

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 1 NOVEMBER 1960

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following Bills reported by Mr. Speaker:—

Mackay Gas Company Limited Bill.

Kyle Enterprises Pty. Ltd. Bill.

Oaths Acts Amendment Bill.

Police Acts Amendment Bill.

Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers
(Pensions) Acts Amendment Bill.

Acts Interpretation Acts Amendment Bill.

Barristers Act of 1956 Repeal Bill.

**CIRCULATION AND COST OF
"HANSARD"**

Mr. SPEAKER laid on the table the report of the Chief Reporter, State Reporting Bureau, on the circulation and cost of "Hansard" for the session of 1959-1960.

QUESTIONS

APPOINTMENT OF HON. V. C. GAIR AS INDUSTRIES ESTABLISHMENT AND EXPANSION OFFICER

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

“(1) In view of frequent charges by Government spokesmen, notably by himself, that previous Governments, and specifically the Gair Government had been responsible for industrial stagnation in Queensland, is the appointment of Mr. Gair to an office designed to promote expansion of industry in Queensland to be construed as an admission that such charges were and are unfounded?”

“(2) If not, can he explain how a man whom he considered to be responsible for causing industrial stagnation in Queensland only became possessed of the special qualities required to promote industrial expansion after he had lost his seat in Parliament?”

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

“(1) Surely the Honourable Gentleman has not already forgotten that, prior to ceasing to be a Member of this House, Mr. Gair deliberately threw off the suffocating and deadly grip of the Q.C.E. and the Trades and Labour Council. The policies practised by these sections of Queensland's political and industrial life are such that they cause strangulation of any development. Mr. Gair was in a position to see the truth of this and was courageous enough to throw off that yoke even at the cost of forfeiting his own personal and financial position. I feel very certain that the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition is equally unhappy at being forced to accept the dictation of his political masters, and in seeing them joining in full unity with known Communists on disputes committees controlling industrial situations in this State. Unfortunately, however, the Honourable Gentleman has not shown any signs of being possessed of the same moral and political courage as his erstwhile leader, and I have neither seen nor heard any faintest sign or word that he does other than fully support the principle of unity with Communists that was so fully illustrated in the photograph published in the Brisbane ‘Telegraph’ of September 12.”

“(2) Whilst I very much doubt whether he has the moral courage to do so, I would even seriously consider appointing the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition to a similar position in the Secondary Industries Division if he, too, cares to renounce the Unity Ticket and Q.C.E. domination principles under which he at present labours. I would feel justified in doing so because no man can serve his State as a Senior Minister without gaining a great deal of knowledge which, properly directed, could prove very valuable to his State in such a position.”

PRIVILEGE

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (11.6 a.m.): I rise on a question of privilege.

Is the Minister in his reply, which I might state completely evaded the information sought, in order in attributing to me motives that are completely improper? His statement that I have been responsible for advocating unity tickets with Communists is quite untrue. He has produced no evidence to support that charge, and he, as well as every other hon. member, knows that neither I nor any other Opposition member has done so on any occasion.

The Minister in my view is contravening the Standing Orders in imputing improper motives to me. His statement was completely unworthy of him or any other Minister of the Crown.

Mr. SPEAKER: As the Leader of the Opposition has raised the point, I must say that it is one I have been considering for quite some time. But if members of the Opposition, or any other hon. member for that matter, chooses to ask intricate questions and at times questions with certain motives behind them—questions that contain in some instances imputations of improper conduct by a department, in this case the Department of Labour and Industry, I think that those hon. members must put up with the consequences in the answers they receive.

Mr. DUGGAN: You have inferentially said that I have attributed improper motives to the Minister for Labour and Industry, in raising this matter, and you have said that that practice, if it were true, is to be deplored, but by your own ruling you are going to permit a perpetuation of that practice—by permitting the Minister to give a scurrilous reply—which is at variance with your earlier ruling that you would not permit any departure in this respect from Standing Orders.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not propose to enter into a lengthy argument. I have thought for some time that there should be an improvement in questions and answers.

Mr. DUGGAN: I agree in regard to answers.

Mr. BURROWS (Port Curtis) (11.10 a.m.): Is there any indication or ruling by you, Mr. Speaker, to cover or deal with privilege in unnecessarily lengthy answers such as the one that has just been given, the same as there is in dealing with questions?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! When questions are asked in this House they are usually very closely scrutinised. Hon. members have already had an indication of that when certain questions have been disallowed. However, I do feel, as I stated before, that there is room for improvement on both sides.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (11.11 a.m.): I think you have taken the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, on a number of occasions, when questions have been asked about Communists, to have some of those questions reframed in accordance with Standing Orders. In view of that practice, which has been in operation in the Chamber for many years, I ask you how you can explain your statement and at the same time reconcile it with Standing Order No. 70, which states—

"In answering a Question, a Member shall not Debate the matter to which the Question refers."

Mr. SPEAKER: As far as I am concerned there is no debate on questions at all. There is also a Standing Order regarding questions, that they shall be as short as possible.

Mr. LLOYD: The point I was making was that the Minister for Labour and Industry obviously attempted to debate the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition while answering it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I do not propose to waste the time of the House in discussing this matter. If there is any doubt, the Standing Orders Committee may discuss the matter to see if there are ways and means by which it can reduce the time taken up by questions in the House. I may say if there is any possibility of hon. members wishing me to institute a censorship, both of questions and of answers, it is a matter for consideration by the Standing Orders Committee.

QUESTIONS

APPOINTMENT OF HON. V. C. GAIR AS INDUSTRIES ESTABLISHMENT AND EXPANSION OFFICER

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

"In view of the fact that (a) Mr. A. G. Hirst is liaison officer for the Department of Labour and Industry, (b) he stated in the House on October 12 that Mr. E. P. Bedwell had been appointed a general liaison officer in the same Department and (c) Mr. V. C. Gair has now been appointed a liaison officer, which liaison officer will be senior to the other liaison officers, what will be the specific duties of each of the liaison officers, and what are the salary classifications of each of the said liaison officers?"

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

"There has been, and still is, only one liaison officer in my Department. His duties and salary classifications have been published. Consequently, as the Honourable Member has Public Service officers attached to him and on his staff, he can quite well discover these matters for himself. Officers of my Department are

too busy doing valuable reproductive work to consume time in order to gratify the Honourable Member's apparent craving for publicity. No doubt he still remembers his plaintive cry of a couple of weeks ago at being banished to page 7 or 9 of the 'Courier-Mail' and hopes this type of political stunt will restore him to the front page. I have no intention of pandering to his vanity."

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"In view of the fact that the prospect of the appointment of Mr. V. C. Gair as chairman of the Licensing Commission has been frequently canvassed by Government members and the Press, was the matter of the adequacy of his qualifications for this particular office examined before it was decided to appoint him liaison officer in the Department of Labour and Industry?"

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

"I am not aware that the prospect of the appointment of Mr. Gair as Chairman of the Licensing Commission has ever been canvassed by any Government members. Further, the question of the appointment of Chairman of the Licensing Commission does not come within my jurisdiction. The Honourable Member's thinking is as muddled as his phrasing. This appointment is not officially termed 'Liaison Officer' but 'Industries Establishment and Expansion Officer'. In view of his lack of clear thinking I regret that I cannot make him an offer similar to that which I have just made to his Leader."

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"(1) In view of the appointment of the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party, Mr. V. C. Gair, to the newly-created position of Industries Establishment and Expansion Officer in the Department of Labour and Industry administered by the Liberal Party Leader in Queensland, is it a fact that the inspiration for this appointment came from the Liberal Party's Federal headquarters?"

"(2) Since the duties of the new appointee will involve frequent visits to Sydney and Melbourne, amounting to something like a roving commission, can he give an assurance that such visits will bear no relationship to the projected entry of the southern Democratic Party into the Federal election campaign in Queensland in 1961?"

"(3) If the foregoing assumptions are not as reasonable as they appear, will he state clearly and in detail the proposed duties of the new appointee, since they are not stated in paragraph (b) of the Executive Minute contained in his prepared Press statement of October 27 announcing the appointment?"

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

"(1) No. The Honourable Member no doubt has, very freshly in mind, the desperate efforts he and his colleagues made to secure some acceptable niche for one of his embarrassing Federal colleagues, and, even more personally, the number of times when he has ruthlessly marshalled every shred of influence to extricate himself from his own problems. I am delighted to assure him that such tactics are not, never have been, nor ever will be, a symptom within the Liberal Party."

"(2) Yes. I would add, however, that I know nothing of the political development forecast by the Honourable Member. I suspect that, in this question, we see the proof of the old adage that 'Fear makes cowards of us all'."

"(3) Seldom, if ever, do the assumptions of the Honourable Member appear reasonable, even to his closest conferees. The duties of the new appointee will be to assist as required in interesting industrialists in establishing in Queensland."

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"(1) In view of the fact that the appointment of Mr. V. C. Gair to the position of Industries Establishment and Expansion Officer in the Labour and Industry Department constitutes the seventh appointment of defeated Q.L.P. Parliamentarians to relatively highly-paid positions in the Public Service by this Government, is he satisfied that ex-Q.L.P. Parliamentarians engaged by his Department have specialised knowledge of their jobs exceeding that of senior experienced officers with long service in the Department?"

"(2) Is he satisfied that in these appointments he is getting the best available value for the expenditure of public funds in conformity with his 1957 Policy Speech promise—'We won't tolerate waste and we will set out to see that the State receives fair value for every £1 of public expenditure'?"

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

"(1) The only ex-Q.L.P. Parliamentarian in my Department is doing an exceptionally fine job in the field of Industrial Safety and I am proud to be associated with him in his work and I have no doubt that Mr. Gair will do an equally good job in his sphere, for the State. If the Honourable Member will furnish the names of 'Senior experienced officers with long service in the Department' referred to by him I will let him have my further comments."

"(2) Yes, quite definitely. The fact that I differ, politically, from another person is no justification, in my opinion, for either vindictiveness or political bigotry. As the Honourable Member has quoted from my

1957 Policy Speech, I will also refer to that campaign. I said then that 'I had no interest in the political beliefs of any Public Service officer so long as he gave of his best at his work and left his politics at home'. My three years as a Minister have given me no reason to change that viewpoint."

Mr. BROMLEY (Norman) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"(1) What officer of his Department is now performing the duties to be undertaken by the newly-appointed officer, Mr. V. C. Gair?"

"(2) Will Mr. Gair as Industries Establishment and Expansion Officer be provided with special office accommodation and what staff will be made available to him?"

"(3) Is he to be provided with an official car, or a car and driver?"

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

"(1) Up to the present there has not been any one particular officer constantly available to contact industrialists in Southern States to induce them to visit Queensland, with a view to their establishing in this State. However, the Director of Secondary Industries and I have shared much of this work. When this first step has been successfully achieved, as it has in an increasing number of cases, a great deal of extremely technical and specialised work is then required. The Director of Secondary Industries is extremely highly qualified in this field, being a Master of Applied Science, a Bachelor of Science, and an Associate of the Australian Institute of Chemists. It is therefore highly desirable that he should be relieved from some of the first mentioned duties to enable him to devote more time to the specialised work. This new appointment will achieve this."

"(2) He will be provided with appropriate office accommodation and the services of existing staff in the Secondary Industries Division will be available to him."

"(3) In common with other officers of the Secondary Industries Division, he will have the use of the official cars provided for the Division when necessary."

COMMONWEALTH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, BURDEKIN DAM PROJECT

Mr. COBURN (Burdekin) asked the Premier—

"(1) Has he read the report in 'The Advocate' of a discussion at a meeting of the Ayr Shire Council on October 21, 1960, on the necessity for the completion of the Burdekin Dam Scheme?"

"(2) If so, will he make a statement to the House concisely tracing the efforts of his and previous Governments to induce the Commonwealth to assist financially in

the implementation of the Burdekin Dam Project which has been declared by certain principal Queensland public servants to be of the greatest national importance?"

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

"(1) Through the courtesy of the Honourable Member I have now had an opportunity of perusing the newspaper report referred to."

"(2) I have prepared a statement as requested by the Honourable Member which, on account of its length and detail, I table herewith."

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the document on the table.

INSPECTION OF BURDEKIN DAM PROJECT BY PRIME MINISTER

Mr. COBURN (Burdekin) asked the Premier—

"(1) Has he any knowledge of an impending visit to North Queensland by the Right Honourable The Prime Minister, R. G. Menzies, during the first week in November or at any other time?"

"(2) If so, will he make representations to the Right Honourable The Prime Minister forthwith requesting that during his visit he make an aerial inspection of the Burdekin Dam site and the irrigable area comprised in the Burdekin Dam Project and subsequently meet a deputation at Ayr to discuss Commonwealth participation in the implementation of the Scheme?"

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

"(1) The only knowledge I possess of the impending visit of the Prime Minister to North Queensland is what I have acquired from Press reports."

"(2) Should I receive official advice of the Prime Minister's visit I shall be happy to suggest to him that he carry out the inspection and meet the deputation mentioned by the Honourable Member."

WATER SUPPLY FOR TOBACCO GROWERS, DALBEG, MILLAROO AND CLARE

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

"In view of the serious position that tobacco growers at Dalbeg, Millaroo and Clare will be placed in if adequate water is not available for irrigation of their crops due to a failure of the customary summer rains on the Burdekin watershed, a position which undoubtedly will recur, will he give the most earnest consideration to either raising the height of the existing coffer dam at Leichhardt Gorge or, for preference, constructing the diversion weir below the coffer dam as provided for in the proposed Burdekin Dam Project and treat the matter as urgent?"

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

"At present although the Burdekin River ceased to flow some weeks ago and water is being released from the storage down the river to supply Dalbeg, Millaroo and Clare, there is still some 5,000 acre feet of water in storage in Gorge Weir. On October 10, settlers were advised that generally some 15 acre feet of water per farm (equivalent to approximately 50 per cent. of water right for a full year), would be available if no fresh occurred in the river. Experience with subsequent releases indicates that this amount may be increased slightly, and as this quantity should be ample for 10 acres of tobacco per farm, the position would appear to be reasonably satisfactory, although it will require care in the distribution and use of the available water. Since, as is set out in the 1951 report on the Burdekin project, odd shortages were expected to occur, and this is the first occasion on which it has been necessary to draw extensively on Gorge Weir since its construction in 1953, it is felt premature to consider the provision of additional storage for the present development."

PRICES OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS AT REDCLIFFE

Mr. HOUGHTON (Redcliffe) asked the Minister for Justice—

"(1) Is it a fact that the price for petrol sold in Redcliffe has been determined at the same price as that ruling in Brisbane?"

"(2) If so, why has not the same price been determined for all other petroleum products, including kerosene, lighting kerosene, dieselene, lubricating oils, etc.?"

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

"(1) Yes."

"(2) Petrol is delivered to the Redcliffe Peninsula by the oil companies in their own tanker wagons, and this cost is included in the general petrol price structure. However, in the case of other petroleum products, there is no provision for cartage in the general cost structure as delivery in the main is effected by outside carrying contractors. It follows from this that it is not practicable to apply a uniform price for the petroleum products other than petrol."

PAPERS

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

Report of the Health and Medical Services of the State of Queensland for the year 1959-1960.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Regulations under the Nurses and Masseurs Registration Acts, 1928 to 1948.

MOSSMAN TRAMWAY BILL

INITIATION

Hon. L. H. S. ROBERTS (Whitsunday—Minister for Public Works and Local Government): 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 validate an agreement entered into between the Council of the Shire of Douglas and the Mossman Central Mill Company Limited for the acquirement by the said company from the said council of a line of tramway with certain of its appurtenances and for other consequential purposes."

Motion agreed to.

EVIDENCE AND DISCOVERY ACTS
AND OTHER ACTS AMENDMENT
BILL

THIRD READING

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

CITY OF BRISBANE ACTS
AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

GOVERNOR'S SALARY ACTS
AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (11.34 a.m.): I move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Governor's Salary Acts, 1872 to 1957, in a certain particular."

The Bill is very short and simple. It contains only one provision, to increase the salary of His Excellency the Governor from the present level of £5,325 to £6,500, an increase of £1,175. The adjustment will be effective as from 4 July last.

As all hon. members know, the Industrial Court recently granted substantial adjustments upwards—if I may use that term—in Public Service salaries, as from 4 July.

Mr. Walsh: Was that by way of agreement?

Mr. NICKLIN: No, it was by action of the Industrial Court.

Mr. Walsh: Were there no conferences on the matter?

Mr. NICKLIN: There were no conferences on the matter until after the Industrial Court had fixed four key salaries and had ordered

the parties into conference. The remaining salaries of public servants were adjusted accordingly. The hon. member well knows that that is the usual practice followed by the Industrial Court in fixing Public Service salaries.

I do not think we should, under this Bill, enter into a discussion of Public Service salaries generally. Opportunity for that will arise later if hon. members desire to do so. But I think all hon. members will agree that it is necessary to keep the Governor's salary in keeping with the other salaries paid in the Public Service.

Mr. Walsh: I would be surprised if all hon. members did not agree that he earns it.

Mr. NICKLIN: That is the reason for the Bill.

Ever since separation Queensland has been fortunate in the distinction with which all occupants of the high office of Governor have discharged their duties. I should say that no other Governor of Queensland has discharged his duties with greater distinction and greater credit than Sir Henry Abel Smith. There is no doubt that by the way in which he has carried out his duties he has earned the esteem of all sections of the Queensland public. I say without fear of contradiction that few people in the State know Queensland better than His Excellency. From the time of his appointment he lost no opportunity to travel to all parts of the State and make himself acquainted with the people and our industries, both primary and secondary. He has entered very fully into the life of the community and has given a great lead to all sections of it.

One particular thing for which His Excellency must be commended is his love of the land and his great knowledge of many of our primary industries, gained through personal experience in many parts of the world and the fact that he personally has engaged in agriculture in both England and Africa. His knowledge of the cattle and tobacco industries is such that he will be able to give very valuable information to people in those industries in Queensland.

He is very keen on the development of the beef industry, particularly along the lines of crop and lot feeding, and by his encouragement he has done much to promote development in this valuable industry along those lines.

He has shown a very great regard for the people of the State and a love of the land. No other Governor has ever shown the interest displayed by Sir Henry Abel Smith and his good wife, Lady May, in the wonderful Royal National Show. They visit it every day and take a particularly keen interest in all the exhibits.

Sir Henry is a Queenslander of whom we are very proud. He has indeed given great service to the State since his appointment by Her Majesty the Queen as her representative in Queensland.

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (11.40 a.m.): When the Premier introduced this Bill he said it was a very simple measure and contained only one principle, to increase the Governor's salary from £5,325 to £6,500. In some respects I am sorry that the Premier did not link this proposed salary increase with the office of the Governor generally rather than attempt to justify it on the basis of Sir Henry Abel Smith's personal attributes and the way in which he carries out his duties. The Premier was entitled to say those things—I propose later to follow him in some respects—but in considering this matter we are concerned with the office of Governor particularly rather than the occupant for the time being. I feel it is a mistake very often in the determination of any salary to link it with a particular person.

If I may digress a little and give an instance, in the office of Co-ordinator-General of Public Works we had the late Sir John Kemp who was regarded as one of Australia's outstanding engineers and also as one of Australia's outstanding administrators. It is rarely that we find in the one office a person with those attributes and qualifications. It may be fairly stated that a man of that calibre could command a higher salary for his services than some of his successors. When I say that, I am not reflecting on Sir James Holt, because he, too, is a very able officer for whom I have the highest admiration. However, there is always the danger that if we try to justify a salary determination for someone on his personal qualifications, we may be very unwise. I think that argument could attach to the office of Governor.

I am not going to introduce party policy into this matter because the office of Governor should be beyond party disputation. All I wish to say is that the general policy of the Australian Labour Party in every State of the Commonwealth is that we believe the appointee should be drawn from within Australia. Having taken that stand, and having followed that policy when we were in a position to administer these matters, we do not in any way put it forward as a reflection on the present occupant that he comes from outside Australia. I join with the Premier and say that I feel that the present Governor has set a tremendously high standard in discharging his official duties. He has a very high conception of his duties to the people of the State, and with his wife, Lady May, he has injected into the discharge of those duties many very fine social qualities. He is possessed of very fine qualities above and beyond those normally exhibited. The part of his character that appeals to me particularly is his obvious sincerity when dealing with people. He goes to any length to acquaint himself with the particular problems

that arise. That is reflected in his speeches, which show careful preparation; it shows also in his conversations with people he meets in the various sections of industry. It is clear that he is very keenly aware of the problems that may be associated with those industries.

He has also been very scrupulous—even more so than his advisers—in acknowledging, as the Queen's representative in this State, his impartiality to all Her Majesty's subjects. He has shown many courtesies to, and officially recognised, not only myself as Leader of the Opposition, but also my colleagues. That applies, too, to other parties on this side of the Chamber. He has scrupulously observed the proper constitutional relationship between Her Majesty and Her Majesty's Government and Opposition. I am very grateful for the many gracious acts and personal courtesies that have been extended to me by Sir Henry and Lady May, and also for the extent to which they have been similarly afforded to private members on this side of the Chamber. He is most anxious to undertake with scrupulous impartiality his duties as Governor. That, of course, enhances the office of Governor as well as his own personal stature.

The way Sir Henry carries out the duties of his office, even the sum of £6,500 would not be adequate to meet all his expenses in discharging them. I should imagine he would be called upon to draw quite heavily on his private income. That brings me to the further point that it is very hard, in determining the salary of a man in public life, particularly one occupying the office of Governor, to decide to just what extent he should be compelled to dip into his own pocket and to what extent he should draw on his official salary to meet the financial obligations incurred in the discharge of his duties over and above what a normally generous and prudent man might be expected to pay. Sir Henry has been very generous indeed. Certainly no occupant of the office of Governor should attempt to make money out of his office; on the other hand, no occupant should be called upon to dip unduly into his own pocket. If our selection of Governor must be from men of great private means, we necessarily narrow the field of prospective appointees to the office. That is a negation of democracy. It is, after all, the highest office in the land, and the highest office that the Queen can bestow on one of her subjects should be available to men of merit and to men of outstanding service. At no stage should the selection of a man to represent Her Majesty in any part of the Commonwealth or of her dominions be restricted through the limited private finance available to a prospective appointee. It is very difficult for me to lay down a line of demarcation as to what constitutes fair and prudent expenditure for such a man, that is to say, what a person holding the office of Governor of the State should properly be expected to

incur. I refer, of course, to such matters as the visit to the State of prominent overseas personalities, to the entertaining of outstanding people in the State, to the holding of levees and receptions, and so on, where the very invitations sent out to representatives of sections of the community constitute, through the weight of their numbers, a heavy drain on the purse of the person issuing them.

I have tried to be scrupulously honest in observing that, while the Opposition has some views on the general subject of salaries, which will be expressed in the debate on the Bill to follow, we have no wish to bring the subject of the Governor's salary into the sphere of controversy or of party political disputation. His Excellency has been most scrupulous in the discharge of his duties in maintaining a sense of very complete impartiality, and we should be doing a great disservice in the Parliament if we attempted to introduce into the debate any question revolving round His Excellency. We can appropriately register our general views on salaries and wages in the subsequent debate on measures that are listed on the business sheet or that may be introduced this session. Our complete acceptance of the increase of over £1,000 for His Excellency must not be construed as an indication that we have no views on the salaries and allowances of other people.

Mr. Nicklin: There is no connection actually.

Mr. DUGGAN: That is so. They are completely divorced, and I accept the Premier's invitation to maintain the debate on that level. We have no desire to depart from the Premier's wish or to deviate from the line we have adopted.

I can testify that His Excellency has done a great job for the State. There is nothing personal in the fact that we still hold sincerely, on a matter of general principle, the belief that Australians should be appointed to the office. The meticulous and friendly and amiable way in which Sir Henry and Lady May have discharged their duties has added lustre to the office and brought great credit on themselves. Even when he was on leave in England Sir Henry seized every opportunity to do what he could for the State. He has always done that. In conversation I have had with him he has been kind enough to indicate to me his desire to bring to Queensland people of some importance in the commercial and financial world of the United Kingdom and other places. He has used his associations, privately and through other branches of the family, with important financial links in commerce in Great Britain in an attempt to do something for Queensland. So, whatever we might feel about individual salaries of others, we freely concede that His Excellency certainly earns every penny that is paid to him. In addition to earning every penny that is paid to him by the State, I think it is probable that he is required to make disbursements amounting to a considerable sum out of his own private purse.

The Opposition joins with the Premier in paying tribute to a man who has given outstanding service to Her Majesty the Queen and enhanced the goodwill of the people of Queensland through the office of the Governor of the State. As the Premier rightly said, there is no part of the State that His Excellency has not visited, and he has visited many of the remote parts on more than one occasion. When some local disaster has occurred or some particular local problem has had to be faced, His Excellency has shown by his practical and sympathetic interest that he has the welfare of the people of Queensland at heart.

Those are the general views of the Opposition, and for those reasons we do not propose to offer any objection to the measure.

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon) (11.52 a.m.): This proposed legislation does not call for any lengthy debate, and I merely wish to indicate that the interests I represent in this Assembly are wholeheartedly in agreement with the proposal outlined by the Premier.

In discussing the office of Governor of Queensland, I think it is a good thing, whilst admitting that there are factors that warrant the increase, to refer to the excellent qualities of Sir Henry Abel Smith. I wholeheartedly endorse the Premier's remarks about His Excellency. It is true that the Labour Party, through the years, has had a fixed policy on appointments to the position of Governor of the State. My own personal view is that any man, whether he is in England or in one of the dominions, and whether or not he is a citizen of Australia, should be considered for appointment to the office if he has the necessary qualifications. I have no personal objection to a man from the old country being appointed to the office as long as he has those qualifications and the other attributes that will enable him to fill that office with dignity.

It is true that constitutionally certain definite responsibilities are reposed in the Governor. If we have taken the trouble to read the constitution and to read what has occurred in Australia in the past in regard to the Governor's responsibilities, we understand what they are. Over and above those responsibilities that are very definitely set out in the constitution, there are other qualities and psychological factors that are difficult to define in ordinary, every-day language. The present occupant of the office has all those unwritten qualities. He fills his office with great dignity and to the satisfaction of all people in the community.

I do not know whether I heard the Leader of the Opposition correctly, but I understood him to say that, in considering this Bill, the office of Governor should be related to the office of Governor-General.

Mr. Duggan: No. I said that the debate should be limited to the office rather than to the particular occupant.

Mr. HILTON: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that clarification. Even if that is so, when we see the great difficulties that other countries are in and the instability of other democracies, I think it is a very grave step for any political party in Australia to intimate that it is opposed to the office of Governor in the various States of the Commonwealth. Unfortunately, that is the position, and I think the major political party that espouses the cause of the abolition of the office of State Governor should recast its thinking. I refer to the Federal platform of the Australian Labour Party, which sets out that the position of State Governors in the Commonwealth should be abolished. I think the experience we have gained under our system of government in Australia and what is now happening in other countries of the world should make us very steadfast in our resolve to maintain the status quo in the Australian States. It is to be regretted that this major political party should seek to destroy that office, with all its implications, which is so vital to the Government, and which means so much to all citizens of the State. I mention that this morning because I think a real danger will confront us should that plank of the Federal policy of the Australian Labour Party ever be implemented. I think that there would be a great hue and cry by all citizens in all States if that decision were given effect to at any time. I suggest that those responsible for framing that policy should reconsider their attitude, and resolve, with all clear-thinking people, to ensure that the office of State Governor is preserved in Queensland and every other State of the Commonwealth.

I heartily endorse the proposal put forward by the Premier. I repeat, "Long may we be enabled to assemble here and deal with these matters as they arise, and as circumstances demand that they should be dealt with!"

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier (11.57 a.m.), in reply: At this stage it is obvious that all hon. members approve of the purpose of the Bill, but in closing the debate I should like to mention that my reference to Sir Henry Abel Smith personally was incidental to the Bill. It definitely did not influence the Bill's introduction. The office of Governor is the No. 1 position in the service of the State of Queensland, and the Bill has been introduced solely to deal with that position in its proper perspective.

Motion (Mr. Nicklin) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

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

In accordance with Standing Order No. 307, the House went into Committee of Supply.

SUPPLY

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—ESTIMATES—FIRST AND SECOND ALLOTTED DAYS

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

ESTIMATES-IN-CHIEF, 1960-1961

EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE—HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR (BALANCE OF VOTE)

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (11.59 a.m.): I move—

"That £30,018 be granted for 'His Excellency the Governor (Balance of Vote)'."

In moving this Item I should like to explain for the information of hon. members that the amount asked for this year is an increase of £5,594 over the appropriation for 1959-1960, and an increase of £5,254 over the actual expenditure for that year. The increase is made up of salary increases £2,186, and a contingencies increase of £3,408. Dealing with the salaries increase first, this year's provision of £14,152 represents an increase of £2,186 on the appropriation for the previous year and an increase of £1,531 over the actual expenditure for that year. That is due to provision which is being made for the following payments that will have to be met this year:

(a) Increased salary classifications prescribed by a variation of the Public Service Award operative from 4 July this year;

(b) Annual increments which will become due during the current year;

(c) Basic wage variations approved by the State Industrial Court.

Hon. members will see that under the heading of contingencies, £17,231 is provided. It is an increase of £3,408 over the appropriation for the previous year and an increase of £3,723 over the actual expenditure for that year. The main feature adding to the provision this year is the purchase of motor-cars. The Daimler car that was purchased from Her Majesty the Queen for official duties of the Governor cost us £2,255, and £400 was involved in the replacement of a Ford sedan and in other incidental amounts for postages, cash equivalent of long service leave and things of that nature that have to be met during the year.

Items (His Excellency the Governor—Balance of Vote) agreed to.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (12.2 p.m.): I move—

"That £950 be granted for 'Executive Council'."

This Vote shows an increase of £100 over the appropriation for the previous year and

an increase of £305 over the actual expenditure for that year. Provision has been made in the Vote for the payment of an appropriate allowance to the Acting Clerk of the Executive Council and also for increased costs of printing and binding which have to be met this year.

Vote (Executive Council) agreed to.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (12.3 p.m.): I move—

“That £130,992 be granted for ‘Legislative Assembly’.”

This Vote is a decrease of £3 on the appropriation for the previous year but an increase of £5,893 over the actual expenditure for that year. Salary increases of £8,118 have to be provided for this year but there is a decrease in contingencies of £8,121, so there is an overall reduction of £3 on the appropriation for the previous year.

The salaries Vote shows an increase of £8,118 over last year's appropriation and an increase of £9,392 over the actual expenditure for that year. The increase is due to provision for increased salary classifications prescribed by the Public Service Award, salary increments becoming due during the year and basic wage variations, together with a staff increase of nine clerk-typists. That increase in clerk-typists has resulted from a transfer of the clerk-typists who provide secretarial staff for hon. members from the State Reporting Bureau to Legislative Assembly. That was done on the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner. The clerk-typists are those whose services are utilised by hon. members. Their salaries, amounting to £7,440, account for the major portion of the increase in salaries. The amount required this year for total contingencies is £86,761, a decrease of £8,121 on the appropriation last year of £94,882, and a decrease of £3,499 on the actual expenditure last year.

In comparing this year's requirement with last year's actual expenditure, hon. members will find the main features of difference include the contribution to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, which last year was £11,274. Hon. members will recall that last year representatives of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association were our guests, but this year only £750, the normal contribution to the Association, is required. That is a decrease of £10,524.

A decrease of £687 is seen in the amount provided for the Refreshment Rooms. Last year the amount expended was £6,687, while this year the Estimates provide for £6,000.

