment. We are suffering from a complacency that was inherent during the post-war years when there was an abundance of money and employment was plentiful.

We have seen the rising of generations—I think that is illustrated by members of the Young Liberal Party—that cannot accept the dictum as it pertained in the latter part of the 1920's and the early 1930's. These generations cannot be convinced of the tragedy of wholesale unemployment. It would seem that the post-war years have served as somewhat of an opiate to the hon. members opposite. Their complacent air, when the subject of unemployment is raised, would lead one to believe that they are

thoroughly convinced they have been the saviours of this State. But such is not the case. The Minister for Transport has admitted that men are being dismissed from the quadruplication scheme. We have been warned by other hon. members of what amounts almost to a crisis in the beef industry. The Minister for Public Works and Local Government has warned Government employees under his jurisdiction that their whole livelihood depends on the amount of effort they are prepared to make.

The Brisbane "Telegraph" of 7 September expressed an opinion on the losses incurred by the Railway Department. That article, after referring to the closure of branch lines and the curtailment of off-peak services continued—

"But the most unwelcome news is that the livelihood of hundreds of workers and their families is to be affected by extensive retrenchment of the quadruplication project. Here is a problem calling for a human approach with no less than the sense of urgency. Public opinion will not condone the official neglect of the little domestic tragedies that always accompany loss of jobs."

Those words are not a figment of the imagination, nor are they political propaganda from this side of the Chamber. They are a true summing-up of the present unhappy position. If hon. members opposite choose to ignore these warnings, if they are content to place the telescope to their blind eyes, then they are living in a fool's paradise. Let the older members of this Parliament truthfully refute the statement that there are signs existing at the present time for a repetition of the tragedy of the depression years of 1928 to 1932. I appeal in all sincerity to all hon. members opposite to commence planning and to institute moves to avoid a repetition of those unhappy years.

During the debate on the Appropriation Bill the hon. member for Wavell spoke of the sorry spectacle of youths of 17 and 18 years of age being convicted of drunkenness. He spoke of the need to educate young people on the evils of over-indulgence in alcohol. While he emphasised the tragedy of chronic alcoholism by early introduction to drinking, he failed to point out that the greatest contributing factor to juvenile drunkenness is to be found in unscrupulous persons who are supplying liquor to children.

(Time expired).

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! Before I call on the hon. member for Merthyr, I draw the attention of all hon. members to Standing Order No. 120. Many hon. members may not know that this order provides that an hon. member may not comment upon expressions used by any other hon. member in a previous debate of the same session. That is why I told the hon. member for Barooka that what he referred to was of the past.

Mr. RAMSDEN (Merthyr) (8.45 p.m.): Unlike the previous speaker, I do not want to be provocative; rather shall I follow my usual custom and try to be constructive.

Mr. Walsh: Let us have your policy on the new States.

Mr. RAMSDEN: I wish the hon. member for Bundaberg would let me make my own speech in my own way and in my own time. I am sure I shall not disappoint him. After listening to the tale of woe that has been poured out from the Opposition benches, I think it is high time that the Treasurer was congratulated on the presentation of his fourth Budget. It was a salutary reminder that the task of looking after finances of a State as wide and large as Queensland is no easy one.

Mr. Walsh: I don't think he is very happy about it, you know.

Mr. RAMSDEN: I suppose none of us are very happy when we have not got the world to give away. Nevertheless, with all due respect to the hon. member for Bundaberg, I believe the Treasurer to be one of the most capable men ever to occupy the Treasury benches. He has indicated the great care with which he has scrutinised the allocation of every penny of the State's £110,000,000 Budget for 1960-1961.

Mr. Walsh: But the Government are broke; they are completely broke.

Mr. RAMSDEN: I would not say that. They may be pinched but they are not broke. A study of the Budget speech shows how the Estimates were so very carefully scanned by the Treasurer to find every possible way of obtaining revenue for the State without incurring hardship for the taxpayer, yet having due regard to the many responsibilities that must be fulfilled.

Mr. Walsh: What about the people they are sacking?

Mr. RAMSDEN: I know it is delighting the hon. member for me to keep coming in but I remind him that it has taken the Government just four years to get around to the very position that the Leader of the Opposition, then Minister for Transport in his own Government, had reached when we had to withdraw sacking notices on some 600 railwaymen. At least we have kept going for another four years.

Mr. DUGGAN: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member is guilty of mis-statement. It is untrue, whether premeditated or not, to say that I was a member of the Government that issued dismissal notices on 600 railwaymen. Such is not the case and I ask the hon. member to withdraw the statement.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to accept the denial of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. RAMSDEN: I am delighted to do so. In my eagerness to convince the Assembly of my argument I had forgotten that the Leader of the Opposition had left the Government benches at that stage. I accept his explanation.

