

Queensland



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[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 1960

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

SCREENING OF FILMS

Mr. **SPEAKER**: Hon. members, arrangements have been made for the screening of three films in the Legislative Council Chamber at 6.30 this evening. These films will deal with Central Australia, Mary Kathleen, and the Gold Coast, and an invitation is extended to all hon. members to attend.

QUESTIONS**COMMONWEALTH FINANCIAL POLICY**

Mr. **DUGGAN** (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

“In view of his comment, reported in the morning Press of November 14, that the Commonwealth Government’s measures designed to correct the drift in the national economy were drastic because of the Government’s delay in invoking such

measures and his allied statement that the proposed interest rates could adversely affect Governmental and semi-Governmental borrowing, is he prepared to make a statement to the House indicating what adverse effects could reasonably be expected in respect of such borrowings during the current financial year and, if the new disciplinary measures persist, the borrowing programme for 1961-1962?"

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

"My observation was prompted by the measures designed to draw off purchasing power and to raise interest rates in the banking sector both for deposits and advances. The amount of available bank credit is to be reduced, whilst interest rates will move to 4½ per cent. for a 12 months fixed deposit and up to 7 per cent. for bank advances. The Federal Treasurer, Mr. Holt, indicated that Bank advances had risen by £150 million in quite a brief period. Some of these will be discouraged by higher interest rates—some will be forcibly recalled. The total amount of money available for investment will fall and Governmental and Semi-Governmental borrowings must experience some effect of this shortage. Higher bank rates will weaken the Governmental and Semi-Governmental issues on a competitive test. With 4½ per cent. for one year on fixed deposit, a 5 per cent. rate on long term Commonwealth Bonds, even allowing for some tax rebate, seems an inadequate margin to offset a much longer commitment. I am strongly opposed to higher interest rates for gilt-edged stocks but these other rises may compel such an increase. On the other hand, most insurance companies had discontinued support for gilt-edged stocks and the new 30 per cent. proposal will compel a new factor of support which could largely offset the adverse effects. Our own State Government Insurance Office had been an outstanding exception to the trend. For this financial year, Queensland's share of the Loan raising is secure. The Commonwealth will lose some customs duty in the second half and may find that reduced employment will cause a slight fall in pay-as-you-go tax receipts. But it will collect higher Sales Tax on a reduced volume of car sales and there should be no shortage of Commonwealth revenue sufficient to cause it to withhold support for the Loan Programme. With Semi-Governmentals there could be difficulty. Fortunately, the Government predicted a monetary shortage after Christmas and the Treasury has counselled all local bodies to raise loans while the climate remained favourable. The result is that, to October 31 last, loan offers received by Semi-Governmental and Local Bodies compared with the same period last year, were—To October, 1959, £12,721,719; To October, 1960, £13,685,543. Last year, as in the two earlier years, raisings were 100 per

cent. of entitlement and, with the good progress already attained, I believe that, not without some degree of difficulty, this year's target of total raising will be successfully accomplished. As for next financial year, I cannot pretend to see, with any clarity, what might emerge. Much will depend on the effectiveness of the proposed measures and on their duration."

TABLE OF ANNUAL REPORT OF COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT

Mr DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—
Leader of the Opposition) asked the Minister
for Transport—

"(1) In view of the fact that the Annual Report of the Commissioner for Transport for the year ended June 30, 1959, was tabled in the House on November 5 of that year, will he explain the delay in the tabling of the 1960 Report?"

"(2) Since a Bill in respect of transport is to come before the House on Thursday, will the Report be available to Members before the Bill is brought down?"

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

"(1) There has been no undue delay. As the Honourable Gentleman knows, other questions have been asked in this House earlier this Session concerning the printing and tabling of Departmental reports and I suggest the Honourable Gentleman refer to the complete reply given on Wednesday, November 9, by the Honourable the Treasurer, who is the Minister in charge of the Government Printing Office."

"(2) The Transport Report is being tabled this morning and I understand printed copies are now available with the Clerk of Parliament for distribution."

ROADS MAINTENANCE CONTRIBUTIONS

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

"(1) What was the amount of Roads Maintenance Contributions paid during the financial years 1957-1958, 1958-1959 and 1959-1960 by the following transport companies:—(a) Western Transport, (b) Browns Transport, (c) Cobb & Coy. and (d) Crisps Transport?"

"(2) How many vehicles subject to Roads Maintenance Contributions were in use by each of these companies during each of the three-yearly periods and upon which the contributions were paid?"

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

"(1 and 2) Notice was given of this question yesterday to the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity, and in keeping with ordinary practice the question was delivered by the Clerk of Parliament to the Department of

Main Roads. A reply was prepared by that Department for presentation to the House, to the effect that the question had been mis-directed and that it should be asked of the Minister for Transport. However, late yesterday afternoon when the Department of Transport became aware of the mis-direction of the question, it was suggested that the Clerk of Parliament alter the direction of the question to the Minister for Transport. This has been done, but unfortunately the information sought entails a considerable amount of work and it is impossible to have the answer available this morning. Such information is being prepared and will be available for the House later today."

"I regret this position, but it was brought about entirely by the misdirection of the question. It was not until late last night that my department ascertained that the question had been directed incorrectly."

INSPECTION OF CRANES USED ON BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

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

"(1) In view of the increasing numbers of multi-storied buildings under construction and the fact that within a period of a week there have been two serious crane accidents, one the M.L.C. construction in Adelaide Street, Brisbane, which fortuitously was not fatal but as a result of which one man is hospitalised, and the other a flats and office building construction by G. Day in Leichhardt Street on which a workman was killed, will he advise (a) the dates upon which these cranes were inspected by an Inspector of Machinery and what was the report of such inspections, (b) did the crane drivers hold a driver's certificate and (c) were any repairs needed as a result of any such inspections?"

"(2) Is it a fact that the crane involved in the fatal accident in Leichhardt Street was one hired by the contractor from the Commonwealth Handling Equipment Pool, now privately controlled, and that this particular crane which cracked two welds on the turnbuckle at the end of the fly boom, was the same crane that crashed at the University construction job a fortnight previously? If so, was the crane inspected and certified as safe following that particular accident?"

"(3) Are cranes and other machinery owned by Commonwealth Handling Equipment Pool subject to regular inspections by machinery inspectors?"

"(4) Is it also a fact that the crane on the M.L.C. construction by K. D. Morris is one hired from Marr and Coy. and that this crane was overloaded?"

"(5) Is the Department proposing to take any action as a result of either of these two serious accidents?"

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis—Minister for Education and Migration), for **Hon. K. J. MORRIS** (Mt. Coot-tha), replied—

"(1) (a) The crane involved in the accident at the M.L.C. Building on November 11 was inspected by the Machinery Department on January 15, 1960. It was therefore due for annual inspection in January, 1961. The crane involved in the accident at GlenCraig, Leichhardt Street, on October 31, 1960, was inspected by the Machinery Department on July 13, 1960, and is due for inspection in June, 1961. (b) The crane drivers in both these cases held Certificates of Competency issued under the Inspection of Machinery Acts, such certificates being Second Class Internal Combustion Oil Tractors and Mobile Crane Driver's Certificates. (c) The crane used on the M.L.C. Building when inspected in January, 1960, was issued with a repair order requiring minor adjustments to rope anchorages and the fitting of a radius load indicator."

"(2) The crane used at GlenCraig in Leichhardt Street was hired from the Commonwealth Handling Equipment Pool. The Machinery Department has not been advised of any accident to a crane at the University construction job within the last few weeks."

"(3) Yes."

"(4) Yes."

"(5) Yes. The investigations by the Machinery Department into the Adelaide Street accident have not been finalised, but in view of the number of accidents recently in which mobile cranes have been involved, the restriction of the use of mobile cranes on building construction work will be seriously considered. It is evident that mobile cranes are being used on work for which they were not designed and this aspect is being investigated by the Chief Inspector of Machinery, who will submit a recommendation as to the appropriate action which should be taken to obviate any further risk of accident with this type of crane on building construction work."

DEVELOPMENT OF NEW INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Mr. COBURN (Burdekin), for **Mr. AIKENS** (Townsville South), asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"(1) Did he say, when opening the new Salisbury factory of the Frigrite (Queensland) Pty. Ltd., that he was negotiating with a company for development of 400 acres of Brisbane land as a new industrial area not very far from the Rocklea industrial district?"

"(2) If so, and the area is so developed, how many acres of land will have been thus opened up since he became Minister for Labour and Industry?"

"(3) How many of those acres are in (a) Brisbane, (b) the country areas of the State, and (c) Townsville?"

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis—Minister for Education and Migration), for **Hon. K. J. MORRIS** (Mt. Coot-tha), replied—

“(1 to 3) Mr. Morris made the statement in question and was referring to current negotiations with respect to the Wacol Industrial Estate. The industrial estate at Wacol is the only one which has, as yet, been proposed in any part of the State.”

FOUR WEEKS' ANNUAL LEAVE FOR REGIONAL ELECTRICITY BOARD EMPLOYEES

Mr. COBURN (Burdekin), for **Mr. AIKENS** (Townsville South), asked the Acting Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity—

“(1) Is it a fact that as a result of an agreement reached with the unions concerned regional electricity boards grant four weeks' annual leave to salaried and clerical employees?”

“(2) If so, will these boards make the same agreement with unions representing the tradesmen and black-shirt workers and, if not, why not?”

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick) replied—

“(1) The Regional Electricity Boards' Award—Professional and Clerical Employees, was first gazetted in July, 1947, and continued as far as possible the conditions of employment, including annual leave, of the Regional Electricity Boards' employees who were previously in the service of Local Authority Electric Authorities and employed under the Municipal Officers (Queensland) Award. With respect to annual leave, the latter Award provided for the granting of four weeks' annual leave to the relevant employees in the northern part of the State, and three weeks to the relevant employees in the southern part and similar provisions apply to employees of Regional Electricity Boards who are subject to the present Regional Electricity Boards' Award—Professional and Clerical Officers.”

“(2) The matter is one for the parties concerned and not one of which the Government can advise.”

RENTAL HOUSES FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL, TOWNSVILLE

Mr. COBURN (Burdekin), for **Mr. AIKENS** (Townsville South), asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

“(1) (a) How many houses are rented by the Housing Commission in Townsville and (b) how many of these are rented to service personnel?”

“(2) Has any approach been made to the Commonwealth Government to build homes for rental direct to service personnel and, if so, with what result?”

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

“(1) (a) Three hundred and seventy-seven house units. (b) Under the 1956 Agreement requirement, 24 house units.”

“(2) When the 1956 Housing Agreement was being framed, States claimed the Commonwealth should provide houses for Service personnel from the Defence Vote rather than under the Agreement. The Commonwealth rejected this claim and made it a requirement of the 1956 Agreement that the State set aside for housing of Service personnel 5 per cent. of the amount advanced to the State, the Commonwealth providing supplementary 5 per cent. loan for such purpose. When Queensland was not prepared to build houses at Amberley for the R.A.A.F., the R.A.A.F. at Amberley in February, 1957, endeavoured without success to have the Commonwealth's supplementary 5 per cent. loan withdrawn from Queensland and Service houses constructed by the Commonwealth Department of Works.”

NORLINE DRIVE-IN THEATRE, TOWNSVILLE

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

“With reference to the application by C. J. and A. N. Wordsworth, representing a syndicate of nine Townsville people, for permission to construct a drive-in theatre adjacent to the old migrant centre at Stuart, which was refused on October 12, 1960, on the ground that it was considered that present accommodation at Townsville theatres and the Norline Drive-In was adequate, is it a fact that immediately following that refusal Haymarket-Tivoli Theatres, a subsidiary of the Birch, Carrol and Coyle and J. Arthur Rank Organisation, made application for permission to construct a further 150 car ramps at the Norline Drive-In?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis—Minister for Education and Migration), for **Hon. K. J. MORRIS** (Mt. Coot-tha), replied—

“This is not a matter which comes within the jurisdiction of the Minister for Labour and Industry.”

CENTRAL STATE SCHOOL, NELLY BAY, MAGNETIC ISLAND

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

“If a Central State School is ultimately established at Nelly Bay, Magnetic Island, and other schools on the island are closed down, will parents of children living within the three-mile limit be forced to pay for their transport to the school, which in the case of those living at Picnic Bay would be 9d. each way?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

“Normal Departmental policy is to require parents of children living within three miles of a State School to be responsible for their regular attendance and no financial assistance for their transport to school is given. As approval has not yet been given for a scheme of centralised schooling on Magnetic Island, I am unable

to advise specifically in the matter. However, if a definite request is made for centralisation into one school instead of three schools on Magnetic Island, the Department will view favourably the granting of assistance to the parents of those children who are disadvantaged financially by the closure of their schools."

BULK SUGAR TERMINALS

Mr. BYRNE (Mourilyan) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

"(1) As public documents show that the C.S.R. Co. Ltd. are and have been joint consultants for the planning and establishment of the bulk sugar terminals at Mackay, Lucinda Point, Bundaberg, Townsville and Mourilyan Harbour, what were the terms and conditions of engagement of the C.S.R. Co. Ltd. as such consultants?"

"(2) What amounts of money, in respect of what services, and in what years have been paid by the Government of Queensland or by the Sugar Board or by the C.S.R. Co. Ltd., as agent for the Sugar Board, to the C.S.R. Co. Ltd., as such consultants in respect of the said bulk sugar terminals?"

"(3) Of any amounts so paid to the C.S.R. Co. Ltd., what part or parts of them are attributable to the services rendered by the Co-ordinator of Bulk Terminals, Mr. J. T. Alley, and his assistant, Mr. A. B. Pointon?"

"(4) Are not Messrs. Alley and Pointon both officers in the permanent employment of the C.S.R. Co. Ltd.?"

"(5) Is the Co-ordinator of Bulk Terminals the Chairman of the Bulk Terminal Local Organisations constituted for each of the abovementioned five (5) bulk terminals and is not his assistant the Deputy Chairman in each case?"

"(6) What fees and allowances have been and are to be paid to (a) the Co-ordinator of Bulk Terminals in his capacity as Chairman of the five (5) Local Organisations mentioned and (b) the assistant as such Deputy Chairman?"

"(7) Is the Co-ordinator of Bulk Terminals the Chairman of each of the five (5) Local Organisations mentioned one and the same person as the mill-owners' representative on the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board?"

"(8) If so, what salary, fees and allowances are paid out of the sugar fund in respect of such mill-owners' representative?"

"(9) Are there not members of the Queensland Public Service (within and beyond the State) available to perform the duties mentioned with equal efficiency and at less cost?"

"(10) Who are the bankers to each of the five (5) Bulk Sugar Terminal Local Organisations?"

"(11) Who are the insurers of each of the five (5) bulk sugar terminals and in what or whose name do the policies issued stand?"

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

"(1) Messrs. Macdonald, Wagner and Priddle have been the Consulting Engineers for the planning and construction of each of the bulk sugar terminals mentioned. The engagement of their services has been the subject of agreements of service covering each case. These agreements of service make provision for them to select and instruct consultants for those portions of the work involving skills other than civil engineering. It is my understanding that the C.S.R. Co. Ltd. has been engaged by Macdonald, Wagner and Priddle under these provisions for specialised services of electrical and mechanical engineering. Under the agreements the matter of payment for these specialised services is a matter for Messrs. Macdonald, Wagner and Priddle. I have no knowledge of the arrangements made between these two parties. Where these specialised services are obtained, the consulting engineers are entitled to a co-ordinating fee of 1 per cent. of the cost of the work in respect of which the special consultants are retained. This co-ordinating fee is, in fact, somewhat less than that which the consulting engineers could charge under the standard code fixed by the Institute of Engineers."

"(2) Nil."

"(3) See answer to Question (2)."

"(4) I believe so."

"(5) Yes."

"(6) None. By arrangement with the Sugar Board, the C.S.R. Company set up a Bulk Raw Sugar Section to co-ordinate and expedite the work of bulk terminal construction and subsequent administration to be performed at the several loading ports, and for the purpose of organising the construction and use of the bulk developments. The cost of this work includes salaries of the staff of the particular section and portion of the salaries of officers of other sections called upon from time to time for advice, etc. It also includes the travelling expenses and fares of officers engaged on the work. The annual charge for the bulk co-ordination service is agreed annually at discussions between the Sugar Board and the Company, and is determined in the light of the services rendered during the year. The arrangement is confirmed by an exchange of letters. The charge for the service covers the actual cost of the service, plus an element for profit, and is roughly in line with the terms of the general Refining Agreement between the Government and the Company. The amount fixed for this year is £15,000. As the need to organise construction will end during next year, I anticipate that the charge in following years will be sharply reduced."

"(7) Yes."

"(8) The affairs of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board do not come within my jurisdiction. There is certainly no payment from any source administered by the Treasury."

"(9) I am not sure to what services the Honourable Member refers. As for the specialised engineering services, the Government did have the advice of its Chief Engineer for Harbours and Marine, Mr. E. C. Fison, to guide it in considering the recommendations of Macdonald, Wagner and Priddle and their specialised consultants, the C.S.R. May I say, that with a programme covering five locations and involving a total expenditure in the order of £8.1 million, I have nothing but respect for the quality of the advice tendered by all members of the advisory team. They were not always unanimous and my own appreciation of the various problems was infinitely aided by contributions from all three advisers."

"(10) The bankers for the Bulk Sugar Terminal Local Organisations are as follows:—Bundaberg: The Commercial Banking Company of Sydney Ltd. Lucinda: The National Bank of Australasia Limited. Mackay: The Commercial Banking Company of Sydney Ltd. Mourilyan: The Commonwealth Trading Bank of Australia. Townsville: The Bank of New South Wales."

"(11) A Queensland firm of Insurance Brokers has been appointed to co-ordinate the insurance of the bulk terminals, the bulk of which is at present placed with the State Government Insurance Office. The policies are in the names of the relevant harbour authorities, the Sugar Board, and the Local Organisations for their respective rights and interests."

LEVELLING OF HOUSING COMMISSION SITES, BROADWATER ROAD AND CARINA

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

"Referring to a number of sites in the Broadwater Road Queensland Housing Commission estate and a small number in the Carina estate, has the Queensland Housing Commission given any consideration to the position of draining and filling a number of gullies on these building sites at present held by them which, if drained, could be used for building sites instead of becoming wasted sites?"