The Vote for “Hansard” and other printing, telephones, stationery, maintenance, etc., shows a decrease of £1,481. Last year the expenditure was £35,381, whereas this year £33,900 will be required. That decrease has been brought about by close supervision of the printing associated with Parliament, in an effort to save as much money as possible.

There is an increase of £3,634 in the allowances to members for postage, telegrams and telephones. That arises largely because of the fact that there are now more members and an increase in allowances became necessary. The Vote for allowances to members shows an increase of £5,141 over the previous year. The expenditure last year was £12,293. This year it has been found necessary to find £17,434. Amended allowances were approved by the Governor in Council on 30 June, and provision had to be made for the period from 28 May to 30 June. The increase is brought about by an increase in the number of members and also by variations in the allowances to members, which I may say, are on exactly the same scale as they were in the last Parliament.

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon) (12.9 p.m.): I do not think it is advisable to allow a Vote such as this to pass without comment. I have some observations to make. We are really discussing our own Parliament and all that goes with it. The Premier has outlined the increases in the Estimates this year and they are understandable for the reasons given by him. But I still hold the view that perhaps it was not entirely necessary to increase the strength of Parliament to the present number of members. In the distribution of electoral representation throughout the State, it is perhaps inescapable that some hon. members have a much greater degree of work than others to perform for their constituents. Many anomalies arise because of this. For instance, because of the geographical position of some electorates, hon. members representing them have to put in a far greater effort than those in the metropolitan area because they represent the very far-flung electorates. In these days we must consider the means of travel available to hon. members to get to Brisbane when Parliament is sitting, and when they must come to Brisbane to carry out important liaison work for their constituents. Any thinking person knows that many of the duties that a member of Parliament performs revolve round liaison work he is called upon to perform between the various Government departments and his constituents. There are other hon. members in the same position as I. In these days with reduced rail services we cannot travel to Brisbane by rail, and in many instances there is not a suitable plane service. I am obliged, together with other members, to travel to Brisbane by car on all occasions. The running of a car during the session and at other times of the year involves a member in considerable expense.

Mr. Lloyd: Depending on the roads.

Mr. HILTON: Between Brisbane and Stanthorpe the road is quite good, but in other parts of the electorate where it has not been possible to carry out all the necessary road work the going is difficult. When these allowances are assessed, all factors of travel and the means available to members to

travel should be considered. There is justification for some review of the allowances. I think I have said enough on that point for the time being.

I will deal with another broad aspect of Parliament, the democratic aspect. Today we hear and read much about democracy. We read a great deal about other nations being given the right of self-government and, unfortunately, many of them are making a horrible mess of it. However, that is understandable when we recall that it took five centuries for the British system of democratic government to develop to the stage that we know today, and although these new nations have our wealth of experience to draw on I think it is quite reasonable to assume that it will be many generations or decades before they can absorb the democratic concept as we know it.

It would be wise to have the true concept of democracy taught in our schools, because we find men visiting countries that are under the rule of tyranny and dictatorship coming back here and publicly stating that those countries are really democracies. I rise in this Assembly today to voice my protest and utter disgust at the distortion of the word "democracy". I repeat that it would be a good thing in the social studies course in our schools if particular emphasis was given to the question of democracy and our Parliamentary system of government so that the boys and girls as they grow up will not be deceived by the utter hypocrisy emanating from those who seek to destroy the democratic ideas that we have developed, and who want to use these democratic institutions and facilities in that process.

There has been much talk about pressure groups and dictation by political organisations. It is logical and feasible, and in accord with our system, that there should be bi-party government. It is quite legitimate that those people who are responsible for sending members to Parliament should formulate a policy and expect them to carry it out. If they cannot in conscience do so, or if circumstances preclude their carrying it out, the argument can be resolved every three years when they come up once more for selection. Am I infringing the Standing Orders, Mr. Taylor?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is getting away slightly from the subject of the approval of money for the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. HILTON: I do not know under which other Vote we could discuss it. The Legislative Assembly is all-important to us. It is for the discharge of their duties that hon. members receive payment. I know that I have to deal with the subject broadly in that way. I will not elaborate the point unduly, but I repeat that I am opposed to those directions, no matter where they may come from, that would have the effect of destroying the very basis of the election of hon. members to this Assembly. Every political party is quite right in formulating its policy

and putting it before the men it sends here, but it should rest at that. There is a time to deal with them if they do not act in accord with those principles, and that time is the next election.

Again, we hear a great deal of talk about the standards of the members of the Assembly. Of late, a certain gentleman in this city has adopted the role of judge over members of a political party. He castigates those members about their conduct in the Assembly and about their contributions to the debate. It is highly improper that, even when there is a rumour of a proposed increase in salary for members of this Assembly, this man—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must point out to the hon. member that the matter of parliamentary salaries is not dealt with in this Vote. It comes under the Schedules, which are not part of this Vote. I ask hon. members please to refrain from referring to members' salaries. They may mention members' allowances. But I ask the hon. member to try now to get back to the Vote, because I think he has made his point.

Mr. HILTON: Yes, Mr. Taylor. I appreciate your ruling. While members' salaries do not exactly come under this Vote of Legislative Assembly, many other aspects that go with them do come under it. Is it possible to deal with the role of Members of Parliament under this Vote?

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think so. There are so many items under the Vote—Correspondence Room, Library, Reporting Staff, Gardeners, and Contingencies—that the hon. member could deal with. The role of Members of Parliament is not actually a subject for debate under this Vote.

Mr. HILTON: I accept your ruling, and if you wish me to refrain—

Mr. WALSH: I rise to a point of order. Is not a Vote of this nature, providing as it does, for the Legislative Assembly, broad enough to cover the subject of representation in the Assembly or of conduct within the Assembly itself? If debate on the conduct of hon. members within the Assembly, that is to say, the conduct of members elected to the Assembly, is not allowed to be discussed under this Vote, I cannot see anywhere else that the Committee will be given the opportunity to discuss the matter. For example, when the Premier and Chief Secretary's Vote is debated, are we to be allowed to discuss the Public Service and all the implications of appointments and so on?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I will deal with the Premier and Chief Secretary's Vote when it comes before the Committee, but I must point out that I have allowed the hon. member for Carnarvon a great deal of latitude. It must be remembered that we are dealing with the Estimates. The Estimates relate to the various aspects of the Legislative Assembly. I think the hon. member has

expressed his point fairly fully. I adhere to the ruling that the Legislative Assembly Vote deals with the items that are mentioned in it.

Mr. WALSH: On a further point of order, Mr. Taylor, will you rule at this stage whether it is possible for hon. members to discuss the conduct of the Assembly itself in this debate?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! It is a matter of opinion. As long as hon. members do not digress and make lengthy references to statements that will take up all their time on questions of conduct and completely ignore the Estimates, I am quite willing to allow them a reasonable amount of time to do that. But I must ask them to try to keep within the confines of the Vote under discussion. If they have something special to say about conduct in the Chamber, a reasonable time will be given to them to express their thoughts.

Mr. HILTON: In view of your ruling, Mr. Taylor, I do not think it is possible for me to proceed to develop the points I wished to make on this Vote. I have no desire to find myself in violent conflict with you, because I have always had the very highest regard for you as a Chairman. You have given your ruling, and I will further consider the Estimates. If it is possible for me to make the points that I want to make, I shall endeavour to do so later on.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I should like to make my point clear to the hon. member for Bundaberg and the hon. member for Carnarvon. The conduct of members, either in the House or in the Committee, is the responsibility of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman; so any discussion of members' conduct in the House or the Chamber I think should be left to those officers when matters arise. I make that point by way of explanation.

Mr. HILTON: Under what Vote will it be possible for me to discuss the subject of the suitability of members of Parliament as it has been discussed in public? I shall be grateful if you will give me an indication of whether or not it is possible for that to be discussed on the Estimates.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the hon. member might proceed at reasonable length to express his thoughts so we might find out exactly what his motive is.

Mr. HILTON: The point I was making was that certain people are criticising members of Parliament because of what they allege to be their incapability in their position as members of Parliament. I think in the past some reference has been made to that matter during debates on the Estimates. I think it is not fitting that members of this Chamber, irrespective of the party to which they belong, should be put under duress at this stage because later on there may be consideration of salaries and allowances and that they should be told that

they must not do this and they must not do that. We are considering an incident involving the Legislative Assembly, and I protest very strongly against anyone taking unto himself the role of dictator in regard to the rights and privileges of members of this Assembly. My own view is that, in the final analysis, any determination of remuneration or allowances should be the responsibility of Parliament itself. When such a proposal comes before the House, I shall express my views. But I think it is absolutely shocking that in this democracy we find not only one individual but also others setting themselves out to cow, as it were, members of a political party because there is a possibility of increased salaries or allowances being discussed in the Assembly. That is the point I wish to make. If it is possible to deal with the role of a member of Parliament in the life of the community, I should like to do that, also, in view of what has happened in this Assembly and in the Press in recent days because certain members of Parliament, after being defeated, were appointed to public positions.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member will agree that he had an opportunity to speak along these lines in the debates on the Appropriation Bill, the Treasurer's Financial Statement and the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. I must now ask him to return to the item with which we are dealing, that is, the Estimates for Legislative Assembly.

Mr. HILTON: Unfortunately the matters I want to deal with had not arisen at that time.

The CHAIRMAN: They may arise when a subsequent Bill is being debated.

Mr. HILTON: I realise that they may arise then, but I should like to deal with this matter while it is hot. However, I do not want to encroach on the Standing Orders. I have never done that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member will understand that should I allow him further latitude I must allow similar latitude to other hon. members.

Mr. HILTON: Having made those observations I shall seek an opportunity to discuss the matter further at another time. For the time being I will content myself with the brief observations I have been able to make.

When any further thought is being given to the allowances payable to members of Parliament living outside the metropolitan area, I urge the Premier to have all factors taken into consideration in their determination. Some areas are not served by plane or train services. Obviously hon. members representing such areas are at a grave disadvantage compared with those who can avail themselves of daily, speedy train services, and plane services to the extent of

the number of plane trips granted to members of Parliament. A number of other hon. members besides myself could come into that category. I hope that in the course of the present session of Parliament I shall have an opportunity to speak impartially and objectively on the matters I wanted to deal with this morning.

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (12.27 p.m.): The hon. member for Carnarvon has made an important point dealing with the fixing of members' allowances. He mentioned the difference in the size of the electorates, their distance from the capital city, the varying expenses entailed in properly working different electorates, and matters of that nature. As the hon. member knows, the basis of fixing electoral allowances was worked out by an all-party committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Lloyd Roberts.

Mr. Lloyd: Was it an all-party committee? I think it was just the two Government parties.

Mr. NICKLIN: I would not be quite certain. A committee of the House—I shall put it that way. That committee took into account the size of the electorates, the distances from the metropolitan area, the number of electors and one or two other factors associated with the working of electorates. A points basis was laid down, and it was applied to all electorates in the State. It worked out fairly well. I am not going to say there are not anomalies, but I do not know how we are going to arrive at a formula that would cover the wide variety of electorates in Queensland. For example, we have sparsely populated electorates almost as big as the State of Victoria. Obviously a good deal of expense would be entailed by Parliamentary representatives in covering areas like that. As the hon. member for Carnarvon emphasised, car expenses amount to a very considerable sum for hon. members representing widespread country electorates. Although my electorate is not particularly widespread, it is thickly populated, and my car expenses were very considerable when I was running my own car.

Mr. Walsh: The train services would not suit you.

Mr. NICKLIN: No. However, I do not think we can make any alteration to the present system, which I think is very fair, until there is a further examination of members' allowances, as the Government parties have suggested. If and when it is necessary that there should be any alteration in either salaries or allowances of members, a tribunal will be appointed to deal with the matter. I suggest that when that tribunal is appointed would be the time for hon. members to place before it their views on the expense involved in running an electorate. Those are matters that have to be examined and adjusted equitably.

The hon. member for Carnarvon raised a particularly important point on the variation in the attention given by hon. members to their electorates. That is natural because most human beings are different. Some hon. members give very close attention to their electorates whilst others do not give quite as much.

Mr. Hilton: The point I was making was relative to the nature of the electorates.

Mr. NICKLIN: Yes, the nature of the electorates comes into it, too. However, that is not something we can adjust here. It can be adjusted only after intensive examination, which I suggest be by an independent tribunal appointed from outside this Chamber.

I do not want to digress from your ruling on the discussion that can take place on this Vote, Mr. Taylor, but I should like to make brief observation on the matters raised by the hon. member for Carnarvon.

Mr. Walsh: Is it proposed to put the schedules to the Committee?

Mr. NICKLIN: The schedules are covered by the Appropriation Bill.

Mr. Walsh: I thought we might discuss them.

Mr. NICKLIN: Hon. members will have plenty of time to discuss the schedules on the Appropriation Bill. The hon. member, who is a former Treasurer, well knows that.

The point raised by the hon. member for Carnarvon on maintaining the standard of Parliament and on criticism of Parliament from time to time is a particularly good one. Parliament is our greatest instrument of democracy and all members of parliament have a responsibility to the form of Government that we have in this State and for which we all stand. It is to see that their own standards of conduct in this Chamber do nothing to discredit Parliament. Those outsiders who lose no opportunity to discredit Parliament, and whose comments unfortunately receive more notice than they deserve, are doing a great disservice to our way of life. If the Parliament and Parliamentary system that we have today were lost it would be a very serious matter for this State and its people.

Mr. Lloyd: The newspapers give headlines to those people that they will not give to politicians.

Mr. NICKLIN: That is possibly so. It is always the practice to give headlines to criticism, whether just or unjust. Criticism of Parliament that tends to wreck the Parliamentary institution is not a good thing in our democracy.

Mr. Houston: Do you think the newspapers should assist by not publishing statements that they regard as irresponsible?

Mr. NICKLIN: I do not guide the publishing policy of the newspapers. I made that remark because I thought it should be made.

Mr. WALSH (Bundaberg) (12.34 p.m.): I appreciate the soundness of your ruling on the question of salaries and the like in this Vote, Mr. Taylor. I think it certainly would have been unwise if discussion on those matters had been allowed in the debate on this Vote in view of the Premier's announcement that there would be a chance to discuss it later on. I take it that the Premier is going to proceed with the appointment of an independent tribunal, and that legislation of some nature will be introduced before the tribunal is appointed. It might be done by Executive minute.

Mr. Nicklin: Any variation in members' salaries has to be by way of legislation.

Mr. WALSH: I realise that the Constitution Act has to be amended before increases can be made in salaries, but that is not necessary for the payment of additional allowances.

I take it that your ruling, Mr. Taylor, does not prevent our discussing the conduct of hon. members within the Assembly.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must disagree with the hon. member. The conduct of hon. members within the Assembly, whether in the House or in Committee, is the responsibility of the Speaker or the Chairman for the time being. Consequently, if an hon. member proceeds to speak about the conduct of another hon. member, is he not indirectly reflecting on the Speaker or the Chairman? I ask the hon. member to refrain from discussing the conduct of hon. members within the Chamber.

Mr. WALSH: There are many things that can be said about the conduct of hon. members that need not necessarily reflect on the Speaker, or for that matter on the Chairman of Committees. But if you are going to be so cast-iron in your ruling, Mr. Taylor, at least I can deal with the Vote for refreshment rooms. The first point I raise is the communication that went out recently to all hon. members, I take it, dealing with matters affecting the refreshment rooms. It was signed by the Speaker. I do not know if it was a decision of the Refreshment Rooms Committee; if it was, the committee has to take responsibility for it.

In the letter hon. members were asked to give two hours' notice if they intended to entertain any guests, say, for a meal. While I understand the motive behind the request—not that I use the facilities personally or for visitors—

Mr. Coburn: An hon. member may not know two hours beforehand that visitors are coming.

Mr. WALSH: That is the point I want to make. I saw the reaction of certain hon. members who received the letter. One member of my party had to make arrangements within a limited time.

I emphasise again that I do not use the facilities of the bar or the refreshment rooms.

I choose my way of entertaining friends, either in drinking or eating. But if some hon. member has not paid his debts for either food or drink, I do not think that provides an excuse to send such a communication to every other hon. member. Could not the Refreshment Rooms Committee, if they were the people responsible for the decision and the Speaker was merely carrying out their decision, take some steps to draw the attention of the particular hon. member to the fact that he was not meeting his financial commitments? Those are matters that we should not lose sight of, just as we should not lose sight of the Press propaganda about the application of certain Standing Orders. It is very unwise propaganda.

Mr. Coburn: Are there cases of hon. members who are not paying?

Mr. WALSH: I am not aware of them. I am not in a position to know, and what is more I do not care. It is not my obligation to see that they pay for the use of the facilities. I am not using the facilities and am not inquiring into matters that are the responsibility of those on the committee. There would be very few hon. members who were not paying, if any. For that reason steps should be taken to consult individual hon. members rather than imply that it applies to every hon. member who has received the communication.

The Premier said that allowances paid for the different electorates are still the same as they were in the last Parliament.

Mr. Nicklin: Worked out on the same basis.

Mr. WALSH: I do not know if they are on the same basis. I have 1,600 more electors on my roll and my allowance is about £5 more than it was previously.

Mr. Coburn: Less area, probably.

Mr. WALSH: I do not know what the area has to do with that aspect of it.

According to the distance that the electorate is from Brisbane an hon. member has to travel a certain distance. I am talking about the overall allowance, and with 1,600 more electors I find myself £5 better off than I was before. I take it that the Premier will tell the Committee that for every electorate, irrespective of the number of electors in it, there is the same postage allowance, and it does not matter whether it is the Cook or the Gregory electorate.

Mr. Nicklin: There is a variation in the postage allowance.

Mr. WALSH: If I am mistaken I want the Premier to correct the impression in my mind, because I understand that outside the metropolitan area the allowances have been adjusted on a similar basis. I may be wrong but I cannot help it if I have misunderstood the information given to me. The Premier might correct it if he desires. My electorate would have one of the largest electoral enrolments in the State. There are 13,600 on

the roll in my electorate, and I doubt if there are two electorates with more electors. Because there are 1,600 more electors than previously, the postage and electorate allowances have been increased.

The hon. member for Carnarvon raised the question of availability of suitable train or plane services to and from electorates. I know that shortly after the Government were elected they adjusted the position as it applied to the provincial cities. I would not hesitate at any time to show anybody my bank-book and let him see what it contained three years go, and what it contains now. If anybody thinks I am making a profit as a member of Parliament, that will quickly disillusion him. It may be true that I spend my money more freely than other hon. members, but I have to put myself at the convenience of my electorate, and because I use the plane services I can assure the Premier it has cost me a good deal more than the allowance. However, I am prepared to put up with it so long as it remains the same, but as the hon. member for Carnarvon raised the point no doubt the Government will consider it in the overall picture.

You gave a ruling, Mr. Taylor, that matters relative to parliamentarians generally may be discussed when the schedule to the Appropriation Bill is before the Committee, but I should have thought this might have been an occasion where some A.L.P. and Q.L.P. members could have given expression to their views on Mr. Jack Egerton. I should have imagined the A.L.P. would have taken the lead in that, and I would not be far behind them.

Hon. D. E. NICHOLSON (Murrumba) (12.43 p.m.): I feel that the comments of the hon. member for Bundaberg call for some reply from me, as I was the person responsible for signing the document that he said was distributed to each member of this Assembly. The document calling for two hours' notice of intention to entertain visitors in the visitors' room was drawn up with one object in view, and that was to put the refreshment rooms on a business-like basis. The hon. member for Bundaberg said today that he does not use the facilities provided, but if he is not prepared to see that the rooms are put on a business-like basis, and if he is prepared to criticise any attempt to put them on such a basis, we can assume only that he is a believer in the slipshod methods that perhaps existed here many years ago. That document was issued mainly to assist in the preparation of meals. It was found that some hon. members were bringing seven or eight visitors into the visitors' room without prior notice. To provide meals for members of Parliament on an economical basis, the meals are prepared in advance and preparation is made for a certain number of people. If three or four hon. members each take three or four visitors, it amounts to anything from 12 to 15 extra people in the visitors' room for

lunch or dinner. I am not criticising hon. members for taking visitors there—they are perfectly entitled to do so—but when they take them in at the last minute, it may deprive other hon. members of a certain amount of food, particularly of vegetables but also of a certain amount of meat that has been previously prepared. I do not think any other hon. member has raised any comment or objection to the request for notice; the hon. member for Bundaberg is the only one.

Mr. Walsh: A lot have complained who would not raise the matter here, but that is not my form.

Mr. NICHOLSON: I can assure the Committee that no complaints about it have reached me. I can say here and now that if any hon. member has any complaint he will find me the most approachable person in the Assembly. Believe me, I have had complaints about many other matters and no hon. member can say that he has ever come to me with a complaint or a request and I have turned a deaf ear to it. If the hon. member for Bundaberg, or any other hon. member, wishes to complain about having to give two hours' notice, he has only to come to me and I will try to remedy it. When an hon. member has come along at short notice, even only 10 minutes before, as long as it has been within reason there has never been a refusal to serve any one in the visitors' room of the Refreshment Rooms. The rule about giving two hours' notice was made purely and simply for the smoother running of the Refreshment Rooms. If the hon. member objects to the smooth running of this establishment, all I can say is that he should make use of the facilities provided and he would possibly see that we are getting somewhere with the control of the House generally, and in particular of the Refreshment Rooms.

The hon. member for Bundaberg commented, too, on the docket system. He usually makes insinuations without any possible foundation, and he made one here today about the request for hon. members to pay the waitress, particularly in the visitors' room. I assure him that the action was not taken because there were any defaulters in the Refreshment Rooms. It was done because it was the habit of some hon. members—I have done it myself on occasions—when they had visitors to walk out with their visitors and see them off the premises, then two or three hours later put their hand in their pocket and find the docket for the meal. The Auditor-General's Department has introduced the docket system into the House, whereby for everything issued through the bar, or at the Refreshment Rooms tables, or in the billiard room if it is afternoon tea, there must be a docket. A docket must be written out for the meal or whatever else has been provided. If one of those dockets is missing—if an hon. member takes one out with him and perhaps, later finding it in his pocket, inadvertently

crumples it up as one does a tram ticket and throws it away—there is immediately a hunt to find out what happened to the missing docket, and that may cost pounds. So the request for hon. members to pay in the visitors' room did not come about through any hon. member's failure to pay his bill; once again it was made purely and simply to make for the smoother running of the system. The system was introduced not by me or by any of the Parliamentary staff but by the Auditor-General's Department to make sure that everything in the Refreshment Rooms is in accordance with his regulations.

Once again, anything that is introduced by the committee is condoned by the department. I do not do anything here without the approval of my committee. If I have to do something immediately, I ask for it to be endorsed by my committee at the first opportunity. So far, the committee has not refused to endorse any action I have taken. The request for two hours' notice—as I say, it can be limited and brought down to one hour—was necessary in order to ensure the smooth and economical running of the refreshment rooms. The docket system was introduced by the Department of the Auditor-General, and we must insist on all dockets being returned. I repeat that it was not introduced because any hon. member had not paid his bill.

Mr. WALSH (Bundaberg) (12.51 p.m.): I appreciate Mr. Speaker's explanation. As I said previously, I understood the motive. I did not complain about the nature of the communication that was directed to all members, but I do not see why I should be blamed for placing a certain interpretation on the language that was used in the letter. However, I am glad to know that Mr. Speaker is taking those steps to get away from what he describes as the slipshod methods of many years past. I cannot recall any occasion on which the present Speaker or any other member of the Government parties complained about the methods prior to his assuming office or during the period that the present Government have been in office. If Mr. Speaker continues along these lines, he will be doing a good job, even if he is acting on the advice of the Auditor-General, who, no doubt after studying the accounts applicable to the House, has decided on certain reforms. If it has not been done already, I suggest that some action should be taken in regard to stores coming in and stores going out. No doubt Mr. Speaker has heard all the rumblings about those things, and if some action is being taken by the Government or by Mr. Speaker to deal with any irregularities, it is all to the good.

Mr. DEAN (Sandgate) (12.53 p.m.): I should like to ask a question of Mr. Speaker through you, Mr. Taylor, if I may. Are there any members in arrears with their payments to the Parliamentary dining-room?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member cannot ask a question at this stage.

Mr. Nicholson: I can say, "None."

Mr. ADAIR (Cook) (12.54 p.m.): I wish to bring before the Premier's notice, as I am entitled to on this occasion, the request for more air passes for far-northern and far-western members. I know that the present Government have raised the number of return passes from six to eight, and we are very grateful to them for that; but I think the far-northern and far-western members are entitled to at least 12 return passes every year. It is impossible for me to travel by train into my electorate; I must travel by air. For the last three months I have been without passes and have been unable to travel to places such as Thursday Island, Coen and Cooktown. The return air fare from Brisbane to Thursday Island is £94, and I think my electorate would be the most expensive in the State when one has to travel by air. I think I should be entitled to travel to Brisbane and return to my home once a month. Federal members can travel at any time they wish, and as State politicians do much of the work that Federal politicians should do—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out to the hon. member that air transport for country members of Parliament to and from their electorates comes under the Vote for the Premier and Chief Secretary, which is the next Vote. He can deal with the matter on the next Vote.

Mr. ADAIR: Thank you, Mr. Taylor. I shall leave the matter until then.

Vote (Legislative Assembly) agreed to.

PREMIER AND CHIEF SECRETARY CHIEF OFFICE

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—(Premier) (12.55 p.m.): I move—

"That £66,629 be granted for 'Premier and Chief Secretary—Chief Office'."

The vote is an increase of £2,206 over the appropriation for 1959-1960 and an increase of £7,484 over the actual expenditure for that year. The increase is made up of the usual salary increases amounting to £2,911, a contingencies decrease of £705, giving a net increase of £2,206. The increase in salaries has been brought about by salary classifications and increments during the year, plus basic wage increases.

The number of staff has decreased by 9—from 41 to 32. From 1 July, 1959, to the end of December, 1959, 5 clerks, 3 clerk-typists and 1 messenger were seconded to the chief office to cope with the increased volume of work occasioned by the visit of Her Royal Highness, Princess Alexandra, and the Queensland Centenary celebrations. Those officers have returned to their respective departments.

In the contingency vote the provision of £25,668 represents a decrease of £705 on the

appropriation for 1959-1960, or an increase of £3,237 over the actual expenditure for that year. Comparing this year's requirement with last year's actual expenditure under the various contingency headings we find that for Fares, Freights, Printing, Stationery, etc., there is an increase of £513. Hon. members will realise that this increase is due to the increased costs of printing, stationery, fares and freights. Under the heading of Incidental and Miscellaneous Expenses we find an increase of £2,089 over the amount expended last year and required for this. This increase is accounted for by the provision of a car for the Leader of the Opposition, amounting to £896, and other incidental expenses representing an increase of £924. The provision for this purpose is £1,200 as against only £276 last year. This amount is kept at a high level to provide for contingencies which the Chief Office has to meet from time to time, such as State funerals, something which I know all hon. members hope will not have to be expended this year. Payroll tax is ever increasing owing to salary increases, and that will cost us another £275 this year. All other increases in the vote are of a minor nature, and are due principally to increased costs of postage. Cash equivalent of long-service leave was not required last year, but this year £635 is payable to an officer under the control of the department.

The CHAIRMAN: I desire to inform hon. members that on the Chief Office Vote I propose to allow a full discussion on the whole of the ramifications of a department (Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds, and Loan Fund Account) and then to confine the discussion to each particular Vote.

For the information of hon. members I would point out that the administrative acts of the department are open to debate, but the necessity for legislation and matters involving legislation cannot be discussed in Committee of Supply.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (2.16 p.m.): I have taken the trouble this morning to read a rather interesting debate on the Chief Secretary's Estimates in 1952. At that time, the present Deputy Premier criticised at length the public relations office in the Premier's Department. I also spoke at the time and I can remember that an amount of only £6,000 was expended on the public relations office work performed by Mr. Comrie. I pointed out that the Government were more than compensated by this expenditure. I believe the debate was started at that time by the present Deputy Premier who did not realise that a number of inquiry officers were permanently employed by this office in various Government buildings.

I do not intend to make the same mistake. I want to compare the amount of £6,000 that was spent at that time with the estimated expenditure of £20,595 for next year. That amount will be spent by the Government through the Public Relations Bureau on

propaganda for the benefit of the Premier and his Ministers on a scale never envisaged by Labour Governments. All sorts of documents and bulletins are distributed regularly throughout the year.

Mr. Nicklin: It is a very good bulletin, is it not?

Mr. LLOYD: It is a very good document from the Government's point of view. It is a very good political document containing valuable propaganda for the Government, a great deal of it in relation to work that had either been commenced or completed by Labour Governments. Over the last two or three years, in particular, credit has been taken by present Ministers for much of the work that they criticised during the Labour Government's term of office. There is no indication that the preparation of propaganda for the Government is to be stopped; on the other hand we have every indication that it will continue. When Government members sat in Opposition they claimed that the Public Relations Bureau was redundant in the Government service, but now that they are the Government they regard it as an essential service that should be expanded.

I appreciate the great work done by public relation officers over the years. While I was with the late Jim Comrie I knew the work he did. He was one of the finest journalists Queensland ever had and a man with a great deal of imagination. He organised the Public Relations Bureau and disseminated a great deal of valuable information overseas, to the office of the Agent-General in London, and various other sections of the Government's service. Such work is essential in the interests of development. I do not intend to criticise at length the work of Mr. Clem Lack, who at one time was Mr. Comrie's assistant. Mr. Lack was able to learn much from the work of Mr. Jim Comrie. I am criticising the Government's policy of using the Bureau for the purpose of issuing documents with propaganda value. I believe the Government are overspending in this direction at a time when they cannot secure sufficient funds to carry out essential works and services for the people. If there is to be a cutting down in expenditure, surely there should be a cutting down in expenditure on political propaganda. If expenditure on the Public Relations Bureau is to be maintained or expanded, let the money be used for the dissemination overseas of important information in the interests of Queensland.

Mr. Davies: They get in enough propaganda in their answers to questions.

Mr. LLOYD: It would appear that Standing Order 70 is likely to be exercised like a policeman looking the other way.

I take this opportunity of mentioning Miss Doyle, the former manageress of the Parliamentary Refreshment Rooms, who has now taken a position elsewhere. I express

my appreciation—I am sure I can speak for all hon. members—of the co-operative and wonderful work that she performed as manageress of the refreshment rooms. We all miss her. The refreshment rooms and the losses incurred by the refreshment rooms are matters of a contentious nature.

The CHAIRMAN: The refreshment rooms may not be discussed on this Vote.

Mr. LLOYD: I understand, but I just wanted to pay that compliment to Miss Doyle.

The importance of various reports issued by sections of the Department of the Premier and Chief Secretary would appear to be underestimated. If hon. members would peruse the reports of the sub-departments they would find in them a great deal of information of use not only to themselves but also to persons in outside industry. I refer particularly to the report of the Agent-General in London, Mr. Muir. It indicates the great work done by that office on behalf of the Government of the day, whether a Labour Government or the present Government, and on behalf of all Queensland industries.