On the expenditure side, the Treasurer has adopted a policy that all who are interested in the future of the State will agree with. I should like to take a quick look at that policy. A few weeks ago it was my privilege to hear a debate-cum-discussion between Professor Harry Messel and newspaper columnist Eric Baume. During the question-time period someone, obviously seeking to make some cheap political propaganda, asked Professor Messel what his reactions were to the announcement that the Minister for Education had made, I think the day before, relative to the proposed dismissal of married women teachers next year. Professor Messel made the statement—a platitude, really—in which he said, “The Minister must ask himself not ‘Can we afford to keep these teachers on?’ but ‘Can we afford not to keep these teachers on?’” I say that statement is a platitude because it does not take into account that we can employ only the number that we have sufficient money to employ. If hon. members opposite agree with the professor, then I will ask them the question that I asked Professor Messel privately after the meeting was over. It was this: “Is it not a fact that if £X will employ Y teachers, the only way we can employ 2Y teachers is to use £2X? In other words, increased taxation?” Professor Messel argued that we could find all the money we wanted during the war and we must find it again now.

Mr. Walsh: Why not?

Mr. RAMSDEN: “Why not?” interjects the hon. member for Bundaberg. I am pleased he came in, because I think that is a most irresponsible statement, particularly coming from a man who has been Treasurer of the State. I say this not because I disagree with Professor Messel but because in fact I want to join him in preaching the crusade to awaken the people of Australia to their great and urgent need for education and more education.

Mr. Davies: The Prime Minister laughed at these statements.

Mr. RAMSDEN: He would not laugh if he saw the parties sitting opposite. It is no good saying that the Government must provide more and more money for education unless we are prepared to play our part to the full.

For a moment, let us go back to the Treasurer and his Budget. Hon. members will notice that there is a larger increase in the Education Vote than in any other Vote. I think a brief reminder of the extent of this increase is timely. In the financial year 1956-1957, the last full year of office of our predecessors, the amount allocated to the Department of Education was £11.3 million.

This financial year, 1960-1961, the allocation is £17.9 million, an increase of £6.6 million. To get back our perspective of Professor Messel's observation, in 1956-1957 the State provided for 6,609 State school teachers, whereas this year there is provision for 8,653 teachers.

Mr. Walsh: In 1960 your Government are sacking 700 teachers.

Mr. RAMSDEN: We have still increased the number of teachers by 2,000 since we took over from a Labour administration. In 1956-1957, provision was made for 1,414 technical education teachers to give practical instruction in State schools. This year the Treasurer has provided for an increase of 204, bringing the total to 1,618.

Let us now look at the subject of tertiary education. In 1956-1957 provision for the University was under £900,000. This year it is £1.7 million. In the field of actual buildings, in 1956-1957 the provision for State schools, technical colleges, high and post-primary school buildings was £1.7 million; this year it is £3.5 million.

Mr. Walsh: You are still sacking 700 teachers.

Mr. RAMSDEN: Mr. Taylor, just give me strength. I could go on to show the vivid contrast that now exists between the unspectacular, even niggardly, attitude of our predecessors in office towards the education of our children and the Country-Liberal Government's outstanding appreciation of the importance of education. But what I have said will suffice to answer those hon. members opposite who seek to belittle what this Government have done for the young people of Queensland.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. RAMSDEN: I ask hon. members opposite to desist from their parrot-like interjections until the debate on the Estimates of the Department of Education, when I shall have much more to say. I do not want to take up my time on that subject tonight.

If the critics say that more should be done I will be honest and be the first to agree with them. But I also say that the only way that more can be done in the field of education is to increase our income by means of higher State taxes or, on the other hand, by diminishing our services, which means spending less on hospitals, main roads, bridges, railways, etc. They cannot have it both ways. In other words, we would have to cut back on other vital services of the State.

I pointed out to Professor Messel that the fallacy of the argument that if money could be found in war-time it could be found now in peace if Governments were sincere, lay in the fact that in time of war when the

Japanese hordes were hammering at the gates of Milne Bay and Port Moresby the people of Australia and the people of Queensland, realising that their existence was at stake, were prepared to throw in every penny that they owned to preserve their prosperity, their lives, and even the money they were lending the Government of the day. Today the people of Australia and Queensland do not realise that the threat to the future and their all is just as terrible but more subtle than it was in the dark and terrifying days of 1942-1943. The battle in 1942-1943 was with armaments, bombs, men and ships—a materialistic battle visible for even the blindest of the blind to see. But today the battle is a spiritual battle, a battle of ideas and ideologies, not visible to the eye, visible only to keenly-perceptive minds. With Professor Messel I agree that we in this day and era of the cold war—no wonder hon. members opposite are interjecting so much because they are fighting that war for our enemies—we are fighting for intellectual survival. If we lose this battle of the intellect, civilisation as we know it will perish and we will have entered on an era blacker and darker even than any of the dark ages of mediaeval times. This intellectual battle, this gigantic struggle between the minds of the Communist bloc and the minds of the free world, demands sacrifices from us for more and more education.