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

"There are approximately 30 surveyed allotments in the Broadwater Road Estate which cannot be filled or made available for building until the Brisbane City Council carried out stormwater drainage and in respect of some of the allotments eliminates the inlets and outlets to existing drains, which work is the Council's responsibility. In July last the Council was requested to carry out this work and advice has recently

been received that the Council is designing the necessary drainage system. On completion of the works by the Council the Commission will fill and grade the allotments for building purposes. There are approximately 23 surveyed sites in the Carina Estate that require costly drainage and filling to make them suitable for building. Some filling has been placed on ten of these allotments and action will now be taken to provide further filling and drainage to these sites and to the balance of the sites which it is considered can be economically reclaimed."

TRANSPORT OF FREIGHT FROM SOUTH COAST TO BRISBANE

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East), for **Mr. BENNETT** (South Brisbane), asked the Minister for Transport—

"(1) In view of the expensive turntable constructed at the Southport railway station, will he insist that freight to be carried from the South Coast to Brisbane be handled by the railway?"

"(2) Is it correct that Woods Transport has an open licence to carry all types of freight from the South Coast to Brisbane?"

"(3) Has Woods Transport a licence to carry zircon from the Coast to the City of Brisbane and return loaded with cement? If not, will he consider appointing an Industrial Inspector on the Coast to prevent any illegal carriage of goods?"

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

"(1) No."

"(2) Yes."

"(3) See answer to (2)."

"I regret that the hon. member is not in the House as I would like respectfully to suggest to him that he 'brush up' his knowledge of Queensland law. Transport police—not industrial inspectors—police the illegal carriage of goods."

PARKING BAN, PETRIE TERRACE AND PADDINGTON

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

"Can he indicate why a complete ban on parking on the outbound side of the Bardon tram line from Caxton Street, Petrie Terrace, extending right through the Petrie Terrace, Paddington and Upper Paddington shopping centres has been imposed from 4 p.m. rather than from 4.30 p.m., as the main outbound traffic flow does not commence until 4.30 p.m. at least?"

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis—Minister for Education and Migration), for **Hon. K. J. MORRIS** (Mt. Coot-tha), replied—

"Traffic Surveys have shown that on the arterial roads leading out of Brisbane, the evening peak hour progressively builds up

from 4 p.m. Peak hour standing prohibitions have been standardised throughout Brisbane, from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. in the morning, and from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the evening. The prime purpose of any roadway, as far as traffic is concerned, is for right of way and access to abutting properties. The parking of vehicles on a street is a privilege, not a right, and when this privilege interferes with freedom of movement, it cannot be allowed to continue. This stems from an early Judgment in 1812 in English Law in relation to the standing of stage coaches on a highway. In the Judgment given by Lord Ellenborough he states—'No one can make a stable yard of the King's highway.' I would refer you to the answer given you by Mr. Morris on September 27, 1960, concerning traffic conditions at the intersection of Ann and George Streets, wherein details were given of the increase in traffic and wherein it was pointed out that in the next 10-year period we can expect an increase of 65 per cent. in the number of vehicles registered in this City and the effect this would have on peak traffic conditions. As this increased registration comes into being, the standing restrictions in Caxton Street, along with all other arterial streets leading into the City, by necessity must have the standing prohibitions increased for a greater period of the day, in order to move the anticipated traffic volumes."

MACKAY ABATTOIR

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

"When is it anticipated that the Mackay Abattoir Board will commence construction of the local works at Mackay?"

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick) replied—

"The present position in regard to the building of a District Abattoir at Mackay is that plans of a proposed works have been prepared and are being considered by the Government's Abattoir Consultant and the Board. The Abattoir Consultant in question is scheduled to be in Mackay today for this purpose. It is expected that a final decision will be made as a result of this meeting and a firm request submitted to the Government concerning finance for the erection of the Abattoir."

PAPERS

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

Report of the Commissioner of Housing for the year 1959-1960.

Report of the Commissioner of Transport for the year 1959-1960.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

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

SEWERAGE, WATER SUPPLY, AND GAS FITTING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. L. H. S. ROBERTS (Whitsunday—Minister for Public Works and Local Government): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Sewerage, Water Supply, and Gasfitting Acts, 1949 to 1951, in a certain particular."

Motion agreed to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. L. H. S. ROBERTS (Whitsunday—Minister for Public Works and Local Government): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Local Government Acts, 1936 to 1959, in certain particulars and for other purposes."

Motion agreed to.

STATE TRANSPORT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Minister for Transport) (11.31 a.m.): I move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to consolidate and amend the law relating to transport."

I believe it is correct to say that every member of this Chamber is, in some degree, conscious of the controversial element associated with the subject of road transport in this State, more particularly as it relates to the transport of goods.

This feature is not peculiar to Queensland, or even to Australia, but is common to any modern country throughout the world where motor transport has developed in opposition to the railways.

With the development of the motor industry, we have entered an era of individual transport, and there is no way of escaping the transport problems associated with it. This is most apparent in the wide use of the private motor-car and the acute traffic problems that have followed it in every city of any size.

The current Bill, of course, does not deal with traffic matters, but I mention them to indicate that there is a great and continuing demand by the community for motor transport in all its phases.

Over a period of some 30 years, successive legislative enactments have been passed

in this Chamber. They have been debated at length, and they have been designed to control the growth and development of commercial road transport in some way. But I believe that it is a fair statement that all fell short, either in law or administration, of what the public is demanding now.

The present State Transport Facilities Act was passed in 1946, and was a further attempt to strike a balance between road, rail and air transport. The main feature of that Act was the introduction of a scheme of licensed services, supplemented by individual permit issues, to which was added, by the amending Act of 1951, a monthly or extended permit system. That is the system as we know it today.

The 1946 Act also placed the responsibility for ensuring the provision of adequate services on the Commissioner for Transport, but it gave the Minister the duty to confirm or veto all the Commissioner's decisions. Let me make it clear here that that responsibility was either confirmation or veto; it was not a responsibility or a power to enable me or by any other Minister to lay down what the Commissioner should or would do.

Since I took office as Minister for Transport I have taken a keen and active interest in the whole subject of road transport. I have encouraged deputations from all sections of the community, and I have endeavoured to the best of my ability to give careful thought to the overall picture in Queensland.

During recent visits to Sydney, Melbourne and Perth, when it was my responsibility to represent Queensland at annual meetings of the Australian Transport Advisory Council, I have taken the opportunity to visit the Transport Offices in those States and discuss with the respective Ministers and departmental officers our mutual road-transport problems. There have been big problems in all States, but in the course of these conferences we have endeavoured to look at them as they have faced each State to see whether a common approach was not forthcoming that would enable us to overcome the difficulties that each State had been encountering. I also made inquiries into the systems of control in Tasmania and South Australia.

Until recently Tasmania has not had the problem that the eastern States have had, but with the introduction of the service of the "Princess of Tasmania," the ship that travels between Melbourne and Devonport, Tasmania has experienced the same difficulties. The Premier of South Australia has always adopted the outlook that South Australia, particularly Adelaide, has become highly industrialised, and that the population of that State was not sufficient to consume or purchase all the State's secondary production, particularly the output of electrical gear and luxury goods. Consequently it has been the attitude of that Premier and his Transport Minister—probably rightly so from South Australia's point of view—that they

would not enter into any basis of road taxation. In other words, they wanted to ensure that they would get their goods to the markets of New South Wales and Victoria as cheaply as possible. It is not for me to criticise that attitude, but I mention it to indicate the difference between the problems of South Australia and those of Queensland.

As a result of my inquiries and the advice tendered during the visits to which I have referred, and in the light of a little over three years' experience as Transport Minister, I am prepared to say today that I am satisfied that the 1946 Act has been proved to have the following shortcomings:—

1. General licences for goods transport have, with a few exceptions, been confined to routes radiating from Queen Street. Very little consideration has been given to country centres; in fact I believe it could be said that under the system as we know it country licensing has been virtually ignored.

2. Licensed companies have been allowed to develop. The basis as laid down in the Act has, no doubt, given some rise to that and has enabled some people with capital to build up what I am prepared to describe in this Chamber as monopolies in transport.

3. The licensing system has also given complete protection against competition to many of these people and has failed in many instances—these particular people have failed—to supply the necessary specialist transport services required in many areas.

Mr. Hilton: The Act did not preclude the issue of additional licences.

Mr. CHALK: I am quite aware of that. I will develop that aspect as I go along. The point is, as I said, that many of those who had licences were not prepared to provide the specialist service that is required in many areas.

The fourth point on which I contend the Act has a shortcoming is—

4. The compulsion on road licensees to charge ruling freight rates has prevented industry, commerce, and consumer from sharing in the cost savings accruing in many instances from direct door-to-door road transport. Instead, the mere fact that these licences have been tied to rail freights has meant the pouring of many thousands of pounds of extra profits into the pockets of the monopoly transport companies.

Further, the need for any change in our transport legislation has been brought about by the continuing persistent public demand for a more liberal approach to road transport. I do not think any hon. member in this Chamber will deny that there has been a persistent demand from the public for a more liberalised system. That has come particularly from the country. The demand is not so clearly defined in the capital-city

area because it is a centre of large population and transport costs are not so evident as they are in the far-flung portions of the State. I think it would be safe to claim that transport control is a matter that affects country people much more than city dwellers and the Government are well aware of this. Nevertheless, we do recognise that any legislation that is to be passed must be for the benefit of the community as a whole.

By introducing this Bill, I claim that the Government are facing squarely up to the transport problem and are not shirking any of the issues involved. It is realised that after this Bill becomes law, no longer will the railways experience much of the protection that they enjoy today, but this is a competitive age and the railways must compete or retire gracefully from some of the areas. And let it not be said that railways cannot cart more cheaply than road transport.

It is not a question of railways losing money because of the goods they haul. It is a question of their losing money because the loading is not available to them. The loading has, in many instances, been taken by road hauliers.

The analysis of the report of the Committee for Transport Economic Research relating to road and rail, a committee that was set up under the Australian Road Transport Advisory Council, contains a graph showing some trends of the average road and rail-operating costs in Australia. That was taken out by the best available brains in Australia. It indicates that the overall rail cost is in the vicinity of 6d. per ton-mile carried, as we have said in Queensland, but, looking at the cost of haulage of a load of goods by road, we find that it can be kept down to somewhere near 3½d. The first assumption would be that there is a vast difference between haulage costs of rail and motor transport. For motor transport the cost is based on the average load the vehicle can haul. If the Queensland railways can procure heavy loading, such as on the Mt. Isa line, or heavy loads of steel or grain, it has been proved—as has been set out in the graph—that haulage costs can be kept down to approximately 2d. per ton-mile. At that figure the railways can compete and give a much better service, that is, by hauling heavier loads.

Mr. Coburn: That has always been the trouble in the North.

Mr. CHALK: That is true. But, as goods have not been available and goods trains have continued to operate with half loads, and as there are other problems associated with the railways generally, over the years it has been found necessary to give some protection to the railways, but, as I have said, the Government, recognising the position, say that the railways must be made competitive or retire from some of the areas. No longer can this State be allowed to be strangled financially by heavy railway deficits.

In the new approach to transport the Government are seeking to establish the following principles:—

(a) That all areas of the State receive fair and equal treatment in road transport matters.

I have said that under the Act most of the licences were for routes radiating from the metropolitan area. The Government say that all areas of the State must receive fair and equal treatment.

(b) That existing protection for haulier-monopolies must be eliminated;

I have already indicated something that can arise through the present system.

(c) That the artificial freight minimum brought about by existing rail freights must be removed, and all parties—whether haulier, merchant or primary producer—must be allowed to share in any reduced costs that can derive in many instances from road transport;

Is that not a fair approach? Is it not logical to say that, if hauliers can haul goods cheaper in some cases, all persons must have an opportunity to benefit from those reduced costs?

(d) That those who use the roads must pay a fair and reasonable charge towards their construction;

(e) That realistic penalties be imposed on those who deliberately and consistently breach the Act.

Mr. Walsh: Why don't you enforce the existing law?

Mr. CHALK: I propose to deal later in the day with that issue. If the hon. member for Bundaberg has anything to say, he will have an opportunity to say it, and I will have an opportunity to reply.

It would be wrong for me not to acknowledge that border-hopping has had some influence on the Bill.

Mr. Lloyd: With your approbation sometimes, too.

Mr. CHALK: My attitude to border-hopping, I believe, is too well-known throughout the State for me to have to repeat it here, but I must admit that the geographical location of the capital in relation to the New South Wales-Queensland border has made this particular type of transport possible, and certainly has given many country people a taste of road transport that they desire to continue.

Approval of road transport during the wool strike also gave many western areas experience of that type of transport and they have continued to press for the permanency of that arrangement. I do not propose to go into the whole of the ramifications of what happened in the wool strike, but I do say that in many parts of Queensland it was the real initiation that the graziers received into the haulage of wool by road.

Whilst the penalty provisions of this Bill will make it quite clear that the Government do not intend to condone any type of illegal operation, the public demands for road transport have made it necessary to give people the opportunity of using legal road transport if they are prepared to pay the necessary fees. So often of late have I heard it said, both by the haulier and the merchant—and in many cases by the primary producer—"Grant us a permit; we'll pay the fees; we don't want to act illegally." In many of the western areas I have visited, people have said that the blame for border-hopping rests principally on me as the Minister because we will not give permits. This Bill provides the answer to those people. No longer will anybody be able to blame the Government for border-hopping jaunts. This Bill will test their sincerity. I believe many of these people are absolutely sincere, but we will test the sincerity of their claims that they do not want to be illegal and that all they want is a permit as they are prepared to pay for the use of the roads.

I recognise, of course, that some individuals have probably—I cannot altogether blame them—a somewhat selfish approach to their own business and do not feel that there is any personal obligation on them to use the railways for their transport if they can find a cheaper and better method. This attitude, of course, is magnified if all are not treated alike. For example, if a grazier at Goondiwindi is allowed to have his wool brought to Brisbane by road transport, it is extremely hard to convince the grazier at Winton that he cannot do likewise. Yet that is what is laid down in the Act that this Government inherited when they came to office. In many cases where the licensing system applies the grazier can transport his wool by road transport. However, people in the Gregory electorate will be denied that right unless a complete licensing system is instituted.

Border-hopping has been with us since the Hughes and Vale decision in November, 1954, and the Government have interested themselves in a number of High Court cases since then. I believe it can be fairly said that we have done all we possibly can to maintain some control over the State's transport system. One of the first actions taken by this Government, on assuming office in 1957, was to pass the Roads (Contribution to Maintenance) Act of 1957, which coincided with comparable legislation that was passed in New South Wales and Victoria. That Act has resulted in the collection of hundreds of thousands of pounds, which have been expended solely on the maintenance of roads. It has proved, I believe, a worth-while measure in the interests of the community, and particularly of local authorities.

Unfortunately, there is still a general acceptance of border-hopping by many consignors

and consignees in the community and there is no doubt that some of these people will continue to try to find legal devices to give them sufficient scope to continue. It would, therefore, be unwise to approach the matter without that assumption. However, the Government will do all in their power to ensure that the new law is observed. The stringent penalties provided in the Bill, which I will explain later, will give ample evidence of our sincerity in the matter.

Before proceeding to deal with the principles of the Bill in more detail, I wish to make it clear that there is no alteration in the legislative control of the transport of passengers and goods by air or of road passenger transport.

In air transport, the higher cost of movement, particularly of goods, has allowed development to take place in an orderly way and control by both State and Commonwealth Governments has operated smoothly.

In passenger transport, the licensing system, as we know it, has worked reasonably well. Although it has often been argued to me that some degree of competition would be of great benefit here, too, I have found that, in suburban services, the exacting requirements of workers, school children and shoppers' timetables justify some protection from competition. I am prepared to go as far as to say that these operators generally have the interests of the public at heart to a large degree and strive to give an adequate service at a reasonable fare.

When the State Transport Facilities Act of 1946 was introduced as a Bill on 3 December, 1946, the late Hon. E. M. Hanlon was Premier. It came into operation on 1 April, 1947, and it was featured by Mr. Hanlon at a conference of State Ministers held at Canberra on 19, 20 and 21 August, 1947. I have a copy of Mr. Hanlon's speech to the Conference and I believe the following passage from it is well worth quoting:—

"Under the Transport Act passed by the Queensland Parliament last Session, the roads are thrown open to anybody who wants to travel. The day when people can be prevented from using their own means of travel in order to avoid heavy deficits on our railways systems is as dead as the dodo. I have always held the view that we should enable people to travel as they wish and give them opportunities for the most safe and speedy transportation of their goods.

"So, what we are doing is to open up the roads to transport on condition that everybody who travels over the roads makes some contribution to the cost of the State Transport Services."

However, whilst I believe that the late Mr. Hanlon was sincere in his remarks in 1947, the state of affairs to which he referred was never allowed to develop. There was an outcry from unions associated with the railways and union pressure was brought to bear on the then Labour Government, and so it

was that, while a number of licences were issued in the South-eastern portion of the State, the rest of Queensland was deprived of the very form of transport of which Mr. Hanlon spoke so freely.

What we propose under the Bill is based on the very same principle of opening the roads that Mr. Hanlon advocated in 1947—a principle of equality to all, a principle of competition amongst the various forms of transport as long as, in the case of road users, they make a fair and just contribution towards the upkeep of the roads. I now propose to outline the main provisions of the Bill.

As I indicated earlier in my remarks, it is intended to abolish the present system of licensing. Clause 4 of the Bill provides for the termination of licences for the carriage of goods in Queensland.

Mr. Walsh: Is that repudiation?

Mr. CHALK: In order to cause the least possible upset in the change-over to the new permit system, all licensees will be given up to 30 days to run after the proclamation of the new Act. This applies also to those operators who are operating on extended permits for the carriage of goods.

I know that some large licensees, and some hon. members such as the hon. member for Bundaberg, will cry to high heaven alleging repudiation by the Government—

Mr. Walsh: So it is.

Mr. CHALK: But might I say that this is all so much "boloney." No existing licensee will suddenly be removed from the road. He has the same rights regarding permits as any other haulier. What is more important, however, is that if he has been playing the game as an operator, he will have built up good will with numerous customers that will firstly place him streets ahead of any new competitors, he will have established depots, capable office staff, a fleet of trucks, and experienced drivers, all of whom will be keen to ensure that their future livelihood is protected. The only thing that the Government will have taken is the monopoly that for years has been responsible for pouring many thousand of pounds into the company profits that rightly belonged to the people.

Clause 6 is one of the most important provisions of the Bill, in that it changes the administrative setup of the control of transport in Queensland.