Mr. Muir is a comparatively young officer. I think he is about 43 years of age. He was born in Brisbane at Kangaroo Point and attended the State Commercial High School and College. One or two hon. members also attended that college. I had the very great pleasure of being associated with him at that time and he has risen to a very high position in the Public Service. He has given wonderful service to the Government and the people of this State. He has included in his latest report a summary of the export markets for foodstuffs, as far as they concern the United Kingdom Government. Every primary producer in Queensland should be able to read this careful and close analysis of our potential markets overseas in foodstuffs. It is of particular importance to Queensland that the Government should have some method of conveying this report outside this Parliament. If the Government wish to utilise the services of the Public Relations Bureau to convey throughout industry the Agent-General's report, so far as it concerns Queensland's industries, that would be of extreme value. One part of the report covers the sugar industry, and it is particularly interesting on that phase of our primary production. He reports on the low world price for sugar last year and the fact that the International Sugar Agreement was unable to control it. That is most important and it is something that the Premier should consider seriously. Hon. members will recall that last year, when a possible crisis confronted the sugar industry, we on this side of the Chamber suggested that the Premier should be the man to go overseas to represent the industry and the growers. Although we have no criticism of the approach to the problem, unfortunately the representative of the C.S.R.—the Government-created monopoly within the

sugar industry—Mr. Wheen, went overseas and represented the industry. We were confronted with a crisis in the sugar industry at that time, and that industry is particularly important for the future security of our people and the welfare of, and full employment in, the coastal towns of Queensland. If the Premier had decided on that occasion to go overseas he would have received the full support of all hon. members on this side of the Chamber so that he could do what previous Premiers have done for the sugar industry, which is our most important industry.

Mr. Windsor: You did not support Mr. Morris on his trip overseas.

Mr. LLOYD: Our situation is similar to that of the former Minister for Public Lands. We had quite a lot of confidence in the Premier but it has been shaken.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Is the hon. member dealing with the Agent-General's report?

Mr. LLOYD: I am dealing with the Agent-General's report. It covers all these matters. On the comment by the hon. member for Ithaca regarding the Deputy Premier, I should say we think in the same way as Mr. Muller on that question.

The other report that I believe would be of great interest to all hon. members is that of the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works. From it, one can arrive at a critical analysis of the Government's policy during the past three years. I have taken the trouble to dissect some of the figures relating to the more important works undertaken by the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works over the years and I have found that whereas the Budget this year amounts to some £15,000,000 in excess of that for 1956-1957, there is in fact a reduction in the amount expended on the major developmental works carried out under the administration of the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works. For the benefit of the Committee I intend to deal with some of these figures.

Before going on to the actual developmental work I shall mention one of the most important activities that come under the control of the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, and that is the construction of the new University and bridge at St. Lucia. In this lies one of the administrative reasons why the Government are embarrassed for finance. I know I cannot use the full argument under this Vote but that is being reflected throughout the heavy commitments on State Government buildings. The main reason is the tremendous increase in the numbers of students attending secondary schools and the possible expansion and need for expedition of the work that will have to be carried out on the St. Lucia University and on additional universities in the very near future.

Mr. Coburn: A good, healthy sign.

Mr. LLOYD: Yes, it is a good, healthy sign in a healthy and virile community. It is a problem facing every State in the Commonwealth.

A dissection of the figures discloses that in 1957, which we might call the last year of the Labour Government in Queensland, 15,444 children attended secondary schools. By 1961 the figure will be 33,500, or more than double over three years. It stands to reason that all those children who will be graduating through secondary schools and matriculating from their Senior will be demanding additional tertiary education. In other words, the number of students attending university will be so much greater. That is not confined to Brisbane. It is spread throughout the State, mostly through the areas with larger populations. Queensland has one of the most decentralised populations in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Aikens: That is not saying much.

Mr. LLOYD: The hon. member for Townsville South has been away organising a Melbourne Cup sweep—

Mr. Aikens: I know my electorate. That is more than you do.

Mr. LLOYD: At the same time, we have a very decentralised population. In other words, the percentage of the State's population resident in Brisbane is lower than that of most of the other capital cities of the Commonwealth. As we have a decentralised population, the university programme will have to be extended into the northern and central districts. Some £4,500,000 has been expended on the University at St. Lucia, of which the Commonwealth Government have contributed only £479,500. That is possibly money that has been provided under the Murray Committee's report during the last few years. While there has been this tremendous expenditure, despite the low figure of some £200,000 spent on the University at St. Lucia in 1956-1957, as the demand becomes greater the programme will have to be expanded even further. I understand that next year £1,200,000 will be spent on university buildings at St. Lucia. That is not the limit. It will have to be expanded further, and, as that expansion continues, the State Government will find it difficult to carry out other works. I realise that this is only the beginning. My criticism is that, unless we can impress upon the Commonwealth Government their responsibility for university education so that young people in the community can be trained to meet the requirements of modern industry and can be absorbed into industry, we will drag farther behind overseas countries than we are at present. Goodness knows, we are far enough behind now. The demand at present falls mainly on State Governments. That is reflected in the figures of high school construction in the past few years. But it will be extended to university education from next year for another four or five years until we reach a peak.

Realising all this, and realising the necessity for the expansion of our building programme for schools and universities, let us look at the figures that are contained in the Auditor-General's report on the activities under the control of the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works. I think from them we will get a complete picture of the failure of the present Government to expand any major works of flood prevention, conservation of soil and water, and so on. When I refer to major works, I am not referring to the small weirs that are being built here and there. We cannot hope to achieve planned development unless we have a continuous expansion of major works.

On page 7 of the Co-ordinator-General's report there is reference to the restricted volume of new major works. It mentions that the Government's loan-subsidy commitments are so heavy that the stage has been reached where the Government are going to restrict, or intend to restrict, new major works that can be undertaken by local authorities under the Co-ordinator-General's Department. For purposes of comparison, I have taken from the Auditor-General's report a list of all the large projects specifically mentioned by him and I have made a comparison of the amounts spent on them in 1956-1957 and in 1959-1960. The figures are:—

Project		1956-1957 £	1959-1960 £
Brisbane River			
Development ..		4,534	6,601
Somerset Dam ..		115,086	44,690
University ..		159,938	992,055
Elimination of			
level crossings ..		23,085	9,993
Tully Falls ..		3,447,240	1,282,474
Burdekin River ..		193,538	108,453
Burdekin River			
Bridge ..		217,183	2,979
Mt. Isa Railway ..			710,446
Barron River ..			502,262
Miscellaneous ..		69,214	75,668
North Pine Dam ..			191,651
Total ..		£4,229,818	£3,927,272

Between 1956-1957 and 1959-1960 there has been an increase of £16,000,000 in expenditure on works from Consolidated Revenue and an increase of approximately £13,000,000 in expenditure on works contained in the Co-ordinator-General's Report. I am mentioning this now in case the Premier should say that I stated that less money is being spent. In other words, comparing the totals for 1956-1957 and 1959-1960, there has been a reduction in major developmental works during that time of about £300,000.

Mr. Nicklin: Have you taken off Tully Falls?

Mr. LLOYD: The Government have the Barron River project. Do not forget that the Mt. Isa Railway, on which there was an expenditure of £710,446, is a special loan commitment. Out of generosity to the

Government, I have included that. Are the resumptions of land for the North Pine River dam also to be a charge against the Government? Are not the Government to be compensated by the City Council for the money spent on that? I have been particularly generous in my assessment of the expansion of public works throughout Queensland in a period when we should be insisting on development. Naturally, expenditure on the Somerset Dam has been considerably reduced, but what about the Burdekin River authority? The expenditure on that project has been reduced considerably during the last few years; indeed, very little work has been undertaken.

(Time expired.)

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon) (2.41 p.m.): The Public Service Commissioner, the Co-ordinator-General and other public servants of the State no doubt play a tremendous role in the development of Queensland in the actual implementation of Government policies.

I join with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in complimenting the Agent-General on his work in London. He is a highly competent officer and his reports are very interesting and informative. It is a pity that more people in Queensland are not aware of what is done by his office. Perhaps it is a matter to which the State Public Relations Bureau could give some attention. Irrespective of what Government are in power I think it is accepted that the State Public Relations Bureau is a permanent feature of Government. The bureau could do a great deal of valuable work in publicising a factual record of major developments. I have no objection to any of its publications being distributed far and wide throughout Queensland, as long as they contain only facts and no political bias. I think Mr. Lack is doing a very good job but the publications are not sufficiently widely read throughout Queensland. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to what was done by the Agent-General in London. From time to time when there is something really worthwhile to tell the people of Queensland it might be a good idea if the Government would engage in some means of Press advertising. Of course, I do not mean political propaganda. If the Press considered the matter a news item they might be prepared to give a short precis of it, but that does not go far enough. If the public should know about it and it is calculated to develop the interests of this great State, the Government should advertise.

Mr. Coburn: They could make the information available in the official journals of the sugar industry.

Mr. HILTON: That is so. We might be able to get coverage for important matters, not only in the sugar industry, but in other primary industries of the State.

I wish to say a few words about the Public Service of this State. As I have always said in the past, nobody can deny that we have an excellent Public Service in Queensland. In any large body of men, of course, one or two who do not measure to standard will always be found, but, during my rather long experience as a member of this Parliament and my term as a Minister of the Crown, I have always admired the ability and integrity of our Public Service. I think that they are without equal and I am not exaggerating in saying so.

These men make the Public Service their career. Those who work for advancement are given the opportunity to advance. Many of them study hard and apply themselves to their particular work and set a good standard. I suggest that the endeavour made by them might further be improved upon if some sort of examinations were held on public administration in this State.

Mr. Pizzey: There is a course in that subject at the University.

Mr. HILTON: I think that covers a different field. What I have in mind is that a young man might enter a particular department and work there for a number of years until he becomes familiar with all phases of the work; then, if he is transferred to another department, he may not be familiar with all phases in the new department and a suitable series of lectures and courses of instruction, if inaugurated, would encourage young men in the Public Service to make a career of it. I am not saying that many of them do not do that now, but if diplomas were issued for Public Service administration it would further encourage many of them.

Whatever may or may not transpire in the future, I repeat that we now have an excellent Public Service in this State and we are grateful to its members for the work they do. Many people, of course, from time to time are prone to make cynical and sarcastic references to public servants, but any person who realises the job they do must give an honest opinion endorsing what I say of this able and loyal body of men.

Appointments to the Public Service usually follow a pattern under the Public Service Regulations, but I do not think there is any Government in Australia that does not from time to time make particular appointments outside the actual scope of the Public Service Act and Regulations. Only recently there was the appointment in New South Wales of the chairman of a political party to a £4,000 a year job. However, that has nothing to do with what goes on in this State, where, from time to time, appointments that I think have been quite justified have been made outside the usual routine of the Public Service.

In all these appointments, whether they are made directly by the Governor in Council or under the Public Service Act, the Public Service Commissioner invariably makes some recommendation either to the Premier or to

Cabinet. The present Public Service Commissioner, as have his predecessors, gives a complete and honest picture in such recommendations.

I make those observations because of the publicity that has been given to the recent appointment of a former Premier of this State, Mr. V. C. Gair. I do not care to what political party a man belongs, if he has served his State long and honourably and well and is qualified for a particular job, I have no objection to his being appointed to the Public Service.

If hon. members analyse appointments over the years in Queensland they will find that the recent appointment to the Public Service of Mr. Gair does not create a precedent. Many ex-members of this Assembly have been re-appointed to the Public Service. I recall that at one stage a public servant who desired to enter politics had to resign before he nominated for election. Labour Governments some years ago altered the legislation so as to allow a public servant to stand for election without being obliged to resign; he can do so merely by getting leave of absence. Most hon. members endorsed that action. The position of public servants who aspired to service in a higher field was made easier. I say "a higher field" advisedly, because service in Parliament is one of the highest forms of public service.

Some public servants have entered political life and later have been reappointed to the Public Service. I read comment in newspapers recently to the effect that public servants who had entered Parliament were later reappointed to the Public Service for political reasons. That is entirely incorrect. In regard to Q.L.P. members, all but two of those reappointed were formerly members of the Public Service or of branches of government in this State.

I hope I am not infringing the Standing Orders.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not refer to particular public servants. He can refer to members of the Public Service generally.

Mr. HILTON: I am referring to those who were in the Public Service and who were later reappointed to it.

Mr. Kehoe, Mr. Skinner, Mr. Dohring and Mr. Cooper were in the Government Service before entering Parliament and were reappointed to it. Mr. Moores was in the Department of Education and was later reappointed. Mr. H. E. Robinson, who has now retired, was reappointed to the railway service. Can any hon. member say that because those men had served their State in Parliament they should be denied the right to earn their livelihood in the service of the State. I was disappointed to hear criticism of the reappointment of Mr. H. E. Robinson. He was a returned service man of World War I. At one time he had been a clerk in the Railway Department. He later gravitated to outside work and acted as a guard. While

in Parliament he had to have a lung removed, and thus was unable to perform the manual work of a guard. On his reappointment to a clerical position in the Railway Department certain hon. members displayed strong hostility and asked most inappropriate and unfair questions about his reappointment.

Mr. Aikens: Which members?

Mr. HILTON: There is no need for me to say which ones. Those who were in the Chamber know that the objections came from certain A.L.P. members.

Mr. Aikens: Certain members who are not here now?

Mr. HILTON: They are here now.

Mr. BURROWS: I rise to a point of order. I take exception to the remark of the hon. member that certain members of the A.L.P. objected to Mr. Robinson's appointment.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HILTON: A question was asked about it. If the hon. member for Port Curtis cares to look it up, he will see what I am referring to.

Mr. Lloyd: There was no objection. We had plenty of opportunities to object if we had wanted to.

Mr. HILTON: There are more ways of objecting than by standing and making a formal speech about it.

In the past many men have been transferred from the Railway Department to the Public Service and they have served the State with great distinction. So far as Mr. V. C. Gair is concerned—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not want the hon. member to refer to any particular individual.

Mr. HILTON: I am speaking of his qualifications to do the job. He served first of all in a clerical position, and then in this Parliament for 28 years. He was a Minister of the Crown from 1942 until he became Premier in January, 1952, holding the offices of Secretary for Labour and Employment and Secretary for Mines, Secretary for Labour and Industry, and Treasurer. Anyone who has filled these offices must gain a wealth of experience, and nobody could cavill at his appointment to a position in the Public Service. I think that the real basis for the objection that has been voiced is implacable hatred, which I deplore. I repeat that I do not care what party a man comes from. If hon. members go through the records of the departments they will find in the past that many former members of this Assembly have been appointed to the Public Service of this State. A few of them come to my mind. They are Mr. M. Kirwan, Mr. W. Bertram, Mr. S. A. Logan, Mr. S. A. Duffy, Mr. T. L. Williams, Mr. H. Williams, and Mr. H. Hartley. Then we come to two former Premiers, although their positions were

secured for them before they vacated their positions in the Chamber. I refer first to the late Hon. W. Forgan Smith, who became Chairman of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board. Everyone knew he was vacating the position of Premier and nobody cavilled at his ability to carry out that important office in the Public Service. Then we have the late Hon. Frank Cooper, who carried out with distinction the office of Deputy Governor of this State.

We are coming to a low ebb when, because of implacable hatred and party-political bias, people object to men who have served the State long and well as members of Parliament, as Ministers of the Crown and as Premiers—men who were formerly in the Government Service—being appointed to positions in the Public Service. Without exaggeration, I say that objection can be based only on what might be termed an implacable hatred of the man concerned. I do not think it was becoming to the hon. members concerned to ask the questions in the manner they were asked. It will do them no good in the eyes of the public.

Mr. Lloyd: It might have been rather interesting if the Government themselves had created a new Public Service position and had given all public servants an equal opportunity to apply for it.

Mr. HILTON: I said a while ago that, apart from appointments made under the Public Service Act, down through the years it will be found that former Labour Governments, and the Moore Government, made special appointments to the Public Service. Nobody can deny that. If objection was not taken then, why should it be taken now?

Mr. Lloyd: I am talking about the people who come under the Public Service Act and other appointments that generally come under the Public Service Act.

Mr. HILTON: If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition looks at the records of the Public Service under past Governments I think he will find that what I have said is absolutely correct. I wish to go on record today as saying that even if there were no precedent for this appointment to the Public Service, there is full warrant for it. The appointee will carry out his duties with credit to himself and the State. I feel sure of that, and furthermore, despite the political propaganda that may have been indulged in in a past election campaign, if the records are searched it will be found that during the time the man concerned was Premier of this State and Minister for Labour and Industry, many valuable industries were established not only in the city of Brisbane but throughout Queensland. Those embarking on those industries were encouraged by the legislation that was enacted to assist them. I think the Deputy Premier mentioned that when he amended the Act last year. I think Mr. Gair played a big role in the sponsoring of industry in the State. If any one who wants to be fair and reasonable looks at the records,

he will find that he did a very good job and that he is well fitted for the position to which he has been appointed. I wanted to make the position clear to those who did not understand it. The Public Service has been strengthened by his appointment.

Finally I pay tribute to the officers of the Premier's Department, the Co-ordinator-General and the Public Service Commissioner, for the great courtesy they have always extended to me as a member of this Assembly. It is good that we have men who, irrespective of our political affiliations, can extend courtesy, help and advice to members of the Parliament when it is sought in the right manner. I want to go on record as thanking them for their valued service in that direction as well as for the State in general.

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) (3.2 p.m.): I join with previous speakers in paying tribute to the office of the Agent-General in London. It is unfortunate that its counterpart supported by the Federal Government does not give a similarly good service, especially when we remember that, largely, the two offices are there to perform the same task, one for Queensland and the other for Australia. It might well be considered by those in authority that the Queensland office could, with suitable remuneration, take over the work that is now being performed by its Federal counterpart.

Mr. Nicklin: What knowledge would you have of that?

Mr. BENNETT: I have read the statistics on what goes on and I have listened to people in authority who are well qualified to express an opinion—people who have personal knowledge of both offices.

Mr. Coburn interjected.

Mr. BENNETT: It is the opinion of ordinary people who seek their assistance. I do not think the hon. member who interjected would deny that my observations are entirely correct.

The office deals with the relations of the State internally and externally and no doubt the Premier and Chief Secretary's Department is the most important department in the Estimates. It is imperative that it uphold its high prestige and high position in the relationships of the State both internal and external. It is important that the Government keep in proper perspective the various allocations of funds from time to time through that department. I have noticed with some alarm over the years that they are increasing their expenditure on such an item as the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust. I have noticed with equal alarm that they do not seem to be paying the proper attention to their patriotic fund commitments and other charitable commitments from the funds made available for these purposes. It is well to realise that this year

the Brisbane City Council is paying £2,000 to the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust while the State is increasing its contribution to £6,000 of the £88,000 to be provided by the taxpayers of Australia. One could well consider that that rather generous expenditure is certainly unjustified. We should realise that there are many deserving causes in the State. While we should recognise art, literature, and theatre, we should keep those obligations in their proper perspective. When consideration of this obligation first came up, we were told it was only to set the Trust on its feet. That was away back in 1956. Apparently it is still endeavouring to get on its feet. It is significant that the ordinary person wishing to attend performances by that company is still unable to pay the prices charged, and those who do attend, therefore, are those who would be in a position to pay the prices whether or not the trust was subsidised. I think it is high time that the Premier's Department gave serious consideration to the extraordinarily generous contribution now being made to the Trust, particularly when we know that from its funds it has made a generous contribution to a venture in another State.

Mr. Lloyd: Does it come under Government audit?

Mr. BENNETT: I do not know whether it comes under Government audit, but I certainly do not think the expenditure is justified.

When considering the Estimates for the Premier and Chief Secretary's Department, we must also view with alarm any expenditure designed to secure services outside Queensland that will never serve any useful purpose. It is rather distressing to remember the £1,186 spent on legal costs in connection with the Constitution (Declaration of Rights) Bill, which has now faded into oblivion and apparently is going to be conveniently forgotten by the Premier and his Cabinet. Before such outrageous fees are incurred by the Premier and his Department in future, he should seriously consider whether he is sincere in his intention of getting draft legislation prepared, and he might submit—

Mr. Dewar: Don't you think the Premier is sincere?

Mr. BENNETT: I certainly do not think the Premier was sincere in his statement on the Constitution (Declaration of Rights) Bill. I certainly do not think he has any intention of introducing a Bill into this Chamber to implement it. If he was sincere, I say he should indicate quite clearly to the Chamber when he does intend to introduce the Bill, or, alternatively, he should announce quite clearly and definitely that he has abandoned the proposal. If he acts in that way, I am prepared to admit that he is being sincere in relation to that particular Bill.

Mr. Dewar: I do not think you would know.

Mr. BENNETT: I know as much as Dr. Louat did, but I did not charge £1,000 for it because I knew it was unworkable. I think he might be in that exclusive category entitled to practise under the Barristers Act of 1956. I think we might infer that from his fees.

Mr. Aikens: How long does it take you to earn that much in fees?

Mr. BENNETT: It would not take very long if I charged what I was worth.

The Co-ordinator-General of Public Works has a very onerous task, because, as his title implies, he is the co-ordinator of all public works in Queensland. Unfortunately, because of the policy that has been imposed upon him by the present Government, he has been forced over the last few years to seriously curtail the proposed works' programme of the Brisbane City Council, and no doubt of many other local authorities throughout the length and breadth of Queensland. An attractive programme is submitted to him by the Brisbane City Council, a programme that can be controlled by the facilities available within the Brisbane City Council, a programme for which loan money can be raised, and the Council is regularly told by the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works that it must seriously and savagely curtail its projects. I do not think the Co-ordinator-General as an individual has any personal animosity against the Brisbane City Council. I think that, as an individual, he would like to see that works programme put into operation in its entirety. But he is obviously carrying out the policy of Cabinet when he demands and insists that the programme be reduced even before it is submitted to the Loan Council for approval. In other words, before it is known whether or not the money is available on the loan market the Brisbane City Council has to curtail its loan programme.

Mr. Hughes: Would it not be that they first take a guess and then budget accordingly?

Mr. BENNETT: I am rather surprised that a member of the C.M.O. would suggest that they guess at their programme. For one, I do not think they do. If the C.M.O. alderman is truthful in his allegation it is a damning indictment of Lord Mayor Groom and his colleagues. Certainly those tactics would not recommend themselves to the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works. If the allegation is true I would not blame the Premier and his Cabinet for disposing of their programme. I believe that the policy adopted by Cabinet should be one of confidence, and, to some extent, of venturesomeness. With the operations of the loan market in the last few years local authorities have been able to raise their full quotas of loan moneys.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Is the hon. member referring to the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works?

Mr. BENNETT: His report.

The CHAIRMAN: I am trying to connect the hon. member's remarks with the Vote under consideration.

Mr. BENNETT: He deals in his report with the local-authority programme for the year. There is also reference to the new university works and the St. Lucia Bridge. In the brief time at my disposal this morning I was unable to find out, with any degree of accuracy, just what the reference was to the new St. Lucia Bridge. I would naturally expect that it referred to the St. Lucia Bridge that was to be constructed from the end of Boundary Street to St. Lucia to feed the St. Lucia University. Apparently that project has been abandoned for many years, but it is a very desirable project, one that is absolutely necessary not only for the welfare of the University but also to relieve and solve many of the city's traffic problems.

Reference was made in the Co-ordinator-General's report to the fact that up to date £43,501 has been spent on that bridge. Perhaps he could be referring to another bridge on the way to the University at St. Lucia, but as far as university people are concerned, as far as civic circles are concerned, and certainly as far as people in the neighbourhood are concerned, when we refer to the proposed, or new, St. Lucia Bridge we are referring to the one already referred to by me. It is high time that project was implemented; already too much lethargy has been shown by Governments in implementing it. Certainly the late Hon. W. Forgan Smith was sincere in his ambitions when he made all the necessary preparations for the construction of the bridge. He built the underpass under Dornoch Terrace, and constructed a very attractive archway; he made all the necessary preparations for the bridge, and it would have been constructed in his time but for the outbreak of war. All work on the proposed structure and the approaches to it ended in 1939 or early 1940. For many years the piles and other materials required for the bridge remained on the University side of the river, but they have been removed.

It is a sorry feature of Brisbane's development that the present Government do not appear to be at all interested in the construction of the proposed bridge. They are paying high fees for traffic engineers and huge sums of money for the installation of traffic lights, and so on. But the only real means of relieving bottlenecks is to provide more arterial roadways and open avenues for the traffic that would use them. This proposal would cut down the time of travel to the University from the present approximately three-quarters of an hour at peak periods to about 10 minutes, through the West End area. Incidentally, it would be a very enjoyable trip as you pass through West End. I sincerely hope that the Government, though they apparently have abandoned the proposal for the time being, will give

further consideration to restoring the construction of that bridge to its proper place on the programme of works in this State.

Mr. Hughes: That section must be a salubrious area.

Mr. BENNETT: I agree with the hon. member.

In the Co-ordinator-General's report there is some reference, with a certain amount of justifiable satisfaction, to the elimination of three railway level crossings in recent times, two of which were commenced and almost completed during the term of office of the Labour Government. They are the crossings at Clayfield and Albion and, I think, one at Chermiside. They presented a grave danger to the travelling public. I sincerely hope that the Government will do something about eliminating the dangerous level crossings at Woolloongabba.

I make brief reference to the North Pine River dam scheme, on which £191,000 has apparently been expended. At the moment the Government, acting like dilettantes, are "pulling out" because of some futile objections that were raised by the Redcliffe City Council and the North Pine Shire Council, who want to carry out the work.

Before the Government allocated the work to the Brisbane City Council, all those aspects of the matter should have been examined and a decision made as to which body had the greater capacity to do the job. It is disappointing and frustrating, after many months have elapsed, to find the various local authorities arguing with the Government about who should do it. It should not require much deep thought to conclude who has the capacity to carry it out.

Reference has already been made in this debate to Public Service salaries. I agree that public servants in this State perform a very worth-while task in the development of Queensland, and if the Government were sincere in their gratitude they would provide better accommodation and better facilities for public servants instead of allowing them to work under the "rabbit warren" conditions existing in the Magistrates Court and the Court of Petty Sessions in Brisbane.

There has also been some discussion on public servants holding high offices in the Public Relations Bureau. It is rather significant that the State Public Relations Officer will receive this year a maximum salary of £2,250, and that last year he got only £2,182. I urge the Government, if at any time they are formulating Public Service salaries, to so correlate them that the top men will not get less than officers holding less significant jobs. Dissatisfaction is being created in the Public Service through subsidiary officers being paid more than the top men of departments. No organisation can be run successfully under conditions like that. I suggest every consideration should be given to correlating salaries properly.

I make one final reference. The Labour Party in Opposition have never objected to the re-appointments of Mr. Robinson and Mr. Tom Moores. They were returned to the positions that they occupied before entering public life. For the hon. member for Carnarvon to suggest that A.L.P. members have cavilled at or queried the re-appointment to the Public Service of members of Parliament is pure nonsense, because their re-appointment has never been queried. We believe that those two men, particularly Tom Moores, were perfectly entitled to be re-appointed to the jobs they left before entering Parliament. A.L.P. members never objected to the re-appointment of Mr. Tom Moores, nor did they voice disapproval of it.

Mr. Dewar: The Leader of the Opposition voiced his disapproval three years ago.

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. member would say anything.

Mr. Dewar: I am telling you. It is a fact. I will show it to you afterwards in print.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. member for Wavell is beside himself with anger, and as usual when he gets into that condition his statements are inaccurate.

In order to maintain a spirit of esprit de corps among public servants, the Government must provide them with proper working conditions and keep classifications in proper relationship. There is then no discontent one with the other; they will work as a happy team and family. They will not have the feeling that some sections are being favoured and others ignored. I think the Government are inclined to take that course, particularly in relation to public servants in the country.

Mr. TOOTH (Ashgrove) (3.22 p.m.): This is an appropriate occasion on which to pay, on behalf of Government members, a personal tribute to the Premier on his leadership not only of the Government but also of Parliament and on his conduct of the public affairs of the State. We are indeed a very happy and thoroughly united group of people behind his leadership and under his direction.

Mr. Houston: Do you think someone doubts that?

Mr. TOOTH: We have heard much to the contrary over the last few weeks and this is the first opportunity we have had to refute it, and refute it is what I propose to do.

If I may, I shall mention very briefly the remarks of the hon. member for South Brisbane and comment on them. I think most hon. members will agree with his early contention that the Premier's Department is one of extreme importance, and that the Premier in his own person and in the conduct of his department upholds the dignity and prestige

of the State. But as the hon. member proceeded I am afraid he wandered very seriously off the track, and I think the extreme of his error was to be found in his references to the conditions under which public servants are accommodated by the present Government.

The hon. member for South Brisbane referred to the accommodation of public servants at the present time in such terms as to lead anyone who was not aware of the facts to think that the accommodation provided for public servants has deteriorated during the life of the Government, whereas the cold facts of the matter are that it was just one of the many problems with which the Government were faced on assuming office. Those problems were so numerous that the progress made on so many fronts and in rectifying so many evils is indeed an extraordinary achievement of administration. One of the greatest problems was the chaotic condition of accommodation for public servants.

Very early in the life of the Government I had occasion to go to the Department of Education. I was received by the Minister, and he took me into the section dealing with buildings and sites. I was amazed to see in a small room so many people and so many desks that it was impossible to walk amongst them except and unless one walked sideways. It was literally impossible to walk in a normal way between the desks in that section. The people in that section told me they had been there for some considerable time. They were not making any criticism. I merely asked a few questions and I discovered they had been living and working under those conditions for a very considerable period. There was no place where they could have lunch. Indeed, most of the them ate their lunches at their desks.

Mr. Gilmore: That was the way Labour normally treated their employees.

Mr. TOOTH: I agree with the hon. member for Tablelands. We could give a lengthy catalogue, starting in this building with the members of the staff—

Mr. Gilmore: In the kitchen.

Mr. TOOTH: Yes, right in the kitchen.

We could give a lengthy catalogue of the deliberate neglect under which members of the Public Service laboured during the long years of Labour rule, and it is a serious mistake for a comparative neophyte in political affairs—I would be the last to criticise anyone for being new in the Chamber, as I still regard myself as a new member—to make such an extraordinary statement without first checking his facts.

Mr. Houston: He mentioned the Magistrates Court. What have you to say about that?

Mr. TOOTH: Let us take things in some order of priority. It is impossible in three years to rectify the neglect of 40 years. There will be found in State instrumentalities

in various parts of the State conditions that we have not yet been able to rectify, but do not make any mistake; they have been noted and as and when the opportunity offers they will be rectified, and rectified as quickly as possible.

I should now like to make some reference to the remarks of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on the State Public Relations Bureau, in which he claimed that it had done great work in the past. The implication was that apparently today it is not doing a satisfactory job. The charge was laid by implication, if not openly and directly, that it had become an instrument of Government party-political propaganda. Of course, nothing is further from the truth. The truth is that it has ceased to be an instrument of party-political propaganda and has become what it should always have been, an instrument for the advancement and well-being of the State.

As the suggestion has been made that there are extravagances in this field, I shall make a very quick comparison with the situation elsewhere. Let us note, for instance, that in October last the Labour Government in New South Wales not only had its own Public Relations Bureau attached to the Premier's Department, but in addition most of the Cabinet Ministers had personal public relations officers attached to their personal staffs. Even when the department itself has a publicity organisation, in addition there is attached to each Minister a personal publicity officer. When we add to all those the publicity staffs run by the New South Wales boards and Government instrumentalities we can quickly dismiss our publicity arrangements as insignificant, both numerically and financially. Compared with New South Wales it is indeed a light drain on Government finances. Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland are engaged in a strong bid to attract capital industries, and in the field of publicity Queensland cannot afford to be outdone.

Various speakers have referred to the Agent-General. On his last visit to Queensland the Agent-General mentioned particularly the costly campaign in the form of books, advertisements, general literature, films and so on being undertaken by the other States in London and he urged that the best possible material be sent to his office so that he could maintain Queensland's position relatively with the other States. It is interesting to note that Victoria has a public relations department in New York acting on its behalf, compiling and distributing for it a weekly newsletter which contains an up-to-the-minute Melbourne Stock Exchange report and various other news items that would be of interest to Americans and of service to Victoria.