I was shocked when Professor Messel told me that although he had raised over £1,500,000 for his school in New South Wales he had received not one penny from either the Federal or State Governments. Every penny he has got came from the United Kingdom or the United States of America. I have said these things, not in a spirit of carping criticism, but only in the spirit of a crusader calling on the people of the State to awaken from their lethargy and to condition themselves to the constant demands that will be made upon their time and their pockets if this State is to develop its educational services even further. The Government to which I am proud to belong have raised the standard of the Education Ministry from the bottom of the ladder of precedent to almost the top.

Mr. Thackeray: That is untrue and you know it. Less is spent on education in this State than in any other State of the Commonwealth.

Mr. RAMSDEN: When this Government took office the Minister for Education held probably the lowest ministerial rank in the Government. This Government lifted him to a high position in Cabinet ranking, and education has a higher precedence today than it has ever had before.

I believe that every citizen must play his part. I should like the Premier and the Treasurer to go to the next Loan Council meeting and suggest a Commonwealth education loan to be devoted entirely

towards giving added impetus to the education programme of the State, without detracting from other essential and desirable works and services.

Mr. Walsh: They won't give them enough money to pay the 700 women teachers who have been dismissed.

Mr. RAMSDEN: Despite the frivolity of hon. members opposite who persist in so treating this very vital matter of survival, if we are to survive in a free world we must win the battle of the intellect. We can do that only by applying the whole resources of the Commonwealth and marshalling them to provide teachers, schools, universities and equipment on a scale comparable to the production of aircraft, tanks, ships and munitions during the vital years 1939 to 1945. The years in which we live are dangerous years.

Mr. Walsh: So you agree with Professor Messel after all.

Mr. RAMSDEN: I said in the beginning that I agreed with Professor Messel. Of course I do; I am not a fool. Anyone who holds the survival of Australia in his mind and in his heart must agree with Professor Messel.

Mr. Bennett: Who brought him to Queensland first?

Mr. Walsh: This Government sacked 700 women teachers so you must be against your own Government.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. RAMSDEN: Despite Opposition howls of derision, the years in which we live are dangerous and challenging years, and unless we face the danger and the challenge we shall have lost all we have won through two world wars.

I will now direct the attention of hon. members to other items of expenditure. If it is of interest to note the increase in the Education Vote, it is of similar importance to notice an increase in the Vote for the Department of Health and Home Affairs. In 1956-1957 the amount expended, without subtracting the various hospital receipts, was £15.2 million. This year the corresponding figure is £21.2 million, an increase of £6,000,000. This is, of course, without interfering with the free public-bed system of the Queensland hospitals and in spite of the insinuations of hon. members opposite. As a matter of fact, only this morning I heard it said, either by way of a question or an interjection, or in a speech, that we were breaking down the free-bed system in Queensland. A great deal of credit must be given to the Minister for Health and Home Affairs, who has brought a very businesslike attitude to bear on hospital finances in this State. He has done that by developing and increasing the private and intermediate sections, without taking away

one public bed. By taking advantage of money received from people enjoying medical benefits, the free-bed system has been maintained and indeed has been expanded.

An A.L.P. Member: Don't kid yourself.

Mr. RAMSDEN: An interjector has said, "Don't kid yourself." I should like to enlighten the Chamber and the hon. member who made it by referring to some figures taken out for me to-day by the Department of Health and Home Affairs. I expected that somebody would raise the old bogey.

On 30 June, 1957, prior to taking over from the Labour administration there were 8,164 free public beds in Queensland. At 30 June this year, three years after the Government assumed office, there were 9,149, an increase of 985.

On 30 June, 1957, there were 738 private and intermediate beds, compared with 989 at 30 June this year, an increase of 251.

Mr. Roberts: A very sympathetic Government.

Mr. RAMSDEN: Of course. Those figures give the lie direct to Labour's constant cry that we are doing away with the free-hospital system.

Mr. Bromley: There is no argument about it.

Mr. RAMSDEN: The last interjection proves my point about the need for greater education.