In the previous Act, the initial responsibility to make determinations and/or decisions was vested in the Commissioner, but these rulings had then to be confirmed by the Minister. It is true that the Minister has had the power of veto; but once a decision was confirmed, anyone approaching the Minister and disputing a decision no doubt found himself in the position of appealing from Caesar to Caesar, as he was appealing against a decision that the Minister had already confirmed.

Under this Act, the Government, through the Minister, will rightly lay down policy; but the responsibility for the administration of the Act within the framework of that policy will rest entirely with the Commissioner. No longer will the Commissioner be bound first to seek the opinion of the Railway Department as to whether that form of transport could undertake the carriage forming the subject of a permit application. What he must decide is whether movement by road is in the best interests of the industry concerned and the State in general. However, if any person or industry feels aggrieved at the Commissioner's decision, he has the right to approach the Government on a question of policy. I believe the time has come when we must place the entire responsibility for the administration of the department fairly and squarely on the shoulders of the Commissioner.

Clause 7 provides for the continuance in office of the present Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner. This clause has given the Government a great amount of thought following on the statement by the Premier in his policy speech that the Government would appoint a Transport Administrator.

Mr. Walsh: You are getting out from under now.

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member got out from under many a time.

However, after careful examination of the experience of other States, it is believed that the concept of this new Act and the freedom—I emphasise the word "freedom"—it gives to road transport, obviate for the present, at least, the need for another highly-paid public servant, and that the administrative duties can well be carried out by the present administrative heads.

I do not propose to go into personalities on this matter as such has never been in the mind of the Government, but I do want to mention on my own behalf that I have the greatest confidence possible in the present Transport Commissioner, Mr. Norman Kropp. During his term of office he has been fearless in his administration. Naturally there are some people in the community who would damn him, but that is often the lot of a public servant who will not yield to pressure groups. I could name others too. I have absolute confidence in my Commissioner.

When the Bill is distributed it will be noted that Clause 12 gives rather wider powers of delegation by the Commissioner than were previously existent, and I consider that this is a progressive step. It is obvious that every administrative act cannot be performed by the Commissioner himself for the whole of the State, and it is necessary to provide clearly for a rather extensive delegation of duties. I know that the present Act gives the Commissioner the right to delegate authority but unfortunately it has not been possible for him to delegate all the authority that was necessary with the

extensive growth of road transport. By the introduction of the new provision I hope that we will in many cases avoid the necessity to refer many minor matters from country areas to Brisbane, and so avoid irritating delays.

Part III of the Bill contains the licensing provisions for vehicles for hire other than for the carriage of passengers by bus on licensed services. The licensing of vehicles for hire has been extended to include all vehicles previously used under goods' licenses, which will now have to be licensed on a similar basis to what local vehicles for hire were licensed previously. The need for this licensing is to ensure that persons wishing to enter the "For Hire" carrying industry are of good repute and capable of carrying out their duties to the public, and that their vehicles measure up to the required standards, and are roadworthy. The provisions are much the same as those in the previous Act which were transferred from the Traffic Act by the amending Act of 1959.

An additional provision is that caravan trailers are excluded from the necessity to have a licence to hire. The exemption of caravan trailers gave us some thought, but in view of the prevalence of casual hiring of caravans among friends, it was decided to permit them to be rented freely. I emphasise, however, that if caravans are rented, these vehicles are still subject to inspection by the Chief Inspector of Machinery, and a certificate from that officer that they are roadworthy should always be current. I believe this adequately ties up with the safety regulations, an important factor when a caravan is being hauled.

Part IV of the Bill deals with road-passenger services and, as indicated before, very little alteration has been made to the provisions existing under the State Transport Facilities Acts. Some sections have been streamlined, but without disturbing the principles contained therein.

A slightly increased degree of authority has been given to the Commissioner to extend existing licensed passenger services to roads or areas abutting upon or in the vicinity of areas covered by licenses already conducted by them. This policy has been followed even since the inception of the Act, but there has always been some doubt as to whether even the smallest extension of a licensed passenger service should be re-advertised. This is obviously not necessary and I can quote several instances of where and existing passenger service, because of the development of a township, desires to go a few miles farther than is laid down in the licence. In those cases both my predecessor and I—and rightly so—extended the license because, after all, you would not advertise a licensed service for two or three extra miles. So, to clear up any possibility of litigation, we have done that in this Bill.

The fees provided for passenger licenses are the same as in the existing Act.

Part V of the Bill contains the provisions governing the issue of permits and incorporates the most important changes in the system of control. Permits may be issued in respect of a specified period of time or in respect of a specified occasion. With respect to goods, the permits will fall into three categories.

Class 1 will authorise a person to carry for hire any goods other than restricted goods in or on the district or road specified in the permit. This type of permit will be issued essentially to the regular haulier and in the case of well-established companies will be issued in block form so as to avoid regular calls at a permit-issuing centre.

Class 2 will be made available in respect of a hire vehicle for goods of the classified type in the permit in or on a district or road specified in the permit. The permit in this classification will apply more particularly to individual loads of specified commodities.

Class 3 is an innovation in that it provides for the owners of vehicles to carry their own goods in or on the road specified in the permit. Under this permit it will be legal for business houses, for an industry or for primary producers to carry their own goods in their own vehicles subject to the payment of the fee prescribed.

In each of the three classes abovementioned the permit will not authorise the carriage of restricted goods. Section 40 deals with restricted goods, which are goods that the Commissioner decrees cannot be carried under permit.

It is expected for the present that these goods will include such items as coal, cane and raw sugar, livestock over a certain distance, timber in certain areas, minerals, certain grain, certain oil products, certain brewery products, and, in some cases, cement. However, let me make it clear to the Chamber that this is a matter that must engage the very close attention of the Commissioner because of the circumstances that will apply in a particular area or at a particular time. It will be his responsibility, as I said earlier, to consider the economics of the particular industry and have due regard to the forms of transport available.

Clauses 41 to 43 contain provisions for the terms and conditions under which payments will be issued and for the cancellation or suspension of permits.

Clause 44 provides for the fees to be paid for issue of permits, and in respect of the carriage of passengers—as I have said—no alteration has been made to the previous system.

So far as goods are concerned, the principle of assessing fees on a percentage of gross revenue—particularly gross revenue related to rail freight—has been dropped in favour of a ton-mile rate and the maximum—I stress this—in this regard has been fixed at 3d. per ton-mile on the load capacity of the vehicle.

The fixing of the maximum fee was determined only after a great deal of consideration and much research.

It is expected that the fee will provide a satisfactory basis, but it may have to be reduced on certain commodities hauled over longer distances. This again will be the responsibility of the Commissioner to decide. The Government have not tied the fee, but have said that the Commissioner shall not exceed the maximum.

Unfortunately, certain haulier interests have deliberately tried—seeking the aid of the Press—to mislead the public in relation to the fees to be charged under the Bill. They have tried to indicate what 3d. per ton-mile will total, but have very conveniently avoided mentioning to the public that under the present system, that is, 20 per cent. basis, the rate for some commodities has been up to 7d. per ton-mile. The Bill strikes a medium, maximum charge, and at the same time gives the Commissioner the right to reduce the fee on certain commodities where items are of a bulky nature. For instance, take a load of cotton, which is of a bulky nature. The Commissioner is aware of that, and knows only too well that no man could put 12 tons of cotton on a 12-ton truck. Consequently, under the Bill he is given the right to reduce the fees. Again, take the position of a man in the West. I have read the case put up by some of the haulier interests in which they point out how much it is going to cost on the basis of 3d. per ton-mile to shift a header from one place to another. The Commissioner is given certain authority under the Bill. He has knowledge of goods that may be carried and under the Bill can exercise a right it gives him. The movement or carriage of a header will be based on a nominal sum. The charge will not be based on the fact that a header takes up the whole of a 12-ton space. Haulier interests in Queensland have gone the length and breadth of the State in the last couple of weeks in an effort to condemn the Bill, and have said this or that is going to happen. Their statements have been based not on information given by me or, I believe, by any Government member, but purely on assumption. They have endeavoured to condemn the Bill on the basis of their assumptions by spreading propaganda, not in the interests of the railways, but in their own interests.

I know of nothing that could be fairer; yet we have the disciples of gloom—those who have reaped thousands of pounds from transport interests—wailing to high heaven, allegedly, as I have said, championing the cause of the primary producers and others, but in reality howling because the Government have had the internal fortitude to throw over their money-making kingdom and to see that the public get a fair deal.

When a truck runs empty it pays no fees other than under the Roads (Contribution to Maintenance) Act, but immediately it accepts any quantity of loading, the total

load fee applies. This is to avoid thousands of trucks running here and there with uneconomical loads, causing wear and tear of roads and traffic congestion. It will make the owner realise that he must have a share of the available business before he can enter this calling. It will also abolish all the rackets—I use that word advisedly—that have previously been practised with goods manifests. In this direction I could name many systems that have been devised to beat the department and the police.

Under the proposed system there is the basis of the load weight of the truck, and a permit is issued on the capacity of the truck or a special permit is sought for a particular load because of its nature. There will no longer be a need to check the load to see if it contains, for example, a keg of beer, a drum of fuel, or a ton of salt or sugar. That is the basis that has operated in the past, and how in the name of fortune anyone can really successfully do that—unless he almost unloads the truck on the road to see what is on it—I do not know. As a result, the system has been to accept the manifest of the haulier. Under this Bill, he gets a permit for a load. We do not care what he hauls—other than restricted goods. We are not concerned what freight rate he charges; all we require him to do is to pay his fee.

Mr. Hanlon: What about where the Commissioner varies it between 3d. a ton—

Mr. CHALK: That is simple. It is on the permit. That is the basis. The permit lays down what he will carry and the fee involved, consequently there will now be no need to check manifests and we will get away from the rackets that have previously operated.

Part VI. deals with offences against the Act.

Mr. Walsh: You are dreaming.

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member has been dreaming for a long while.

Clause 45 sets out the exemptions, which are basically the same as those under the existing State Transport Facilities Act. Some minor alterations have been made in the wording to clear up doubts that existed. I shall deal now with the major alterations that have been made.

Sub-clause 11 provides for the exemption from fees on delivery to primary producers at their place of production of foodstuffs for human consumption, for use by them.

In the past there have been cream carriers who, under the present Act, have been prevented from taking back requirements for their own homes. We have clarified that. This request has come to me from all parts of the State.

Sub-clause 19 provides an exemption, and this is a particularly important one, because I know of the difficulties that were experienced by my predecessor and by me in

trying to interpret the Act as it stands. Sub-clause 19, which provides an exemption to the nearest station, has extended the authority of the Commissioner to determine which is the most suitable nearest station. He is required, in addition to loading facilities, to take into consideration convenience of transport and any other factors that he deems relevant. In the past, we have had examples of liability under the Act in what could only be classed as unreasonable circumstances. For example, people at Thargomindah were subject to control under the State Transport Facilities Act because Quilpie was their nearest railhead, despite the fact that the road to Quilpie was only a few miles shorter, was not nearly as well constructed as the road to Cunnamulla and that Cunnamulla had always been the natural outlet for Thargomindah. We are now making it possible for the Commissioner to determine which will be regarded as the nearest railhead bearing in mind the facilities there. I had a case only a week or so ago where a haulier desired to unload stock but there were no stock facilities at the nearest railhead. It becomes a matter of interpretation of the Act. I remind the Committee that litigation has arisen in many cases from the reasonable interpretation of the Act rather than an interpretation according to the strict letter of the law. We want this to be fully clarified, so we clearly set out the rights of the Commissioner. A further unreasonable aspect of this technical liability was that properties a few miles east of Thargomindah were exempt because they were nearer to Cunnamulla than to Quilpie. So we had properties side by side, one completely exempt because it was closer to Cunnamulla while one in the other direction was liable.

This same technical principle has been applied to many other parts of the State where there should not be any liability at all.

Clause 49 sets out the amounts of penalties for offences against the Act in respect of the carriage of goods. The penalty for a second offence has been increased to an amount not less than £100 or more than £200.

Mr. Walsh: Chicken feed!

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member would pick it up, at any rate.

The penalty for the third or subsequent offence has been increased to not less than £200 and not more than £500. Even at these figures, I still have some doubts as to whether the penalties are sufficiently high. After the experience I have had over the last few years of the extreme difficulty of proving breaches by shrewd illegal operators and the cost of policing that is necessary to try to ensure that not on just one trip but on every illegal trip an offender is intercepted and prosecuted, I think that the penalties should even be doubled.

It is well known to me that many operators look on the fine and fees payable

when they are intercepted as a sort of licensing fee, knowing that, to compensate them for the penalty, they may be able to continue to sneak trips through without being caught. If this deliberate evasion of the law is to be stamped out—and I say on behalf of the Government that we will do everything possible to stamp it out—we must eventually make the penalty so high that the prosecution of an offender on three occasions will virtually mean his extinction. I do not believe that the Crown should be expected to play a sort of game with illegal operators whereby the fine is regarded as an evening-up of the score for benefits they have already derived by running the gauntlet.

Clause 51 provides that fees to be paid for illegal trips shall be double normal fees. Such a provision is on a par with that for income tax evasion.

This principle of doubled fees also applies to consignors and consignees, and I want to say something now particularly about consignors and consignees. So far the Crown has not applied the provisions of a clause under the existing Act against consignors or consignees; but I want to make it known now that when this Bill becomes law, if a haulier fails to make payment of the fees, or if after court action he defaults—and unfortunately I can quote quite a few cases under this heading—the Crown will not hesitate to exercise its rights against consignors and consignees.

To become a border hopper, a haulier has to obtain goods to carry, and therefore it can fairly be said that in quite a number of cases both consignor and consignee are equally guilty with the haulier in "thumbing" the law.

Clause 53 provides for the issue of a warrant of execution for the amount of any penalty by the seizure and sale of the goods and chattels of the offender, and also of the vehicle used in the illegal transport, even though such vehicle may not be the sole and absolute property of the offender.

The Bill also provides for the execution of the penalty against the vehicle even though the vehicle has been disposed of by the person committing the offence. It is well recognised that these are extreme measures; but we have had too many cases where vehicles have changed hands overnight, where companies have closed down, where new companies have been formed at almost the same hour as another company has been fined heavily, or where vehicles have been returned to hirers or dealers through one gate only to be reissued to the new set-up out of another gate, and the Crown has been left holding the bag. I do not propose to allow this to occur in the future.

Part VII of the Bill deals with the acquisition of road passenger services by local authorities or Crown corporations or instrumentalities, and Part VIII. relates to control of water and air transport. Virtually no changes have been made in the provisions in the existing Act.

Part IX of the Bill contains the safety provisions relating to driving hours and road-worthiness of vehicles, and, whilst they are substantially the same as those in the existing Act—in some cases it has been difficult to police some of the provisions, I know—I forecast that as soon as weighbridges are installed at Darra and on the south and north coast roads, these provisions will be very vigorously policed.

Part X is the general section of the Bill and contains the usual clauses regarding administration. In addition, this part contains a section relating to offences against the Act and the powers of authorised officers.

Quite some difficulty has been experienced in the past from attempts by some hauliers to hinder authorised officers in the execution of their duties, and, to overcome this, additional protection has been provided with penalties ranging up to £100.

The Bill also provides for the offence by companies to be punishable against the managing director, directors, managers, and governing officers. This section is also recognised as being drastic, but the Government feel that they have no alternative to providing all methods of enforcement against illegal operators. Most hon. members, I know, have some knowledge of transport and some knowledge of the changes of companies, managers, and directors, and of some of the ramifications of deceptions that are practised by those who deliberately and consistently set out to beat the law.

Clause 68 provides drastic penalties for persons who forge or counterfeit any permit, certificate or other authority under the Act, or any record, document or other writing relating to the carriage by road of any goods. We have had very many examples of the faking of documents by illegal operators, and this clause provides an additional measure for dealing with them.

Clause 69 takes the matter somewhat further by providing for similar penalties for using a false numberplate on a vehicle. The reason for this provision is to prevent the swapping of numberplates on trailers and vehicles for the purpose of evading the Act. Again I could tell the Committee about many of the rackets that are being worked at present by certain illegal operators in swapping numberplates on motor vehicles and trailers. By putting markings on a vehicle you can follow it along its journey. You can see it at one place bearing a certain number plate but when you see it very shortly after at another place it is bearing another numberplate. We are now making it an offence to swap numberplates. Previously there were certain powers under another Act but because of the extent to which this practice has grown we are making the swapping of numberplates an offence that will attract a severe penalty under this legislation.

Clauses 70 to 72 provide for the rights of authorised officers to carry out their duties

under the Act, and whilst somewhat stringent they are basically the same as those existing at present.

The subject matters for regulations are detailed, and conform in the main with those provided for under the existing Acts.

The foregoing explanation has, I believe, been sufficiently comprehensive to enable hon. members to form an appreciation of the principles of the Bill, aspects of which will be treated in greater detail as the debate develops, and in accordance with the trend of the debate.

As I have said, the issue under review is of itself controversial; it must therefore be expected that conflicting points of view will be encountered. However, it is equally reasonable to expect criticism to be constructively based and directed at the actual ramifications of the measure, not formulated on what some interested person or persons might have construed as being the possible implications of the Bill.

I have given the Committee as clear an indication as I possibly can of what is involved in the legislation. The Bill has not been hastily conceived; it represents the product of an extensive and thorough examination of all aspects of the transport problem. I have heard it said that I have not taken into my confidence or discussed the matter with a certain haulier or hauliers. But it is the responsibility of the Government to get the best brains available. We have discussed the matter with transport officers in many states; we have discussed it with legal men; it has been carefully and fully considered by Cabinet. Not at any stage do I consider that there is a responsibility on me to discuss the matter with someone who has a vested interest in the very legislation to be discussed.

The Government feel confident that the realistic approach to the issue, as exemplified in the Bill, coupled with the adoption of specific measures aimed at simultaneously lifting the standard of railway-operating efficiency, will ensure the functioning of a transport system in Queensland which will—

(a) Provide for a better all-round service to all parts of the State;

(b) Reduce transport costs to many areas, at the same time ensuring that those living in such areas will benefit;

(c) Fairly spread the right to haul amongst all carriers who are desirous of giving a service, and who in turn will make a fair and just contribution to the Government for the use of State-constructed roads.

I commend the Bill to the Committee for consideration.

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (12.40 p.m.): I regret very much that the Standing Orders permit me only 25 minutes to deal with this subject, although the Minister has taken one and a quarter hours to introduce the Bill.