New South Wales also has opened a public relations office in New York with the sole intention of attracting investment capital and new industries.

So what we have done is very modest indeed, but I think it is appropriate and will be profitable at this juncture to have a look at what is done by the State Public Relations Bureau. Therefore I propose to run over its various activities. It is one of the smallest units in the Public Service. It consists of the State's Public Relations Officer, his four assistants, a photographic liaison officer and three typists. I do not wish to dwell too long on the work carried out by the bureau but a brief outline is called for. I think it deserves to be congratulated on the way it is publicising Queensland not only in Australia but also abroad. Indeed, that aspect of its work is probably its most important and valuable function. For example, as recently as yesterday, a British Broadcasting Corporation television unit called on the State Public Relations Bureau for assistance and, almost within a matter of minutes, an itinerary had been arranged for the Cairns district; the town clerk had been contacted and transport had been organised. Whilst the claims of North Queensland were thus being promoted, other interesting facets of the State's economy were being stressed. Availability of movie films was being discussed; questions were being answered, and all the multitudinous details associated with this type of thing were being attended to. Finally, a B.B.C. representative went away loaded with maps, pamphlets and other background material. Everything had been done to ensure that the interests of Queensland had been promoted to the fullest extent possible and that viewers in England and on the Continent later on would receive the best impression of this State consistent with an honest and factual presentation of the Queensland scene. This case is by no means unique.

Following on the Centenary Year celebrations—and we all know the contribution the bureau made to those celebrations—Queensland has been very much in the news internationally, with the result that there is a constant demand from overseas for photographs, special articles and all manner of material. These requests come from places as far apart as Canada, Malaya and Italy. I mention these three places deliberately for, in the last few days, the bureau has prepared an article for the "Toronto Evening Post"; it has assembled a weighty parcel of background material for the Trade Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur, and it is now laying plans for obtaining photographs of the big tennis at Milton to be published in a magazine in Milan. Assignments such as these are highspots in a routine that includes the preparation of material for speeches, issuing something like 70 to 80 Press statements each week, controlling the insertion of classified advertisements for 90 per cent. of Government departments and writing special articles for different papers and journals.

The bureau prepares "Welcome to Queensland", that little booklet that tells so pithily the story of Queensland in words and pictures. Other pamphlets for Government departments are continually in preparation

or revision. In addition to performing these tasks, the bureau is responsible for the preparation of advertising material for use all over the world. It also works in close harmony with the Secondary Industries Division of the Department of Labour and Industry, a very important department as all hon. members will agree, and it also works in connection with the Arts Section of the Government Printing Office.

We all receive copies of the "News Bulletin". The hon. member for Kedron made sarcastic references to the "News Bulletin". His implication was that it was a political journal. The only basis for such a statement could be that it is completely factual and that it reveals the excellent work being done by this Government. That is the only way in which it could have any political influence, and I suggest to the Chamber that that is a perfectly legitimate use of any bulletin, because I have yet to see any deliberate, overt political matter in it.

As a matter of fact, the "News Bulletin" is prepared primarily for overseas consumption. The very selective mailing list for it includes nearly every English-speaking country, where overt political propaganda would either be meaningless or would defeat its object. It is an ambassador-at-large for Queensland, wherever the language is spoken, and a very special responsibility rests, therefore, on those who prepare it. Amongst the recipients are every trade commissioner, representatives of each foreign country that maintains a post in Australia, the Agent-General for Queensland in London, and many others on the Continent and in the United States. The State Public Relations Bureau works in close co-operation with the Agent-General, Mr. Muir, in London.

The hon. member for Carnarvon referred to the Agent-General's office, and he made what I think is a particularly useful suggestion, namely, that the Public Relations Bureau should set in train a traffic in reverse of information and of news of importance. That not only should deepen the channel whereby news of Queensland is fed out to London and other parts of the world but also, having particular relation to the London office, it should bring back to us, for public consumption and for general distribution, an analysis of the situation in England and in Europe as it affects Queensland.

Mr. Lloyd: That was my suggestion.

Mr. TOOTH: I think the hon. member for Carnarvon made that suggestion. If the hon. member for Kedron made a similar suggestion, I am very happy to see the two hon. members in such close accord.

I mentioned the close association with the Agent-General's office in London as an example. Let me tell hon. members that at present a photographic liaison officer of the Bureau is finalising a series of 35 mm. colour transparencies that depict virtually

every facet of living in the Sunshine State. The series, which is in its initial stages, comprises over 100 slides, and will be the basis of a set that will show the intending migrant or the industrialist what he can expect to find in Queensland. This is a very special job. It was, I believe, delayed for some time because of pressure of other work, but it is now well under way and when completed will be invaluable in promoting Queensland's interests.

In addition, there is a constant flow of news photos and other illustrative matter that the Agent-General uses for display purposes and to lend to schools and other interested organisations.

The provision of special material for window displays in London is another important function of the Bureau, and the Agent-General has often expressed his gratitude for the assistance rendered by the Bureau in this specialised field. Publicity, to a country that is expanding as rapidly as Australia is today, provides the lure that will attract industries and people to build and develop this State. It must be up to date, it must be compelling, and it must be effective. That is what we have learnt to expect from the State Public Relations Bureau in Queensland.

That very brief outline of the activities of the Bureau has been submitted to the Chamber as a justification for the Vote that the Committee will be asked to authorise in respect of this very important aspect of Government activity and of promotion of Queensland's interests.

The references to the Agent-General, which have come incidentally in discussion of the State Public Relations Bureau and which have been made by other hon. members, lead me to mention a particular fact about the office of the Agent-General in London that I have gleaned from talking to many visitors to London over the last three or four years. They are, as hon. members have already said, unanimous in their approval of the work of the Agent-General and his staff. Their account of the assistance they have received, and the work done to promote Queensland's interests is glowing in the extreme, but many of them have referred to what they consider to be a very serious disability under which the Agent-General and his staff work, namely, the quality and size of the building in which they are housed. In dealing with the priorities of the jobs that the Government have to handle and the various neglected programmes that they have to recover and retrieve, when they get around to the accommodation problem of the Agent-General in London, his really magnificent work will be doubled in value. Indeed, if the Government can find the money to provide suitable and dignified accommodation for Queensland's representative in London the value of his work will probably be threefold.

(Time expired.)

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (3.41 p.m.): I notice that although there has been a reduction of nine employees in the Chief Office of the Premier's Department there has been an increase of £2,902 in this year's appropriation compared with last year, £4,247 more than was actually expended in the previous year. There appears to be a reduction of five clerks because I presume that there will still be a senior clerk and an accountant who, with the six clerks, make the eight employees listed under this heading, compared with 13 listed for 1958-1959. The appropriation for the 13 employees in this section last year was £9,684, and the actual amount expended was £10,445. As £9,240 is required to meet the salaries and contingencies this year, a saving of £1,205 apparently is expected. There has also been a reduction in the number of clerk-typists from 18 to 15, and a small saving of £61 in wages, etc. The retirement or transfer of these eight employees, together with a messenger, will, if things go as planned, save the Chief Office £1,307 in its wages account. The sum of £1,564 was set aside for an assistant secretary to the Premier last year, but as nothing was expended under this heading the Premier must have denied himself the assistance of an assistant secretary. As £1,590 has been placed on the Estimates for this officer this year, I am sure all hon. members will agree that the Premier should have the assistance that such an officer could and undoubtedly would render to him. A sum of £3,819 will be required to meet increases in awards, but one should be pardoned for thinking that for this increase 32 employees will have to do the work that 41 were engaged on last year. We know that there has been a reduction in the number of employees. Therefore is it not logical to assume that they are required to do the work that was done by the greater number last year? Surely the work of the Premier's Department is going to increase and not decrease this year! Even the Premier would deny very strenuously, and truthfully, any suggestion that he was going to have an easier job this year than last. He will have much more to do this year than last year, and every ensuing year he and his officers will have more work to do.

The Vote for the Agent-General has more than doubled in the last decade. I think everyone will agree that the cost has been justified over and over again. This year £4,468 more is required than was expended last year. Although we have at various times had some very adverse reports on the London office and of how it is conducted, they are more than counterbalanced by the glowing reports received from time to time of the splendid work done by Mr. Dave Muir and his staff. If the office is not doing the work it should be doing, if it is not getting the results that some people think it should be getting, it is no fault of Mr. Dave Muir. Every hon. member who knows Mr. Muir will agree with me. We had an example of his industry and

efficiency as a leading public servant in Queensland before he was appointed to the very important office of Agent-General in London.

This office is very important to Queensland. It could increase the exports from this State to the homeland and also regulate the imports from Great Britain. What is more important, it could increase the flow of migrants from Great Britain. If we can improve the efficiency of this office it should be done.

The hon. member for Kelvin Grove has already drawn attention to the very things I am speaking about. Apparently he has heard and read, as I have, of the need to increase the efficiency of our London office so that the officers there may work under comfortable conditions for the advantage of Queensland.

I know from personal experience that Mr. Dave Muir has been very helpful to visitors to London from this State. Letters of introduction have been given by the Premier to people who have gone overseas on holidays, on business, sporting activities, or for other reasons, and they have been very helpful. Such letters of introduction from the Premier have been delivered to Mr. Muir who has been of great assistance to these people and, as a consequence, helpful to our State. However, let us be more helpful to him and his officers by improving the conditions under which they work.

I should like to draw attention to certain parts of his report, particularly that dealing with migration and recruitment of labour. As I said before, it would be advantageous to Queensland, the Commonwealth and the British Commonwealth of Nations generally if we could induce more people from the Homeland to migrate to Australia.

On the subject of migration, Mr. Muir says in his report—

"During the twelve months ended 30 June, 1960, 2,313 migrants proceeded to Queensland under the Assisted Passengers Scheme. As in former years the majority of these were sponsored by friends or relatives resident in the State.

"In addition to the normal method of transport, either in all-migrant carrying vessels or by regular passenger ships arrangements were made during the year for 77 migrants to travel to Queensland by air. These comprised mainly single persons whose services were urgently required. Only a very limited number of assisted air passages is available and I am therefore indebted to the Chief Migration Officer at Australia House for his kindly co-operation in providing these facilities in the particular cases which I represented to him."

We brought only 77 migrants from the Homeland to Queensland by air compared with air-shiploads of migrants from foreign countries. Just what are we doing? Are we

making a very sincere effort to increase our population of British-born people or do we prefer to bring people from foreign lands?

Mr. Pizzey: That depends a lot on the prosperity of the country in which they are living. When things are good, there is not the same urge to migrate to Australia.

Mr. DONALD: I agree entirely with the Minister. That is why we are not getting more migrants from the Old Country. The people of the Continent are not living nearly as well as the British people, but I am making a comparison between the number of migrants from Great Britain and those from other countries. From Great Britain 77 migrants came by air, as well as 2,313 by sea. We are getting hundreds of people by air from other countries. Their passages must be costing the Commonwealth Government, and incidentally the State Governments, a great deal of money. The Commonwealth Government cannot pay for it unless they get the money from the States in the first place.

In examining and comparing the positions of the States and the Commonwealth, I point out that the income of the Commonwealth Government increases with each additional migrant. It could be said that migrants are a valuable asset for the Commonwealth Government, but for State Governments they are in a sense a liability, because the States have to pay for their hospitalisation, education, protection under the laws of the country, and so on. While the State Governments have to pay out money for migrants, the Commonwealth Government get revenue from them—from every drink they take, from every cigarette they smoke, and from income tax on the money they earn. New Australians are taxed in the same way as Australians, yet the State Governments have to pay interest on money received from the Commonwealth Government.

But that is not the point I wanted to emphasise. Mr. Muir went on to say—

“The ‘Bring out a Briton’ Scheme continues to provide accommodation and employment opportunities for British families. During the period under review organisations such as Junior Chambers of Commerce and Apex Clubs contributed materially to Queensland’s migration intake.

“It is not easy to assess the total number of persons migrating to Queensland from the United Kingdom. The figures supplied to me do not include assisted migrants proceeding under Commonwealth Nominations who are not allotted to a specific State until after their arrival in Australia. Moreover, it is not possible to record the numbers who travel independently to Queensland as full fare paying passengers.”

I should like to express again my disappointment at the falling-off in volume of chilled beef exported from Queensland to the United Kingdom. I can remember the first shipment

from Australia of chilled beef; it was killed and treated at the Redbank meatworks. I do not mean the plant at South Brisbane, but the original Redbank meatworks situated on the bank of the Brisbane River at Redbank. This particular beef was handled very carefully by the slaughtering and freezing staffs. The freezing staff, incidentally, were dressed in white clothes and the cars used for transporting the beef were fumigated according to a special formula. The shipment was a great success, and those in the meat industry at the time thought the difficulty of sending chilled beef to Great Britain had been overcome and that they could expect an increase in the trade each succeeding year. Unfortunately that has not been the case. In his report, Mr. Muir has this to say—

“Chilled Beef.

“At a time when the opportunities for establishing Australian chilled beef on the United Kingdom market were never better it is most disappointing to record that during 1959 Australia supplied 35 per cent. less than in the preceding year, and, in fact, only half the quantity shipped in 1957. Undoubtedly one of the main factors responsible for this decline was the small premium paid for chilled as against frozen beef. During the period under review this was less than 2d. per lb., being the lowest differential since the post-war resumption of chilled beef imports. Furthermore, in view of the lucrative prices offering for low grade beef in the United States market it is perhaps not surprising that the attention of Australian graziers was directed more to meeting this demand than raising prime chiller quality cattle for the United Kingdom trade.”

I do not know the difference in methods of rearing a beast that can be killed and exported as chilled beef and one that is killed and exported to United States as low-grade beef. We know, of course, that quite a lot of our beef went to America, and that quite a number of beasts would have died in the hands of the graziers if they had not been killed and the beef dispatched to the United States. But it is hard to believe that beasts that could have been killed and sent home as chilled beef would have been sent to America for the hamburger trade.

I think we should all be encouraged at the position of the pineapple industry. Under this heading Mr. Muir reports—

“The year 1959 saw a complete revision of marketing policy in so far as the bulk of the exports of Queensland canned pineapples to the United Kingdom is concerned.

“Following a visit by the manager of the Northgate Cannery to this country in the early part of the year a new approach to the marketing of ‘Golden Circle’ pineapple was evolved. A change was made in distribution arrangements and an international marketing manager was appointed. This has enabled closer contact to be

maintained with the wholesale, multiple and retail trades. Steps were taken to establish stocks in the United Kingdom and an extensive advertising programme, including television, was initiated. Early in 1960 there was a complete breakaway from the former methods of marketing as a result of which the Queensland pineapple industry is now in a position to control its own marketing policy at all stages through efficient and progressive distributing organisations.

"At the commencement of the year the United Kingdom, the major overseas outlet for Australian canned pineapple, was in a state of over-supply with prices generally falling. With an already heavy carry-over of stocks of pineapple products from 1958, the record 1959 Queensland pack posed many problems.

"The total supplies of canned pineapple to this country in 1959 fell short of the previous year by 8,000 tons. This was due primarily to the fact that exports from South Africa and Malaya, both major suppliers, were substantially reduced."

When we consider the difficult period that pineapple-growers went through last year we are pleased that at least they have been able to hold their own, and even improve their position, on the London market.

The hon. member for Kelvin Grove referred to the condition of the premises in which the Agent-General's office is housed in London. Mr. Muir made this statement in his report—

"The lease of our main premises expired on 1 June, 1960, but I was able to conclude negotiations with the lessors for an extension of twelve months as from that date, under existing terms and conditions. The owners are not prepared to grant a new lease nor to extend the tenancy for a longer period than one year at a time. On present indications it would seem that some two or more years may elapse before we are eventually obliged to vacate. In any case, I shall be faced, sooner or later, with the problem of obtaining alternative premises, as the existing accommodation is hardly sufficient even for current requirements."

Mr. Muir's belief, as expressed in that paragraph, should be met. We should do something to give him new accommodation in which he could do justice to his position and this State.

The Public Service Commissioner's report shows that there has been a decrease of 41 in the number of Government employees. There was a decrease of 862 in the number of railway employees. In the other services there have been the following decreases:—

Department of Public Works (Construction and Maintenance Branch)	200
Department of the Co-ordinator General of Public Works (Tully Falls Hydro-electric Project)	186
Department of Irrigation and Water Supply	121

With the exception of the Department of Public Works, those decreases have taken place in the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply. As one hon. member interjected, the Tully Falls scheme is nearing completion and, as a result, fewer employees are required. But that does not mean that those employees cannot be used on other irrigation projects. As hon. members can see, 186 employees are affected at the Tully Falls hydro-electric project. The total number of employees who represent the decrease in the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply is 307. With the 200 fewer in the Department of Public Works Construction and Maintenance Branch, and with 862 fewer in the Railway Department, it appears to me that the Government are pursuing a policy consistently and steadily of displacing men in their own service and giving that work to outside firms. That is, of course, their policy. They do not believe in public enterprise; they believe in private enterprise. They are willing to get rid of men who have given them valuable service over the years, the men they have trained, and transfer the work to private enterprise. Consequently, some of those men are dismissed.

I have a very high regard for the present Public Service Commissioner, Mr. Doug. Fraser, just as I had a very high regard for the late Mr. McCracken. In spite of any adverse criticism that may be levelled at those gentlemen, I never had any cause to feel other than pleased with any negotiations I had with them. I always found them courteous, obliging, and thorough in their work.

I can endorse the remarks of the hon. member for Carnarvon and the hon. member for South Brisbane about the worth of public servants.

I should like to take the time to elaborate more fully on that subject. If there are any men in the Public Service who have my sympathy, they are the Parliamentary Draftsman and his assistants. I know they work very hard. They have the task of drawing up Bills to be presented by Ministers and they often have to do it at a moment's notice. They are asked to draft a Bill to meet a certain emergency and they have to get it to the Government Printing Office without delay. They may have to draw it up in a hurry. Then it comes before hon. members, among whom there have always been some very able legal men. They have plenty of time to peruse the Bills and to pick faults in the drafting. So I always feel that we should be very sympathetically disposed towards these very efficient officers.

Time will not permit me to elaborate further on that subject but, before my time runs out, I want to pay a special tribute to Mr. Holt, the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works. While his predecessor, the late Sir John Kemp, was able to build up an enviable record of achievement in the State and throughout the Commonwealth,

I think the service being rendered by Sir James Holt is equally good and he is equally efficient. We have been very fortunate to have a man like Mr. Holt to follow a man of the calibre of the late Sir John Kemp, and we should do everything we can to encourage him and to see that he is given an opportunity to show what the Department of Public Works can do. It is a department of which the Government should be extremely proud. In this respect I should like to pay a special tribute to Mr. Worley, the officer in charge of the Public Works Department, West Moreton District. It is very pleasing to go along and see a big job that has been undertaken under his supervision in Ipswich and compare it with the work that is being done by private enterprise for the Government. Work done by the Department is cheaper and certainly more thorough in every respect. I hope the Government will take some notice of what I am saying and not slavishly follow the practice they are adopting of farming out work to private enterprise and interrupting the programme of their own Department.

The State Reporting Bureau, as I think every hon. member will be able to gauge from the standard of the work that they do for us, deserves a special tribute and a word of thanks. I note that the staff of the Bureau has been reduced by five, and that, whereas there were eight clerk-typists in 1959-1960, no provision is made for any clerk-typists in 1960-1961. Just what that means I do not know. Clerk-typists are necessary. They have to be there. Even though the reporting staff is at full strength, we know that we cannot have our speeches reported for inclusion in "Hansard" without these clerk-typists. I do not know whether they have been covered by another Vote or another section—I have had little time to peruse the Estimates—but hon. members in this Chamber and the general public receive excellent service from the State Reporting Bureau and all that goes with it. I think we should do all we can to see that the number of staff is maintained and that any increase in the volume of work is fully covered by a commensurate increase in staff numbers.

I think hon. members should also have a look at the subsidies that are paid to private enterprise. They will be astonished if they do. I draw attention to the reduction in the Vote for mining activities. In 1958-1959 it was £188,141, and in 1959-1960 it dropped to £81,760. There should be some explanation for that. It is good to know that it has risen to £150,500 in the Estimates for 1960-1961, but this is still approximately £50,000 less than it was in 1957-1958.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HERBERT (Sherwood) (4.7 p.m.): As the Government representative on the Australia Day Council, I should like to express to the Premier the appreciation of the council of the increased amount that has been made

available for its activities in the past three years. That is a direct answer to the comment of the hon. member for South Brisbane, who accused the Premier of cutting down on contributions to patriotic causes.

The contribution towards the Australia Day celebrations has been increased from £350 under the previous Government to £800 for next year. The exact allocations made by a Labour Government in 1956-1957 were £350 to the Australia Day Celebrations Council in Brisbane, and £25 to each of the nine major cities and towns. That allocation is still maintained to local authorities that are prepared to match the Government's contribution with a similar amount. That means that in those days the Government were committed to a total contribution of £350 to Brisbane and £225 to the country, a total of £575. In 1958, under this Government, the Brisbane council received an allocation of £500—a considerable increase on the £350 allocated by the previous Government—and £30 was allocated to each of the nine country centres, bringing the total to £770. In 1959, the Centenary Year, we had a vastly increased budget for centenary celebration purposes. £550 was allocated to Brisbane, which was only a small increase on the previous figure for Brisbane, but in addition to that the Government provided, through the Premier's Department, the sum of £60 to each of nine country centres. That brought the total Government contribution to £1,090. Admittedly that was Centenary Year, but over £1,000 was given for the celebration of Australia Day throughout Queensland—almost double the figure that was given in the last year of Labour's administration. This year, a normal year, the Government still paid an allowance of £500 to the Brisbane council and £30 to each of 10 country centres—another country centre joined in this year—bringing the total allocation to £800. For 1961 a further allocation of £800 has been made. That gives an indication of the Government's intention to foster Australia Day as much as possible.

The 10 centres at present receiving support are: Toowoomba, Maryborough, Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville, Cairns, Roma, Longreach and the Gold Coast. The council will be only too happy to hear from other centres that are prepared to join in the celebration of Australia Day in their own areas by a contribution of like amount to that supplied by the Government. Although the Government's contribution to Australia Day has been particularly generous—generous enough to ensure that the celebrations are conducted in a fitting manner—I am sorry to say that the support from the commercial life in Brisbane particularly is very disappointing. It is true that one or two firms do give some small support to the council, but in the main the celebration of Australia Day is still ignored. To most of the commercial enterprises in Brisbane Australia Day does not seem to exist. It has been said that the date at the end of the school holidays

is an awkward time to arrange celebrations, but I do not think that is the story at all. Other parts of Australia have a similar problem. People as a general rule do not seem to regard Australia Day as anything other than another day off work. But for the fact that in Brisbane there has been a hard-working committee, few in numbers but large in enthusiasm, Queensland would not have any Australia Day celebrations. In fact, Queensland is the only State in Australia that really celebrates Australia Day.

Two years ago I had the honour to represent the Queensland council in Melbourne when a deputation waited on the Prime Minister with a request for Commonwealth financial support for Australia Day celebrations. The Prime Minister was particularly interested in what Queensland had done, but as none of the other States had anything like the plan that we had in operation, and as none of them had anything outside of their capital cities like we do, he would not grant Federal financial support at this stage. Had other States followed the lead of Queensland and conducted Australia Day celebrations on as wide a scale as we do here, the Prime Minister would have been much more amenable to the suggestion that Commonwealth financial support was warranted. The idea behind Commonwealth support is that after all it is Australia Day—it is not Queensland Day or New South Wales Day or anything like that, but a strictly national day which should warrant Commonwealth financial support. As a matter of fact, South Australia has its own Independence Day, which is included in the Christmas break, and South Australia tends to regard that day as its Australia Day rather than the day that the other States observe.

Unless we can get further support from business interests in Brisbane, particularly for the procession, an increasingly heavy burden will be thrown on the shoulders of a small group of people who do the work for the celebrations each year. The Government at least put in the same number of floats each year, but most local firms who could contribute at least one float to the procession so far have not seen fit to join in. Carried away by enthusiasm in Centenary Year—possibly having a float left over from one of the other processions—many of them came in a little more than they had in previous years, but this year they dropped out again. If the marching girls and the pipe bands were taken out of the Australia Day procession it would be very small. That would be a mistake, because Australia Day is catching on with the local people who go to watch it. The crowds on Australia Day have been growing each year. This year, in spite of the fact that we had the centenary behind us, the Australia Day crowds were the biggest we have had yet. It would appear that the coming generation appreciate the effort that the council is making to put on a truly national day. Possibly

because Australia has never been seriously threatened or invaded, as have other countries, we do not get the same enthusiasm for a national day as is engendered in countries overseas. It is possible that a certain amount of our enthusiasm is directed towards Anzac Day as an important day for us. Whatever the reasons are there is need for a further awakening among the people who can provide finance for Australia Day to increase the amounts available to the council.

I believe that the Government allocation is quite adequate and that it would not be right to ask them for anything further. At the moment the council is able to cover its expenses for a sports day, aquatic sports and a procession, but it has no chance of enlarging the scope of its activities unless it can get some interest from people who are able to support it.

On behalf of the council, I again thank the Premier for the increased allocation. It has at least enabled these people to carry on their enthusiastic work without having to worry about who is going to pay the bills after the day is over.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (4.17 p.m.): I welcome the opportunity provided in this debate for me to, if I may use the vernacular, lock horns, not bitterly but very bluntly and very frankly, with the Premier. I once again call the attention of this Assembly to the different ways of thinking that seem to actuate members of Parliament when they are in Opposition and when they are on the Government benches, for, when the Premier occupied the Opposition benches, he used to support me regularly when I rose in this Chamber to fight for a better deal for North Queensland and to impress upon the Government of the day, which was then a Labour Government, the need to do something for North Queensland. He joined me—and "Hansard" can bear witness to the fact—on more than one occasion when I criticised the then Government for working what I call the "percentage racket" by quoting percentages in relation to the amount of Government money spent in the North. Time and time again I clashed with Labour Premiers—I use the plural—on the way they used to present the figures relating to Government money spent in the North. They reduced it to the simple formula of saying, "We spent so many pounds per head of population in the North, which is more than we spent per head of population in either the Central Division or the Southern Division." That frankly, is political prestidigitation of the worst sort. If we are to have a reasonable assessment of the Government moneys that should be spent in the various areas of Queensland, we should calculate our percentages on an area basis. The question should be, "How much money are the Government spending per square mile of area in North Queensland, per square mile

of area in Central Queensland and per square mile of area in Southern Queensland?"

The Premier, when Leader of the Opposition, used to join with me in criticising the then Premier for working what I repeatedly described as the "percentage racket."

However, now that he feels he is safely ensconced on the Treasury benches for some years, he is using exactly the same system as he condemned when he was Leader of the Opposition. Only the other day in a Brisbane Sunday newspaper he quoted figures to show that North Queensland was having more per head of population spent on it than either Central or Southern Queensland. I do not know whether it is the changed venue that makes the difference in the approach of various members to this matter, or what it is. To me it smacks of political hypocrisy, and while I am a member of Parliament I will roundly condemn it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I should like the hon. member to indicate to which portion of the Estimates for the Premier's Department he is referring.

Mr. AIKENS: I am glad you raised that point, Mr. Taylor, because I am now going to deal with the Estimates for the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, and the developmental works proposed in the various areas of Queensland.

Leaders of all Governments and of all political parties come to the North from the southern capitals—Brisbane or Canberra—prior to an election and they all tell the same story. They say, "We must develop and populate North Queensland. It we are returned to office, we will ask the Co-ordinator-General to provide adequate money for the development of North Queensland, so that we can have and retain in North Queensland a population that is so vitally necessary to form a bastion between us and the hungry millions in South-east Asia." Leaders of all shades of political opinion tell us that story before every election.

Mr. Pizzey: The Co-ordinator-General's work is not the only work done in North Queensland.

Mr. AIKENS: There are others, but the hon. gentleman knows that at the moment I must confine my remarks to the proposals of the Co-ordinator-General. If the Minister for Education introduces his Estimates later, I must admit I will not be able to find very much fault with them in regard to Townsville South, or the part of Townsville that I previously represented, or perhaps all of North Queensland. But I have a very strong argument with the department of the Co-ordinator-General, which is controlled by the Premier.

These political leaders return to Brisbane or Canberra after the elections and tell an

entirely different story. They say, "Oh, no, we are not going to approach the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works and ask him to make provision for the lavish development and population of the North that we envisaged in our pre-election talks to the people of North Queensland. Although we said that if we did not develop North Queensland there are millions to the north of us who will be happy to come in and develop it, now the election is over we must look at the problems of development of North Queensland purely from the angle of pounds, shillings and pence. We must ask ourselves if every proposal for the development of North Queensland is economical," or, to put it in a blunter way, "We must ask the Co-ordinator-General to advise us whether we can make a profit out of the moneys we are going to spend in North Queensland, and, if the Co-ordinator-General cannot advise us that we are going to make a profit out of money we may spend there, of course—very unfortunately—we must advise you poor 'saps and suckers' up in North Queensland that we cannot go ahead with the work." But, of course, prior to the next election, whether it be State or Federal, we will have all the Labour, Liberal and Country Party leaders coming to North Queensland from their haven, in Brisbane or Canberra, and telling us the same taradiddle over and over again. They will say, "To your great discredit, a lot of you silly mugs up here will fall for it."

Mr. Hughes: More industry will naturally bring more public works.

Mr. AIKENS: More public works will bring more industry. That is the point I am trying to drive home. We want the industry there, but we will not get it there unless we get the population and the facilities for industry. We have been harping about that for years. We have been harping for years about facilities for education, if I may digress for a moment seeing that the Minister is in the Chamber. We said that the one factor more than any other that was driving people out of North Queensland was the lack of facilities for secondary and tertiary education. To his credit the present Minister for Education has done much to overcome that obstacle, but there is still much to be done by other departments of the Government.

We heard a dissertation by the Treasurer recently in which he said, "Why should we build huge dams for irrigation and other purposes when by building those dams—"—and I assume he had the Co-ordinator-General's figures to quote from—"it will cost us £50,000 to establish one farmer." How many men, directly and indirectly, does one farmer provide employment for? How much does one farmer add to the national wealth of this country? Those are the things that must be considered, not the cash that is paid out through the Co-ordinator-General's Department to establish the

farmer. We must consider how much extra national wealth that farmer will earn for Australia and Queensland and how many people he will employ, directly and indirectly.

The Premier can tell hon. members that there are many areas in this State where thriving little townships have been founded and have prospered, and are prospering today, on the efforts of about 50 farmers. If 50 farmers can be properly established, producing crops, there will not only be a little thriving township where none exists today—where perhaps there is desert and desolation—but there will be provided the very people that we need for the establishment of industries and of facilities. Anyone who is not blind, deaf and dumb will know that the Treasurer the other day was having a snide crack at the proposal to build the Burdekin Dam. In fact he was saying, "There is all this nonsense and all this blather about building the big Burdekin Dam. I have had my Co-ordinator-General and my Treasury officials work it out that, if it is built, it will cost £50,000 to put one farmer on the land." If it costs £50,000, or even more, to put one prosperous farmer on the land in the Burdekin area it is money well spent. It will increase the national wealth of the country and, directly and indirectly, it will find employment for perhaps 12 or 20 men.