In the figures I have given for expenditure and bed strength of hospitals we have a clear answer to the insidious propaganda constantly being put out by hon. members opposite. Even as late as 28 September the hon. member for Norman, who is personally a very good man, asked a question of the Minister for Health and Home Affairs which brought a forthright reply that it is the Government's policy to continue to provide free hospital services for public patients and at the same time obtain the maximum possible assistance from the Commonwealth Government for the maintenance of hospitals through medical benefits or any other proposal designed to serve that end.

It is not my intention to deal with the figures item by item. Suffice it to say that the expenditure has increased since 1956-1957 by £55,000,000 from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, Trust and Special Funds, and Loan Funds. It has increased from £164,000,000 to £219,000,000. This represents a net increase, after allowing for changes in the basic wage, the influence of margins, and the increase in population, even if it is relatively small, of £15,000,000. In other words the increase of £55,000,000 from 1956-1957 to 1960-1961 is made up in this way: the increase in population, taking expenditure at the same rate per capita, would account for £10,000,000; changes in the basic-wage structure accounted for

£26,000,000; marginal increases in the wage structure £4,000,000, and policy decisions cost a net increase of £15,000,000.

While this increase is relatively small it is significant it has made possible developmental moves that our predecessors failed to carry out. The most significant of those is the Mt. Isa rail project. It will have been noted that £4.8 million has been provided for this project, which every Queenslander wants to see carried out as quickly and as efficiently as possible to enable the North and the North-west to reach out towards a new peak in industrial development and production. Another developmental aspect that is not quite so spectacular, but equally solid, is Main Roads expenditure, which has been increased from £11.6 million in 1956-1957 to £16 million this year, and the provision for road works in local authority areas, which has risen from £1.3 million in 1956-1957 to £2.2 million this year.

It is to this aspect of development that I wish to devote my remaining remarks. It may be recalled that in the Address-in-Reply debate I earnestly commended to the Government that there should be a Ministry of State Development with a Minister for State Development who would have no duties other than to receive suggestions for the development of an area or zone, industrially or otherwise, from a zone development council. Such a Minister should have no duties other than receiving such recommendations, and co-ordinating the activities of all interested departments, where necessary, to carry out the developmental project and then make recommendations to Cabinet for the implementation of an overall plan for such development. As I suggested then, the task of co-ordination would include the easing of the way for people who came forward with a proposal to establish a new industry or the expansion of an already established industry, through the various departments that might be concerned. It need hardly be stressed that almost every department is in some way concerned with State development. Lands, forestry, irrigation, agriculture and stock, labour and industry through its secondary industry division, the Tourist Bureau, mines, main roads and electricity, are all obvious examples. I developed fully my plan for a Ministry of State Development. I again make the plea commending all that I said then concerning it to those who may not have heard it on that occasion. I commend what I said and I remind those interested in the question of State development that what I said can be found on pages 353 to 356 of the current "Hansard." I do not wish to repeat what I said then although it is so important it would bear repetition.

I wish to add to what I said on that occasion. If the time is not ripe for a separate Ministry of State Development then at least we must set up a Department of State Development. That department, as well as being a channelling authority for new and

expanding industries to approach, should also be a planning and research department; a department able to examine each project submitted, on its economic, scientific, engineering or agricultural aspects. Then, having examined it, it should be able to assess its value to the development of the State. I am well aware that at every stage the State's finances are limited and that after such services as education and health have been met and provided for, there is only a limited sum available for developmental projects. I am conscious that this will remain so whether or not some small additions are made by State taxes, State railways or the Commonwealth. For this reason I believe it is most important that these resources be used with the greatest possible discrimination.

To me it is a matter of great concern that the detailed Estimates make provision directly for the developmental aspect of the Ministry of Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity so as to provide only for a Director of Northern Development. I ask myself: where is the Director for Western Development, or for the South-west, or for Central Queensland? Provision is made only for a development staff of three, comprising the director, an engineer and a clerk-typist, with a total estimated expenditure of only £8,638 for this year.

It is, of course, true that there is a Chief Office, Department of Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity, but that, I think the Government will readily agree, is in fact the Chief Office of the Department of Mines rather than of the Department of Development and I believe its staff is trained for Mines Department activities rather than for the broader and deeper aspects of State development.

I want to make it perfectly clear that I am not detracting one iota from what my Government are doing in the field of State development, for whatever is being done now and whatever shortcomings they may have in this regard, the truth is that the present Government are doing infinitely more than Labour ever did.

If it is suggested that the estimated expenditure of £8,638 is of no account, let it be remembered that when we assumed office from Labour in 1957 there was no Director for Northern Development. In 1957-1958 there was, and the estimate for that year was £1,691. The figure jumped to £5,274 in 1958-1959 and it has jumped further to £8,638 for 1960-1961.