Because of measures taken by the Federal Government, yesterday might be regarded throughout Australia as a grim day in the financial history of this country, but Thursday, 17 November, will undoubtedly go down in history as "Black Thursday" for transport in Queensland. If the people of Australia, and the people of Queensland, have the intestinal fortitude that the Minister has said this Government have, when the time comes they will tip both these Governments out of office as quickly as they can because of the disservice they have done to the country's economy.

It is quite ironical to hear the Minister attack those who are licensed operators in this State, and in particular a member of his own Government. The irony of it is that that same member whom he attacks got out of a sick bed to come down and record his vote for him for Cabinet selection, which he obtained by a majority of only one.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: It is all right for hon. members opposite to interject. If they can take it, I can hand it out.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask hon. members to please restrain themselves whilst the Leader of the Opposition is speaking.

Mr. DUGGAN: Make it perfectly clear, Mr. Taylor, because I do ask for some consideration on behalf of "Hansard." I will probably be compelled to speak more quickly than I normally do.

Members of the Opposition oppose the introduction of the Bill on two grounds: firstly because we think it is unwise to introduce it only one day after the Government announced their intention to spend £100,000 on getting American consultants to tell us how to run the railways.

Mr. Chalk interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: The Minister says he beat us to the gun. That shows especially the political devices they use in trying to withdraw the sting from the criticism from this side of the Chamber. As I say, it was done for the purpose of withdrawing the sting from the Opposition. We oppose the Government's intention. If there is to be any investigation into the railways, we say there are competent men in Australia to do it.

I have before me a copy of "Fortune" magazine, probably the most authoritative business magazine in the Western world.

Mr. Tooth: American.

Mr. DUGGAN: American, and the proposed inquiry is by American consultants. It is the issue of January 1960 and it points out that the railroad industry, with a private investment of almost 28 billion dollars last year returned only 2.76 per cent. on the net assets for the five years up to 1958, while the major industries of America—and it lists a number of industrial undertakings—in every case returned at least three times that

amount. And the Government are going to America, a country with a record like that, for industrial consultants to come out here and undertake this survey!

About three years ago the New South Wales Government brought out representatives of a firm named Ebasco, a firm that was regarded by the then Premier of New South Wales as being the most eminent firm of industrial and railway consultants available. Its report was submitted. It was first of all ignored by the Government of the day. It was only what everybody knew it would be. This is the reception it got from "The Sydney Morning Herald"—

"A first reading of the long delayed Ebasco report on the Government transport undertaking suggests that it is something of a damp squib.

"It provides no magic remedy for the Railways Department's dismaying annual deficits.

"It tells us a number of things we already know only too well—that working expenses have increased more than earnings; that much plant and equipment needs to be modernised.

"Proposed five-year programme of capital expenditure totalling £67,750,000, by so doing an annual saving of £9,500,000 in total operating cost would result.

"It all sounds very much like throwing a whale to catch a mackerel."

The same thing will happen when the proposed report is submitted to the Queensland Government. I would not mind so much if they acted on some of these reports. We remember the statement by the Minister some time ago that the State Government had appointed an Australian transport economist, Professor Hytten, to help check growing railway losses by framing a new road-rail transport policy that would provide a fair basis of competition between the Railway Department and road operators. But what did they do with the Hytten Report? It cost the State £1,050, but what has happened to it? They have denied hon. members the opportunity of perusing it. What is the use of asking us for co-operation when official reports, produced with taxpayers' money, are not tabled? We cannot get the Government to table them.

On the subject of transport, Sir Arthur Fadden, a man closely associated with Government members politically, was asked to report on the Gladstone-Rockhampton ports. The investigation cost some thousands of pounds, but the report was pigeonholed. We asked the Government to table it, but they would not.

What about the report on electricity development to be undertaken in the State? Electricity and transport together are probably the most important element in the development of Queensland. Representatives of a firm of British consultants, Merz & McLellan, were brought out here at a cost

of several thousand pounds, but when their report was submitted it, too, was pigeon-holed by the Government. What is the use of asking the Opposition for co-operation when experts are called in and make their reports and the Government withhold from the Opposition information that is so vitally necessary to an examination of these measures?

Under the Bill the Government have attempted to solve the transport problem, but what of the Minister's attitude in the past? I do not need a very vivid imagination or a very retentive memory to recall that when he was on this side of the Chamber he said that the main defect in the Railway Department was that it had inefficient ministerial direction and inefficient administrators. He asked on several occasions—not only one—for a royal commission to investigate the transport policy and the railways policy of Queensland. Yet today, listening to him, one would think we were like Rip Van Winkle and had been asleep for the past four years. He said, "We must be cognisant of the introduction of the motor-car into the transport industry." One would think that the motor-car was invented and became operative only in 1957. This problem was common to administrators long before the Minister was even in Parliament. And if there has been such a shocking mulcting of money by these licensed hauliers, why has it taken the Government three and a half years to find out about the existence of such a shocking state of affairs warranting this drastic action that I say exceeds the sort of action we expect Krushchev and the Russian people to take in their country?

What is the use of talking about the liberty of the subject? The Government say they are going to give everybody in Queensland the opportunity to engage in transport. What will be the result of this policy? First, the Railway Department will not rehabilitate itself; it cannot rehabilitate itself under the conditions proposed in the Bill. What will happen in regard to road-transport hauliers? Licensed operators will immediately lose the tremendous assets they have built up over a period of time. It will mean the injection into the economy of hundreds and perhaps thousands of new operators, who will, of course, reduce the quantity of freight carried by the railways at present. The first blow has been struck at the Railway Department. What is the use of the Minister going to these railway gatherings and saying, "I am your friend?" How can he say that when the Public Service Commissioner's report which was tabled the other day shows there were 860 fewer railway employees at 30 June, 1960, than in the previous year? And in reply to my question yesterday the Minister told us that another 500 will go before 30 June next year. In a period of 18 months the railway staff will be reduced by something of the order of 1,350 men. Under this scheme

in a very short period of time there will be a reduction much greater than 1,350 people in the number of railway employees.

Most of the things that the Minister seeks to do under the Bill could have been done without coming to Parliament. What is the good of talking about this monopoly grip? There is nothing to prevent the Minister, at any time, from licensing 1, 2, 3, 4, or 100 people to operate in Queensland. There is no need to come to this Parliament for the authority. If these things were so bad why did he not take that action? Why did he wait till now? If the Minister feels so strongly on this point, why did he agree to the merger of existing transport interests to consolidate their empire? Or does he deny that? He talks about monopolies and gives his friends the sole monopoly to cart sugar in the northern part of the State, yet in the same breath he says he is not going to deal with the passenger services. We see in today's newspaper what the C.M.O. aldermanic candidate for Coorparoo, Mr. Penfold, is doing in a monopolistic way for the passenger transport of the State by spending £100,000 on acquiring the Red and Blue Bus Service to the South Coast. The Minister talks about monopolies! The Minister may have thought the "Dim Sim" petrol proposal stank, but it did not stink half as much as this one.

When I say that, I do not want the Minister to assume that any of the allegations that we make are in any way an attack on him; we do not suggest that there is any personal impropriety on his part in this matter. It is purely his political action that we are criticising. I want that understood.

On the evidence available, I say very definitely, that there was effective and adequate power to deal with these things as they were.

If the Government feel so strongly on the question of the liberty of the subject, why have they in their legislation permitted hotel licences to be restricted? Why not let everybody have a hotel licence? On the manufacture of margarine, why not allow every manufacturer the right to produce as much margarine as he can? The other day, in the Barristers Act Repeal Bill, the Government tried to protect the barristers of Queensland from competition by southern barristers by legislating that they could not appear in Queensland jurisdictions. Again, by the Auctioneers, Real Estate Agents, Debt Collectors and Motor Dealers Acts Amendment Bill the Government tried to clamp down on the number of people who can act as auctioneers and real estate agents in this State. Yet the Minister comes here today and prates as though this Bill is protecting the legitimate interests of private enterprise!

This Bill will deal a death blow to the Railway Department and to the road transport industry of the State, and ultimately it will create financial chaos. This Government will bring about a financial disaster that the Opposition will inherit in the near future when it becomes the Government.

Under the Bill, first of all the Minister says that a 20-per cent. tax will be applied on road freight. By a simple Executive Council decision, the Minister could have done that 3½ years ago. Why wait until now if there was something flagrantly wrong with the policy? Why wait so long to do it when an Executive Council decision could have achieved the same result?

The Minister says that under the old basis, when the 20-per cent. tax applied to some specified categories or classifications, the tax amounted to something of the order of 7d. a ton-mile. Under this proposal the Minister, or the Commissioner for Transport, cannot impose a higher charge than 3d. a ton-mile.

The Minister said that the revenue from the operation of the Bill will give a satisfactory return to the Government. First of all, the fact that the Bill is being introduced suggests that the present position is not satisfactory. If it is not satisfactory when revenue is gained at the rate of 7d. a ton-mile, how in the name of goodness can the Minister expect to get an equal, or greater, amount of revenue if the tax is reduced to 3d. a ton-mile, unless of course a tremendously increased tonnage of goods is transported over the roads of the State? How can they do it?

Mr. Hughes: Free competition!

Mr. DUGGAN: Of course it is free competition, but it is silly competition.

Mr. Chalk: Don't you believe in free competition?

Mr. DUGGAN: Not in this manner. The Minister, of course, was very histrionic when quoting the late Hon. E. M. Hanlon. I suppose there is no-one in this Chamber who used to attack Mr. Hanlon more than he. If there was any implied criticism that I did not carry out that policy, I remind him that I was the only Labour Minister who was kept on in the Transport portfolio for 10 years so there could not have been any great dissatisfaction with what I did.

Mr. Chalk: I didn't say anything about you.

Mr. DUGGAN: No, but the Minister quoted the Hon. E. M. Hanlon with great approbation.

Mr. Chalk: That is fair enough.

Mr. DUGGAN: I believe the Government have panicked very greatly on this and I regret that time does not enable me to elaborate on the points I should like to make. The 1946 Act was introduced to deal with a set of conditions then obtaining, which will be reproduced when this measure is proclaimed in the near future. Competition prevailed in those days, all right; the trucking operators were competing so savagely against each other—as they will be under this Bill—that they were causing their drivers to work 15, 16 and 20 hours a day and to take benzedrine and other tablets to

keep awake and trucks were loaded beyond the point of safety in order that those men might earn enough to pay for them. It was because of all the undesirable features from the health, safety and other points of view that it was found necessary to bring in a measure to control the chaos that existed. And it must exist. Then the Minister comes in like some magician and says that under the Act, with the licensing system, they can conceal a keg of beer or something else. While he says there is going to be a sliding scale of charges for various commodities, what is going to prevent a dishonest operator from saying that 75 per cent. or 85 per cent. of his consignment comes within the category of goods to which the lower rate applies?

Mr. Chalk: You misunderstood it.

Mr. DUGGAN: Who is going to check that? At the present time on the Darling Downs there are three or four operators. So we have only three or four to check there. Under this new scheme the department will have to check hundreds or thousands of operators throughout the State. We know only too well that some people try to evade their obligations. The small men will do it; the big men will not, because there is too much involved. I will guarantee that if the Minister had evidence to justify the revocation of the licence for Brown's Toowoomba Transport, for Western Transport, for Crisp Transport or for Cobb & Co., those men would have more to fear than the owner of a 4-ton truck out at Boulia or somewhere else.

Mr. Chalk: I am sorry that, because of your incorrect interpretation, you are misleading the Committee but I do not want to interrupt your speech.

Mr. DUGGAN: Then the Minister should have explained it fully.

The Government seem to think that with this measure the affairs of the railways will be satisfactory, but let us go back a little to some of the statements made by the Minister in the past. In "The Sunday-Mail" of 6 October, 1957, he was reported as having told departmental heads that he "wanted to run the railways as close to a business proposition as possible."

On 4 November, 1958, "The Courier-Mail" reported him as predicting "a working profit for the Queensland railways this financial year."

The previous year he had said, as reported in "The Courier-Mail" of 30 August, 1957, that "he hoped to balance the railways budget this financial year."

It is interesting to recall that he was reported as saying on the same occasion, in reply to a suggestion by Councillor Webster of the Kingaroy Shire, that he would be pleased if Councillor Webster would introduce to him persons who were prepared to buy the Queensland Railways.

And what did the Budget disclose? In 1957-1958 there was a deficit in the railway operating account of £2,196,000 plus interest. There was constantly a deficit for three years, the last one being a record for the State. The total amount debited for interest for three years was £11,080,077.

I should now like to make very brief reference to the fact that, despite the loud protestations, proclamations, and declarations by the Premier, the Minister for Transport, and Government spokesmen generally, I consider there has been a blundering and dithering in regard to the activities of road transport. They were concerned with border-hopping and the heavy freighting of wool by road. The Government moved quickly to draft legislation once the Privy Council had declared valid the Victorian Legislation imposing a ton-mile tax on road transport. The ink was hardly dry on that Act when, in the Minister's own electorate of Lockyer, agitation against the new legislation commenced, and it soon had reinforcements from a large number of primary producer organisations and transport concerns handling primary products.

This agitation was reflected in a "Queensland Country Life" editorial of 10 April, 1958, which said—

"Once a Government loses contact with the people who put it in office it does not take it long to drift away from reality . . . On transport and land matters, the State Country-Liberal Party has lost its way."

The editorial went on to say in respect of the specific issue on which agitation had arisen—

"Why was the Roads (Contribution to Maintenance) Act rushed through Parliament to produce transport chaos? We were told that the Act was the only way of making interstate hauliers contribute to the upkeep of roads, but on the Premier's own admission interstate hauliers pay only about one-fifth of the tax collected. The other four-fifths fall on producers."

Despite the charges made about red tape, and so on, when we were in Government, it is extraordinary that the measures taken by this Government have resulted in the staff and personnel of the Transport Commission increasing from 64 in 1956-1957, when I left office, to 188 last year—an increase of 124 people. If this Act is to be policed properly there will be a further increase. It is all very well for the Government to talk about regimentation, but it is building up bureaucracy and building up a police State. We have it now in some respects, and it will be intensified under this measure.

As I said earlier, the Opposition's attitude is reflected in two ways. We propose to vote against this measure in Committee, because I understand from discussions and my reading of the Standing Orders that there is no other appropriate way of dealing with it. I believe that the introduction of the Bill should be

deferred pending the carrying-out of this railway investigation, and I will move at the Second Reading Stage that the Bill be deferred and that a royal commission be appointed. I will now outline the points, amongst others, that I want examined. I wish to say that the first part of these allegations comes to me from Mr. Bolton of Cobb & Co. I have no right to have this information accepted as a document of Parliament; the Government alone can do that; but I have reason to believe that the Minister for Transport, the Premier, or members of the Government, have in their possession an exact copy of what I have in my possession. I am prepared to lay on the table of the House, or give to the Premier, the Minister, or anyone whom they care to nominate, the information that I have on these matters, but I believe they have it already.

Time prevents me from mentioning all these matters, but Mr. Bolton has given me authority, in the presence of a member of this Parliament, to say that if what he says is untrue, he deserves to go to gaol; if what he says is true, other people deserve to go to gaol. I make that declaration with his authority. These allegations are made not by a fly-by-night person, but by a reputable person in the community.

In view of the allegations made by Mr. Bolton, a prominent and reputable transport operator in this State over a long period of years, I ask that a royal commission be appointed to investigate, amongst other things his allegations that—

1. Western Transport have been given political protection in alleged sham interstate transport operations over the past three years because of pressure exercised on the Government by Mr. M. J. R. Anderson, M.L.A.
2. That this allegation was confirmed by Mr. Leech of the Transport Police on the 30-9-60, when Leech allegedly stated that they were going well with all except Western Interstate Transport. He was disgusted at the way they were still getting away with it. They did their job and then nothing further happened.
3. That this allegation was further confirmed in an alleged conversation between Bolton and Detective-Sergeant Ingram on the 22nd October, 1960, when Ingram stated that Detective C. Becker, a detective seconded to the Transport Police, had told Ingram that he was disgusted with the Transport Police, that he would work on a case and get it all ready and then it would be stopped higher up. They would get prosecutions and convictions against some little fellow who would plead guilty but not against the big fellows.
4. That two of the Road Transport Police had told Bolton that their duties consisted of protecting the yellow b—s.
5. That T. P. Anderson, Milner and others in the Transport Department were protecting Andersons Transport.

6. That Mr. Anderson, M.L.A., had asked Mr. Sherrington, of the Liberal Party, to get Chalk to take a plain-clothes man off Western Transport's doorstep and that Bolton thought Sherrington might have done so.

7. That the Transport Minister, Mr. Chalk, had urged a conspiracy for Brown, Anderson and Bolton to submit a dummy tender for the co-ordinated contract.

8. That when Brown and Bolton refused, Anderson had submitted a dummy tender in the name of Leybourne and that when Brown had asked Anderson how could the Government give the contract to you, a member of their parliamentary party, Anderson had replied, "You don't think it would be in my name, do you?" And that Anderson had later admitted that there was a connection between Leybourne's and some of his concerns.

9. That the Premier had been prepared to connive with Bolton in an arrangement whereby Bolton would purchase a run to suit Mr. Leybourne in return for the granting of additional runs to Bolton.

10. A statement in court by Mr. McCawley on behalf of Western Interstate Pty. Ltd., that in those cases where the defendant did not go over the border it was done with the prior approbation of the Minister for Transport and Bolton's allegation that the five witnesses Anderson had proposed to call to prove such approbation were J. C. Anderson, Mr. R. Anderson, N. Britton, Campbell, then president of the Liberal Party and now Member for Aspley, and Sherrington, Deputy President of the Liberal Party.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed him under the Standing Orders.

Mr. DUGGAN: I have other allegations, but the Deputy Leader will deal with them.

(Time expired.)

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon) (2.22 p.m.): Undoubtedly this is a very vital measure, one that should receive the utmost—I emphasise the word "utmost"—consideration by the Committee before it is passed. Obviously the whole matter of transport is of tremendous importance to Queensland, the people of the State and the trade and commerce of the State. There is no gainsaying the fact that at the present time transport is in a chaotic state in Queensland. That may be true of other States also. As I am sure every hon. member will readily agree that it is in a chaotic condition in Queensland, before any policy calculated to remove the chaos is adopted we should be sure that any legislation to be passed by Parliament will accomplish what the Government are setting out to do. That is only common sense.