What a different story they tell after an election! I assume that before the Treasurer made his particularly irresponsible statement he went along to the Co-ordinator-General and said, "Find out in pounds, shillings and pence how much it will cost to build the Burdekin Dam and how many farms can be envisaged as a result of the building of the Burdekin Dam, and then tell me how much in pounds, shillings and pence we are going to spend to establish each single farmer." He did not say to the Co-ordinator-General, "Tell us how much national wealth we are adding to the country by putting a £14,000 or £15,000 lift into Parliament House?" He did not squeal about that, but that is dead money. That does not add one brass farthing to the national wealth of the country. It does not provide lucrative employment for one man, although it does employ a liftman. It is dead money so far as our national development is concerned, and dead money so far as keeping the teeming hordes of Asians away from Australia is concerned. It is money poured down the drain and no-one can get away from that. I do not know, of course, whether the Co-ordinator-General comes into that.

Then we had a proposal put forward by the hon. member for Windsor the other day—I assume it has already gone along to the Co-ordinator-General for his report—that each Minister should have established here in Brisbane a palatial palace for his own Ministerial staff.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I trust that the hon. member will refer only to matters that are in the Co-ordinator-General's report, not to what might be in the future.

Mr. AIKENS: I should not like the Committee to think I was deliberately digressing. I am merely pointing out what happens. If I am allowed to finish, I would point out that the hon. member for Merthyr wants a £500,000 wing put on Parliament House so that every member can have his own room and ermine-covered couch. The Government do not mind how much money is spent in Brisbane, but they object to every brass farthing spent in North Queensland.

Mr. Duggan interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: The Leader of the Opposition interjects, but he was the worst offender of all when he was a Minister of the Crown. We have only to look at the way he starved North Queensland for railway development. When this Government took office they found they had £5,000,000 of railway capital work on hand in Brisbane and not a brass farthing's worth of railway capital work in North Queensland. The "Duggan Monument"—the diesel shed in the north yard of the railway station at Townsville—was standing there like a big skeleton and had to be completed by the present Minister for Transport. So the Leader of the Opposition should be the last man to criticise this Government for neglecting the North in the interests of this rat-ridden dump called Brisbane.

Mr. Duggan: I was trying to help you but you do not give me much thanks.

Mr. AIKENS: I will admit that at times I might be quite grateful for any help rendered me by the Leader of the Opposition, but not on this occasion, because, if ever there was a case of Satan reproving sin or of the pot calling the kettle black, this is such an occasion, when the Leader of the Opposition condemns this Government for their neglect of the North. He and his Government, if anything, were worse. Certainly they were very much worse in the realm of education.

Mr. Lloyd interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: I would not know where Bribie Island is and I do not care where it is. Any money that is proposed to be spent on a Bribie Island bridge would be far better spent in the North because there it will be spent for the benefit of people who are the salt of the earth.

We have heard a suggestion of rises in pay for Ministers of the Crown.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member cannot deal with that subject.

Mr. WINDSOR: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Townsville South said that this is a rat-ridden dump. It is no such thing. It is a lovely place to live in.

Mr. AIKENS: Mr. Taylor, I was referring to the city of Brisbane, and I will go further and say that it is an odorous, scrofulous, rat-ridden dump.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I trust that the hon. member will get on with the Estimates.

Mr. AIKENS: I have been trying to do that all along under your benevolent guidance, Mr. Taylor, despite the provocation I am receiving from both sides of the Chamber. I was going to try, if I may and if you will permit me, to tie the Premier up with Mr. Egerton with regard to the low opinion that they both have of private members of Parliament.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That subject does not come under the Estimates for the Premier and Chief Secretary's Department.

Mr. AIKENS: Then I am not permitted to say, I understand, that while Egerton contemptuously refers to private members as "Pollies," the Premier—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not permitted to make those references.

Mr. AIKENS: Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN: Please deal with the Co-ordinator-General's Department or with any other department that comes under the Premier and Chief Secretary's Department.

Mr. AIKENS: I was a little in doubt about what I could or could not say. I find it is always advisable, Mr. Taylor, particularly when you are in the chair, to ask for your guidance and your advice on these particular matters, but I could not help commenting, after reading "The Sunday Mail"—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: I may be going to deal with the Co-ordinator-General.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. member persists in the habit of referring to a subject after he has been asked to cease speaking about it, I will be obliged to ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. AIKENS: I have no intention of provoking you into that extreme course.

Now I want to appeal to the Premier about the way hon. members are treated in this House in one particular regard. I mentioned the matter when the Premier was Leader of the Opposition and also when the late E. M. Hanlon was Premier and later when Mr. V. C. Gair was Premier. We have now reached the stage that seven members of this Assembly—the three so-called Independents, though, of course, I am not an Independent, and the four members of the Queensland Labour Party—are regarded by the Australian Broadcasting Commission as a particularly contemptible form of mangy dog.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The subject the hon. member is dealing with now is not included in the Estimates of the Premier and Chief Secretary's Department.

Mr. Hughes: There is no provision made for mangy dogs.

Mr. Duggan: That comes under the Vote of the Department of Agriculture and Stock.

Mr. Lloyd: Judging from proceedings in this Chamber today—

Mr. AIKENS: When all the little puppies have stopped yapping, you and I, Mr. Taylor, will argue out the merits or the demerits of what I propose to say.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member will not argue with the Chair.

Mr. AIKENS: I know that if I did, Mr. Taylor, I should lose, because your wealth of experience and knowledge of your Parliamentary duties far transcend mine. However, the Premier, as the leader of the Country-Liberal Party in this Assembly, has had granted to him—and I am dealing now only with the Premier—half of the A.B.C.'s broadcasting time in the political session on Monday nights and he confines—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! For the last time I will tell the hon. member for Townsville South that he cannot deal with the Premier. If the Premier is under discussion, the Premier's salary comes under the schedule. We have passed that stage, so he cannot criticise the Premier.

Mr. Lloyd: That was this morning, when he was not here.

Mr. AIKENS: I wish I had been here. I was flying down from my beloved North this morning. I hoped to get here in time to discuss this matter on the Vote for the Legislative Assembly. It is a shocking travesty of democracy, Mr. Taylor, but as you have ruled that I cannot mention it—

Mr. Newton: I was up there during the war.

Mr. AIKENS: When the hon. member was up there, he was under the command of a commissioned or non-commissioned officer, who told him where to go and how to find his way back. Of course, if he went up there now of his own volition, he would now know how to find his way back.

Mr. Bennett: Did you read that Townsville is the fastest-progressing city outside Brisbane?

Mr. AIKENS: Yes. That is due mainly to me. I take a fair amount of credit for it. But when one considers that every two years a city the size of Townsville is added to Brisbane, it is not enough. I suggest that the Co-ordinator-General might look into that. Every two years from 45,000 to 50,000 people are added to the city of Brisbane. One of the sub-departments under the Premier's control estimated that in 1982 the population of

Brisbane would be 1,000,000, and I ask the Premier to find out from his officers the estimated population of North Queensland in 1982.

Mr. Windsor: You said it was a rat-ridden town.

Mr. AIKENS: Brisbane is. That is all the more reason why the increase in population should take place in the North, where the air is clean and the people are cleaner still.

For those reasons, I think on this department under the control of the Co-ordinator-General rests perhaps the greatest measure of responsibility for the development or the desertion of North Queensland. Over the years we have seen studied and deliberate desertion of North Queensland in the interests of the city of Brisbane, and I will leave out the offensive terms to which the hon. member for Ithaca takes objection; I do not want to offend him. But you must admit, Mr. Taylor, that because of the Estimates that have been prepared and submitted to this Chamber by the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, we are going to see in the coming year a continuation of all the deplorable and undesirable features that have characterised the presentation of that report for years and years—at least for all the years I have been in this Parliament. We are going to see another seven-course meal for the city of Brisbane, while the scraps, the bones, and the pieces of fat, are to be thrown to the people of North Queensland, and, what is more, they are expected to be grateful for these scraps from the well-laden Brisbane table.

Mr. Hughes: Generally, taken all round, has not the North had a much better go in the last few years?

Mr. AIKENS: The North has had a better go in the last few years only in regard to education—I will say that, and say it frankly—but in all other aspects of Government spending it is still getting the raw deal that it has got for many years—the raw deal it got from the Labour Party, the raw deal it is getting from these parties, and the raw deal that it is going to get irrespective of the political colour of the Government occupying the Treasury benches. It is true—and I do not want to say anything that is not true—that under the present Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity a little better allocation of Main Roads funds has been made to North Queensland than was made under any Labour administration. But it is still not enough. There is still far too much leeway to make up.

Let me draw an analogy, Mr. Taylor, because you would know what an analogy is. Let us assume that a man had three sons and he consistently starved two of them for many years and continually poured all his wealth and affection—all the good food and all the best things of life—on the one son, and then someone came along and said to

him, "Why don't you give the other two boys the same deal as you are giving the boy on whom you have lavished your care, affection and love all these years?" and the father said, "Yes. From now on I will try and give the two kiddies suffering from rickets and all the other ills of malnutrition and semi-starvation exactly as much as I am giving the well-fed and well-loved boy." When the Government have done that they think they have done something marvellous. But they have not. What they should do is give the two half-starved kiddies a far better deal for some years than the well-nourished boy; in other words, let the half-starved kiddies catch up to the one who has had the thick end of the stick all his life. It is no use the Government coming in now and saying, "We know. We can look back over the Co-ordinator-General's reports year after year and see where the North has got a raw deal under Labour. We are going to remedy that raw deal so that, instead of giving North Queensland 20 per cent. and Central Queensland 15 per cent. of the State's funds, we are going to be magnanimous; we are going to be generous to the point of being reckless. We are going to give North Queensland 21 per cent. and Central Queensland 16 per cent." I have not worked out the percentages, but in effect that is what is happening. We are getting a little better percentage from this Government than we did from previous Labour Governments, but I do not want them to kid themselves or pull their own legs that they are fooling the people of North Queensland. We know that we are not getting our fair share.

(Time expired.)

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (4.41 p.m.): I know, Mr. Taylor, that you are a great believer in hon. members being relevant in their speeches. I thought that perhaps you were being unduly tolerant to the hon. member who just resumed his seat until I perused the various items that come under the Vote for the Premier and Chief Secretary, and about which you would permit a general discussion. I saw that the Elizabethan Trust has an allocation of £6,000 and therefore I presume that the hon. member for Townsville South was quite in order in demonstrating the justification for increasing that grant this year. That was about the only relevance of his remarks.

Putting irrelevancies aside, I think that hon. members on both sides will agree that it is appropriate that the Vote for the Premier's Department should be debated first, because a debate on the department controlled by the chief member of the Government gives us an opportunity of dealing with some very important matters. It is also appropriate that the State's developmental agency, the Department of the Co-ordinator-General, should come under the Premier's Department, as also does the Public Service Commissioner's Department.

I should like to ask the Premier one or two questions of a minor nature before I deal with some more important aspects of the Vote. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition and other speakers on this side have dealt with matters that time does not permit me to develop and subsequent speakers will fill in many gaps, so that overall we will cover as comprehensively as we can the various points needing consideration.

The first matter that excites our interest is that since the Government have been in power the number of personnel in the Premier's Department has increased by 55 to 395. I think we should pause for a moment and reflect on that matter. The other day the Treasurer was exultant over the fact that he was able to show increases in the various departments. When Labour were in office it was customary for Liberal and Country Party spokesmen to condemn Labour's administration for building up bureaucracy in Australia because the number of public servants in the State and the Commonwealth was growing at an alarming rate. We were told that we should stimulate employment in private industry. Today we find that in the Premier's own department there is an increase of four in the chief office, four in the office of the Agent-General and sixteen in the Department of the Co-ordinator-General. Of course, a number of those are draftsmen and engineers and I have no serious quarrel about that because we need to command the services of many skilled people in the preparation of developmental plans. Under "Parliamentary Counsel and Draftsmen" there has been an increase of two. I have no serious quarrel with that because I think the demands on our Parliamentary Draftsman are growing.

In the State Public Relations Bureau there is an increase of three. I have some quarrel with that because the money has been expended primarily not for the purpose of publicising the State, but to publicise the Government's activities in a political sense. We have seen circulated a spate of propaganda and a tremendous number of booklets, and each succeeding publication seems to try to surpass in cost those issued previously. I have no serious quarrel with the attempts being made by the Premier to fully publicise the State's potential but I feel, generally speaking, that there has been too much emphasis on the dissemination of propaganda that reflects credit on the Government only and that does not deal purely with statistical and factual information regarding the State as a whole.

Mr. Hughes: Don't you think it has done the State much good?

Mr. DUGGAN: No, I do not think it has. The mere fact of increasing the number of staff does not necessarily say that it is producing better results.

The number of Public Service Commissioner's Department employees has increased

by five but what I should like the Premier to specifically answer is the increase of 10 in the Public Service Superannuation Board. That seems to me to be rather disproportionate. Admittedly, there has been an increase in contributors but it seems a rather steep increase numerically in that department. There may be an explanation such as officers transferred from other sections; I do not know.

The other Votes on which I would like some explanation are the Steamer Subsidy, which has been increased from £24,000 to £31,500, an increase of 36 per cent. I know, because of increased costs, that it is not uncommon to find the operators of these services continually asking the Government for increased subsidies to serve people living in the areas affected, but it seems to be quite a steep increase in one year.

Another matter that I notice is the expenditure last year on the provision of life passes over Australian railways. This expenditure has increased by more than £1,000 to £2,067. That also seems a rather substantial increase.

Mr. Nicklin: Quite a number of members were defeated in the last election.

Mr. DUGGAN: Is the increase entirely due to that fact?

Mr. Nicklin: Yes.

Mr. DUGGAN: I did not think it would amount to that; that is why I asked that question.

There are some other aspects of the figures to which I refer. The subsidy to Playground and Recreation Association remains at £2,500. I thought, because of the Government's anxiety on the child delinquency problem, that they might be prepared to consider increasing the Vote to this association if they felt it was giving a worth-while service. The Vote has been kept stationary.

The other matter to which I wish to refer is the contribution to the Elizabethan Theatre Trust, which has been increased by £1,000 to £6,000. The Premier may or may not consider answering those questions.

I should like to refer specifically to Public Service administration and one or two matters referred to by Mr. Muir, the Agent-General, in his report. With regard to the Public Service generally, I think it could be said that there is a desire to see that the Public Service is made a professional career service. We do not want to see the sort of custom that was prevalent in the United States of America, where a change of administration from Republican to Democrat saw the major officials emptied out and replaced by people who had loyalties to the new regime. Fortunately, that system—spoils to the victor—has been abandoned and the trend in the United States of America is now towards professional career service.

In this country the great bulk of employment in the Public Service has been on that basis. For some time we have had the Public Service Act, which lays down a minimum standard of entry for candidates who seek permanent positions in the Public Service. Unless there is an Executive Council minute testifying that there is nobody within the Service capable of carrying out certain professional and specialised duties, the Public Service Act obliges the Government of the day to advertise vacancies in the Government Gazette and to deal with them according to the Public Service Regulations. I feel there has been a departure in that respect, notably in the Department of Labour and Industry. I am not canvassing that department, but the Public Service Act is administered by the Premier, and I think that there are people in the Department of Labour and Industry who, as members of the Public Service, are entitled to criticise seriously the trend that is developing in that department.

I have before me a copy of "The Toowoomba Chronicle" of a few weeks ago which contains an article headed "What the Public Service Offers." The Premier, through his Public Relations officers, provides the provincial Press with homely messages and so on. Generally speaking I pay tribute to the Premier in that respect, as in the great majority of these messages he does not abuse the courtesy of the Press by indulging in partisan propaganda. These articles are not of the type in which I hit at the Government as hard as I can and the Premier hits back as hard as he can. In those articles the Government frequently rely on the galaxy of the talent in the Public Relations Bureau, judging by some of the language used. I find in those articles words that we are not accustomed to hearing from the Premier. But I am not seriously questioning the practice.

Mr. Aikens: The Premier is very pleased with some of them when he reads them.

Mr. DUGGAN: Probably, but these articles generally are not what could be referred to as vicious political propaganda. I coincide that that is so.

Mr. Nicklin: You could hardly say that they are even political propaganda.

Mr. DUGGAN: Generally speaking I have no quarrel with them, but in the particular article to which I have referred in "The Toowoomba Chronicle" the Premier, dealing with the Public Service, went to some trouble to point out the growing opportunities that exist in the service for bright boys and girls who embrace the Public Service as a career. He told them—

"In actual fact, efficiency and merit are deciding factors right throughout an officer's career and he is not forced into a mould of regular annual increases. Theoretically he can leap into the higher classifications almost from the beginning of his career.

"I know, and I am sure many of you know, cases of rapid promotion of comparatively youthful public servants."

Then he went on to talk about the normal manner of entry and pointed out that in the academic year of 1958 so many boys and so many girls passed the prescribed examination. He urged them to consider the advantages of joining the Public Service. When we included in our policy speech the matter of a 35-hour week as an objective—not an immediate plan, but an objective to be progressively introduced as the fruits of automation and mechanisation became more generally operative in industry—we were criticised and accused of engaging in the most extravagant economic political promises that could bring about bankruptcy of the State. But the Premier in the article I have referred to said that one of the advantages of the Public Service is that it has a working week of 36½ hours spread over 5 days. There is no suggestion as far as public servants are concerned that because they are working less than 40 hours a week there will be grave economic dislocation throughout the State. The working week of 36½ hours, among other things, was put forward as a bait to encourage boys and girls to join the Public Service.

The Deputy Premier and Leader of the Liberal wing of the Government has done all he possibly can to sow in the minds of public servants the thought that no longer is the Public Service a place where a person can on merit alone rise to the highest positions in the service of the Government of the day. The Department of Labour and Industry today is somewhat like the Portuguese Army, all generals and not enough privates. We find that the number of industrial inspectors has been reduced. The number of travelling inspectors has been reduced by two, but at the same time there have been increases at the top level through new appointments. It does not matter how the Premier's spokesman may twist and turn phrases or indulge, in my view, in shocking abuse of Parliamentary privilege in the answering of questions about matters of great public importance, or how he tries to discredit us or cover up these things by saying that the particular designation of an officer is not in accordance with facts.

In 1957 there was an advertisement calling for a liaison officer in the chief office of the Department of Labour and Industry with a salary classification of £1,265-£1,380. The qualifications were enumerated in the advertisement as follows:—

"1. Knowledge and ability to cope with the demands of interested and affected persons for information respecting industrial potentialities of the State and the establishment or expansion of industries therein.

"2. General knowledge of financial and industrial matters.

"3. Ability to establish and maintain contacts and co-operation with the public generally.

"4. Ability to advise and assist inquirers upon matters associated with industrial development.

"5. Ability to conduct interviews with tact, discretion and courtesy.

"6. Ability to write and express ideas and facts effectively in the form of speeches and news articles."

I say quite deliberately that that appointment could have been filled without any difficulty at all by a career public servant from within the department. In Toowoomba I have seen a succession of industrial officers whose work has been recognised by the Commonwealth inasmuch as after they established their separate divisions in the Department of Labour in the Commonwealth Service they recruited nearly all these men at salaries far in excess of those that they were receiving under the Public Service Award of the State. I have not met one of these district inspectors who has not complied with all these requirements, and yet we find that an outsider in the person of Mr. Hirst was brought in.

Mr. Knox: Wasn't he for many years a public servant?

Mr. DUGGAN: Yes, he was. I have nothing personal against him; I have a high regard for him. However, he was brought in on this salary basis and, as everybody knows, seniority in the Public Service is determined on salary. We find that within three months the salary was increased to £1,460 and the position was re-advertised. Applications closed on 5 October, 1959, with a new classification of £1,825-£1,900. It has since been altered. However, the opportunity for appeal in all these cases has been reduced because they are excluded by the salary classifications.

Then we have the case of Mr. Bedwell. Again I have nothing personal against this officer, but there is a very strong suggestion that he was a very active campaign director for the Liberal Party. He was appointed Regional Development Officer at a salary classification of £1,625-£1,700. The requirements for this position were—

"1. Practical knowledge of primary industries and relationship to secondary industries, particularly in regard to larger ones, e.g., beef.

"2. Ability to undertake organisational and administrative work in connection with the formation of and the functioning of committees.

"3. Experience and knowledge of Queensland country centres.

"4. Good educational standard."

Again in this case any number of people in the Public Service—particularly in the Department of Labour and Industry—would conform to those requirements but they were passed

over. In the latest instance, the appointment of a former Premier of this State—I am not going to develop this very much—applications were not even called for the position. What incentive is there for a man who joins the Public Service when that happens? What incentive is there for a man who goes to Townsville, Rockhampton, Toowoomba or Longreach, and many other districts, or for inspectors who have been travelling for years? They go out to these positions with the understanding that the knowledge they gain will be useful and that it will enhance their prospects for advancement. We find that the same thing happened when Mr. Barton was appointed to the Main Roads Department. Again, I have nothing against Mr. Barton personally. However, we have been losing a tremendous number of engineers from the Main Roads Department. They have been accepting appointments as consultants to local authorities or entering practice and doing work for local authorities. There has been quite an exodus of engineers from the department. What incentive is there for a young man to say, "If I work hard, I will get to the top," when these things are creeping into the Public Service administration? It is time somebody stepped in and said, "We should get back to the position where the worth of a man determines the filling of a particular vacancy." If that is done it will ease the disquiet in Public Service circles today. I should like to speak longer on this matter, but unfortunately, I have not the time.

I should now like to comment on some aspects of the Agent-General's report. I commend Mr. Muir—I think he is a very good officer indeed—but some of the recommendations he has made in his report seem to be at variance with the facts. He deals with very important matters affecting the economy of the State. The other day the Premier, or perhaps it was the Treasurer, referred to the fact that out of about £900,000,000 export earnings for Australia, Queensland contributed about £190,000,000 and the Treasurer claimed that on a per-capita basis the export earnings of this State were the highest of any State in the Commonwealth. That is true, but unfortunately nearly all the articles covered by the Agent-General's report indicate that we are in for a very difficult time. All the latest financial journals indicate that. I have here some current ones. One is "The Australian Financial Review" dated 27 October and in it is an article headed, "World Trade Strikes Ominous Note for Australia." It points out the general decline in world markets, how raw materials generally have declined in price, and how surpluses are building up in almost every country in the world.

The European Common-Market, with a population of about 218,000,000 at present, constitutes the greatest single import group in the world and the second greatest export group in the world. I think it is only a

matter of time before the United Kingdom, because of the position it finds itself in, will be forced to enter that union. That will be a serious blow to all Commonwealth countries, in particular Australia, Canada and New Zealand. It cannot be lightly dismissed. Instead of spending a lot of time engaging in political wrangling and trying to sow the seeds of political dissension locally by making controversial appointments—by putting men in positions where even the most casual political observer knows it is purely for political considerations and not designed to improve the trade relations of the State—we should have a much closer liaison with the Commonwealth trade departments or, if necessary, establish independent trade offices in South-east Asia in particular. Something must be done in that direction very quickly.

Let us deal with sugar for a start. Australia's exports for the year ended June, 1960, were approximately 680,000 tons, a decrease of 90,000 tons compared with 1959. We know that, with the very difficult conditions operating in Cuba at the present time, there is a threat to the International Sugar Agreement. We also know that, with the increased production of beet sugar in many countries in the world and with Russia's expressed intention to try to undermine the capitalist countries on the markets of the world, we could well have a chaotic position in the sugar industry.

Mr. Muir in his report dealt with Australia's wool prospects and said—

"The problem for the wool industry is one of co-existence with synthetics in the wool market.

"Wool is maintaining its position. There is rising consumption in Japan, the United States, and in the principal Continental countries.

"The prospects for wool appear to be as sound as ever."

That does not stand up to a comparison with a factual presentation of the position. It seems that somebody in a high place has not got his facts right. Mr. W. A. Gunn, chairman of the Australian Wool Bureau, was reported in "The Courier-Mail" of 26 October last as saying that our wool industry was in a situation of crisis. He said it could be put back on its feet but this would involve spending at least £1 a bale on sales promotion. Only a year ago in this Chamber I suggested an increase on the existing 6s. a bale for this very purpose and it was dismissed as being a suggestion of not very much importance. Now we find the chairman of the Australian Wool Bureau advocating the spending of £1 a bale to deal with the problem. It was announced over the radio today that Mr. Gunn is leaving for overseas to try to cope with this very great problem confronting the wool industry. We find, too, that our net return for wool at present is the lowest it

has been for the last 10 years while the costs of production are slightly in excess of the average price for greasy wool received at the Sydney sales the other day.

Our pineapple industry is facing difficulties. So is the wheat industry. Mr. Warren McDonald, chairman of the Commonwealth Banking Corporation, said the other day it will not be long before Australia will be compelled to restrict acreages and varieties. He added that last year we had the greatest number of acres under wheat in our history and every country in the world that grows wheat is bursting at the seams with surpluses, and so on. We find a crisis confronting the grain industry. The Barley Board is meeting with trouble in attempting to market its crop and the pineapple industry is threatened because of Malayan supplies and also because of a slackening in the demand.

Mr. Muir said that the prospects for our chilled beef were very encouraging, yet in South Australia Mr. Marshall Irving, Chief of the Animal Husbandry Section, urged an entirely new approach to the export problem. He said he thought Australia had missed the bus in chilled beef and that we would have to consider snap-frozen beef and the use of prepacking. He pointed out that 80 per cent. of meat on the American market was sold in this way, and he poured cold water on our chilled-beef export policy. There is justification for all the resources of the Government being used and applied to maintaining our position as a primary-producing State. Unfortunately, this subject could well engage anyone who is interested in it for an hour at a time, and I have only two or three minutes left.

I appeal to the Premier to do what he can to get to grips with the severe threats overhanging the economy of Queensland, firstly because of drought, secondly because of a decline in prices on markets in other parts of the world, thirdly because of the distinct possibility of Great Britain joining the common market scheme, and fourthly because I think there is time to develop and promote trade with South-east Asia. Let us get rid of all this talk of the Commos. Mr. McEwan has strongly advocated trade with South-east Asia, Mr. Colquhoun leaves in two or three days for Japan, and we have a trade ship going to Singapore, Hong Kong, and other ports. I hope that this subject will be explored by the Government in the near future.

(Time expired.)

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (5.9 p.m.): As one is allowed in this debate to express opinions on the report of the Public Service Commissioner, I should like to discuss that section of his report that refers to industrial matters and the Public Service Award.

The attitude and the policy of this Government have contributed to the industrial unrest existing in Queensland. I hope to

prove that this contention is correct by referring to the Public Service Commissioner's report. In it he states—

"Crown employees have been given the right of access to the State Industrial Court in Part V. of 'The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts, 1932 to 1959.'

"Under Section 48 of these Acts, employees of the Government who are members of a registered industrial union are deemed to be employees for the purposes of the Acts and the permanent head of the department in which such persons are employed is deemed to be the employer.

"So that all industrial matters might be co-ordinated in a central authority, applications and claims affecting Crown employees other than those of the Railway Department are referred to the Public Service Commissioner who, on behalf of the Government, attends to subsequent industrial proceedings including departmental discussions, industrial conferences and representation at Court hearings."

That, in itself, would seem to be a very efficient way of dealing with all matters relating to wages claims affecting the Public Service, but the Government have set up two distinct classes. They have widened the breach between the white-collar worker in the Public Service and the worker in outside industries. What was the attitude of the Government when awards covering unskilled labourers under the Engine Drivers and Firemen's Award, the Building Trades Award, and many other awards came before the court? At the hearings where the Crown was represented the Crown adopted a neutral attitude, neither opposing nor supporting the union's application, but merely furnishing to the Court facts and factors to assist it in reaching its determination. They were forcing the employees on to the mercy of the Court. As a consequence the Court saw fit to make the following adjustments to the wages of these types of Crown employees or employees who would be affected by any variations in the awards: an employee in the building trade was granted an increase of £1 1s. a week; Government Printing Office labourers were granted £1 6s. 6d. a week; bridge, wharf and pier construction labourers, 5s. 9d. a week; forestry employees—labourers, 5s. 6d. a week; employees under the Surveyors' Labourers and Cooks Award—State Government, 8s. a week.

Mr. Ewan: Was not the judgment based on the evidence put before the Court?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I wish the hon. member would let me develop this argument. Unfortunately he has the habit of coming in before he has the full facts. If he is patient I shall answer any questions he likes to ask.

What was done about the tall poppies in the Public Service when they applied for

increased salaries? Applications for a variation of the Public Service Award affecting some 9,000 public servants were lodged in the Industrial Court by the Queensland State Service Union, the Queensland Professional Officers' Association, the Stipendiary Magistrates and Wardens' Association, and the Institute of Inspectors of Schools. What was the attitude of the Government, or the Public Service Commissioner? The Public Service Commissioner submitted to the Court that there were at least four methods of approach that could be followed in determining the salaries. The methods were—

"(i.) 28 per cent. of margins prevailing in 1955;

(ii.) 28 per cent. of present-day margins;

(iii.) A comparison of 'like with like'—i.e., the margins of the positions concerned in relation to those of similar positions in other Public Services and industries;

(iv.) Increases granted in other Public Services in salaries whose marginal content is approximately of the same amount as those under consideration."

In his address the Commissioner stressed that—

"(i.) Increases in those salary rates and salary classifications prescribed by the Public Service Award—State have since 1955 been granted upon the basis of either—

(a) A comparison of 'like with like' in relation to the margins of comparable positions in other Public Services; or

(b) a comparison of actual salaries paid to employees in Queensland engaged in banking, insurance, and commercial establishments.

(ii.) It was therefore relative values of work which determined the variations of the rates of pay and the amounts of those variations."

The Court in its judgment reviewed the recent history of salary fixation in Public Service awards and pointed out that in 1955 and 1957 salaries were increased on the basis of comparison with Public Service rates in other States and in the Commonwealth Service. Commenting upon increases agreed to in 1958, the Court said the parties made salaries in other States a basis of their agreement and, as regards male clerks, had been influenced by salaries paid in non-Public Service establishments, such as private banks, insurance offices, and to clerks in wool stores.

The Court decided that the "key" salaries in question should be determined on the basis used by the Court in its past reviews, and by the unions and the Commissioner in their 1958-1959 conferences. So we see that, on one hand the manual type of worker is being forced onto the mercy of the Court while, on the other, every consideration is tendered to the tall poppies of the Public Service in granting salary increases.

It is interesting to note that the Court requested the parties to confer, but in view

of the overall industrial and financial situation, little negotiation was possible. However, the parties did agree to submit four "key" salaries to the Court for determination and endeavour to determine subsequently in industrial conference the consequential adjustment of all other salaries, salary scales and classifications. On the one hand the Government are forcing certain of their employees onto the mercy of the Court, while on the other hand they are pleased to conciliate with the tall poppies of the Public Service.

Mr. Ewan: That is not altogether correct.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The hon. member has been lost in the mulga for so long that he would not know. If he says it is not so, let me cite the decision of the Court on the salaries of these tall poppies. I will take the Forestry Award—State Government as an example. The labourers, who were thrown on the mercy of the Court, received 5s. a week increase. A Clerk, Grade II—I am not familiar with the status of the Public Service but I should imagine that a Clerk, Grade II would be at the bottom of the scale—was given an increase of £115 a year. Going a little higher up the scale the Under Secretary received £600 a year increase and the highest classification in the award was increased by £700 per annum. Yet the hon. member tries to tell me that I am not familiar with the facts! The facts are all in the Public Service Commissioner's report, which shows clearly the anomaly existing between Crown employees who are white-collar workers and those doing the manual and menial tasks.

Mr. Ewan: I am suggesting that the unions did not put up a sufficiently good case.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The hon. member suggests that the Public Service Commissioner put up such a case that he brought to the notice of the Court the determination of the Government to preserve a wide gap between the white-collar workers and those performing manual, every-day tasks.