Mr. Walsh: Do you think the Brisbane City Council electricity undertaking should be transferred to the Southern Electric Authority?

Mr. RAMSDEN: I think perhaps electricity should be provided for an electric chair for the hon. member for Bundaberg.

Whilst I say it is a matter of great concern to me to know that only a staff of three

is specifically set aside for northern development, at the same time I pay tribute to my Government for having taken the initial step in what I believe will ultimately become one of the most important branches and departments of this Government's activities. I simply must keep urging that we develop this aspect of government as rapidly as our economics will allow.

Let me not be misunderstood. I am not suggesting a large staff on the one hand, nor, on the other, do I think it is necessary to employ a new staff. I do not believe that the Estimates, as set out, and the allocation of departments as set out, reveal the true amount of work that is going on and that rightly could be grouped together under a separate Ministry for State Development. I believe we would get better emphasis on State development if the Government would consider re-allocation of certain departments and sections to dovetail into one another under the Ministry of State Development. I am certain, without going into fuller details now, that the transfer of the necessary planning and research staff should be possible without affecting the efficiency of the departments from which such staff was transferred. Again and again, with all the emphasis at my command, I say to the Premier, and I say to the Government: let us so rearrange our developmental departments that, following the next election, we could set up the Ministry for State Development as an accomplished fact. We in Queensland have, for far too long, winced and flinched whenever we have heard the words "potential for development" used.

I was delighted to read in this morning's "Courier-Mail" that the Federal Government had set up a Government committee consisting of some 20 members of Parliament and Senators to study the problems of the development of Australia north of the 26th parallel, which includes all Queensland north and west of Gympie. I believe that a greater understanding of the unique position of Queensland in the economy of the Commonwealth and her position in the defence strategy of the Commonwealth could be brought about if the Queensland Government would appoint a State development committee consisting of Government members to co-operate with the Federal committee on matters relating to and affecting State development. I believe most sincerely that if the Government accept the suggestions I have made tonight and previously for State development, we will forge ahead in a new era of enthusiasm, understanding and knowledge that will hasten the day when we will no longer shudder when we hear the words "Queensland's potential," because I believe that by then the potential will have been turned into reality.

There is one more plea that I make. I was delighted to hear the hon. member for Gympie draw attention to the gross overcrowding of Parliament House. I agree

with him that the conditions under which we members work would not be tolerated by the executives of any business house in Queensland, yet here we are, trying to run the State's biggest business under conditions that prevailed in the horse-and-buggy days.

Mr. Burrows: Do you think we should reduce the number of members?

Mr. RAMSDEN: That would be the happiest thought I could think of if we could reduce the number from the other side of the House.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. RAMSDEN: What I am trying to say through this barrage of needless interjection is that during the 30 years Labour was in power absolutely nothing was done to put this House on a businesslike basis. We, as a Government, have inherited their neglect and we now have conditions of employment that, as I say, no business man would tolerate in his company's affairs.

I believe that in spite of rising costs, in spite of all the difficulties, the Government will have to build a new wing to Parliament House sooner or later to meet the needs of our expanding work and numbers. I urge the Government to consider building a new wing on the eastern end of the George Street facade, which architecturally would balance with the Alice Street wing.

There is one final thought I wish to leave with you, Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Walsh: What are you going to do about the smog in New Farm?

Mr. RAMSDEN: I remind the hon. member, if I may reply to his interjection, that as a result of my maiden speech a committee was set up to investigate the incidence of smog. For the last 12 months it has been making a survey, and I am sure that when the results are known and legislation is finally introduced, the hon. member will be quite happy with what I have done about smog. If I may try to salvage this speech from the realms of noise and take it into the realms of meditation, I should like to suggest a departure that might bring some sense of dignity to this Parliament in spite of itself. I remind the Committee that each year the law year opens with special religious services. Indeed, the Supreme Court will not open until the liturgical services connected with the opening of the law year take place. I commend to the Speaker of the House and the Government that consideration be given to approaching the heads of the various denominational units in the State to see whether it would be possible to have a Parliamentary Sunday held each year in conjunction with the official opening of Parliament.

Mr. Bennett: They opened the council meeting with a prayer and then suspended me.

Mr. RAMSDEN: As I hear the hon. member for Ashgrove saying, they had their prayers answered.

Each day we open the proceedings in Parliament with a prayer and I do commend the idea of an annual Parliamentary Sunday.

I shall have many other comments to make on the Estimates of the various departments as they are presented.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 9.29 p.m.