At various times in days gone by the subject of transport received the earnest consideration of the Government. An effort was

made to co-ordinate the various forms of transport, bearing in mind the development of the State, the economic factors that prevailed, and the needs of the people in the cities, provincial towns and the remote country areas of the State. I think a great measure of success was achieved. But the reasonably satisfactory position that obtained—on which I shall elaborate a little later because of certain remarks by the Minister—was jeopardised by the now famous decision of the Privy Council concerning Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution

Taking all factors into consideration, I do not think we can ever put transport on the plane on which it should be put until constitutional power to do so is vested in the various State Governments. Responsibility in that direction devolves on the Commonwealth Government and I cannot see why that Government, consisting of allegedly responsible men, having in mind the position that has developed throughout Australia and the terrific economic strain imposed on State Governments—do not proceed to obtain the considered opinion of the people of Australia on this important question by way of referendum. We live in a democracy and, when a problem such as this confronts us, obviously the correct procedure is to get the considered opinion of the people.

Having said that, I repeat, until that happy time arrives—and I doubt if it ever will, at any rate while the present Commonwealth Government are in power—the State must consider taking appropriate measures to deal with the position that confronts us.

The factors we have to consider are road transport, rail transport and aerial transport. This legislation deals mainly with the transport of goods by road and, indirectly of course, with the transport of goods by rail. It is obvious that there is a certain amount of tonnage to be shifted by road and rail each year and we have to ascertain the actual figures and the action to be taken to co-ordinate rail and road transport in the best interests of the community. We must keep in mind, of course, the economic position that confronts the State in relation to Government revenues, and we must keep in mind particularly the all-important question of employment as it affects our greatest public utility, the Railway Department.

I think it is passing strange that, concomitant with the introduction of this legislation, the Government should announce that they are going to spend approximately £100,000 to ascertain what should be done to improve matters in the Railway Department. I consider that, before legislation such as this is introduced, such an inquiry should be held so that the Government would have some clear indication in the formulation of their policy for the future development of this State and the necessary co-ordination of rail and road traffic.

To me, that makes common sense. There is no gainsaying the fact that the railways

are still our most useful method of transport; there is no gainsaying the fact that if a war broke out and our oil and petrol supplies were placed in jeopardy the country would have to rely, in the main, on rail transport, as it did during the last war. This country can never lose sight of that fact until we are self-sufficient in petrol and oils.

I agree that there should be some provision for the road transport that the people demand, but it is essential to preserve the railway system. We must preserve the proper degree of employment in the railways, and no matter what happens in the future—and I am prompted to make this remark because the Minister intimated that the railways should retire from some areas of the State—we still have to face up to the hard, cold fact that the Government of this State will have to meet each year a £4,000,000 interest bill on the capital invested in the railways. That, of course, is irrespective of any profit made, or loss incurred, on their operation. Four million pounds is a vast sum of money, as the Treasurer knows, just as he also knows the impact on Consolidated Revenue of the payment of such a sum. Therefore, I repeat, let us not be foolish and embark on any policy that will throw into greater jeopardy the present parlous financial condition of the railways.

The Minister in his outline of the measure has not given any indication whatever of how the railways will fare in the future. Admittedly, he said the Government intended to have a very expensive inquiry conducted by American experts. I have a high regard for America in many directions, but I agree entirely with the Leader of the Opposition that we have men in Australia who are cognisant of conditions in Queensland and Australia, and who would be just as competent as any American to make an exhaustive analysis of the railways and submit the necessary comprehensive report. Such an investigation if carried out by Australians would not cost anything like £100,000. It is a shocking state of affairs! The Government propose to spend that vast sum of money—after this legislation is introduced—to find out what the future position of the Railway Department is likely to be.

Mr. Mann: They are not at all concerned about the railwaymen.

Mr. Lloyd: Or the transport workers.

Mr. HILTON: Any Government should be concerned about the employment of men in the railways. The Railway Department has more employees than any other State instrumentality and, in view of the factors I have outlined briefly, the Government must keep that fact in mind.

I shall now deal with the main points of the Minister's speech that arrested my attention. He spoke of monopolies being created under the Act. By way of interjection I said that there was no provision in the Act to prevent the granting of additional licences where necessary, which

would prevent in turn the creation of monopolies. I stand on that statement, and I do not think the Minister can deny it.

Mr. Chalk: You have never heard of the purchase of licences after they have been granted?

Mr. HILTON: If anything has gone wrong at the administrative level, that is the responsibility of the Minister and the transport officials. I have a high regard for the ability of transport officials.

The Minister stated that in future there would be an open-road policy. Let me examine that point. He said that there was to be a schedule of restricted goods which could be enlarged at the will of the Commissioner with the approval of the Minister. That, of course, denies at once that there will be an open-road policy for the general carriage of goods. Again, he said that licences or permits under the Bill could be granted at the discretion of the Commissioner. That mitigates against an open-road policy. And we have no assurance, even if the legislation is passed—I hope it will not be passed in its present form—that those people who want to carry commodities in the remote areas of the State will have the right to obtain permits to carry the goods when they desire to do so, because, as the Minister said, the officers in charge of the department will have a discretionary power in granting or rejecting applications for permits.

The Minister made much play on what he called "border-hoppers" and interstate transport. The Bill will in no way affect those who operate interstate. If licences are granted to those people who use the interstate legal technicalities at the present time to defeat this State's effort to get its just revenue, there is nothing to prevent other men undercutting them, or doing the same thing as is being done by carriers who are referred to now as "illegal" operators. We will revert to the status quo very quickly and very readily. If permits are issued to operators to carry wool from, say, Longreach to Brisbane, and they pay the prescribed fees, obviously the man who wants to cross the border will be able to undercut the price of those who have paid the prescribed fees.

He will be able to do exactly as many of these men have been doing, that is, cross the border and comply with the legal technicalities that make valid the transport of goods. That can be done under this Bill in exactly the same way. Why try to pull our legs by saying that this legislation will stamp out much of the border-hopping that is going on at present? I wanted to make those very brief observations on the legislation.

There is another important point I should refer to. The Government intend to place the onus of proof on the consignors and consignees if a haulier does not obey the law. That is a very drastic provision, because the consignor or the consignee may be acting in

absolutely good faith and may think that the haulier will do the right thing in complying with the permit obligations.

Mr. Hiley: If you think that is a bad principle, why did you write it into the existing law? It is part of the existing law.

Mr. Chalk: That is exactly what I was going to say.

Mr. HILTON: If it is, I will candidly admit that I was not aware of it. I was not a Minister when that Act was passed. If I had been, I would have fought it very strongly. I do not think it has ever been put into operation. If it was put there merely as a device to try to ensure observation of the law, there may be some understanding of it.

The Minister stated unequivocally that it is intended to enforce that part of the law. It is fundamentally wrong, and the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt, who is deeply interested in the onus of proof, will bear me out when I say that writing that provision into a Bill to ensure that the law is complied with is a drastic encroachment on the freedom of the people. It could mean that people who are entirely innocent of any breach of the law could suffer penalties for somebody else who commits a misdeed.

Mr. Hart: Why didn't you repeal it?

Mr. HILTON: It never came to my notice. I say in all sincerity that if the previous Government wrote that provision into the law, before I was a Minister, to encourage the people to do the right thing, they should not have done it.

Mr. Tooth: Who was the Minister responsible for writing it in?

Mr. HILTON: I do not know how that provision was written into the Act. I state my objection to it, and I am quite sure it was never raised in the Chamber subsequent to the passing of the Act. In any case, I feel sure it was not raised when the Act was passed. If that is so, the Opposition failed badly in its duty if it did not protest when the legislation was passed.

There are other matters that I wish to mention. I agree that this measure should be postponed, and I suggest that it be postponed until a royal commission is appointed to inquire into every aspect of transport in this State and brings down a report that will enable the Government to formulate a definite and satisfactory policy for the future, having regard to all the factors that exist. The Government would be well advised to hold the measure up for the present, and move along those lines.

There is another matter I wish to mention. The Leader of the Opposition referred to it. At the outset, I state definitely that I have never been a mud-slinger or a mud-raker. But a prominent man did approach me recently and gave me a sheaf of documents. Normally, if the man was of no substance, I would not take any notice of him, because

I have never allowed myself to be used as a gaspipe in this Assembly for any crackpots—and that will always be my attitude—but this man in his documents, has impugned—

Mr. Chalk: Everyone.

Mr. HILTON: Everyone—the Minister, the Premier—

Mr. Chalk: Public servants.

Mr. HILTON: This is a serious matter. I should be recreant in my position as a man in public life if this man of great importance in the transport world, in the commercial life of the State, approached me with these documents, which, I repeat, impugn the honour of the Premier, the Treasurer, the Minister for Justice, the present Minister for Public Lands, the Minister for Transport and others, and I did nothing about it. He also reflects on the Gair Government and other prominent people and certain members of the Police Force. I repeat that, when these documents are placed before a member of the Parliament and when they contain such sweeping, such drastic and such far-reaching allegations, I think they should be sifted. Perhaps all the members of the Assembly have not seen them. This matter has given me a great deal of concern. I say with all sincerity that I propose to place these documents on the table of the House at the conclusion of my address so that people will know what is exercising my mind. In my opinion, that is the right course to pursue.

Mr. Chalk: Very good! (To Mr. Duggan:) It is more than you would do.

Mr. Duggan: I offered to do that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Hon. members will maintain silence while another hon. member is speaking.

Mr. DUGGAN: I rise to a point of order. I was told by the Minister for Transport by way of interjection—which I accepted because I think the Standing Orders provide for the acceptance of interjections—that it was something I was not prepared to do. I indicated very definitely that I was prepared to table the documents referred to by the hon. member for Carnarvon. I also said that I would make the same documents available to the Minister and the Premier or anyone nominated by them.

Mr. Chalk: But you didn't do it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must point out to the Leader of the Opposition that the Standing Orders do not permit of a question being asked by one hon. member of another while another hon. member is speaking. Questions may be asked of the hon. member who is speaking, who may take notice of them or who may not. I ask the hon. member for Carnarvon now to proceed.

Mr. HILTON: I repeat that the charges contained in those documents are such—and

I do not attempt to substantiate them in any way—that I would be recreant in my position as a member of this Assembly if I did not draw attention to them and request that as they are so serious and are bound up with transport policy, they should be thoroughly sifted.

Mr. Hanlon: Do you intend to table the complete file? There is a lot in that file that has nothing to do with the request for a royal commission. Do you think it is fair to table those other documents?

Government Members: Ah!

Mr. HILTON: I want the people to know and I want the members of this Assembly to know what has been placed before me. I am prepared to do that, and I suggest to the Government that the Bill should be deferred until a royal commission is appointed to inquire into every aspect of transport and until such time as these charges are investigated by a royal commission or a select committee of the Assembly. I make that suggestion to the Government in all sincerity. I intimate to them that I have discussed the matter with the members of my party, and that another hon. member will move a suitable amendment later, if the Government do not accept my suggestion to appoint a royal commission to investigate all phases of transport and appoint either a select committee of the House or a royal commission to clear the names of the men impugned. This responsible man said to the Leader of the Opposition, "If these charges are not true, I should be in gaol." Well, I am all for gaoling him or imposing the full punishment of the law for the criminal libel that, in my opinion, he has uttered against the Minister, the Premier, other Ministers, public officials of the State and the police—

Mr. Walsh: If they are not true.

Mr. HILTON: If they are not true. If they are not true, that man should be punished, and I think every responsible member of this Chamber will agree with me. I do not like to see such serious charges left unattended to for an indefinite period, and I think they should be sifted.

Mr. Ewan: When are you going to table them?

Mr. HILTON: I will place those documents on the table of the House. That is my only recourse. I do that so that hon. members who are not cognisant of them will have the opportunity of perusing them and perhaps joining me in my earnest request that this legislation should be deferred until the matters to which I have referred have been thoroughly sifted.

Whereupon the hon. gentleman laid the documents on the table.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (2.46 p.m.): Firstly, I should like to continue the points that were being made by the Leader of the Opposition relating to his request for a

royal commission into this very serious matter that has been derided by hon. members on the Government benches in their attempt to undermine the serious charges that have been made by a man who is a responsible citizen and quite a successful business man. The remaining points are—

11. An alleged statement by J. C. Anderson that if the union had not pulled out from following Western's trucks they would have squashed Brady, the organiser, between two trucks and spread him over the road.

12. That the Premier had told Bolton that no-one could blame him if he did the same as the others—in other words, sham interstate operations.

13. The loss to the State over the past three years of several millions of pounds in revenue through what the Premier and Bolton allegedly agreed on as "the transport mess."

The Opposition asked that a royal commission should be appointed by the Government to investigate these allegations and make an exhaustive public inquiry into the entire ramifications of road and rail transport in Queensland. In support of our request for a royal commission, I should like to say that there has been general unrest in the Railway Department, recently heightened by the closure of some branch lines and the prospective closure of further branch lines, and the incidence of these closures on road transport. There has been unparalleled disquiet among road transport operators and hauliers throughout the State in respect of Government policy and administration, and there has been similar disquiet and outspoken criticism by graziers and other primary producers and commercial organisations. The Government have consistently refused to table the Hytten Report in Parliament, despite the fact that Professor Hytten has been retained by the Government to make a "full inquiry" into the State's transport economics.

It is all very well for hon. members on the Government benches to try to laugh this business off, but there is in these documents a great deal of evidence that can be directed right at the Minister for Transport himself and the organisation known as Western Transport. Now that they have welcomed the tabling of the documents by the hon. member for Carnarvon, we hope that hon. members opposite will not try to take advantage of the fact that a writ has been issued by the Commissioner for Transport to stifle discussion on this particular matter.

Despite their laughter and hilarity on this matter, there is in these documents much more evidence to substantiate any charge that might be made than there was on the occasion when the Government parties, then in opposition, made such a noise in this Chamber in relation to the Minister for Lands at that time, Hon. T. A. Foley, in regard to land matters. They had no evidence on that occasion, but here we

have a considerable amount of evidence. I intend to outline some of it, because we know that the hon. member for Bowen has a copy of these documents and that another hon. member on the Government benches has a copy also. Members of the Government parties called "Hear, hear!" to the tabling of the report, but the Government, had they wished to have this matter ventilated properly, could have tabled the report to allow hon. members in this Committee to read and discuss the charges that have been made. The Bill is the result of the hopeless mess in which the Government have placed the whole transport system of Queensland. It was more or less foreshadowed by the Treasurer when he introduced his Budget. He said that some positive action might have to be taken to overcome the big deficits in the Railway Department. The Bill is a direct attempt to destroy whatever we have in the Railway Department at the present time. In introducing the Bill the Minister said that the present Acts simply created and protected monopolies, but the Leader of the Opposition very adequately replied to that argument. The Minister also said that some branch lines in country areas were not paying, and he suggested that something might have to be done about them. Let me draw an analogy. As Minister for Transport, if he were in control of the airways of the State, would he close down the airline services to people in out-back areas because they were not paying services? The great majority of far-western and far-northern airlines are run at a loss but they provide the people living in those areas with a valuable service. The railways have been built not only to provide a service to the people but also to develop and expand industry throughout the State.

Let me continue with the Bolton story. It is not as simple as the Minister for Transport and his Cabinet colleagues would have us believe. Firstly, the Minister for Transport called representatives of the transport companies into his office to discuss the Toowoomba co-ordinated contract let to Storey, and told them that the whole story stank. He said that it was worse than Dim Sim. That was typical of his language but not typical of the dignity of a Minister of the Crown. He said that he would endeavour to cancel the licences and revert to the status quo, but he was unable to get his decision through Cabinet. According to this document they saw the Treasurer; the full reports are there. Let the Treasurer deny that he said the Government were being attacked and they would retaliate. The day before, the licenses of Downs Transport and Brown's Transport were cancelled. On whose direction were they cancelled? The Cabinet minute stated that it was a recommendation, but there is a correction to the Cabinet minute—a correction from a "recommendation" to a "decision" of the Commissioner for Transport on the cancellation of these licences. The important fact remains that on this occasion there was

a statement by the Treasurer to Bolton that the Government would retaliate. Apparently the Government had already retaliated when he saw Bolton.

We continue and find that the whole of this unhappy mess revolves around whether Western Transport were being protected by somebody or other. In this document I think we will find quite a deal of substantial evidence to support the argument that there was some form of protection for Western Transport. We, in the Australian Labour Party, did not press too strongly the charges that had been made by Messrs. Overlack and Harris against the Government about the protection of certain operators. But on top of those charges there is substantial evidence in these other charges that some operators were in fact receiving protection. There is evidence here to indicate that certain transport operators had been told to operate under the sham interstate-transport system. I shall show in a few moments, on evidence that apparently can be substantiated by witnesses, that the Minister himself has given his approbation to such conduct. The Minister will have an opportunity to reply to the suggestion that Western Transport or J. Anderson—I stipulate J. Anderson—was told to operate under the sham interstate-transport system.

If we are to secure any evidence—and I believe it is necessary—to indicate that there is something that can prove, or assist to prove, the story that Western Transport received some protection, here in this document is sufficient evidence to warrant a full inquiry into it.

It will be found that there was an admission at one time by J. Anderson that he was associated with Mr. Leybourne, who was given the co-ordinated service contract to operate after the cancellation of the Story contract. There is an admission that there was an association. There is a statement that several of Leybourne's trucks had been handed over to Western Transport.

We find also that the Minister has made statements that are typical of him. I have no reason to doubt that if he was attacked on these matters, he could retaliate and say that he had nothing to hide; that he had studied all the old files and, if necessary, would show the people concerned—I do not know whom he meant, but his statement is typical of the man, if not of his position—and that he would "empty the can" on them.

Mr. Chalk: On what evidence do you make that statement?

Mr. LLOYD: On whom was the Minister intending to empty the can? Does he deny he made that statement? He made a similar statement in this Chamber. Let him read "Hansard." Let him read his own statement and note the similarity of the phraseology in it and in the files that have been tabled by the hon. member for Carnarvon. The phraseologies are too similar to be denied. There is some substance in them.

Now let us examine one piece of evidence that I think can be substantiated by many of the transport companies. It is a statement made by a Mr. Rolfe of Crisp Transport in an interview on Tuesday, 21 October, 1958. At that interview there were present the Minister, E. S. Brown, W. Matthews of Warwick, C. Leybourne, C. Crisp, T. C. Anderson of Western Transport, N. Kropp, A. J. Anderson and R. M. Bolton. An extract from the report of that conference—

Mr. Chalk: Whose report?