Mr. Ewan: Apparently the Court thought so in its judgment.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: If the hon. member had followed my line of argument he would have seen that I attempted to illustrate that the Crown, by its attitude of conciliation on the one hand and arbitration on the other, has set up a barrier—an unbridgeable gulf—between white-collar workers and manual workers and has created a situation of industrial unrest, and has aggravated it.

Mr. Ewan: I cannot accept that argument.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I would suggest that the hon. member should perhaps go back to the mulga and study the Public Service Commissioner's report.

I should now like to turn to the Public Service Superannuation Board. The amount estimated this year for the administration of

the Board is £16,786, an increase of over £1,700 on last year's figure. The balance sheet of the Public Service Superannuation Fund shows a credit of £7,451,041. With an increase in contributions and contributors, it follows that additional expense would be incurred in the administration of such an important Board. All political parties would agree that superannuation is not only desirable, but is very necessary, for employees in any calling or industry, whether in the Government Service or in private enterprise. We would not expect anomalies when the fund has reached the staggering credit balance of over £7,000,000, but unfortunately there are several to which I shall draw the attention of the Premier. I think he should give some thought to them, and at some convenient time consider the introduction of legislation to correct them.

According to my information a person under the age of 40 years on joining the Public Service is eligible to join the superannuation scheme, which embraces annuity, incapacity and assurance. Take the case of a person of 37 years on a salary of £1,250 a year. He is compelled to take out 20 units of annuity at 5s. 1d. a unit, or £5 1s. 8d. a month, 20 units of incapacity at 10d., or 16s. 8d. a month, and for assurance he is compelled to take out 20 units, four at 2s. 8d. or 10s. 8d. a month, and the remainder at 2s. 4d., 37s. 4d., making a payment for assurance of £2 8s. a month. This man under 40 years on a salary of £1,250 thus has to pay superannuation of £8 6s. 4d. a month. The amount is particularly heavy for a young man who is striving to rear a family, purchase a home and meet all the attendant expenses of a young married man. He has to purchase his home over a longer period than would be necessary if he had available to him the amount he pays in superannuation of £8 6s. 4d.

Mr. Knox: What do you suggest as an alternative scheme?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I suggest that he should be compelled to take out only a minimum number of units with the right to take additional units up to 20 if he so desires. I ask the Government to consider the position of a person who, before becoming an employee of the Crown, has undertaken insurance commitments to provide for his old age. That is why I feel if he was given a minimum number he could relate it to his insurance cover and his retiring allowance, and it would then ease the burden of the compulsory 20 units of superannuation.

Mr. Knox: Have you a figure in mind for the minimum number?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The minimum compulsory number is 20. A minimum of five could be taken out with the employee having an option to take any number above five, according to his financial circumstances.

When we turn to the incapacity provisions we see another injustice in that employees subscribing to the fund must have 10 years' membership before they are eligible for incapacity benefits. A decade is too long to contribute before any material benefit accrues from the fund. With the buoyancy of the fund a maximum of five years would be sufficient.

There is another aspect of the incapacity section of superannuation. Before a public servant can receive benefits from the incapacity fund he must first of all draw every penny of sick pay that is due to him. Perhaps we can have no quarrel with that, but on my information Public Service employees get a certain number of weeks on full pay for sickness and then revert to a figure calculated on the basis of half a week's pay for every week of sick leave they are entitled to. I suggest that a portion of the incapacity fund could be used so that when an employee of the Public Service is on sick leave on half pay, his wages are brought up to what he would be receiving for the first portion of his sick leave.

The fund is so buoyant that these innovations, and many others, could be introduced for the benefit of public servants.

When an employee is debarred from participation in the superannuation fund because he has failed to pass a medical examination, we find that no provision is made for him on retiring. The Government should consider seriously the establishment of something similar to a staff provident fund, with contributions made by those employees to be subsidised by the Government so that on retirement they will enjoy the same status as those who are eligible for benefits from the superannuation fund.

Public servants over the age of 40 can nominate the number of units they desire to take out under the Superannuation Fund, but persons under 40 are compelled to take a minimum of 20 units. It is singular that if an employee is 40 or over he can nominate the number of superannuation units he wants to take out and can thereby nominate a number of units that will not affect his age pension. Yet he may be working side by side with a person under 40 who has to contribute for a compulsory 20 units, which will eventually debar him from receiving the age pension. So we see the anomalies that have been created. Because of the difference in their ages Crown employees working side by side differ in wages up to £2 a week for the same work.

The Premier could well study some of the suggestions I have made. Although I have spoken strongly about the salaries of public servants, I realise that the Parliament as their employer owes them a duty to see that measures are taken to cater for them on their retirement. I hope at a later date to expand many of the suggestions but meanwhile I commend them to the Premier.

Mr. HANLON (Baroona) (5.31 p.m.): I want to refer firstly to the Mt. Isa Railway Project Fund and to repeat an appeal I made to the Premier and to the Government when the Railways Act was amended to provide for the establishment of that fund. That is for the Government to try to stir up a vigorous demand among the people of the State for the Commonwealth Government to make a direct contribution to the cost of the project in the national interest because of its nature. Over recent months I have seen some results of the appeal in that the hon. member for Gregory and, in the Budget debate, various other members of the Government have taken to task their colleagues in Menzies-McEwen Government in Canberra for the bias they seem to have against Queensland and for their unwillingness either to make a direct contribution towards any major development work in Queensland or to carry it out independently.

If there is any work that cries out for the Commonwealth Government to take a direct interest in it and to make a direct contribution towards it, it is the Mt. Isa railway project. I do not want to bore hon. members by repeating what has been said over and over again in this Chamber, but completion of the scheme will mean a tremendous increase in the national income. It will earn a great deal of money for us overseas through the expansion of industry at Mt. Isa. Other projects have been similarly neglected in the past. In the same Vote we see the Burdekin River Authority Fund which relates to another project that obviously cannot be completed until the Commonwealth Government take a practical interest in it. However, the Mt. Isa project in particular is one in which the Commonwealth Government should take a practical interest. Unfortunately, the only way they will be forced to do so is by the people of the State being actively mobilised into a measure of protest at the rejection of the case put forward by the State. They will not do that unless the Premier speaks up openly as Premier. I know he is more inclined to the gentlemanly approach than to the bombastic approach to these matters. That reflects his nature.

Mr. Ewan: Would you have it otherwise?

Mr. HANLON: That approach is all right if you are dealing with gentlemen but I point out that in this case the Premier is dealing with people who are not dealing with him in the same fashion. So he must take the gloves off if he is to get anywhere. More and more hon. members opposite are beginning to realise that. The hon. member for Gregory and various other speakers apparently believe now that the time has come to abandon the policy that the Premier and his Government have adopted over the past few years of trying to hush-hush any discussion in urging from Queensland and and that results will be achieved only through pressure from this Parliament or from the people to try to force the hand of the Commonwealth Government. Apparently various

followers of the Premier are now coming to the conclusion that the gentle approach will not pay off.

Mr. Ewan interjected.

Mr. HANLON: The Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity said in this Chamber in the last month or so not to count on his giving too much support to the Menzies and the McEwans in the Federal elections unless they do the right thing by Queensland. This applies irrespective of what Government are in power in the Federal Parliament, as far as I am concerned, because the only way in which Queensland will get a reasonable deal will be by refusing to tolerate any Government in Canberra who do not give us equal treatment with the other States of the Commonwealth. I understand that the hon. member for Maryborough has taken out information on these matters, which possibly he will give to the Chamber later on.

Mr. Ewan: We would rather hear your version.

Mr. HANLON: I might mention these things: the Leigh Creek railway; the Bell Bay aluminium works in Tasmania; and the Snowy River scheme, which is serving both New South Wales and Victoria. In one year alone almost the total cost of the Mt. Isa scheme is spent on the Snowy River scheme out of the revenue of the Commonwealth Government. We are not against the implementation of these other schemes. As Queenslanders, we must adopt an Australian attitude. We do not want to say, "Stop the Snowy scheme. Stop the oil refinery in Western Australia. Stop the Leigh Creek railway." We want to say, "Those things are good. We do not want them taken from other States." But if it is good enough for the Commonwealth Government to help the other States and give them very favourable treatment in regard to the Melbourne-Albury rail standardisation scheme, it is good enough for them to assist Queensland. Hon. members on both sides of the Chamber must work together if we are to get anything from the Commonwealth Government. We know that the real reason why the Commonwealth guaranteed the Mt. Isa rail project was that they were more or less forced into it. They were being bitterly attacked by all sections of the community in Queensland because the efforts of this State to secure finance for the Mt. Isa rail project were proving unsuccessful. Our own Treasurer was put in a most embarrassing situation by the Prime Minister by having it suggested to him that everything was fixed up in New York to secure the finance when that was not so. I do not want to go over that story. The only reason why the Commonwealth Government gave the green light to go ahead was because they realised that in this State their stocks were falling alarmingly; the public were waking up

to the fact that Queensland was being treated with supreme contempt by the Prime Minister and the Federal Government.

This money will be utilised very shortly. Several millions of pounds have been provided in the last two Budgets for the project. I am not saying that it is the fault of the Government, but it will be seen that so far only £700,000 of that amount has been spent. Now that the project is getting under way and the contracts have been let, Hornibrooks and others are on the job, and a large amount of money will soon have to be forthcoming. The agreement will have to be signed between this Government and it will have to be brought before Parliament for discussion and ratification, and I suppose similarly it will have to be brought before the Federal Parliament. I think there is very little time left for the people of Queensland and both parties in this Chamber to embarrass the Commonwealth Government to such an extent that they will be forced into the position of giving us something. If we are successful in doing that, it will not necessarily help the Australian Labour Party. I believe that this is a Queensland matter, and it should not be discussed as if it is going to be of advantage to the parties on this side of the House.

If the Government can persuade their Federal colleagues to provide, say, at least, £5,000,000, towards this project it will relieve them of a tremendous responsibility. They will be able to spend money on something else—perhaps irrigation. Some hon. members opposite already have criticised their own Government because they have had to cut down the Vote for irrigation as they are committed to these major developmental projects.

That is the position that has come about in Queensland over the last ten years. The previous Government started, and this Government are continuing a number of projects of national importance. I refer to schemes like the Marceba-Dimbulah project, the reconstruction of the Mt. Isa railway line and the Burdekin Dam project. The latter scheme is still in the same position it was ten years ago, although huge sums of money have been spent on investigation work. These schemes on which hundreds of millions of pounds have been, and will be, spent are developmental schemes of national interest. They are not schemes that fairly can be carried solely by the Queensland Government. The rest of Australia must realise their national worth and the Commonwealth must contribute accordingly.

At the conclusion of the debate on the Financial Statement, when the Treasurer was replying to the criticism directed at the reduced allocation for irrigation, he said that it was not economic for the Government to devote huge sums of loan money to settling people in areas where it cost between £50,000 and £100,000 to settle one man. As the Queensland Government—whether it was the previous Labour Government or the present Government—unfortunately we have been forced, particularly in the last 10 years,

into carrying these huge schemes on our own, which has deprived us of huge amounts of loan money and other funds that could have been diverted to what are rightly the Queensland Government's major responsibility—the construction of schools, hospitals, roads, and so on. With the limited finances available to the State Government it is not sound economically for them to have to embark on major projects of national importance. We are at the limit of our capacity. If we can embarrass the Commonwealth Government into helping us with direct aid on the Mt. Isa scheme we shall be doing a service for the State. Indirectly, if not directly, we shall be doing a service for the Government and hon. members opposite because they will have more money available to do things that will please Queenslanders, and have the Mt. Isa scheme progressing at the same time.

The Treasurer has admitted that much of the State's development has slowed down. In his Financial Statement he said that one of the reasons was the drain on the State's finances caused by these large developmental schemes. Perhaps it is difficult for hon. members opposite to embarrass their Federal colleagues within 12 months of a Federal election, but they should do it in the interests of the State. Probably they could do it more successfully than we could as the Opposition. Our criticism would be regarded more as a political attack than an attempt to get fair treatment for the State. The present Government would lose nothing at all in the eyes of the people if they were prepared to try to deliberately embarrass the Federal Government, to the extent that they consider justified, in an attempt to force them to give us a better deal on the Mt. Isa project.

Mr. Aikens: Use a little bit of blackmail.

Mr. HANLON: I think it is necessary. Nobody likes blackmail in the real sense of the word, but perhaps it is necessary in some of these instances where we are getting a completely bad deal. I do not think it amounts to blackmail, but merely making sure that we get a fair share—a fair crack of the whip. It appears that everybody except us is able to get that from the Commonwealth Government. We cannot escape the fact that in the House of Representatives Queensland has a group of 15 Government members. I suggest that that would be, or should be, one of the biggest single-interest "blocs" in the Federal Parliament. There are, I think, something like 144 members all told and about 90 on the Government side of the Parliament. There is a "bloc" of 15 people from one State. There are only about 35 or 40 from New South Wales with their diversified interests, and they are split on both sides of the House. Almost the entire contingent of House of Representatives members from Queensland are sitting on the Government side. They cannot be very satisfied with the efforts they

have made over the past 10 years, not having one major governmental project carried out in this State by the Commonwealth Government. I ask hon. members to compare the position here with that in other States.

It may be true that we have received a certain amount of help with roads and so on, as have the other States, under various road grants. We did get some money for the road to Mary Kathleen which might have been a special grant from the Commonwealth, but we got that only when this Government came to office. It had already been refused twice when sought by the previous Government, and it was refused once when sought by this Government. Eventually, probably because of some political influence that this Government were able to exert, the Commonwealth Government finally broke down and granted the money.

I do not want to keep on repeating myself but I feel it is necessary to do so. This position has lasted for 10 years and in many respects we probably get a worse deal from the Commonwealth Government today than we got in the past. It would appear that the £20,000,000 to be arranged for the Mt. Isa railway rehabilitation scheme through the Commonwealth Government will be at a fairly high rate of interest—something over 5½ per cent. I understand also that the Commonwealth Government will charge commission for securing the money for us. I point out that last year they deposited £17,500,000 with the International Monetary Fund in addition to other deposits to their credit, yet they are going to charge commission for arranging finance for this project. I wonder how long the people of Queensland will put up with the Menzies Government if they carry on in that way.

The appropriation for the Burdekin River Authority Fund this year has been reduced. In 1959-1960 it was £249,000 but only £42,195 was spent. I think perhaps the Premier might explain that; there might be some reasons for it but it is not very encouraging for people awaiting that scheme to find that Parliament appropriated practically £250,000 and the Government spent only £42,000 of it last financial year, and have cut the appropriation for 1960-1961 to £40,000.

Mr. Aikens: That allocation has nothing to do with the proposed Burdekin Dam. They have held that up altogether.

Mr. HANLON: All I know is that the work has to be carried out. It is very important work. Apparently it was thought important by this Government last year when they appropriated £249,000 for it. There must be some reason why they spent only £42,000. If they diverted it to something else we would like to know what it was and how it got priority over this project.

The only other matter I should like to deal with is the State Public Relations

Bureau. I agree with what has already been said from this side of the Chamber. To hear hon. members on the Government side one would think that the State Public Relations Bureau did not put out any informative pamphlets at all until this Government came to office. There were some very good publications by this Bureau for a number of years under previous Governments. In 1958 I enumerated a large number of them. One that I thought was very useful to hon. members and the general public was a little pamphlet that listed the various departments, the Ministers administering them and the sections in those departments. It was easy to find who was the Minister responsible for some particular activity. The information in the pamphlet was very helpful to hon. members, business people, trade unions and others who had to deal from time to time with the Government. By reading this pamphlet they could avoid a waste of time in chasing through various Government buildings and seeing certain officers before finally getting to the right person. If that pamphlet has not been reprinted and brought up to date, I think the Public Relations Bureau would be doing hon. members and the public a service by re-editing it and bringing it up to date.

If officers of the Bureau in order to fill in time have to take many photographs of Cabinet Ministers in an attempt to glamorise them, I think they could devote themselves to another task which, although not really one for the section, is most important. I raised the matter when the Estimates were being discussed last year. I refer to the need for easier identification of various Government departments. People in search of Government departments, particularly old people, can wander from office to office before they find the one they are seeking. The Anzac Square building is now near completion. I have sent a number of electors to departments in that building. There is not much difficulty in finding the Housing Commission, because the office is fairly close to the street, but difficulty is experienced in finding, say the State Children Department, which is on the fifth or sixth floor of the building. Old people can go down there and wander from lift to lift before they find the office. They see various arrows indicating the direction they should take, but when they get to the lifts they find very little information as to the floors on which the departments are housed. Old people who have visited departments in that building have told me they have taken half an hour to find the office they are seeking. Identification of the various departments could be undertaken at no great expense.

Mr. Nicklin: Would not the liftmen inform them of the location of the various offices?

Mr. HANLON: I am not saying they do not, but the lifts on occasions are very busy and carry from 20 to 25 people. The task of the liftman, with so many people in his lift asking for information on the location

of various departments, is a bit difficult. The difficulty in finding offices is increased by frequent rearrangement of the departments and changes in their location. In most commercial buildings a person looking for, say, ABC company, can go to the lift and see from the board that is it on the sixth floor, or whatever it may be. As the Anzac Square building is nearing completion, some attention could be given to this matter. I may be stretching a point in referring to it as a task that could be undertaken by the Public Relations Bureau, but nevertheless it is a matter for better public relations.

The only other point I wish to raise is the subsidy to the Playground and Recreation Association. I join with the Leader of the Opposition in suggesting to the Premier that before the next Budget is brought down he should consider an increase in the Vote of £2,500. The subsidy has stood at that figure for a long time.

Mr. Nicklin: It was increased last year.

Mr. HANLON: It is still a comparatively small subsidy. There is a playground in the Baroona electorate and the Playground Association does much good work providing for youngsters amenities that keep them occupied and help them physically, and prevent them from getting into trouble because they have nothing to do. However, the Government could well increase the amount made available for this work. I thought the figure had been stationary for some years. If it has been increased quite recently I am glad to hear it, but it could be further increased.

Mr. BURROWS (Port Curtis) (7.15 p.m.): Tonight I propose to tell a story. I do not think anyone will dispute its authorship, and there are no embellishments to it. It is necessary for me to repeat it because conflicting stories on the same subject have been told by members of the Government who have shown a careless regard, or careless respect, for the truth. The story deals with the Queensland-British Food Corporation. Some people have so distorted the facts as to make out that the venture was a great catastrophe to the State.

Mr. Gilmore: Would that be true or false?

Mr. BURROWS: It is absolutely false and the hon. member who interjects should be the last man in the world to question the truth of any statement made in the Chamber. Only the other day I heard him say here that it was possible to turn 11,000 head of cattle off 160 acres of land.

Mr. Gilmore: Oh, you're wrong. You did not hear what was said.

Mr. BURROWS: I heard the hon. member say it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Port Curtis is speaking about the Queensland-British Food Corporation. I

am afraid there is no provision in the Estimates for that undertaking. I should be glad if he would deal with the Estimates of the Premier and Chief Secretary's Department.

Mr. BURROWS: With all respect, Mr. Taylor, I agree with you in every way, but I was trying to establish the incorrectness, or the lack of veracity, of the hon. member who interjected. I think there is room for veracity in the making of every statement in this Chamber on every subject. When I hear hon. members making wild and ridiculous statements on subjects they know nothing about, I think I am entitled, as is every other hon. member, to point that out. As a matter of fact, when the hon. member for Rockhampton South made a silly statement on the carrying capacity of land, hon. members opposite interjected quite audibly, "You don't know what you are talking about." The statements I am going to quote tonight are not my statements. They are not biased statements made by a political supporter of a party. They are statements made by the Auditor-General, and I shall quote from the Auditor-General's report in connection with the Queensland-British Food Corporation.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out to the hon. member that there is no relationship between the Queensland-British Food Corporation and these Estimates. He is now obliged to speak to the Estimates and nothing further.

Mr. BURROWS: The provision is made by the Co-ordinator-General's Department.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member would quote to me where it appears in the Co-ordinator General's report I should be very pleased.

Mr. BURROWS: We all know that the Queensland-British Food Corporation has been wound up except for a few outstanding accounts. While that Corporation functioned, it came under the direct management of the then Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, the late Sir John Kemp, and that is my authority on the matter. The 1956-1957 report of the Auditor-General shows the winding up of the corporation.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. member does not obey my ruling I must ask him to resume his seat. He is not permitted to speak on the subject of the Queensland-British Food Corporation because there is no provision in these Estimates for any expenditure on that Corporation. I ask him to refer to some other subject.

Mr. BURROWS: I bow to your ruling. I do not intend mentioning it any further other than to say that I am a little surprised by your ruling, if I may be permitted to make that remark.

The present Government are very fond of referring to losses that have occurred on other ventures, and I should like to refer now to the expenditure that was incurred by them on the Queensland Centenary Commemorative Volume. An amount of £11,000 was paid to Jacaranda Press Pty. Ltd. for 11,000 copies of a publication dealing with Queensland's Centenary Celebrations and last year's Royal visit. They were to be sold at £1 a copy, but up to date the return has been only £2,870. I do not think that the Government would claim that venture has been very successful. Perhaps they might take that into consideration when they criticise ventures such as the one that I am not allowed to mention and which have proved so successful and beneficial to the State. If I get the opportunity, I intend to tell the full story of that other venture, because I think it is very necessary that the public should be told. Not everybody is in a position to get the full facts on these matters from an impartial authority. I sincerely regret that I am being denied the opportunity—I am not casting any reflection on you, Mr. Taylor—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member may speak on that matter in the debate on the Appropriation Bill.

Mr. BURROWS: Thank you, Mr. Taylor. That is really the only matter on which I was prepared to speak. I shall keep that story, because I think that, like wine, it will improve with age.

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) (7.24 p.m.): I wish to deal with the Burdekin River Authority, which is referred to at page 39 of the Auditor-General's Report. The statement of receipts and disbursements for the year 1959-1960, and from the inception of the scheme to 30 June, 1960, shows that in addition to the total expenditure of £2,478,000 to 30 June, 1960, £699,777 has been expended by the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply on irrigation works and development of a capital nature, making a total of £3,177,777. Reference has already been made to the reduced requirements for 1960-1961, and I wish to make a few brief remarks on that section.

I am disappointed that more members of the Government parties are not taking the opportunity of speaking about the Burdekin River Authority and asking the Government for some action this year to further the development of what has been described as one of the great schemes for the future development of Queensland and one that will assist the development of Australia as a whole. The Parliamentary representative for the district, the hon. member for Burdekin, tells us that the Government are enthusiastic in their interest for the scheme. He believes wholeheartedly that it is feasible and that it would be sound economically to eventually establish stages 2 and 3. We have

had statements to the contrary. Personally, I believe that the State Government have little faith in the scheme; I believe that the Federal Government have little faith in it. If the Premier has reports that explain the lack of expenditure in 1960-1961 he should table them and take the Committee into his confidence.

At the present time the people are being completely misled about the future possible development of this scheme. In answer to a question today the Premier set out a record of the negotiations that have taken place, which I presume is an explanation for the lack of provision of funds this year. It is to be regretted that the Premier did not read the statement in full although no doubt it will be published in Votes and Proceedings tomorrow. I think I should refer to the matter hurriedly and explain to the Committee the possible reason why the Government have reduced the amount available for the development of the scheme. I go back to 1949, when there was an Australian Labour Party Premier. On 9 August, 1949, there was a letter from the Premier to the Prime Minister forwarding a report and requesting that the Commonwealth Government meet half the cost of further investigations, and make a still more substantial contribution to the capital cost of the project. On the 23rd of that month the Prime Minister wrote to the Premier, saying that his representation would be given consideration. About 7½ months later, on 5 April, 1950, the Premier wrote to the Prime Minister with a further request for assistance. Five weeks later, on 15 May, the Premier again wrote to the Prime Minister requesting copies of the Commonwealth committee's report following subsequent discussions with State officers. I shall mention a little later that there was an investigation by Commonwealth officials in October, 1949, and later a report was presented to the Commonwealth Parliament. They reported that the scheme was quite sound.

On 19 May, 1950, four days later, the Prime Minister wrote to the Premier, advising that the Commonwealth were actively proceeding with consideration of the Burdekin scheme with a view to reaching an early decision. On 25 May, 1950, the Premier wrote to the Prime Minister, saying that the contents of his letter were noted. On 31 May, 1950, the Prime Minister wrote to the Premier enclosing a copy of a report on the Burdekin project that had been recently tabled by the Commonwealth Treasurer. On 8 June, 1950, the Premier wrote to the Prime Minister acknowledging his letter of 31 May, 1950. On 24 July the Premier wrote to the Prime Minister advising him of the constitution of the Burdekin River Authority, and requesting discussion with Commonwealth officers regarding Commonwealth representation on the Authority.

On 28 November, four months later, there was a telegram from the Premier to the Minister for National Development,

requesting information about the then position. The next day there was a telegram from the Minister for National Development to the Premier stating, "I hope to be able to put a report before Cabinet shortly. Until this is done it will not be possible to give you a firm decision."

On 2 February, 1951, there was a telegram from the Premier to the Minister for National Development asking whether the Minister's report had yet been submitted to Cabinet. On the same day there was a telegram from the Minister for National Development to the Premier advising that the report had not yet been submitted to Cabinet, and promising to do everything possible to expedite the matter. On 2 April, 1952, the Premier wrote to the Prime Minister forwarding a copy of a report on the project and requesting early decision regarding Commonwealth assistance with the implementation of the project on a stage-development basis. There were three stages. One stage was proceeding on the gorge dam. Possibly most hon. members have inspected it. That is quite a big project in itself.

On 23 April there was a letter from the Prime Minister to the Premier advising that a further examination would be made. On 4 November there was a letter to the Prime Minister seeking advice on the present position but there was no answer. Two months later there was another telegram from the Prime Minister and in December of that year the Acting Prime Minister stated in reply that the Commonwealth were considering details of their policy on land development, that a statement was in the course of production and that an announcement was expected to be made soon.

On 30 March, 1953—2½ years after the Minister for National Development had stated that Cabinet would soon reach a decision—the Premier wrote to the Prime Minister requesting advice on the position. In July—four months later—the Acting Premier wrote once more to the Acting Prime Minister requesting advice on the present position. Seven months later, in February 1955, the Premier wrote to the Acting Prime Minister asking if the Commonwealth intended giving financial assistance. The Prime Minister replied on 22 March, 1955—

"Commonwealth cannot agree to make special financial assistance available."

Then the Premier made his statement to this Parliament and, remember, this question was asked of him—

"Will he state concisely the efforts of his and previous Governments to induce the Commonwealth to assist financially in the implementation of the Burdekin Dam project?"

The Premier concluded his statement by saying, in effect, that owing to the tone of finality of the last communication it was considered that any further action on our part would be futile.

Where do we go from there? If the Premier could enlarge on the matter, or if there was any further communication after 22 March, 1955, I suggest he might do so when he replies. I think the whole position in regard to this scheme should be cleared up. I feel it is being used as a political football. Sir Arthur Fadden made the statement that he was in favour of it and would do everything possible to bring about its implementation. In 1947, Mr. Chifley said he would finance the scheme on a 50-50 basis and subsequently Sir Arthur Fadden and Mr. Casey, as he was then, came up and promised to consider it.

It seems quite evident from the available reports and the statement of the Premier of this State that the Commonwealth Government do not regard the scheme as sound, yet the people in that part of Queensland are meeting soon to consider ways and means of inducing the Federal Government to give it some assistance. At the same time, the Premier, observing the various reports and outlining them for the hon. member for Burdekin, admits it is no use having any further negotiations with the Federal Government.

I do not want to develop the argument any further; I think the story speaks for itself. It confirms the lack of interest in this project.

Mr. Murray, the Federal member for the district, is going to this conference, according to the newspaper report I saw. I am wondering whether he will table a report coinciding with that given by the Premier to this Chamber and whether he will draw the same conclusion and place it before that meeting.

If the scheme is uneconomic let us face up to it. If it will result in too great an expenditure for the results to be obtained let us be realistic, but let us have the evidence before us. If this Government are in possession of evidence, let it be placed before this Chamber.

This scheme was first put forward by a Mr. McKinnon, who was an irrigation engineer, in 1889. He put forward a scheme to dam the gorge at approximately the spot where the present dam was established and from what he said some 150,000 acres in the Burdekin Delta would be irrigated and it would be possible to irrigate some 150,000 acres between the delta and the gorge.

In 1945 the first serious investigations took place and as a result it was decided that a large scheme in various stages would be practicable and would be economically sound for the purpose of water conservation for irrigation, and hydro-electricity, and also for flood control in the Burdekin River.

A Commonwealth committee in a preliminary report in 1949 stated—

“The engineering proposals advanced by the Queensland Government are basically sound. A large volume of water can be

made available and substantial quantities of hydro-electric current can be generated at low rates.”

That is the report to which I have already referred. The Labour Premier of the day had to send several telegrams to the Menzies Commonwealth Government before the report was eventually tabled in the Commonwealth Parliament.

The estimated cost of the project was approximately £70,000,000. The Chifley Labour Government agreed to come in on the scheme on a fifty-fifty basis. The statement was made recently that the only crop that could be grown was tobacco. I am not entering into any argument as to what crops could be grown. Departmental inspectors, however, have made reports in which they state that tobacco, rice, cotton, millet and a large variety of crops could be grown either close to the river or further back, and in addition that cattle-fattening could become an important industry in that basin. However, I am not discussing that matter now. I am pleading with the Premier to come out in the open and let hon. members have all the information so that they can decide for themselves whether it is a practical scheme.

We remember that some people in the State ridiculed it. Mr. Colin Clark made the statement that it was the most fantastic, uneconomic proposal ever put forward, even by Australian standards. If his information was worth regarding, let us take notice of it—let us investigate it—but other men have said that various crops could be grown economically and that the proposal was sound. The main report was submitted by J. R. Kemp, Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, Mr. W. Nimmo, Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply, and Mr. Neil Smith, Commissioner of Electricity Supply. Mr. Kemp was chairman of the committee.

Who were some of the men who prepared the reports of the various departments? Who were the public servants in the various departments who were advising the Government? Hon. members can read in the Library page after page of reports, estimates, etc., illustrated with maps and diagrams, written in support of the scheme. The Government cannot have it both ways. Either their judgment is sound, or it is unreliable and Mr. Colin Clark was right. Or was he disgruntled because he did not get a certain position in this State and was small and mean enough to report in that way? I am not going to pass judgment. I have raised the point, and finally I want to mention the names of the officers who supported it. They were Mr. H. Egeberg, Chief Engineer of the State Electricity Commission, Mr. F. B. Haigh, Mr. E. N. Shepherd, Deputy Chief Engineer, Co-ordinator-General's Department, Mr. P. H. Skerman, Agricultural Resources Officer, Dr. W. A. Summerville, Director of the Division of Plant Industry, Department

of Agriculture and Stock, Mr. J. C. Mathison, Engineer, Mr. D. A. Crawford, Engineer, and Mr. W. H. R. Nimmo.

Those are the people who put their names to this report, together with the then members of the committee who prepared the report, namely, Messrs. J. R. Kemp, W. Nimmo and Neil Smith. They stated that the proposal was economically sound and advised the Government to proceed with it. However, the Commonwealth Government turned it down.

Before certain people call a meeting in Ayr and invite their Parliamentary representatives to Ayr to discuss the matter with them they should know the facts. I say that their legs are being pulled if the Commonwealth Government are against the scheme. Either the Commonwealth Government are failing in their duty to assist in the development of a mighty scheme with tremendous possibilities or the claim of Mr. Colin Clark was right, and the reports of all of our leading experts in the various departments were carelessly prepared, in that they support an uneconomic scheme that would involve the State in an expenditure of some £70,000,000, an action that would be unworthy of the traditions of the various great professions these men follow.

They are not my opinion. I am prepared to accept the reports of our Queensland experts. We cannot have it both ways; we must have to have it one way or the other. The Premier on behalf of the Government is endeavouring to bluff the people of the State into believing that he supports this scheme. He has led the hon. member for Burdekin, who strongly supports the Government, to believe it is only lack of funds that prevents this Government from going on with stages 2 and 3 of the scheme. We know from the Premier's statement that the Commonwealth Government have come out in the open and said quite definitely they will have no more to do with the scheme. They have said, in other words, that it is uneconomic and should not be proceeded with. I plead with the Government to let the people interested in this scheme have all the information in the possession of this Government and the Commonwealth Government and explain why they have made no representations to the Commonwealth Government during their four years of office.

There is a Vote of £6,000 for the Elizabethan Theatre Trust this year. In the past I have criticised this Trust—and I stand by that criticism—on various productions they have taken to the country. However, I am pleased to say the opera this year was equal to anything produced in any part of Australia. They have the best cast in Australia and they have given great joy and pleasure to thousands of people throughout the State, even right out to Mt. Isa. They were followed by a Shakespearean group, which did excellent work. They presented splendid productions for the school children and the people generally, excerpts from works of Shakespeare that otherwise they would not

have seen unless they came to the city. I commend that type of work. However, if the Government are going to increase the amount of money available for the Elizabethan Theatre Trust, Parliament should have before it some detailed report. I do not know whether I have missed the report. If I have, I stand corrected. So far I have not seen any detailed report and one should be presented giving details of management.

The Government should have some say in the various programmes to be taken around the countryside and some details as to the method of expenditure so that we could see whether there is any waste. There was a suggestion some years ago that there was a good deal of waste. I want to see a detailed report on every aspect of their activities, because next year I am advised that the people who have carried out this operatic work are to be thrown on the scrapheap and that next year no operatic work will be performed by the Elizabethan Theatre Trust. That is just as bad as the Government's policy on timber reserves for the future development of the State. They are chopping and changing. If the Government are putting so much money into it they should have more say.

I suggest that the Public Service Commissioner be requested to look into the provision of amenities for public servants. Much has been said about amenities for the Public Service. I feel it is a flash in the pan, that some improvements were carried out in certain quarters after the 1957 election, and that since then there has been a slipping back. I bring to the Treasurer's attention the proposed new State Insurance building, in an endeavour to persuade him to hasten its construction, as then better amenities will be provided for the office staffs. It is to be built out of the profits of the State Government Insurance Office. For the same purpose I mention the railway office in Maryborough.

I have one other matter to refer to and that is the apparent lack of co-ordination between departments. Somehow or other affairs seem to get bogged down between departments. I am not laying any blame on anyone for this because it has gone on over the years. I have found that when there is a matter that has to be dealt with by several departments—I have nothing but praise for the individuals—to get from one department to another and get all the information relative to the particular subject, there does not seem to be co-ordination, or somebody responsible to see that everything moves on, and does everything that is necessary to move it on. I could quote a number of examples, but I do not want to do so because I do not want to narrow it down and criticise any particular section or office. I cannot narrow the blame down, but there seems to be a lack of co-ordination. As I have said, this does not apply to a single department, it applies when the problem has to be attended to by four or five departments.

It has taken four or five years to complete some matters dealing with the resumption of land, and I am not blaming any particular department or section. I think there is a good deal in the complaints, and that the matter should have been looked into many years ago.

Mr. Windsor: You are not only losing ground; you're on the march out.

Mr. DAVIES: I have no time to be facetious.

The hon. member for Windsor spoke of the extension of the Botanical Gardens. That is a matter I have mentioned several times. It is not something I want done now, but, as various resumptions become possible, the time must come when, with co-operation between the Brisbane City Council and the State Government, the Botanical Gardens will be extended to include the area bound by Edward Street, Charlotte Street, George Street, and Alice Street, to include sites for the Art Gallery, Museum, and so on.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. DAVIES: The other point I wanted to touch on concerns the Secondary Industries Division of the Department of Labour and Industry, which considers requests from various centres in the State seeking assistance and advice on ways and means of establishing new industries. The tendency is to put all the responsibility and expense upon those various centres. I know it is a call on the initiative of the citizens in those centres, and they certainly have initiative, but I do not see why they should be asked to start right at the beginning. In Bowen, for instance, the people are subscribing some £3,000 a year over 5 years.

Dr. Delamothe: A very good example to other towns.

Mr. DAVIES: It is an example of public spiritedness, but it should not be necessary. The Government are employing officers to make efforts to establish industries, and I have respect for the efforts of these individuals. The man who seems to be suggested for an overriding appointment is Mr. E. Hennessy, of Victoria. He is a man with a world reputation. All who know of him seem to regard him as one of the outstanding men in Australia as an adviser on industrial development. His advice on planning and industrial development is sought by the Commonwealth Government and by other countries, and it would be much cheaper in the long run if the State Government were to pay a high figure to try to get the services of such a man. Possibly he would bring far better results than throwing the onus on various local citizens. I have great respect for some of those officers but regret the recent appointment of a new liaison officer. For instance, one of the surveys that has to be done calls for obtaining the assistance of the University for a local economic survey at great expense. Why could not that sort of thing be done by the Government over

the whole of the State instead of passing the buck onto the individual citizens? If the Government had given much more consideration to it, the desirability of appointing an officer like Mr. Hennessy would have become apparent, but they have tackled the problem from the wrong angle. The local citizens in the various districts have to meet the expense of seeking out information in great detail whereas the department should have stored up the information over the years. It should be able to say to the people in the various centres, "Here is the information we have so far." Instead of that, we in Maryborough are expected to start from the very beginning and to approach the University to have an economic survey made of the area. Advice has been given to them to follow on the same lines as Bowen. That will cost some £15,000 over 5 years.

(Time expired.)

Mr. ADAIR (Cook) (7.49 p.m.): I have raised this subject on previous occasions and have been ruled out of order, but I am going to ask the Premier to grant hon. members from the Far North and the Far West extra passes for air travel. It is impossible for me and other hon. members to travel by train to remote areas. Even to travel to Cairns by train takes two days and two nights and there is no railway from Cairns to Cooktown and Coen and other places in my electorate. Therefore I must travel either by air or by car. I do as much travelling by car as any other hon. member in this Chamber, and probably more. I had a car for 18 months, and in the time I was absent from this Chamber I travelled 45,000 miles. I think that supports my contention that the granting of extra air passes is a necessity. I give the Premier and the Government credit for granting an extra two return air passes when they assumed office, but I believe that members representing remote areas of the State are entitled to at least one return pass a month so that they can return to their electorates and provide an adequate service for the electors.

I have not had a pass for the last three months, because I used most of my passes at election time. It takes me two days and two nights to get to Cairns by train, and when I returned home last week I had to spend the remainder of the week in other parts of my electorate. I ask the Premier to give consideration to granting members representing distant electorates at least another four return air passes.

I also bring to the Premier's notice the subsidy paid to John Burke Ltd. on the shipping service from Brisbane to Thursday Island and Gulf ports. This subsidy has been increased from £24,000 to £31,000. I believe that £24,000 was quite sufficient for this service, and that any additional money by way of subsidy should have been given to the two smaller companies that are doing such an excellent job in that area. Hollands have a boat service that transports goods and meets the requirements of the people in

ports where ships belonging to John Burke Ltd. cannot go. I think they are finding it difficult to continue that service with one boat, and if it goes off the run the people in these remote parts of the State will be deprived of the service. If they received a subsidy of, say, £2,000 or £3,000, they would have an incentive to carry on.

Mr. Hughes: There would not be any competition.

Mr. ADAIR: The ships operated by John Burke Ltd. cannot call at these small ports, and these are the only boats that can provide the service. Mason's boat service received a bank guarantee of £9,000 from the previous Government to enable them to fit diesel engines into their boat to serve those remote parts of the Gulf country.

Mr. Windsor: What size are they?

Mr. ADAIR: They are only small boats. Mason's is about 50 tons.

Dr. Noble: One is about 300 tons.

Mr. ADAIR: Holland's boat would be. These small boats are giving an excellent service, and I have received requests from the proprietors for subsidies. They need help, and if they do not get it I do not think they will be able to carry on.

I commend the Co-ordinator-General's Department for the good work it has done on the Barron River Hydro-Electric Extension Project. An excellent job has been done there. Only recently the department gave a £2,000,000 contract to an outside company—Transfield (Qld.) Pty. Ltd. On my recent visit to the area I was informed that the men previously employed by the Co-ordinator-General's Department had been put off. They fear that they will not be re-employed by the new company, that men will be brought up from the South to work on the job. The crushing season will finish very shortly. Mossman mill will be closing down this week and the other mills in a few weeks' time. Unless the mill-workers can find other jobs there will be a great deal of unemployment in the Cairns district. I should like the Premier to ensure that local men get preference for employment. The cane-cutting season has finished and although most timber mills are well stocked at the present time, when the wet season comes in about the middle of December there will be a long slack in the timber industry. I impress on the Premier the need to ensure that the new company taking over the contract gives preference to local men. As I have said, the Co-ordinator-General's Department has done an excellent job up there. Most of the work has been carried out by local labour. They have done their work efficiently, and I am sure that local labour could do the rest of the work for the new company very efficiently.

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (7.58 p.m.): I thank hon. members for their contributions. Many interesting suggestions have been offered. It was

particularly noticeable that there was no very violent criticism of the department's operations.

Mr. Walsh: We are saving it up for the debate on the Transport Act.

Mr. NICKLIN: Thank you very much.

At the outset I take the opportunity to pay tribute to the officers of my department. Each and every one of them, from the Under Secretary down, has made a wonderful contribution, particularly in the last 12 months. As is evident by the tone of the debate, they have also given satisfaction to hon. members who have had occasion to come into contact with them. I think that at times some of them have been called upon to work harder than they should be expected to, but on every occasion they have been only too willing to respond and in the true spirit of good Queenslanders they have made their contributions towards the effective government of the State.

In the contributions made by a number of hon. members three subjects stood out—the State Public Relations Bureau, the Agent-General for the State, and the Public Service Commissioner's Department. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who led the debate, made an attack on the operations of the Public Relations Bureau. He also sounded some faint praise, but every point that he made was very effectively answered by the hon. member for Kelvin Grove.

Unfortunately, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition seems to see something political in everything that is done by any Government department; more particularly does he see that applying since this Government came to office.

I suggest that the Public Relations Bureau spends at least 95 per cent. of its activities and energies on the promotion of the State of Queensland. Naturally, it does some political work for the Government. That is part of the duty of a public relations bureau.

Mr. Lloyd: I admitted that much work done by the Public Relations Bureau was of great service to the State.

Mr. NICKLIN: I am glad to have that admission from the hon. member.

Mr. Walsh: You used to complain about that when you were in Opposition.

Mr. NICKLIN: I suppose I had a right, as Leader of the Opposition, to criticise. I might suggest, however, that my criticism was well directed and well justified.

Public relations today are particularly important, not only in government but also in private industry. All worth-while industries today employ a public relations section and, as we are operating the largest business in Queensland, we should have an effective public relations bureau working in association with the Government. We have a very effective Public Relations Bureau.

Mr. Lack and his staff are doing a grand job in furthering the interests of Queensland and carrying out the duties that come to them as public relations men. We would be failing in our duty if we as a Government did not do everything possible to publicise this State and spread widely its advantages for people who want to come here and invest money, and also to sell the State from a tourist point of view. Undoubtedly, the Public Relations Bureau is making a great contribution towards that end.

Mr. Lloyd: This sounds like the debate in 1952.

Mr. NICKLIN: I do not know anything about the debate in 1952 but I find there is a division of opinion among hon. members opposite. Of course, we are used to that. The hon. member for Kelvin Grove wanted to reduce the strength of the Public Relations Bureau, while the hon. member for South Brisbane wanted to increase it.

Mr. Walsh: Did you say "the hon. member for Kelvin Grove"?

Mr. NICKLIN: I should say the hon. member for Kedron.

Mr. Lloyd: I wanted to divert it away from the political angle.

Mr. NICKLIN: The Public Relations Bureau has been particularly effective in saving the Government money. The Government spend quite an amount of money in advertising and, as a result of the activities of the Public Relations Bureau and its control of governmental advertising, last year we saved £12,000, half the cost of running the Bureau. That is a very important phase of their multitude of activities.

Mr. Walsh: Was that at the expense of the metropolitan dailies or the provincial Press?

Mr. NICKLIN: At the expense of nobody. Their advertising is more effective and duplication was avoided. As a result, the Government were saved £12,000 which could be utilised for some of the many things that have to be done.

Mr. Lloyd: What about political advertising?

Mr. NICKLIN: The hon. member thinks only of political things. Political advertising is paid for by the political parties, or should be.

Mr. Hanlon: What about that book entitled "Three Years' Achievement" that came out by chance before the election?

Mr. NICKLIN: It was a remarkable record of achievement by the Government, a book that members of the public were very happy to receive. Unfortunately we were not able

to meet the great demand for copies from people who wanted to know what had been done by the Government.

Mild criticism was voiced by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition of the "News Bulletin". It is a particularly valuable publication with wide circulation in places where the information is of great benefit as publicity for the State.

The hon. member said it was used for political purposes. The copy I have here happened to be lying on my desk. I did not look at it before I entered the Chamber but if any hon. member can find in it anything of a political nature, I should like him to point to that item.

Mr. Bennett: The latest issue has a photograph of Mr. Morris putting a garland over a girl's head.

Mr. NICKLIN: What is political about that?

Mr. Walsh: Despite the publicity, you got 1 per cent. less votes than you got in 1957.

Mr. NICKLIN: Nevertheless, we are here, whether we got 1 per cent. less votes or not.

Another excellent publication, "Welcome to Queensland" contains 60 pages of information about the State. If any hon. member has not read it, I suggest he do so; he would know a lot more about the State after reading it. It is a publication of very high order, and is an example of the quality of work of the Public Relations Bureau.

Not a week passes without an article being published by the Public Relations Bureau, not in Queensland but in different countries of the world, on some particular phase of activities in the State, and we are reaping rich dividends from that work.

Mr. Hanlon: Has there been an increase in the staff in the last couple of years?

Mr. NICKLIN: No.

Mr. Lloyd: They must be flat out writing speeches for members of the Government.

Mr. NICKLIN: They do their work very effectively.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to the reports of the Co-ordinator-General, the Public Service Commissioner and the Agent-General. They are excellent reports that reflect great credit on the officers who produce them.

Mr. Lloyd: I said that.

Mr. NICKLIN: I am emphasising the point made by the hon. member. The reports are full of information that is of great use to the people who are interested in the welfare of the State.

In discussing one section of the report of the Agent-General, the hon. member referred to the signing of the International Sugar Agreement, and paid a tribute to the work done overseas by our representatives.

Unfortunately he could not resist having a "crack" at the representatives of the C.S.R. company, particularly Mr. Wheen. I point out that Mr. Wheen has made a tremendous contribution to the future of the Queensland sugar industry by bringing about the very satisfactory results that were achieved at the International Sugar Conference.

Mr. Lloyd: You must have misunderstood me. I did not have a "crack" at him.

Mr. NICKLIN: I am afraid I did misunderstand the hon. member.

Mr. Lloyd: I said that in my opinion it was the responsibility of a representative of the Government, maybe yourself.

Mr. NICKLIN: I know the hon. member said that, but he also had a "crack" at Mr. Wheen, of the C.S.R. Company.

Mr. Lloyd: I said that the C.S.R. was a Government-created monopoly, which it is.

Mr. NICKLIN: I should like to take this opportunity of paying a tribute to the Australian delegation. No other sugar-growing country in the world is better served by its delegation than we are, through the Agent-General, Mr. Muir, the late Mr. Ronnie Muir, Mr. Eddie Pearce and Mr. Wheen, all of whom have made tremendous contributions to the successful results achieved. We in Queensland, and the sugar industry, are indeed fortunate to have in London a man such as Mr. David Muir representing us in international sugar circles. There is no better informed gentleman in the world today on sugar affairs than Mr. David Muir, and his standing in international sugar circles is immensely high.

Mr. Lloyd: He seems to be very much concerned about the reduction in the world price of sugar.

Mr. NICKLIN: Who would not be concerned about the reduction in the world price of sugar? As a Queenslander and as a man who represents Queensland, Mr. Muir knows what an effect it has on our economy.

Mr. Lloyd: It is very difficult to get anything definite from members of Cabinet on these questions.

Mr. NICKLIN: The hon. member must also remember that conditions change very quickly in the sugar world, and they have changed quite considerably since Mr. Muir wrote his report. There has been a short-fall at Mauritius and as a result there has been an increase in the sugar allocation for Australia. That has resulted in an increase in peaks in Queensland, which is very fortunate at this time of the year. I repeat that we are very fortunate to have such a man as Mr. Muir as our Agent-General in London caring for the sugar interests of Queensland.

The hon. member for Carnarvon made a very good contribution on the Public Service and the need to encourage entry to the

Public Service. The Government are also concerned with building up the Public Service. We have a very excellent Public Service that gives great service to the State. In recent years, unfortunately, we have not been getting a fair proportion of the "tops" of the Senior and Junior examinations. They have been going to the insurance companies, the banks and industry generally. We have not been getting the best boys and girls from these examinations. This year we are making a drive to encourage entry into the Public Service of the best of the boys and girls coming from our secondary schools. As a result of that drive I hope that we will get some of the top boys and girls into the Public Service to help build up the standard for the future. We have also instituted arrangements within the Service, whereby various departmental heads and others may attend the various discussion groups, seminars and conferences on business methods and administration. We are associated with the Australian Institute of Management, and its lectures are regularly attended by various members of the Public Service. That is all designed with the idea of building up the knowledge of those members and of getting better service for the State. The officers of the Public Service welcome the opportunity of mixing with business executives at those gatherings and I am sure the Public Service will benefit greatly. We hope to continue to develop the scheme to give officers an opportunity of keeping abreast of developments in the business world, particularly in administration, and the hon. member for Carnarvon can be assured that everything possible is being done to encourage and build up the highest standard in the Public Service.

The hon. member made a very good contribution on the employment of former members of Parliament in the Public Service. I entirely agree with him on that. Why should a man be denied the right of employment in the Public Service of the State because he happens to have been a member of Parliament? If he has the capabilities needed, why should he be treated as a pariah in respect of the Public Service just because he represented the people of the State in the Parliament? A.L.P. members have criticised the fact that no defeated A.L.P. members have been appointed to the Public Service. The reason is that no defeated A.L.P. candidates of an employable age have made application to enter the Public Service.

Mr. Lloyd: They may be too proud.

Mr. NICKLIN: I do not know the reason, but I make the point because A.L.P. members have implied that the Government are extending a measure of preference in re-employment to defeated Q.L.P. candidates.

Mr. Thackeray: That is true. Everyone knows it. It is the talk of Queensland.

A Government Member: What is the talk of Queensland?

Mr. Thackeray: The hand-out to V. C. Gair.

Mr. NICKLIN: I assure the hon. member there has been no hand-out to Mr. V. C. Gair.

Mr. Thackeray: Of course there has!

Mr. NICKLIN: Mr. Gair received employment from the Government in a very important position in the Government service, and I believe that in that position he will give very good service to Queensland. He has all the knowledge; he has all the capabilities, and he has the ability to serve.

Mr. Thackeray: When Morris is shot out his job you can employ him.

Mr. NICKLIN: We will never employ the hon. member for Rockhampton North.

Mr. Walsh: Now he is blackmailing you.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. NICKLIN: The hon. member for South Brisbane said that the Brisbane City Council was being badly treated by the present Government in not getting as much money as it would like. I remind him that the Queensland Government are not getting as much money from the Loan Council as they would like. The figures show that the Brisbane City Council is particularly well treated by the present Government. The allocations that have been made are—

Year	£
1956-1957	3.66 million
1957-1958	3.7 million
1958-1959	3.9 million
1959-1960	4.3 million
1960-1961	4.5 million

The Council has received an increase each year since this Government took office. It has been treated similarly in subsidy allocations, which have increased from £612,000 in 1956-1957 under the previous Government to £1,454,000 for the current financial year. I should like to remind the hon. member for South Brisbane that it was not very many years ago that the Brisbane City Council had great difficulty in raising the amount that was allocated to it in loan funds. The council has been treated very well indeed by this Government.

The hon. member also referred to the increased contribution to be made to the Elizabethan Theatre Trust. There seems to be a division of opinion among hon. members opposite on this question. The hon. member for South Brisbane was very much opposed to any increase, while the hon. member for Maryborough justified the amount that was provided.

Mr. Lloyd: I think he queried how it was spent.

Mr. Aikens: Money well spent.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. members do not cease this conversation across the Chamber I shall have to deal with them.

Mr. NICKLIN: The Elizabethan Theatre Trust is making a contribution to the cultural life of Australia and of Queensland. For the information of the hon. member for Maryborough, it does publish an annual report of its activities, which he can get if he asks for it. It is a public organisation and it publishes an annual report for the information of the public. It receives contributions from the Commonwealth Government, the State Governments and various municipal councils.

Mr. Davies: Each contributor should receive a report.

Mr. NICKLIN: The Government do receive a report.

Mr. Lloyd: Is there any Government audit?

Mr. NICKLIN: I do not know. It is not subject to audit by the State Auditor-General, but I do not know whether it is subject to audit by the Federal Auditor-General.

The hon. member for South Brisbane also raised the question of the North Pine River dam. He should be the last one to make any comments about that, because I remember that in the Brisbane City Council, in 1957 or thereabouts, he joined very vigorously with the C.M.O. in blaming the Government up hill and down dale when they suggested that the Pine, the Albert, the Logan, and other rivers should be put under a separate developmental authority for the benefit of the shires.

Mr. BENNETT: I rise to a point of order. I ask the Premier to accept my denial. I did not join in any debate on that matter in 1957 or at any other time.

Mr. NICKLIN: I accept the hon. member's statement, but I have rather a vivid recollection of the hon. member's having quite a lot to say about it. For his information, irrespective of any negotiations now proceeding between the Brisbane City Council, the Government, and the Pine Shire Council and the Redcliffe City Council, the construction of the dam is not being hampered in any way. Work is proceeding at present on boring foundations, and the plans are being rushed to completion by the Department of Local Government.

Mr. Bennett: What about the work force and materials? They should be getting them ready now.

Mr. NICKLIN: There is a lot of planning to be done yet. The dam site has not yet been bored. The work force and materials will be very quickly assembled when the time comes. The first thing is to find out the quality of the dam site.

The hon. member also had something to say about accommodation for public servants in Government departments. He was answered very effectively by the hon. member for Kelvin Grove. I must admit that when we took over I was astounded and

dismayed at the lack of decent accommodation for members of the Public Service; I was ashamed at the lack of amenities available in Government departments. In the last few years we have made quite an improvement, but by no means the improvement that needs to be effected.

Mr. Newton: What about the physical workers outside of Government departments?

Mr. NICKLIN: I would suggest that the workers to whom the hon. member refers have far better amenities than many public servants working in Government offices. I assure the Committee that the Government, as quickly as they possibly can, will make up for the lack of amenities that has resulted from years of Labour neglect. One would not expect that the Labour Government would have so little regard for their own employees as to allow conditions to get into the state, they were in.

Mr. Hilton: Would the Premier consider the new building, which is just about completed, to be lacking in amenities?

Mr. NICKLIN: It is one of the new buildings. The new buildings are all right. It is the old buildings that were dreadful.

I congratulate the hon. member for Kelvin Grove on his very excellent contribution, and the effective way in which he dealt with the matters raised by hon. members opposite.

As is his usual style, the hon. member for Ipswich East made a very thoughtful contribution to the debate. He raised a very important matter when he referred to the Agent-General's premises in London. For some time now the Government have been aware of the accommodation problem in Queensland House. Not only is the accommodation overtaxed but also there is the fact that we have a very insecure tenancy. We have only a yearly lease of the present premises, and we are likely to lose that at any "crack of the whip." With these factors in mind we have been negotiating for some time with one of the other British Commonwealth countries for the lease of another building in the Strand which will provide approximately three times the floor space available to us at Queensland House. The existing premises are beautifully placed, right in the centre of the Strand, and the windows of Queensland House are used to great advantage to make displays of various activities and industries in Queensland. They are changed regularly. As the hon. member for Maryborough previously interjected, Queensland makes the best use of any of the States of its window space.

The negotiations of which I speak are in the preliminary stages but there is a reasonable chance of our obtaining a lease of those premises within the next year or so. We hope that we will not be turned out by the people who have bought the premises before we can move into these other premises, which are not quite so advantageously placed but are in the Strand and in quite a good position.

In the meantime, the Rhodesian Government has helped us out in our accommodation problem by leasing us portion of their premises where we can store many things. To sum up, the position is that the Government recognise that the present Queensland House is not large enough for our requirements and we hope to make alternative arrangements in the not-too-far-distant future.

The hon. member for Sherwood mentioned the Australia Day Committee and said that as a result of the extra assistance given to it by the Government it had been able to make a greater contribution in recent years towards effectively commemorating Australia Day. I pay tribute to this enthusiastic committee, which guides the destiny of Australia Day commemoration in the State. It deserves a great deal more support from the business community of Brisbane and the public than it gets. I am afraid that if more support is not forthcoming in the immediate future the enthusiasm of the committee will wane and the proper commemoration of Australia's own day will not be adequately carried out in our capital city. It would be a pity if that happened and I trust that the committee will receive the support to which it is entitled in order to fittingly commemorate our national day.

Mr. Aikens: Don't you think it would make a difference if the holiday was held on the day on which it fell instead of being tacked on to a week-end?

Mr. NICKLIN: I certainly do, as I have stated on more than one occasion. No matter how significant a day may be, if it is tacked on to a week-end it is never adequately commemorated.

The hon. member for Townsville South made his usual contribution to this debate—plenty of words and tons of inaccuracies. He made a great noise about the raw deal that North Queensland is getting from the present Government but he did admit that it is now getting just a little more consideration than in the past. He seems to be reasonably well satisfied with the Education Department's activities. He based his whole attack on the Government on the Co-ordinator General's activities, stating that on the Co-ordinator-General rests the greatest responsibility for the development of North Queensland, or lack of it.

Let us look at what the Co-ordinator General is doing. Look at the report which the hon. member has criticised here and which, I may say, he obviously has not read. If he does he will find the figures. An amount of £1,163,000 has been spent on the Barron River Hydro-electric Extension Project. For the Burdekin River Authority £40,000 has been allocated this year, for the Mt. Isa Railway £4,813,000, and for the Tully Falls Hydro-Electric Project £352,000, a total of £6,368,000.

Mr. Aikens: Only a fleabite to what you are spending in the South.

Mr. NICKLIN: Only a fleabite? The Co-ordinator-General is spending in the rest of the State only £1,604,000. North Queensland is getting nearly six times as much as the rest of the State in the work of the Co-ordinator-General's Department. Nobody is complaining about that. The expenditure is not for the development of North Queensland only, but for the development of Queensland as a whole. The hon. member has made a big noise about something that he has not taken the trouble to inquire about.

The Leader of the Opposition put several questions to me, including one about the increase in the staff of my department since the Government assumed office. There has been a slight increase, but I refer the hon. gentleman to the Estimates for this year, which show a reduction of three in staff. Any increases in staff are the result of growing activities, particularly in the Co-ordinator-General's Department. There has been a small increase in the staff of the Parliamentary Counsel and Draftsman. The hon. gentleman referred to the considerable increase in the staff of the Public Service Superannuation Board. That has followed the introduction of the new superannuation scheme and the tremendous amount of work involved in the changeover to the new scheme and the necessary adjustments that followed. Increases in the staff of the department in recent years do not reflect in any way the increased work being carried out by the various sections.

The Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Cook referred to the subsidy of the Burke shipping line. An adjustment in the subsidy has to be justified by increased costs of running the service. They have increased greatly in recent years through marginal and other increases. If the Government subsidy had not been raised, this excellent service to the northern portion of the State would have been discontinued.

The hon. gentleman referred also to the subsidy paid to the Playground and Recreation Association. The Government appreciate the very good work of the Association, and, if the finances of the State allow it, I am certain an increase will be favourably considered by the Government in future. The organisation is very worth-while and is doing great work.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the Public Service. All I should like to say in reply is that since the Government assumed office they have greatly improved the conditions of the Public Service. Reclassification of positions has resulted in increased salaries, and the Service has been placed on a par with other public services in the Commonwealth. We do not find the wide disparity that previously existed between the salaries of Queensland public servants and those of public servants in other States. We have also given the Public Service of Queensland the advantage of a very much improved superannuation scheme and we

hope to improve it further from time to time. In the very near future I will be introducing a Bill to provide further improvements in the scheme.

Mr. Hanlon: Some people have suggested that you have to look after your Public Service like the Menzies Government do because it has to do the governing for you.

Mr. NICKLIN: That interjection by the hon. member is not worth replying to. Anything we do for the Public Service is done because it is justified.

Mr. Hanlon: That was not a facetious remark. I have said it several times. It is not a correct appreciation of the Public Service.

Mr. Bennett: I believe they find it a tremendous responsibility having to do the duty of the Government.

Mr. NICKLIN: Those are strange remarks coming from hon. members opposite.

The co-operation between the members of the Government and the members of the Public Service is better than it has been for very many years.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN: The association between the Ministers of the Crown, who are always on the job, and always available for consultation with members of the Public Service, is of the highest order and there is appreciation from the Ministers of the Crown of the good advice they receive from officers of the Public Service. As a result there is very excellent co-operation between the Government and members of the Public Service.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to various appointments that have been made. I have dealt with them all, with the exception of one. He referred to the appointment of the Commissioner of Main Roads. I think the hon. member will appreciate that for such an appointment the best men possible should be got for the job. At the time the appointment was made it was unfortunate that within the department there were not men of the age and qualifications desirable for the appointment. The position was advertised throughout Australia and in the opinion of the Government the appointee was the best man offering.

Mr. Duggan: I think he also happened to reside in the electorate of the Minister in charge of that department.

Mr. NICKLIN: Is there anything sinister about that? That is the sort of innuendo and suggestion that too commonly comes across the floor of the Chamber.

The qualifications of the gentleman concerned were the highest of all applicants.

Mr. Duggan: The only thing I say is that the dogs were barking it and that you could have saved yourself the expense of advertising for applicants. Everyone knew weeks before that he was going to be appointed.

Mr. NICKLIN: If that is the hon. gentleman's idea on making an appointment, it is not ours.

The Leader of the Opposition did make some rather thoughtful contributions on some matters raised in the Agent-General's report. As he pointed out, the economic position and the world markets for our primary products should cause concern to all thinking people. There is no doubt that many disquietening things are happening in the world today. When we realise we have to sell large quantities of our primary products, both from the land and from metals, I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that we should give greater attention than we do at present to markets in South-east Asia. They are adjacent to us and, as the economies of those nations improve, they will be able to buy more of our products than they do now. We have to look all round the world for markets to sell what we produce. Unfortunately the drought has given our economy a severe blow and the crop prospects of many exporting primary industries are not good at the moment, but I hope that in the near future good State-wide rains will improve the economic conditions and help us to meet the more severe competition that we can expect before long on the markets of the world.