Mr. LLOYD: Bolton's report.

Mr. Chalk: That is all I wanted you to say.

Mr. LLOYD: We have said that all this comes from Bolton's report. During that conference Mr. Rolfe said he agreed with Mr. Anderson that it would be very difficult to work out something that would keep out the border-hoppers—and this is very important—and that his company had kept loyally to their arrangement with the Commissioner of Transport, and that it had paid taxes on the licences it operated and treated the rest as interstate transport.

We already have evidence of several of the unlicensed hauliers being put out of business—and probably rightly so—by prosecutions by the Transport Commission because of their illegal operations. Here, on the other hand, is a statement that the illegal operations of the licensed carriers were condoned by the department. That statement was made in 1958 in the presence of the Minister. If that statement is correct did the Minister take any action? I have no reason to doubt that it is correct. That fact can be substantiated by the Minister, or by a royal commission, or by Mr. Rolfe of Crisp Transport, that is, whether he actually made that statement in the presence of the other transport operators who were at that conference. The matter was raised by the Minister with the Commissioner. The Commissioner said nothing, and the Minister said he would make further inquiries. What further inquiries have been made? The matter is not one that can be lightly dismissed.

During all this period prosecutions were taken out against Western Transport. At one time, in accordance with this statement and allegation, 11 prosecutions were pending against Western Transport. Those prosecutions were adjourned and, as I understand the position, have never been brought on—that is, from December, 1958. They were added to, 23 prosecutions being levelled against Western Transport in 1959.

During those particular proceedings the barrister for Western Transport said, "I want to make it perfectly clear that in these cases where the defendant did not go over the border it was done with the prior approbation of the Minister for Transport. If what I say is true—and I am prepared to substantiate it—that must necessarily affect the question of penalty before Your Worship." The Magistrate decided against the submission that it

would affect the penalty against Western Transport, but the penalty he imposed at the time was a mere £30, with legal costs possibly amounting to £50. A penalty of only £30 was imposed in respect of 23 prosecutions.

Mr. Pizzey: By whom?

Mr. Duggan: Whom do you think—Santa Claus?

Mr. Roberts: You would fall for Santa Claus if you fell for that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Chalk: What page are you up to?

Mr. LLOYD: Apparently the Minister has a copy, but he did not table it.

Dr. Noble: Why don't you talk about the Bill?

Mr. LLOYD: I will talk about that later. All I am saying is that the introduction of this legislation and the decision made yesterday to appoint Ford, Bacon and Davis to inquire into the Railway Department are purely and simply an attempt or device to obviate the appointment of a royal commission. I challenge the Minister to appoint a royal commission. He is afraid to. I challenge him to appoint a royal commission into the whole of the ramifications of this matter. Mr. Bolton has stated that four witnesses are available to give evidence that the Minister gave approval to Western Transport operating under a system of sham interstate transport. There is also the statement, to which I have already referred, that Rolfe of Crisp Transport was given the green light by the Transport Commission to operate, where he could not afford to pay, in opposition to the border-hoppers; that he was given the "all-clear signal" to go ahead and engage in these illegal operations.

Mr. Chalk: When did Mr. Rolfe get that permission to which you refer?

Mr. LLOYD: How the devil do I know?

Mr. Chalk: You did not read your brief.

Mr. Duggan interjected.

Mr. Chalk (to Mr. Duggan): You know when it was. It was in your day.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. LLOYD: I have already referred to the Minister's famous statement that he was going to get Bolton; that if he did not get him by fair means he would get him by foul. Does it matter who gave approval to Rolfe? What is important is that at this time, when a definite attempt was being made to destroy some illegal operators, favours were given to others. In introducing the Bill the Minister said the present legislation had created monopolies. What better method is there of creating monopolies than giving approbation to Western Transport to operate illegally and allowing Rolfe of Crisp Transport to operate

illegally, too? What better method could the Minister adopt to favour the creation of the monopolies that he has talked about?

The people of Queensland are entitled to a service from all forms of transport, whether road or rail, and the licensing system that was introduced under the original Transport Act gave them the opportunity to receive that service, that is, if it was handled by an efficient administration and proper ministerial control. It is very evident that proper ministerial control has not been present during the past three years, and that by his vacillating methods the Minister has been unable to control the transport system of Queensland so that the people may receive the service they demand.

It is all very well for the Minister to quote extracts from a speech made by a former Premier, the late Hon. E. M. Hanlon. That Transport Act attempted to introduce some form of transport rationalisation so that the people of Queensland could receive exactly what Mr. Hanlon mentioned. It operated under a system of licensing, and that system was under the control of the Commissioner for Transport and the Minister for Transport. The administration of that Transport Act was solely in their hands. If a mess was made of it, and if monopolies were created and protection was given to them, the responsibility lies directly on the Minister. The Leader of the Opposition mentioned one incident, but nothing worth while will be gained by raising these charges unless an investigation is conducted to establish their authenticity. The Leader of the Opposition mentioned a conversation between Bolton and several traffic policemen in which statements were made that certain operators, particularly Western Transport, were receiving protection from high up and that political influence was protecting them. Then we find a number of reports from inspectors who were appointed by Cobb & Co. to combat what was going on. One, in particular, concerns the night of 28 June, 1960. It came through as follows:—

“One Mack truck from Brisbane crossed the border at Legume—waited there 15 minutes came back into Queensland.

“One Comet truck from Toowoomba or Warwick crossed the border at Legume—waited 5 minutes and then went back to Warwick.

“Three Macks and one Ford went up The Gap Road but did not cross the border.

“Therefore Westerns ‘Inter-state’ services to Toowoomba, Dalby, Oakey, Chinchilla, Wandoan, Taroom, Roma, Charleville, Biloela, Miles, Kingaroy, Warwick, Nanango—and all other interstate services went straight up the road.”

In other words, none of those services during that evening paid any transport fee.

There is another report from Cobb & Co., and no doubt this can be substantiated by the inspector concerned. It discloses further operations of Western Transport to which

either the Commissioner for Transport or the Minister closed his eyes. This report relates to Friday, 9 September, 1960, when the inspector travelled to Kandanga, near Gympie, and observed a Western Transport vehicle load timber at Wilson Hart & Co's sawmills. It was followed back to Brisbane and the inspector watched the same load being delivered to an allotment at Fig Tree Pocket the following morning, where a building contractor named Harold Flack was building a house. This load was transported direct from Gympie to Western Transport's depot in Montague Road, South Brisbane, and held on the same semi-trailer overnight prior to delivery the next morning.

Mr. Aikens: Who owns Western Transport?

Mr. LLOYD: J. Anderson & C. R. Anderson, from what I can understand. Apparently they are brothers, one of whom is the hon. member for Toowoomba West—Toowoomba East. (Government laughter.)

Naturally, any attempt to underline the serious nature of these charges will be laughed at by the Minister and hon. members on the Government benches. Our case is that the statements that have been made are sufficiently serious to warrant the appointment of a royal commission to investigate these matters. It might not be so serious were it not for the serious charges and allegations made by other illegal transport operators previously, namely, that over a period of years many other transport operators in Queensland were not prosecuted for illegal transport operations and they were the only ones picked on. Whether that is correct or not, the two men concerned, Overlack and Harris, were prosecuted and thrown out of business. These operators—Western Transport in particular—were protected. The allegation is made that firstly they have been in association with Leybourne, who was given the co-ordinated service to Toowoomba. Further, it was disclosed that Western Transport were operating illegally, in the two or three years of numerous conferences and discussions with the Minister for Transport, that the Premier came into it, and the Premier and Mr. Bolton apparently got to the stage of calling each other Bill and Frank. The Treasurer came into it. How the Minister for Justice came into it was that Bolton alleges that at one time he offered to make the whole of the resources of Cobb & Co. available to him, that his officers could act as relators for the Minister for Justice, and that this offer was rejected by Cabinet.

(Time expired.)

Mr. WALSH (Bundaberg) (3.12 p.m.): I think it would save a great deal of time and probably a great deal of heat if the Premier would indicate at this juncture whether he is prepared to agree to the suggestion of the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party that this matter be reviewed by a royal commission. That would only be in keeping with

what past governments have seen fit to do before embarking on any considerable change in transport policy. If he is not prepared to indicate that at this stage, it would appear that we can prepare for a very late sitting of the House.

One can well say of the Minister's introduction of the Bill that he certainly made a lot of noise. As a matter of fact, the repercussions were felt while the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was speaking. Hon. members must have noticed that the whole of the parliamentary building shook.

Mr. Chalk: It shook just now.

Mr. WALSH: I know it did. As I envisage the debate from now on, it will probably have a few more shocks in it.

Mr. Chalk: Where have you got it, Ted—here?

Mr. WALSH: The Minister asks have I got something in my pocket. If ever I have something in my pocket, it will be based on facts, anyhow.

Mr. Roberts: It will possibly be only a hole, in any case.

Mr. WALSH: I do not have to rely on any dossier that the Minister might have to make my contribution to the debate. A careful analysis of what he told the Committee will indicate that the Government are doing nothing different from what is already provided for in the Act. All they have sought to do is to change the language around in an attempt to curtail the operations of people who have fallen foul of them through their opposition to Government policy.

That reminds me of a particular provision. I do not intend to discuss the various phases mentioned by the Minister. I propose to take full advantage of the 25 minutes allowed to me on each clause in Committee. Therefore, I should be wasting my time now if I analysed each feature that the Minister outlined. However, I refer to the clause that takes the power from the Commissioner to have what would be tantamount to the final say in the licensing of transport services in the State and putting it into the political hands of the Government of the day—the very thing that was eliminated and refused by the Labour Government in its 1946 legislation. They made it so that there could be no political influence in these matters. If I might be guided by one of the allegations contained in the dossier tabled by the hon. member for Carnarvon, I am reminded of the allegation that the Minister for Justice is alleged to have said they could not select Yeates as the Liberal candidate for Toowoomba because he was a friend of Cobb & Co. How lovely!

Mr. Dewar: How stupid!

Mr. WALSH: I might correct myself by saying that the statement was made by the Premier.

Mr. Duggan: Munro was the man.

Mr. WALSH: Like the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party, I am not accepting what is in that dossier as being true. The charges have been circulated by people who are associated with capital of nearly half a million pounds in this State.

Mr. Dewar: It does not make them honest.

Mr. WALSH: No more than it would make the hon. member honest.

Mr. Dewar: I know I am honest.

Mr. WALSH: These are some of the things his own colleagues have said about the Premier. I do not subscribe to them, but they are in the documents. This is not related to the aspect of transport policy; nevertheless it is one of the many features in those 250 sheets that indicate the confusion and chaos in the transport policy.

The title of the proposed Bill in the motion is "A Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to Transport." I suggest that a more suitable title would be "A Bill to Add to the confusion, disorganisation and chaos in the State's transport system created by the present Government."

Mr. Chalk: You are at last getting back to the Bill.

Mr. WALSH: I do not have to get back to it. The hon. gentleman does not have to tell me my exercise here. The Chairman is the man who will judge when I am off the rails. The Minister has been off them for a long time.

Mr. Dewar: You have never been on them.

Mr. WALSH: If I may introduce matters in this Committee in such a way that they will not encourage any heat from either side, I might say at this stage that the Leader of the Opposition has given confirmation of the very things that were put forward in this Chamber by the Queensland Labour Party last March, when the adjournment of the House was moved to discuss the allegations of bribery and corruption amongst certain sections of the transport police. Again, there is in that tabled document an allegation that Inspector Bauer, when he was given information by a certain person connected with one of these major operators relating to illegal operations of the transport policy, did not appear to be interested. The responsibility for all these things is on the shoulders of the Premier, as Leader of the Government in this State.

Mr. Hart: You admit that you do not believe some of them.

Mr. WALSH: It does not matter what I believe. I did not believe the statement that Senator Ian Wood made in the Senate about

the commission inquiring into certain matters relating to Crown leaseholds and Peter Fleming, which proved to be false.

Mr. Hart: What is the good of talking about them when you do not believe them?

Mr. WALSH: That gave the Premier and those with him sufficient justification for demanding a royal commission on that occasion. As the hon. member for Kedron says, there is far more sweeping evidence in these documents to justify the Government appointing a royal commission. I think it will be agreed that, next to financial policy, transport policy is one of the most important features of our economic life. I do not think anyone would argue against that, because transport plays such a vast part in the development of the State and the development of industry, and it relates, of course, to the financial economy not only of Queensland but also of the country as a whole.

I take my mind back to past controversies about transport policy. I was not a member of Parliament at the time, but I can remember reading in the Press about the uproar that was created when in 1938 the Government of the day took certain action against a man in the Cooroora area, and his vehicles were seized. But in the 1920's, when heavy-vehicle registration came in, transport was just as hot politically as it is today. Perhaps it may be a little hotter today. No matter how the Minister may try to ridicule the legislation that was introduced in 1946, he must admit that from 1946 to 1957 there was at least an era of stability in the State's transport system.

Mr. Chalk: You must admit that the Hughes and Vale case upset things.

Mr. WALSH: I ask the Minister to let me get along with my story. I am trying to be reasonable. He would not even listen to my relevant interjections—even if some of them were irrelevant. I shall give him time because I know he will put his foot in it—probably in his own mouth.

The point I wanted to make was that until 1957, except for the disturbance created by the border-hoppers, there was an era of stability in the State's transport system. But despite the promises made by the Premier in his policy speeches in 1957 and 1960, it cannot be denied that today the State's motor-transport system is in a greater state of chaos than at any other time in its history. Do not blame the border-hopper. The man mainly responsible is the Minister. He wants to lambaste the monopoly operators. What did he do when he first took over as Minister for Transport? Within the first fortnight of his period as Minister for Transport he invited representatives of these monopolies—the two Boltons—to confer with him. A week later he invited the two Browns, the two Andersons and the two Boltons.

Mr. Roberts: A very considerate Minister.

Mr. WALSH: He led them up the garden path! He even encouraged them to put in

a tender for the co-ordinated contract between Brisbane and Toowoomba. Surely the Minister will not deny that.

Mr. Chalk: I will reply.

Mr. WALSH: I am getting my statements in now. At the point where it looked as if it might be a bit dangerous, the Minister got his stenographer in and then asked a few questions about the financial position of Story, who had got the co-ordinated contract with the Gair Government. He wanted to find out whether his olfactory organs were as good as he said they were at the time he alleged he could smell the ink on the Golden Casket ticket. "This thing stinks," he said "This is worse than 'Dim Sim' petrol."

Mr. Chalk: Those are Mr. Bolton's words.

Mr. WALSH: The hon. gentleman has said it in this Chamber. He said that he was going to find something in the Story contract that would involve either the Government of the day or some Minister of that Government. The plain facts were that the proposal for that contract originated within the Railway Department itself and had been presented, I understand, to the previous Minister for his consideration. The Minister cannot deny that.

Later on, when the new Minister was appointed he brought the matter before Cabinet, who, imbued with the very idea that the Minister says he is imbued with—get more freight back into the railways—said, "Yes, get it back into the railways." Then this Government were so anxious to get rid of this particular party that they went on and let the contract to Leybourne. Did they inquire into his background and associations. And what happened to the contract ultimately? The Minister invited Bolton, Brown and Anderson to submit a tender at £4 a ton and he said, "You will get it." Strangely enough, the tender of £4 a ton got it.

In other words, the Minister compromises his position as Minister with these people by inviting them to do something, knowing full well that if they quote that figure they will get it—"Why don't you three operators get together?" That is the Minister.

Mr. Chalk: Where did you get that statement from?

Mr. WALSH: It is in the charges that were tabled by the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party. He has tabled them and the Minister has access to them. I should say the Government have much to answer in connection with the transport matters in this State.

Charges were made earlier in the year in this Assembly—and to the Premier in a letter conveyed to him—of graft and corruption among certain sections of the transport police. Those charges were never satisfactorily probed. The Premier and the Government know they were never satisfactorily probed.

There were also allegations of discrimination in the issue of summonses for breaches of the law. The Minister says he is going to enforce the law. If we are to judge him on his record over the last 3½ years, there is very little hope for future law enforcement in this State.

Mr. Chalk: How many summonses did your Government take out?

Mr. WALSH: I know the Minister has full knowledge of these matters, so I will leave them.

As I have already said, there was an era of stability until 1957 until the disturbance over border-hoppers, but this Government have created the disturbance since then.

There is a charge that at least one operator was invited by the Government to break the law. That is a very serious charge and I do not think it can be ignored, any more than can the charge published in "The Courier-Mail" that the Government had, in effect, offered certain operators an arrangement or contract that would have the effect of blackmail. That was published in "The Courier-Mail." It is not my statement. It was openly stated to the Government by one operator that another operator had defrauded the Government of between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000.

Mr. Chalk: Who said that?

Mr. WALSH: In non-payment of road taxes. It does not matter who said it.

Mr. Chalk: It is in the document.

Mr. WALSH: I suggest the Minister has it in the document. He has a copy of the document and he has a fair idea who said it. There it is—between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000. That is serious enough.

Mr. Aikens: Which company?

Mr. WALSH: Read the document.

There is also a charge that a responsible public servant gave evidence in court that was not in accordance with facts. The two witnesses who would have to be called to deny or substantiate that statement are the present Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation and the Country Party member for Roma.

Mr. Ewan: I don't know anything about it.

Mr. WALSH: I don't know anything about it, either.

Mr. Hart: Then why are you going on like this?

Mr. WALSH: Because Government members have had a very close association with this organisation, which I have not had; they were much closer to the particular operators than I would be. They have had an association with them.

Then there is the further charge that a Cabinet minute was faked during 1958. These things, if not true, are tantamount to criminal libel. I agree with the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party.

Mr. Chalk: Don't worry.

Mr. WALSH: I don't think the Minister will make a good witness.

The last subject I referred to was the matter of a court hearing. The matter was dealt with in court and the public servant to whom I referred—a very honourable gentleman—was called as a witness. The allegation that is being made by one of the two persons I have named is that this particular witness had to give that evidence; that if he did not give it, it would cost him his job.

Mr. Chalk: Where did you get that one from?

Mr. WALSH: The other one is alleged to have said that the particular witness was not very happy about the type of evidence he would have to give in court.

Mr. Dewar: It is in the box.

Mr. WALSH: Of course.

Mr. Dewar: Money or the box?