The contribution of the hon. member for Salisbury was a rather remarkable one. He referred to what he called the "tall poppies" of the Public Service. I do not know which officers he meant by that expression. I suggest that that type of speech makes the greatest possible contribution to industrial unrest in the State. He contrasted the treatment of "tall poppies" with that of the wages employees of the Crown. He said that each received different treatment from the Industrial Court and that each had different representation in the case presented by the Public Service Commissioner to the court. He is one of those who would deny public servants their just dues in improved salaries. He wants to see a return of the conditions that existed in the Public Service under very many years of Labour Government. In those days our Public Service was the lowest paid in Australia. He refers to those gentlemen who give such great service to the State as "tall poppies." I suggest he is advocating reducing their salaries and conditions of employment, and so on. It was indeed a remarkable contribution from a man who claims to be a member of the A.L.P.

Mr. Sherrington: Why didn't you extend the same conciliation to the average wage-earner?

Mr. NICKLIN: The hon. member talks of conciliation. That shows how little he knows about the Public Service Award and about how the awards are secured. There was no conciliation in fixing the salaries of public servants.

Mr. Sherrington: Why was it agreed to submit four key salaries?

Mr. NICKLIN: That is done all the time, if the hon. member only knew it. Once those four key salaries are determined, the rest of the grades in the Public Service fall into place.

Mr. Sherrington: Isn't that conciliation?

Mr. NICKLIN: That is adopted every time the Public Service case goes before the court, and it is well known.

Mr. Sherrington: The usual distortion!

Mr. NICKLIN: They went before the court. There was agreement between the State Service Union representatives and the Public Service Commissioner. The four key salaries are determined by arbitration and then they go into conference and arrange the rest. That has always been done.

Then the hon. member referred to the treatment received by the workers other than the "tall poppies" he referred to. I should like to quote from a judgment given in the case of the Main Roads Award—State. This is what appears in the judgment that was handed down in that case—

"Mr. R. H. Tait, who appeared for the Crown, tendered a great deal of information regarding movements in margins in comparable Awards in other States as a result of recent variations of those Awards following the 28 per cent. increase in margins granted by the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission to employees covered by the Metal Trades Award.

"He referred also to the judgment of this Court in 1957, when wages generally were last increased in this award.

"He drew attention to principles enunciated by this Court in the judgment referred to. Mr. Tait also quoted from this Court's judgment on Engine Drivers' Awards of 22nd April, 1960, with specific references to the method adopted by the Court in increasing margins in those Awards.

"In concluding his submissions Mr. Tait tendered two documents for which we express our appreciation."

Those were the words of the members of the court, and they give the lie direct to the hon. member when he says that the case that was put up for other than the tall poppies was not fairly put by the representatives of the Public Service Commissioner. The court that gave that judgment consisted of Mr. Harvey, Mr. Bennett, and Mr. Taylor.

The hon. member suggested that officers of the Public Service under 40 years of age are required to take out a minimum of 20 units of superannuation. He is not quite correct in that statement. That applies only if an officer is receiving a salary of £1,200 per annum or over.

Mr. Sherrington: I referred to that. I mentioned £1,250.

Mr. NICKLIN: He is then obliged to take out the 20 units. That is in line with the schemes that are in operation in other States and in the Commonwealth Public Service. However, the officer concerned has a right to apply to the board for exemption in the case of hardship or where adequate provision is otherwise made for himself and his family, or for any other reason that the board may consider adequate. I point out to the hon. member that if the suggestion he made was given effect to, it would mean that the rates of contribution to the Public Service Superannuation Fund would have to be increased, and he complained that the £8 2s. a month applying at present is too high. The most significant point is that there have been very few applications for exemption from these "onerous" conditions that the hon. member says officers are obliged to accept. To illustrate the point I am making, I quote from a letter received recently by the Public Service Superannuation Board from a contributor 33 years of age. He said—

"After reading the booklet which you so kindly provided for our information and benefit, I feel that the scheme which we now fall in line with on 1st April next is very sound and very acceptable."

The hon. member suggested a minimum of five units. That would provide an amount of only £210 per annum, whereas the annuity provided by the 20 units is £840 per annum. The hon. member was barking up the wrong tree when he made that suggestion, I am afraid.

Mr. Sherrington: I suggest that you talk to some of your Crown employees. I am not complaining.

Mr. NICKLIN: The answer to the hon. member's suggestion is that if the Crown employees do not like it, why are so few of them applying for exemption?

Mr. Sherrington: Possibly because they do not realise that they can apply for exemption.

Mr. NICKLIN: The other points raised by the hon. member for Salisbury in regard to superannuation will be dealt with in a Bill that I shall be introducing in the very near future.

Mr. Sherrington: You are admitting that I made some contribution?

Mr. NICKLIN: The Government thought about these things some years ago.

Mr. Sherrington: Did you mention them when you were in Opposition?

Mr. NICKLIN: When we were in Opposition the public servants of Queensland did not have a satisfactory superannuation scheme. It is only since we have been in office that they have been provided with one.

The hon. member for Baroona referred to the Mount Isa railway project and suggested that I should set out on a crusade to arouse

public opinion against the Federal Government in an endeavour to induce them to give more support to that project. As the hon. member well knows, every effort was made by this Government to get from the Federal Government a grant towards the building of that railway line. Although we were not successful we were able to get a loan under certain conditions. We have accepted that loan and clearly it would not be right now for me to lead a crusade to stir up public opinion contrary to the agreement we have arrived at with the Commonwealth Government. But, if he wishes, the hon. member is quite at liberty to lead a crusade in an endeavour to get the Commonwealth Government to give greater consideration to Queensland's needs in the reconstruction of the Mt. Isa railway line.

Mr. Hanlon: As far as I know you have never actually made public what you think would be a reasonable contribution for the Commonwealth Government to make to the scheme. If you did that, and if you asked the people of Queensland to support you, it would be the responsibility of the Menzies Government whether or not they did it. The people would back you up.

Mr. NICKLIN: They probably would, but we have made an agreement with the Commonwealth Government and we have to stick to it.

Mr. Hanlon: It has been finalised?

Mr. NICKLIN: Not finalised to the extent of its being stamped and all the "t's" crossed and "i's" dotted. We are having a little argument about some details but when everything is fixed up the agreement will be submitted to both the State and Federal Parliaments.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. NICKLIN: At least we did get the job under way. Even though we may not have got all we would like to get, at least we have got the job started, and it is starting very well.

The hon. member also mentioned the Burdekin River Authority and the reduction in expenditure last year. The reduction in the amount allocated was made for a very good reason. We had grave doubts about whether it would be possible to handle the nut-grass problem that cropped up in a number of farms in the area. Until such time as we can get the nut-grass under control it would be foolish to spend extra money in providing additional farms that could not be handled economically.

Mr. Lloyd: What about flood mitigation?

Mr. NICKLIN: It was not in any way cut down. It was carried on according to the allocation made available in the Estimates. The only thing reduced was the extension of the proposal in extending the farms. The reduction was made because we were definitely afraid of the nut-grass problem.

Mr. Lloyd: I think the construction of the dam would be an economic proposal.

Mr. NICKLIN: That is the bigger scheme. I am referring to the amount allocated to the Authority last year. The construction of the dam is a different proposal altogether, and I shall deal with that when I am replying to the hon. member for Maryborough.

May I say for the information of the hon. member for Baroona that the "ABC of Government Departments" to which he referred was drawn up this year but not published because we just did not have the necessary finance to publish it. We shall look into the other matter he raised about the proper marking of offices in the Anzac Square building. Now that the various departments are getting settled in it will be possible to do something along the lines suggested by the hon. member to guide people to the offices they want to visit.

Mr. Hanlon: A floor directory in the lifts.

Mr. NICKLIN: That would be a great help.

In reply to the point raised by the hon. member for Maryborough about the Burdekin River dam proposal, I point out to him that there are only limited loan moneys available to the State. The Government utilise those loan moneys in the avenues that we think will give the greatest return to Queensland. The amount involved in the construction of the Burdekin River Dam is tremendous—approximately £50,000,000. We have not £50,000,000 to put into that proposal at the present time. We feel that the loan moneys we have can be used to better advantage on other projects throughout the State. If the Commonwealth Government are prepared to supply the money for the construction of the dam this Government will be prepared to co-operate with them to the fullest extent, giving them all the information, plans and everything else that has been prepared. If they are prepared to do something on a national scale in the construction of the Burdekin River Dam, no obstacle will be placed in their way by this Government.

Mr. Davies: Do the Commonwealth Government accept the opinion that the scheme is sound?

Mr. NICKLIN: I do not know what the Commonwealth Government's opinion is at the present time; I have not asked them in recent years.

The hon. member mentioned delays that occur between departments when matters are referred to them by hon. members. I would be pleased if he would give me any instances that come to his notice from time to time. I invite all hon. members to do that when they may think there are extraordinary delays in matters that have been referred to any particular departments. We will try to overcome the difficulties.

1960—20

Mr. Duggan: There is one small matter I think you might discuss with the Public Service Commissioner. Very often a decision is arrived at on a matter referred by an hon. member and the person involved is notified two or three weeks before they notify the member. Could they be notified simultaneously?

Mr. NICKLIN: That is the usual practice. I will certainly raise that matter with the Public Service Commissioner.

The hon. member for Cook mentioned increasing the amount available for air fares. The financial position of the State in the current year does not permit of any increase in air fares for hon. members. The representations by the hon. member for Cook and other hon. members who represent distant electorates will be examined some time in the future but, so far as this financial year is concerned, there is no possibility of increasing the amount for air fares. I suggest to the hon. member that he conserves those fares that he has left.

The hon. member referred to two other matters—the subsidy for far northern boat services and the Co-ordinator-General's employees at Barron Falls and those of the Transfield Company, which is carrying out a contract there. Representations have already been made to that firm asking them to give preference to local labour, and I understand they will be picking up local labour. Of course, the hon. member will understand that there are a number of technical men attached to the organisation who have gone there in its service. I feel that the work carried out by the Transfield Company under that contract will give employment to a number of local men in the area mentioned by the hon. member. I think that covers all matters raised up to the present.

Mr. WALSH (Bundaberg) (9.4 p.m.): I was not keen on taking part in the debate on this Vote as some of the other hon. members have made their contributions to it. I am somewhat disappointed at the reply given by the Premier to the question raised by the hon. member for Baroona on the Government's negotiations with the Commonwealth Government relating to the Mt. Isa railway project.

Now that I have risen to speak I should like to deal with some of the other items of the Premier's Department, and, if I may do so, add my word of commendation of the work of the Agent-General on behalf of Queensland, and particularly the sugar industry. I do not think any hon. member would fail to recognise the worth-while service of Mr. Muir as Agent-General, particularly his handling of sugar negotiations between various countries prior to the signing of the International Sugar Agreement.

It was perhaps a tribute to Mr. Muir—I do not know whether it was a slip of the tongue—but the Premier at one stage referred

to him as "Sir" David Muir. I was wondering whether it was the shadow cast by a coming event. The Premier later referred to him, however, as "Mr." Muir.

Mr. Muir's appointment as Chairman of the International Sugar Council was a further tribute to, and recognition of, his work by the other countries that are parties to the International Sugar Agreement. They appreciate his advice and service. I do not know whether the Government envisage that at a future date Mr. Muir will if he so desires, return to Queensland and take up a position in the sugar industry.

A number of other departments and officers render very valuable service to Queensland in various directions, for example, the Parliamentary Counsel and Draftsman. Those officers certainly have had to work at great pace at times to satisfy the requirements of this and previous Governments. The Public Service Commissioner has not an easy task, particularly when we realise that he is dealing with such a vast section of the community and the public administration of the State. Many complex problems have to be referred to him. They are investigated by his officers, who in turn are called on to advise the Government on those particular matters.

The Vote for the State Reporting Bureau shows an increase of a little more than £7,000 compared with the amount expended last year. While officers of the Bureau render good service when called upon to attend courts, commissions of inquiry and so on, I should like to refer particularly to the "Hansard" section of the State Reporting Bureau. I do not know for the life of me how those officers catch the remarks of some hon members, particularly on occasions when there is a great deal of interruption. Very little thought is given to the work these men are doing in the upper gallery, and the difficulty they must experience in hearing the remarks of every hon. member. Some of us speak loudly enough to make ourselves heard, but many other hon. members engage in what might be regarded as a form of conversation, as if they were merely talking to other hon. members across the Chamber.

Mr. Windsor: You gave them one and three-quarter hours of unnecessary work recently.

Mr. WALSH: If they had not been reporting my speech, they would have had to suffer the hon. member for Ithaca, and God knows they must think he is bad enough. All I ask is that they be given a fair go, that hon. members speak up and give them a chance to record intelligibly in "Hansard" the speeches that are made here. If they did so they would not then have any ground for complaint about the alterations they have to write in the margin of their proofs.

Now, if I might refer to a few remarks made by the Premier before I come to the Mt. Isa rail project. He has claimed that this Government are treating the public servants so much better than the previous Government did. I suggest that the Premier

has the same machinery available to him as the previous Government had for tendering any advice on alterations of salaries and classifications, as the case may be. Whether the Premier likes it or not, if he is going to claim that under a Labour Government the public servants were the lowest paid in Australia, let him be fair enough to say that under the previous Government at least there was stability in the prices of many articles that affect the cost of living in this State. How well do I remember going to Canberra and hearing from a prominent pressman well known to members of this Committee, and particularly well known to the Premier, who meets him every time he goes to the Loan Council meetings, what it was costing for bread, groceries and meat for him and his family in Canberra compared with what it costs in Queensland.

The Premier should be fair enough to admit that under the Labour Government there was stability in prices. Since price control has been virtually lifted, of course, prices have run riot. Not only are the public servants suffering; the great body of workers engaged in industry outside are suffering and will continue to suffer because they are not getting the same adjustments, no matter what the Premier may say about it. No matter how the Premier may try to "wipe off" some hon. member on this side because he makes a comparison between the rates paid to public servants and the industrial community, and shelters behind the fact that it is an Industrial Court decision, it is not going to give any relief to the man with a pick-and-shovel job, or a road job, or engaged on the various other menial tasks in industry outside. He is not getting any benefit from all these great uplifts and salary increases. Whether the Premier likes it or not he has unwittingly conveyed to this Chamber that his Government are influencing the court in its decisions. He has not said so specifically, but by making a comparison, and by stating that the public servants are so much better off under the present Government than under the previous Government. I will say that again because the Premier's attention was being distracted by an hon. member who wanted to converse with him. I am saying that apparently the Government according to the Premier's say-so, are influencing the court in its decisions.

Mr. Nicklin: That is the sort of thing you would say.

Mr. WALSH: How else can it be explained if there is the same membership in the Industrial Court as was operating when the Labour Government were in power? There is still the same Public Service machinery and the same Public Service Commissioner's Department. Which of those three is at fault—the Government, the Public Service Commissioner's Department or the Court? How have they changed? That is all I want to know. What has happened to enable the court to give different decisions? If we

accept the Premier's word that the court has given a decision different in formula, I take it that would be laid down by the Public Service Commissioner in the first place and all that the Public Service Commissioner would do would be to have regard to the conditions operating in other States, the cost of living and so on, and to make his submissions to the Government, which is no different from what happened under the previous Government. It is a little unfair for the Premier to try to create the impression that the Australian Labour Party Government treated the public servants in a paltry way.

There is then the suggestion that the Court is now comparing like with like. I remember a decision given by the Court while the Labour Government were in power where the Government had to rectify some of the anomalies that arose. For example, taking like with like, if we had accepted the decision of the Court on that occasion, the Surveyor-General would have been getting much less than under his old classification. Very little of the land of New South Wales was administered by the Lands Department but Queensland had 90 per cent. of its land still under the control of the Crown and, with the responsibility for surveys and so on, obviously our Surveyor-General had much more work to do than the New South Wales Surveyor-General. Similarly with the Director of Forests, Mr. Grenning; if we had accepted what was submitted on that occasion on the basis of like with like with New South Wales, his salary would have been reduced. Again—not that it was the Public Service Commissioner's fault but rather the fault of the Court—the salary of the then Director of Local Government, Mr. Alan Sewell, was reduced and the Government had to find some other way of making an allowance to him to make up for the reduction.

The Premier should at least be fair. I know the difficulties that confront the Government on this but it does not do a responsible Minister credit to misrepresent the position for political purposes.

Public servants are entitled to their share of the proceeds of the State having regard to the service they give the State. No matter how the Premier might construe it, I do not agree that State or Federal public servants should be put on a pedestal without having some regard to the effect on the economy as a whole and the employment of people outside on a little above the basic wage. I do not think you want anything straighter than that.

Now we come to the Mt. Isa railway project. Strangely enough, of the Items in the Vote that come from Trust and Special Funds, the appropriation for the Mt. Isa project is far ahead of that of any other fund listed. This year the amount to be appropriated is £4,813,000. This is what the Government did in 1958: they included the sum of £1,400,000 in the Estimates and

did not spend 1s. of it though it had been appropriated by Parliament. That is typical of what a Treasurer would regard as part of the "swindle sheet" that is submitted by the various departments with their Estimates for the year—hide something away that you can call on to make use of for other financial activities.

Mr. Nicklin: How is it hidden away when it is printed in the Estimates?

Mr. WALSH: An amount of £1,400,000 was allocated, appropriated by the Parliament, and not 1d. of it was spent in that year. The following year the Government appropriated £1,900,000, making the total £3,300,000, and still they spent only £710,000. Does not that suggest to the Premier that the balance of the money appropriated by Parliament for the project in those two years necessarily was used under some heading? Of course it was! It was not left idle.

Mr. Nicklin: It was set aside in a trust fund for the project.

Mr. WALSH: The Premier is not telling me anything that I do not know in that respect. After all, it still becomes part of the cash available from the Trust and Special Funds. Of course it does! And if they want to invest that as part of their £7,800,000, all right, but I am saying that they have had their £3,300,000 less £710,000 while they have been putting men off particular projects here and there—throwing them out of work while the money was available under this heading! The disappointing thing is that the Premier stated in this Committee that the Government had virtually agreed to the form of agreement between the Commonwealth and the State on this particular project. It has been announced by the Treasurer in this Chamber, although neither Mr. Menzies nor any other Federal Minister will admit this and up to date, as far as I can gather, they have not announced it, Queensland will be paying $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. more in interest than it is paying for moneys raised for ordinary loan works as distinct from the Mt. Isa railway project. I know that if this money had been raised with financial authorities overseas it would have cost more, but the fact remains that Queensland is receiving loan moneys for other projects at 5 per cent., as are the other States. South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria have rail projects under construction for which 70 per cent. of the total expenditure involving millions of pounds is found by the Commonwealth Government, with no liability on the States to make any repayment of that amount, and the balance of 30 per cent. is repayable over a period of 53 years.

The Committee is entitled to some information from the Premier as to whether these things were brought to the notice of the Commonwealth Government and the Federal members of Parliament. After all, even though the Premier said that the agreement is virtually completed between the Commonwealth and the State but for the dotting of the

"it's" and the crossing of the "it's", I say it is not too late to raise this question and fight it as a national issue. What is wrong with the 16 Queensland members of the House of Representatives who belong to the Liberal and Country Parties, together with the two members who represent the Labour Party, ganging up and insisting on the amendments? Irrespective of what the Premier might say, I hope they will take it into their own hands to insist and that amendments will be inserted at their instigation when the matter comes before Federal Parliament if this Government are not prepared to fight for it. What is wrong with the 16 Senators getting together, irrespective of their party affiliations, and insisting that Queensland should be treated no differently from South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia, or New South Wales? They are all getting handouts from the Commonwealth, and Queensland is getting nothing. I know the Premier would like to get it, but I wonder whether he and his Government have fought hard enough for this. It is now time for the Country Party and the Liberal Party to treat this as a political question, even if they have to discuss the matter with their members in the Federal Parliament and marshal their forces in the national Parliament to see that the agreement is amended as it is presented to either the House of Representatives or the Senate. I am disappointed that the Premier has not been able to say to the Committee that the Government have made some headway in negotiations with the Commonwealth Government on this matter, more particularly when the Premier must know of the substantial difference between the Commonwealth and the State that was mentioned in the Treasurer's Financial Statement. I suggest that the Premier should take the committee into his confidence and explain what the difference is before he brings the legislation down. Let the people of Queensland and members on this side of the Chamber give him some moral backing. Every hon. member on this side of the Chamber is prepared to get behind the Premier and his Government in their fight against their Commonwealth for some recognition of this and other projects for Queensland.

Vote (Chief Office) agreed to.

AGENT-GENERAL FOR THE STATE

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (9.24 p.m.): I move—

"That £52,764 be granted for 'Agent-General for the State'."

That amount is a slight increase of £5,736 over the appropriation for 1959-1960. It has been brought about principally by salary increases. There has been a slight decrease in the Contingencies. All hon. members have discussed fairly fully the Agent-General's Department in the course of the debate so far, and I do not propose to say anything more about it at the moment.

Vote (Agent-General for the State) agreed to.

CO-ORDINATOR-GENERAL OF PUBLIC WORKS

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (9.25 p.m.): I move—

"That £69,170 be granted for 'Co-ordinator-General of Public Works'."

This Vote represents a decrease of £6,682 on the appropriation for 1959-1960 and an increase of £510 over the actual expenditure for that year. The increase is accounted for in the same way as in other sub-departments; it has been brought about by salary increases. There has been a slight decrease in the Contingency Vote on this occasion.

Vote (Co-ordinator-General of Public Works) agreed to.

PARLIAMENTARY COUNSEL AND DRAFTSMAN

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (9.26 p.m.): I move—

"That £10,840 be granted for 'Parliamentary Counsel and Draftsman'."

In moving this Vote I pay tribute to the Parliamentary Draftsman, his assistant and the staff he has employed for the great work that they have done in recent years. We have had very heavy legislative programmes and therefore have had to ask the Parliamentary Draftsman and his assistant to work very long hours to meet the requirements of those programmes. They have always willingly acceded to the demands made on them and they are deserving of recognition for their great service.

Vote (Parliamentary Counsel and Draftsman) agreed to.

STATE PUBLIC RELATIONS BUREAU

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (9.27 p.m.): I move—

"That £20,595 be granted for 'State Public Relations Bureau'."

There is a slight increase of £960 over the appropriation for 1959-1960, and the same remarks apply here; the salary increases have been brought about by the variations in the Public Service Award. There is a slight variation in the staff; staff numbers have decreased by one.

Vote (State Public Relations Bureau) agreed to.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONER

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (9.28 p.m.): I move—

"That £84,908 be granted for 'Public Service Commissioner'."

This represents an increase of £8,118 over the appropriation for 1959-1960, and an increase of £14,312 over the actual expenditure for that year. The same conditions apply here in regard to salary increases. Again we find that there is a slight decrease in the Contingency Vote. There has been

a slight staff variation; provision has been made for an additional Public Service inspector.

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (9.29 p.m.): I should not like the opportunity to pass without paying very brief tribute to Mr. Fraser, the Public Service Commissioner, and those associated with him in the administration of the Public Service. He follows a line of very distinguished people who have served the State. However, I must express a small measure of disappointment at his Annual Report this year. In saying that, I do not want to reflect on him in his compilation of the report, but his responsibility for furnishing the report rests on him in accordance with the appropriate Acts. He has drawn attention to the appropriation under the appropriate Act, given an account of his stewardship, reported on the negotiations that have occurred, outlined the circumstances surrounding appointments outside the ambit of the Public Service Act and dealt with other matters that are normal routine.

If the general responsibilities attaching to the Public Service Commissioner are examined it will be seen that he has perhaps the widest responsibility of any officer of the Crown, being responsible for advising the Government on a very wide range of subjects. The Public Service Commissioner very often initiates proposals and they have, in the past, been acted upon by successive Governments. Very often Premiers over the years have found in the Public Service Commissioner a person in whom they have complete confidence. That must necessarily be so because he is the chief executive officer to the Premier and is responsible in many ways for furnishing ideas to the head of the Government.

I should like to see this role actively resumed by Mr. Fraser because I am sure he has the qualifications to carry out the task. Mr. Story, one of our great Public Service Commissioners, would frequently in his reports focus attention on some interesting topical subject of the day. One particular matter I remember offhand was his graph showing the way money was spent in the Crown expenditure generally, how it was dissected, the development, the interest charges and various things of that kind.

I feel that this officer, being a very senior officer of the Government and one who has the complete confidence of the Premier, is capable of doing that. To my knowledge all those gentlemen who held the position in the past had the confidence of the Premier of the day. I know Mr. Fraser had the confidence of the Government of which I was a member and I am sure he similarly has the confidence of the present Premier.

I should like to canvass the opportunity now of whether there might not have been an opportunity for the Public Service Commissioner to take up the recruitment question to which the Premier referred a few

moments ago. He said that on this occasion he would have to get the cream from the public examinations—some of the boys and girls who passed well in the Junior and Senior public examinations—to enter the Public Service, rather than going down the list. That suggests one of two things—either that the remuneration attaching to the Public Service is not regarded as being sufficiently high to attract these people or that they feel that the opportunities for advancement in the Public Service are not as good as those in private industry.

I was wondering if the Public Service Commissioner, in agreement with the State Service Union, might not develop the idea of having something like the British Civil Service with various grades. I am not one who believes that the mere attainment of academic qualifications enables persons to be great administrators. Some of our greatest Public Service administrators have been men of sound common sense. The Public Service picks the men whose efforts as administrators will be of greatest benefit to the Crown.

A public servant must be loyal to the Government of the day and his political opinions must not intrude themselves into the administration of his department. He is directly impersonal. As someone said on one occasion, so far as the British civil servant was concerned his job was to try to advise his Minister on the course he would recommend, and if the Minister had the temerity to reject that advice it was the responsibility of the Government if they were involved in the calamity that followed.

I have had very close association with several senior members of the Public Service, and I have found in an overwhelming percentage of cases, whatever their views on matters submitted to them from time to time, that they were always very very loyal once a decision was made by someone above them who was entitled to make the decision. That of, course, is the proper role of the public servant. Once a decision is given, the responsibility for it is taken by the Minister and the public servant is absolved from any responsibility for political consequences or even administrative consequences that may follow rejection of his ideas.

I do not think the mere attainment of academic qualifications necessarily makes a person the best fitted for promotion in the Public Service. Very often a good deal of common sense in evaluating a situation may be acquired without a university education, but I do think that a person who has laboured successfully in public administration and has indicated a disposition to take up public administration courses generally to fit himself for promotion in the service should be considered. I do not know to what extent we can depart from the accepted rules of seniority. The Labour Party has held very strongly to the view that the senior, most suitable person should be appointed, but some thought must be

directed to incentive to people to advance themselves. Very often, if a man has had accelerated promotion and knows that his future promotion is rather restricted, he develops a tendency to play safe. He does not become a great thinker who puts forward from time to time constructive ideas. That matter must be remembered by the Public Service Commissioner. Sometimes such persons take the view, "I am in this position and cannot go higher, so I do not want to offend the Government of the day or bring a hornet's nest about my ears by suggesting so-and-so." He has a responsibility to the various forms of government, legislative and executive, and through the executive he plays just as important a role in helping to develop the State as do hon. members of the Legislature, because details of the schemes and proposals flow very often through and from him. It is the task of the Public Service Commissioner to pick out certain men. Mr. Story in particular always had knowledge of particular persons who showed promise, and if a Minister or the Premier said to him, "We would like someone to engage in some research or put forward certain proposals." Mr. Story would instinctively know the person whose services he could command.

I am certain that Mr. Fraser could do the same thing. I pay a tribute to Mr. Fraser as a great public servant. He is a man of great modesty, and is very approachable, and I have found him to be extremely helpful on many occasions. Those of us in Opposition are thankful for courtesies he has extended to us from time to time, and I should like him to know that we appreciate those courtesies.

The previous Government and the present Government have utilised the Public Service Commissioner to carry out many tasks of a confidential character and indeed very often Government policy itself. A Minister or the Premier may have to secure supporting arguments for particular proposals. Very often a Minister or the Premier will go to the Public Service Commissioner to see if he can develop those ideas to the point where they become practical politics.

I think it should be the goal or ambition of every person who joins the Service to one day become the Public Service Commissioner.

I know it is not easy to get unanimity of opinion, and that many people stick slavishly to the idea that we must follow closely the principles of seniority, but I should like to see some consideration given—not by arbitrary decision of the Government of the day or the Public Service Commissioner, but by consultation with the State Service Union—to whether some system of grades can be inaugurated, and provision made that entrance to the grades can be obtained only by officers who have shown by qualifications and study that they are entitled to consideration.

Although I have been speaking in a general way, the views I have expressed are those I have steadfastly held for a long time. Public administration is becoming increasingly important and it is common, particularly in the Commonwealth sphere, to see many men taken from the Commonwealth Public Service to serve the requirements of private enterprise, and quite commonly retired public servants become members of directorates and executives of leading private-enterprise organisations throughout Australia.

We have equally competent men in our State Public Service. I am not suggesting they should be filched away, but I feel we have the material here, qualified in the right way. If we have satisfied and contented public servants who know that the Public Service is a career for them in the strictest professional sense of the word, we can make a material contribution to the development of the State, because an efficient Public Service reflects on the Government itself.

I can recall one very great Premier, Mr. McCormack, who had one of the most analytical political minds I have known, saying that he found that if he had a very good public servant under him, in executive control of his department, people would say it was a very good department, and because it was a very good department the Minister shone in the reflected glory. It helps a Minister if he has an efficient Public Service. Frequently we hear the claim that we have no competent men to fill these higher positions. The Premier admitted that we did not have a man in the Department of Main Roads of the required age and qualifications for the Commissioner's job. I have often heard these declarations by Premiers and Governments of the past. They frequently deplore that they have not the men to fill these executive positions and so we see sometimes a prolongation of the service of certain executive officers because it is felt their services are so meritorious that it is necessary to extend their period of service beyond the stipulated retiring age. There must be an obligation on the Public Service Commissioner to see that there are senior men who are able to fill these positions. In other words, they have to establish and achieve an ideal, and it seems to me that so many public servants fail to do this and the governments of the day feel compelled to go outside the Public Service to fill some of the senior positions.

I should like Mr. Fraser to know that this is not intended as any personal criticism. I have a very high regard for his ability and I am deeply conscious of the many courtesies he has extended to me and the members of my party. As I remarked a few moments ago, I should like to let him know, when the opportunity presents itself, that we appreciate his work for the development of the State.

Vote (Public Service Commissioner) agreed to.

PUBLIC SERVICE SUPERANNUATION BOARD

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (9.44 p.m.): I move—

“That £16,786 be granted for ‘Public Service Superannuation Board’.”

Vote agreed to.

STATE REPORTING BUREAU

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (9.44 p.m.): I move—

“That £110,637 be granted for ‘State Reporting Bureau’.”

Vote agreed to.

STATE STORES BOARD

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (9.45 p.m.): I move—

“That £116,977 be granted for ‘State Stores Board’.”

Vote agreed to.

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (9.45 p.m.): I move—

“That £73,191 be granted for ‘Miscellaneous Services’.”

Vote agreed to.

The questions for the following Votes were put, and agreed to:—

Trust and Special Funds—

	£
Barron River Hydro-Electric Extension Project Fund	1,163,000
Burdekin River Authority Fund	40,000
Co-ordinator-General of Public Works Construction Fund	1,604,000
Mt. Isa Railway Project Fund	4,813,000
Tully Falls Hydro-Electric Project Fund	352,000
Public Service Superannuation Fund	330,000
State Stores Board Special Standing Fund	600,000

DEPARTMENT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (9.52 p.m.): I move—

“That £158,582 be granted for ‘Auditor-General’.”

Vote agreed to.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 9.53 p.m.