Mr. WALSH: Sufficient evidence has been given to justify the appointment by the Government of a royal commission to inquire into the orderly organisation of transport operations in the State. I go further and suggest that, to clear the suspicion that will be in the minds of the public following this debate, the Government should appoint a royal commission to inquire separately into the phases of graft and corruption among certain sections of the transport police, and also the allegations that have been made against the Minister and other members of the Cabinet.

These are serious matters. In the 25 years that I have been in Parliament I have never seen documents laid on the table containing so many reflections and so many charges—hand-written and typed—about conversations, deputations and interviews with the Minister and various other representatives of Cabinet.

To the Premier I say that he has a grave responsibility in this matter. If he gets on his feet now and tells the Committee that he is prepared to appoint a royal commission to cover the subjects raised by the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party and other hon. members and by me, I think that would be sufficient, and the debate could be terminated at this point.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (3.34 p.m.): This is a historic occasion, because metaphorically speaking we are all standing at the graveside of the Queensland Railway Department and taking part in the burial service.

I regret that this morning I was on my way back from my beloved Townsville and failed to hear the Minister for Transport jubilantly

deliver the funeral oration. In fact, I have been informed that never has a panegyric been delivered with more glee and hilarity than that delivered by the Minister today.

The Bill will result in mass sackings of railwaymen. Let there be no doubt about that. Of the 30,000 railwaymen employed by the department today, it is likely that in 12 months at least 10,000 will be walking the streets looking for work. As the years go on, more and more railwaymen will be sacked, and more and more railway lines will be closed, and more and more locomotives and rolling stock will be sold to the Japs for scrap until we reach the day when perhaps only the Brisbane suburban railway transport system will be operating. I cannot see this Government, or any other Government, throwing the "peroxide floosies" and the "Percies" of the suburban area to the road-transport wolves.

This Bill will also make ghost towns of many country towns that today rely almost entirely for their economy on the earnings of railwaymen. In northern towns such as Cloncurry, Julia Creek, Hughenden, Townsville, Charters Towers, Innisfail, Ayr, and Bowen, hundreds of thousands of pounds are circulated every year in the form of railwaymen's pay. They will become ghost towns because the railwaymen will no longer be drawing pay, and it is on that very solid economic base that those towns rest.

A Government Member: Nonsense!

Mr. AIKENS: The hon. member may yell "Nonsense," but I will probably live as long as he does, because I live a cleaner and more decent life. I will probably live longer than he, and I guarantee the longer I live the more despair I will see in the Railway Department as the result of the introduction of this measure.

What is going to happen to the few remaining people in these towns, and the people in the areas around them, once the railways close down and the railwaymen leave them to congregate in the big cities looking for employment? The little bit of trade and commerce that will be taken to those towns, instead of being taken by the railways by men working award hours and under award conditions, which are supposed to be the hallmark of any decent Government and any Government with a twinge of conscience, will be conveyed by road-transport operators who employ, in the main, industrial scabs of the worst possible type—men who work not on the basis of so much an hour, or so much a day, or so much a week, but on the basis of so much a trip. The faster a man gets from one point to another, the more money he is likely to earn, and even then he will not earn very much if he works 14 to 16 hours a day. How often have we seen these sleepy-soupy-eyed individuals at the wheel, and another asleep on the top of the load or curled up at the other end of the seat? We know also, from the Secretary of the Road Transport Union, that certain unscrupulous publicans in the State give these men

faked receipts for £1 in order to show that they have spent a night there so that they may keep within the rest pauses prescribed by the Act. We know they do not have a rest there at all; they pass the publican a "quid," get a faked receipt, and continue on their journey.

Not only will this Bill destroy the Queensland railways and protect venomous and vicious people, but it will also destroy the working conditions and wages that have been built up in this State over the years. The road-transport system is in the hands of operators who like to have scabs working for them and who employ, in the main, the worst possible type of people.

Mr. Mann: Not all of them.

Mr. AIKENS: Not all of them; I said "in the main." There are a few exceptions.

In the main, they employ young, irresponsible people who are prepared to go anywhere under any conditions as long as they can pick up a few "quid" at the end of the trip and "make whoopee" around the town—probably put on their leather jackets and their matador pants and "make whoopee" in the milk bars with the rest of the bodgies, widgees, and beatniks.

Mr. Mann: They are in the minority.

Mr. AIKENS: Judging by the crowd we see coming up to Townsville, the people I have described are in the majority. I do not know whether we are getting the interstate hauliers there, or whether there are decent men employed by the intrastate hauliers, but judging from the crowd we see in the North I would say the great majority are just as I have described.

The Minister for Transport has been preparing the way for the Bill for some time by letting out little snippets of information to the Press, and those in the Country-Liberal Party who support him have also been feeding the Press and the Radio with the spurious story that this legislation will stop the border-hopper. That is a plain, unvarnished lie and anyone who says it is a liar and knows he lies when he says it. How can this legislation or any legislation stop the border-hopper while Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution is still in full bloom?

We know very well that the High Court of Australia has given two rulings on road transport under Section 92 and we know that the road transport operators, even those who were previously only purely intrastate operators, have gone through the loophole like a fox through a hole in a fence. We know that the High Court ruled that, as long as an operator established a depot over the border, put a petrol pump and a tin shed there and branded it as an office and probably took out articles of association for a company in New South Wales, he could take on a load of goods, say, in Townsville consigned to Brisbane, just drive those goods from Townsville to Tweed Heads, take off one prime mover from the semi-trailer full

of goods, attach another prime mover to the same semi-trailer full of the same goods—the goods would not be touched—fill up the prime mover with petrol and drive it back to Brisbane, and, in accordance with one ruling of the High Court, that man is an interstate haulier and consequently is protected by Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution—that monstrous section of the Constitution in which the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt is such an obsequious and sycophantic believer!

Then the High Court gave another ruling, that if the road transport operator picked up the same load of goods in Townsville, drove it over the border to Tweed Heads and just turned the truck round and came back to Brisbane, he would be an intrastate haulier and would not be protected by Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution. But the High Court tipped them off. Probably the members of the High Court are very big shareholders in the road-transport companies. The members of the High Court tipped the road-transport operators off what to do—establish a depot, put up a little tin shed—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is reflecting on members of the High Court—on the judiciary.

Mr. AIKENS: That has nothing to do with this Parliament.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! He has reflected on members of the High Court and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. AIKENS: You are wrong, Mr. Taylor, but I will withdraw just the same. We are bound in that particular ruling only as it affects judges of our own court.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: You look that up, and, if you like to submit it to the Speaker of the House of Commons, I will bet you a ten-bob Casket ticket to a six-bob one that you are wrong.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: As I say, the judges of the High Court tipped off the road operators in Queensland what to do in order to become border-hoppers—put up a tin shed at Tweed Heads, put up a petrol bowser alongside the tin shed, have a spare prime mover, take the load of goods from Townsville to Brisbane over the border to Tweed Heads, take off one prime mover, attach the other prime mover to the semi-trailer, fill up with petrol and drive off to Brisbane, and that is interstate transport. Is it any wonder that the High Court of Australia today stinks to high heaven when it gives such rulings?

I am concerned about the northern division of the Queensland Railways—the only division that is paying at the present time and has paid its way for many years. As a matter of fact, the northern division of the Queensland Railways has carried the financial burden not only of the central division but also of the southern division for many years

and, under the Bill, the northern division of the Queensland Railways is going to be practically wiped out of existence. We know that there are road transport operators up there who have been perching like vultures on the railway fence waiting for the opportunity that will be provided for them under the Bill to move in on the transport of goods that are now carried only by the Railway Department. There are very few licensed road operators in the whole of Northern Queensland. As a matter of fact, there are a few that operate only with bulk loadings such as bulk petrol, bulk milk, Pepsi Cola, and so on. But now that this Bill has been introduced and will become law, I really doubt whether the members of the Liberal-Country Party know the implications and the ramifications of it; I doubt whether they know the dangers that are inherent in it. The moment this Bill becomes law, Fraser and all the rest of them are going to move in like crows on a dead carcass. They will pick the eyes out of the goods that are transported in the northern division now only by the Railway Department, and it will not be long before the Railway Department in Northern Queensland will be carting only coal, bulk sugar, the minerals from Mt. Isa and coal and coke to Mt. Isa. Everything else will be carted by road operators, many of them employing scab and irresponsible labour. Yet this Bill has been sold, I understand, to the back-bench members of the Liberal-Country Party, who must be more credulous and gullible than ever I thought they were, as a Bill that is going to save the Railway Department and save the Railway Department finances, a Bill that is going to put the railways back on a paying basis. I have never heard such bunkum and twaddle in all my life, and I marvel that they could have fallen for it. We know, of course, that although this Bill has been introduced by the Minister for Transport, if I may paraphrase a quotation from the Bible, with which you and I are familiar, Mr. Taylor—unfortunately not many members of this Chamber are familiar with the Good Book—"The voice is the voice of Chalk, but the hand is the hand of Hiley." We know that, and we know that in preparing this legislation, in selling this confidence trick to the members of their own Liberal-Country Party in Caucus, the Treasurer has been the power behind the throne, or, in this case, the power behind the drone. He has prepared the way, he has done the talking, and he has said, "We have to save railway finances from becoming chaotic." If I might use a term that was frequently used by a former northern representative in this Chamber, he said to them, "The finances of the Railway Department are in a state of 'choss'. We have to do something about it." I do not know whether he sold this story to Chalk, because I am sure that Chalk would have been a very eager, interested and avid listener. We know now that this is a deliberate attempt, for some reason that has not been completely disclosed as yet, to put

the Railway Department right down on the basis of being the mendicant transport system in the State of Queensland. This Bill will go down in history as a standing disgrace to this Government, an indictment of this Government, and I will say now that it will go more towards their defeat at the next election than any single action for which they have been responsible, or that they even contemplate between now and the next election.

Let us now take the back country, the country in which I was born and the country in which I hope to die, because the farther I get away from this place, whether alive or dead, the happier I shall be.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: The only reason I might like to die here is that the odour of my rotting carcass would be embarrassing to some of the city members.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: When I think of some of the members of the Government Party who have blindly supported this Bill, I am reminded of the immortal words of Byron—

“Down to the dust!—and, as thou rott’st away,

“Ev’n worms shall perish on thy poisonous clay.”

We know that in the back country the people rely very greatly on the Railway Department. We know also that the women of the back country receive concessions from the Railway Department to come to the coast once a year on what are known as Country Women’s concessions. We know that the bush children get concessions on the railways to come to the coastal areas once a year. We know that the graziers get concessions for fodder for starving stock, for stud cattle, and for everything else. When the railways are ripped up—as they will be under the Bill—where are these people who vote for Country Party members going to get their concessions? Will Western Transport, the millionaire firm from Toowoomba, Cobb and Company and all the rest of them who will move in once the railways rust away or are thrown out, give you concessions for your starving stock? Will they take fodder up to your starving stock in time of drought? Will they bring your women out at concession rates under the Country Women’s concession? Will they bring your children into the coastal areas and the seaside? Not on your life! (Laughter.) Let them laugh. As Oliver Goldsmith says, “A loud laugh denotes a vacant mind,” and no minds have been more vacant in recent months than those of members of the Country Party who, I thought, would see the dangers of the Bill to people who live in the country and rely on the railways for their livelihood. Those hon. members rely on the country people for their votes. If they can see, hear, think and reason at all, they must know that the Bill is going to ruin the railway system and within a short period hand over the

State’s transport system to the predatory and unscrupulous private operators of road transport.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: I sometimes wonder whether it is worthwhile talking to them. The hon. member for Burdekin often says to me, “Why do you so frequently cast pearls before swine?” I begin to wonder why I do it. Still, while I represent the people of Townsville South, while I am a northlander, and will always continue to remain so, I will feel it my duty to put the views of a northlander and a genuine country man—thank God not a Country Party man—before the Assembly.

We know very well that Railway Department finances have been going downhill fast for some time. We know that that is the result of a lack of courage and vision in the years that have gone. When road and air transport first began to emerge as a threat to railway transport—when those operators first began to operate—the late Mr. A. J. Crowther, manager of the Northern Division of the Railway—not a very good friend of mine who transferred me from Cloncurry to Townsville in 1930 as a political punishment for the work I had done and was continuing to do for the Australian Labour Party when the Australian Labour Party was a party for genuine Labour men—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: I can remember that when he came down to the Commissioner’s conference he suggested that the Railway Department must look ahead and institute its own road transportation system of goods. He also suggested that the Railway Department must set up its own airline subsidiary because, he said, “In the days that lie ahead road transport and air transport are going to be very serious competitors of rail transport.” There is a very old and wise saying, “If you cannot fight it, absorb it.” The Railway Department in those days should have looked ahead. They should have taken the advice of Mr. A. J. Crowther, and set up their own subsidiary road transport organisation and their own subsidiary air transport service.

Mr. Coburn: It is not too late now.

Mr. AIKENS: I am glad of that interjection from the hon. member. It is not too late now. I suggest to hon. members of the Government Party that when next they go into the Parliamentary library they get away from “Pix” and “Man”. I realise that they usually take out books like “Love me Sailor”, “Tasker Martin”, and “Damned Shall be Desire”.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: Yes, I have read them all. They should ask for informative books, particularly on the railway systems in other parts of the world. Is it not amazing that railway systems, particularly on the Continent, are booming—that there are actually booming railway systems in many Continental countries today? I believe they are building

railways in Russia and, although some railways in the United States of America and Canada have closed down, in other places they are having a glorious time with freight transportation.

I know, of course, that passenger transport by railway services is something that we cannot do very much about. We cannot blame the road-transport operators for that, nor can we blame the airlines. The factor that is crippling the passenger traffic in the railways in Queensland today—and in fact railways throughout the world—is the private motor-car. We cannot do very much about the private motor-car. Once we get roads radiating throughout the State, anyone who wants to go from one point to another—and these days everyone but me seems to have a car; I am the last of the pedestrians—just hops in his car, picks up his family and his neighbours and away he goes. That happens in my own home. My son-in-law and daughter have a car, and when they want to go somewhere they just hop in it and go.

Mr. Sullivan: And leave you at home.

Mr. AIKENS: At least they are game to leave me at home. They know that when they come back everything will be safe. They would not be game to go away and leave the hon. member in charge of their home. If he came to my place for dinner I would "fan" him as he went out, and count the silver. Don't make any mistake about that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order

Mr. AIKENS: Last night I went to Townsville, because I am patron of the Townsville Choral Society, to attend a performance of "Oklahoma." I love music. I am a lover of most good music.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: And I regret, Mr. Taylor, that as a lover of good music—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman is not concerned with music.

Mr. AIKENS: I am dealing with the Bill and I know that you, if left to your own inclination, would have arranged for a musical accompaniment to the Minister's introductory speech today on the demise of the railways, and which I suggest would have included Handel's Largo, the Funeral March from *Götterdämmerung* and the Dead March in *Saul*.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman has been called to order and, as his time is almost expired I would ask him to resume his seat. I wish to inform all hon. members, and particularly the hon. member for Townsville South, that on his reference to judges of the High Court a while ago, which I asked him to withdraw, and to which he claimed the Standing Orders did not apply as the judges were outside Queensland, on page 458 of May's Parliamentary Practice—

Mr. AIKENS: Please don't give me "May."

The CHAIRMAN: Order! It says—

"Reflections against the judges generally are equally out of order. The Speaker has also intimated that the same rule should be applied in the case of judges in other parts of the Empire."

I inform the hon. member that he was distinctly out of order.

Mr. HANLON (Baroona) (3.59 p.m.): We are not going to agree on very much today, and I can see that we are not going to agree on this Bill, but we can agree that the legislation for and administration of smooth relationship between road and rail transport is probably the most complicated and controversial task that confronts any Government, whether it be a Labour Government or a Liberal-Country Party Government.

It is true, as the Minister for Transport said in his remarks, that after the war the Labour Party Government realised that road transport could not be held back indefinitely and an absolute monopoly maintained for the Railway Department. We saw that it would not be possible to ignore the potential of vastly increased road transport. The Minister rightly said that the public expected it to be made available to them at least in accord with the reasonable requirements of the Railway Department. We saw the necessity for maintaining an adequate railway system, however, particularly in the interests of those who would not be the concern of private enterprise and in areas where it would not be worth-while for road transport to operate. That was one of the basic principles adopted in the protection of the Railway Department. We introduced the licensing system, which the Minister has apparently condemned—a form of restricted licensing—to allow road transport to develop in a regulated way, expanding over the years with increased population and settlement in this vast State. In that respect Queensland is different from many other States. The system introduced by a Labour Government allowed expansion of road transport in a regulated and controlled manner, and allowed the Government to maintain necessary control in the interests of the general economy of the State.

It is true, as the Minister claimed, that to an extent it did create an element of monopoly in transport. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, the sizeable investment that these people were called upon to make was in itself an offset to their monopoly influence, inasmuch as if they ran counter to public interest they had so much to lose if their licences were taken from them by the Government. In that respect we thought that the growth of a certain amount of monopoly influence in the road-transport industry through the restriction of licences was counterbalanced.

These people were allowed to operate by the previous Government, and have been so allowed by the present Government—and that is an important point—and to an extent have

been encouraged to develop their investment on that basis over a long period, and it cannot be denied that there is a certain element of repudiation in the introduction of this legislation and the plans announced for road transport by the Minister.

I do not pretend to have any great knowledge of road transport, although prior to coming into Parliament I was employed in the motor trade. Transport is very much a cut-throat business—to a greater degree than most other industries. Road-transport operators fight very hard, and that pattern is revealed throughout the world. By way of illustration I repeat the allegation by Mr. Bolton, which was referred to by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. It reads—

“An alleged statement by J. C. Anderson that if the union had not pulled out from following Westerns' trucks that they would have squashed Brady, the organiser, between two trucks and spread him over the road.”

That is an illustration of the attitude of those in transport—it is a business attitude, not a personal attitude. The pounds, shillings and pence profit motive is much more to the fore in the road-transport business than in most other major industries.

It is difficult to see that this new arrangement that the Minister has outlined briefly—if he is sincere about it, which I strongly doubt—will produce other than a jungle of wild animals that even the Government will find very difficult to deal with.

This is just another stop-gap measure that the Government are likely to repudiate in another 12 months when they become aware of its consequences. In this important subject of road and rail transport, they have adopted a fits-and-starts policy comparable with that adopted by their Federal colleagues in Canberra in dealing with Australia's economy. I repeat that it is difficult to see that this new arrangement, if the Government follow it to its limits—as the Minister has said they will—will produce anything other than a jungle of wild animals which even the Government will find difficulty in dealing with. It has arisen through the failure of the Government and the Minister, in the administration of his department, to control adequately the fairly limited range of operators now roaming the road under the existing law. I do not think they can deny it. I do not think even the Minister would dispute that the Government have failed to meet the challenge of the border-hopper, and that that failure has resulted in a tremendous loss to the Government. In view of the Minister's failure to control the comparatively few carriers who are operating at present, I fail to see how he is going to control the vast numbers of operators whom he proposes to licence under the Bill. Until the confusion and the charges, which have come freely from more than one source, are cleared up by a royal commission away from the political atmosphere of this Chamber, the legislation should be postponed.

The Leader of the Opposition said that we opposed the introduction of the Bill at the present time. In that respect I want to correct the statement of the hon. member for Bundaberg that the suggestion of a royal commission was put forward first by his party. The original suggestion was put forward by the official Opposition. The original submissions both on a royal commission and on the deferment of this measure until after the royal commission had been held were advanced by the Leader of the Opposition in the remarks he made immediately following the Minister's speech.

Mr. Walsh: We asked for it last March.

Mr. HANLON: That is true. The members of the Queensland Labour Party asked for a royal commission last March. The Leader of the Opposition, who was Minister for Transport for 10 years prior to the defeat of the then Government in 1957, was only too happy at that time to rise in this Chamber to support the request of the hon. member for Bundaberg, not because he thought that the charges on that occasion were necessarily well founded, but because he wanted to make it clear, as far as the Labour Party was concerned and as far as he personally was concerned, that he was only too happy to see the fullest inquiry into the operations of the Transport Department, whether under this Government or any Government in the past.

The submissions of the hon. member for Bundaberg in March of this year are a completely different kettle of fish from the allegations of Mr. Bolton on this occasion. Whilst the allegations of the hon. member for Bundaberg were serious, they did not name any individuals. It was all very generalised as to the people who were allegedly accepting bribes—the transport police and so on—whereas on this occasion Mr. Bolton has named certain members of the Police Force, from the opposite end, who do not say that they are being bribed to let these people go, but they are being stopped politically—by political influence in the Government—from doing their duty as it relates to border-hoppers. I suggest that the hon. member for Bundaberg will agree that Mr. Bolton's statements are certainly more substantial than those brought forward by Mr. Harris, or whoever it was.

Mr. Walsh: They are certainly more substantial.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt attempts to tell us that we have no right to put this forward because we do not believe it.

Mr. Hart: I did not say that.

Mr. HANLON: I am not saying we believe these allegations, nor am I saying we disbelieve them—it is not for us to judge that here—but I do say they are serious enough to warrant investigation by people who can examine them in a place away from Parliament House—completely separate—so

that no party-political advantage can be gained. The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt should know that official inquiries and courts are set up, not to inquire into whether somebody can come forward on something that has already been decided as true, but to examine the evidence and sift the information brought forward—whether by Mr. Bolton or anybody else—and then give a decision. With all such charges that are made, nobody is in a position to say whether or not they are true until they are decided by the proper authority.

The Minister and the Government are faced with the chaotic consequences of their folly and timidity over the last few years. In the same way as their colleagues in Canberra have panicked on economic matters, they have panicked on road transport and are resorting to measures that, in the main, have already proved completely ineffective.

I shall explain the attitude of the Opposition on the tabling of Mr. Bolton's file. This file, tabled by the Leader of the Q.L.P., contains at least 250 pages. It is probably the most detailed submission to be submitted on charges of a serious nature such as this. It is so detailed that according to Mr. Bolton it contains all the discussions on transport that he has had, over a period of years, with Ministers of the Crown, the Transport Commissioner, and other transport officials and operators, and, according to his memory, he has given every detail of what went on at those conferences.

Mr. Chalk: That is very important.

Mr. HANLON: It is very important because the Minister forced Mr. Bolton into that position. When Mr. Bolton asked for a stenographer to be brought in to take down details of his discussions, brave Gordon Chalk said, "No, no, no, I won't have anybody here to take down what I say." When Mr. Bolton comes forward and says these things were said, the Minister says, "It is only his word against mine." Why did he not accede to Mr. Bolton's request over these various interviews to have a stenographer always in attendance?

Because of its very nature, every conversation not necessarily relating in detail to the serious charges that have been outlined by the Leader of the Opposition and by the Deputy Leader has been incorporated by Mr. Bolton in that file. If we wanted to wallow in these matters, as apparently the Government do, and if we wanted, for example, to bring before the Committee the fact that the Commissioner for Transport is alleged to have said, "What would that silly b——, Hiley, know about transport?" we could. I am saying this only because we have been accused of being "gutless" in not tabling the complete file. Our only reason for not tabling it was that we thought there was much in it that was completely irrelevant to the serious charges made. But if we wanted to go through the file word for word, we could do so with the 25 members we have in the Assembly. We

could certainly get a long way through it. We could bring in the statement about the Treasurer, whether true or false. We could also bring out statements alleged to have been made by the present Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation that the Premier was the weakest and most "gutless" man who had ever been Premier. But we refrained from tabling the file because it contains so much of that sort of side comment, which is not essential to our case. There are also suggestions concerning the domestic affairs of prominent public servants—

Mr. Chalk: I think you have said enough, Pat.

Mr. HANLON: Which, again, have very little to do with the matter.

Mr. Chalk: You have at least done the right thing.

Mr. HANLON: The Minister now says we have done the right thing.

Mr. Chalk: In saying that.

Mr. HANLON: But what about all his giggling back-benchers? The Leader of the Q.L.P. said he was going to table the file because he had the "guts" to do so but the Leader of the Opposition did indicate to the Minister when he produced these charges this morning that if the Minister or the Government wanted him to table the entire file of 249 pages he would make it available. After all, it would take the 78 members of the Assembly about six months to read it if they all had to line up one by one, because it takes five or six hours to read even superficially. But if the Government wanted him to substantiate the charges he incorporated in the general words read out by him as a start and completed by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—if they or, in this case, the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party, wanted to take the responsibility of throwing all that sort of stuff on the table for a mob of gossips to pore over they would be welcome to it. The giggling Government back-benchers descended on it like a lot of "chooks" thrown a handful of corn. If they choose to wallow in that sort of stuff, they are welcome to it. When my Leader asked the Minister if he wanted it tabled, the Minister just smiled and acknowledged his suggestion that he was prepared to make it available to any hon. members who had an interest in the matter. The Leader of the Opposition knew, too, that the Government were already in possession of several copies of the file, so let us have that made very clear from the start. We extracted only the essential charges.

Let us get on to Mr. Bolton's charges.

Mr. Sullivan: Tell us something about what is contained in the Bill.

Mr. HANLON: Looking at the hon. member for Condamine, I never have much hope of getting anything through to his brain or

what I imagine is there. But the very point of our opposition to the introduction of the Bill is firstly that the Government have failed lamentably, as my Leader has said, to deal with either road transport or rail transport. That is illustrated by the fact that this morning they have had to announce that they are going to appoint another consultative body, in Ford, Bacon & Davis, for another £100,000 to advise them, despite the fact that they have already had the Hytten Report and numerous other reports. We are opposing the introduction of this Bill on those grounds, and also on the ground of the allegations made by Mr. Bolton. We do not believe that the Government are justified in bringing this measure forward for consideration until a royal commission examines all the ramifications of the transport industry in general, and until people such as Mr. Bolton, or anybody else who wants to do so, can put submissions to the commission. On the basis of the decisions arrived at by the royal commission, which will be put before us in Parliament, and with a great deal of this cloud and chaos cleared away, we, as a Parliament, not as separate political parties, can sit down and see what is the best thing to do with road transport. When these allegations are hanging over the Government, the Commissioner for Transport, and the whole Transport Department, how can we, as a Parliament, arrive at a decision on the basis we are going to use for road transport, a basis that, if it is correct, will operate for some time to come?

Most of the charges that have been made by Mr. Bolton have been fairly clearly outlined by the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, but they do come down to the assertion that Western Transport has been given political protection in alleged sham interstate transport operations over the past three years because of pressure exercised on the Government by Mr. M. J. R. Anderson, M.L.A. I want to say to the hon. member through the Chair that we are not prosecuting him on these matters. We are merely putting forward charges that have been made by a man who has the same reputation as a prominent transport operator in Toowoomba as the hon. member himself, and it is up to the hon. member for Toowoomba East and the Government to see that the full truth is given and that those charges are answered. But they will not be answered by the Government gagging or sandbagging any open inquiry into these matters. It does not give us any pleasure to retail these charges about an hon. member of this Chamber, irrespective of whether he sits on the Government benches or the Opposition benches. I think it is very difficult for Mr. Anderson, being active in business, to also sit in this Chamber. Obviously he elected to do that when he entered Parliament in 1957, and for that reason he has to put up with any consequences that might follow. We are not trying to score personally or politically against Mr. Anderson. We are merely submitting the charges that have been made. But in that

very bulky file there is quite an amount of evidence that could, in answer to what the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt said, be regarded at least as a prima facie case and justify this matter going before a royal commission.

Allegations have been made of pressure being exercised to protect Western Transport. The Government had seen fit to endorse the tabling by the Q.L.P. of all these documents. We see allegations by Mr. Bolton that the Government, on a political basis of personal spleen against him, set out to cancel licences of Downs Transport and endeavoured to stand over the then Commissioner for Transport and force him to cancel those licences; that when he refused to do so, they then utilised the powers of the Acting Commissioner to do so. Mr. Bolton has made serious allegations and the conduct of the then Acting Commissioner on those matters was brought before the court. They are very serious charges, too. As I say, we did not incorporate those in our original submissions on this matter because we did not know the nature of the action taken by the Commissioner for Transport outside Parliament on legal advice. I do not think it restricts us in our discussion of this matter, but we did not mention these allegations against the then Acting Commissioner for Transport until tabling of the full file was supported by the Government.

The Government have allowed the tabling of the full file, and this is a very serious matter. Although these allegations have been made, and whether they have been made against the hon. member for Toowoomba East, the Minister for Transport, the Premier, or the Commissioner for Transport, it does not mean for an instant that they are true. They are matters that have to be inquired into. That is all we are asking. We are not trying to convict Mr. Anderson, the Minister, the Commissioner, or any of his staff, of anything, but we are saying that very strong suggestions have been made by Mr. Bolton and there should be a completely open inquiry into them to ascertain if they are true.

We have further evidence here about the actions of certain members of the transport police and of a detective who was seconded to the transport police. We have mentioned the names of the policemen and the detective only because if we did not we would be challenged by the Government.

Mr. Chalk: Do you think you have proof in the document you have there?

Mr. HANLON: I do not say that we have proof, but if we made only a general statement of what Mr. Bolton said regarding the police the Minister would get up and say, "You have not told us anything. Who were the detectives?" Had we not named them there would have been a chorus, led by the Minister, "What are their names? You have not the guts to give their names." It is not our wish to embarrass the policemen—they are merely the subject of the allegations by

Mr. Bolton—but because we knew the Government would challenge us to name them we have done so, with a certain amount of reluctance. In order to bring home to the Government the seriousness of the matter we have had to give the full substance of Mr. Bolton's allegations.

We have the allegation that there has been a leak from the Transport Department to Western Transport. Suggestions have been made that they were told where the police would be. Another very serious allegation on a political basis is that an official of the Liberal Party was asked to get the police "called off" Western Transport. Again it is not our claim, but Mr. Bolton's. They are all important matters in which the Government cannot merely shrug their shoulders and say, "There is nothing to them." The hon. member for Fassifern made certain allegations about the Department of Public Lands, but the Government merely shrugged their shoulders.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HANLON: I submit that they cannot continue indefinitely to shrug all these things off as if they were of no consequence. Surely as the Government they have to accept some responsibility to the public and to Parliament, and have these matters fully inquired into by a royal commission.

(Time expired).

Mr. ADAIR (Cook) (4.23 p.m.): As I look across the Chamber I can see that Government members, particularly those of the Country Party, are not too happy about the Bill. They have good reason not to be happy about it, particularly Country Party members from the Far North. When the Bill is passed it will deal a death blow to the Railway Department and to the employment of railway workers in the Far North and other portions of the State. Hundreds of railwaymen will be thrown out of work as lines are closed down. Cooktown-Laura, Mareeba-Einasleigh, and other branches lines will be closed down. There is nothing surer.

Mr. Aikens: To hell with the country man!

Mr. ADAIR: Yes, I know what will happen. Probably the Bill has been brought in for that purpose.

I move the following amendment:—

"That the motion be postponed, pending the appointment of a Royal Commission by the Government to inquire into and report on the following matters relating to transport:—

(a) What transport facilities exist in the various districts and localities in the State and whether they are—

(1) Adequate; or

(2) Inadequate for efficiently serving the economic requirements of such districts and localities; or are

(3) In excess of such requirements;

In the case of (1) what form of co-ordination (if any) of such facilities is desirable;

In the case of (2) what action should be taken to provide such additional facilities as may be essential;

In the case of (3) what action should be taken to use these facilities in conjunction to the best advantage;

(b) What number of persons are employed or directly and reasonably indirectly concerned in each class of transport facility and service. What aggregate monetary advantage accrues to the persons so employed or concerned in each such case;

(c) What influence road transport has upon railway earnings;

(d) What form of administrative control (if any) should be adopted for the purpose of co-ordinating transport throughout the State, and what powers should be given to the body exercising such control;

(e) What charges on motor vehicles and heavy vehicles, taking into consideration all circumstances relevant to transport generally, are fair and reasonable, and on what basis should such charges be imposed;

(f) What guiding factors other than the convenience of the public, the benefit to the district in question, and the financial stability and prospects of such service, should be considered in any inquiry into the advisability of permitting the establishment of any transport service;

(g) What financial arrangement is necessary to adjust conflicting State interests, impartially and equitably;

(h) Whether all ports and harbours should be brought under State control;

(i) Any matters incidental to the foregoing."

The reason for moving the amendment is that I believe that this Bill is so far-reaching that if it is passed there is no doubt what will happen in my area. I know quite well, as I have said before, that hundreds of railwaymen will be sacked and looking for work; lines will be closed, and the road transport at present operating in the Mossman and other areas in my electorate, which has been built up by the operators over the years and is functioning satisfactorily, will be thrown open to competition—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have sent for a copy of the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Cook and have ascertained that it imposes a charge on the Crown not covered by the message from His Excellency

the Governor. Consequently, I must rule it out of order. The amendment proposes the appointment of a royal commission, which, in my opinion, would impose a charge upon the Crown not covered by the message from His Excellency the Governor. Therefore, I rule it out of order. The hon. member can continue to speak on the motion.

Mr. ADAIR: I am forced to accept your ruling, Mr. Taylor, but I say again that the members of the Country Party cannot be happy with the provisions of the Bill.

Mr. Chalk: Is it not a fact that you have made representations on five occasions in recent weeks for road transport in your area?

Mr. ADAIR: In the Mossman area.

Mr. Chalk: In competition with the railways.

Mr. ADAIR: No, there are no railways in the area.

Mr. Chalk: Don't you represent Mareeba?

Mr. ADAIR: But I have not made representations for them.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Burrows: He thinks Mossman is on the rail.

Mr. Chalk: I did not say Mossman.

Mr. ADAIR: These carriers in the Mossman area have provided a service over the years.

Mr. Chalk: I did not say Mossman; I said Mareeba.

Mr. Burrows: You said Mossman.

Mr. ADAIR: These carriers to Mossman have built up assets. They have acquired semi-trailers and lorries. If other operators are allowed to compete with them Mossman will get a second-rate service.

The Mossman mill has been given the sole right or a monopoly by the Government to carry all the sugar produced there.

There is no doubt that the Bill will be passed. It will result in the sacking of railwaymen and the closing down of branch lines, and I bitterly oppose it. I fail to understand how any Country Party member could be satisfied with the Bill. Representing country electorates, they must know in their own minds that it is not a good measure, although they will be forced to vote for it. The Bill will result in the sacking of railwaymen and the closing of many lines, and will cause the fall of the Government. It will react against the Government, as they will see at the next general election.

Mr. Chalk: You should be happy about that.

Mr. ADAIR: The Country-Liberal Parties will be out of office.

I move the following further amendment:—

“That the motion be postponed, pending pending an inquiry and report on the following matters relating to transport:—

(a) What transport facilities exist in the various districts and localities in the State and whether they are—

(1) Adequate; or

(2) Inadequate for efficiently serving the economic requirements of such districts and localities; or are

(3) In excess of such requirements;

In the case of (1) what form of co-ordination (if any) of such facilities is desirable;

In the case of (2) what action should be taken to provide such additional facilities as may be essential;

In the case of (3) what action should be taken to use these facilities in conjunction to the best advantage;

(b) What number of persons are employed or directly and reasonably indirectly concerned in each class of transport facility and service. What aggregate monetary advantage accrues to the persons so employed or concerned in each such case;

(c) What influence road transport has upon railway earnings;

(d) What form of administrative control (if any) should be adopted for the purpose of co-ordinating transport throughout the State, and what powers should be given to the body exercising such control;

(e) What charges on motor vehicles and heavy vehicles, taking into consideration all circumstances relevant to transport generally, are fair and reasonable, and on what basis should such charges be imposed;

(f) What guiding factors other than the convenience of the public, the benefit to the district in question, and the financial stability and prospects of such service, should be considered in any inquiry into the advisability of permitting the establishment of any transport service;

(g) What financial arrangement is necessary to adjust conflicting State interests, impartially and equitably;

(h) Whether all ports and harbours should be brought under State control;

(i) Any matters incidental to the foregoing.”

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I cannot accept the amendment.

Mr. HILTON: I rise to a point of order. I understood you to say, Mr. Taylor, that the first amendment moved by the hon. member for Cook was rejected because it

imposed an additional cost on the Crown. The amendment he has now moved does not impose any additional cost on the Crown.

Mr. Chalk: How do you get an inquiry without paying for it?

Mr. Lloyd (to Mr. Chalk): Why don't you want it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out to the hon. member that the appointment of a court of inquiry, or any other inquiry, would necessarily impose a charge on the Crown.

Mr. ADAIR: In the interests of the railways, railwaymen and the Far North, I bitterly oppose the Bill.

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) (4.34 p.m.): It would appear that the rumours circulating on the grape-vine during the last few months about railway matters are correct.

After listening to the introductory speech of the Minister, I should say that the Bill will not only not help the railways but will put the department further in the "red" financially. Not only will the Bill sound the death-knell of the railways in general and mean the sacking or retrenchment of many hundreds of railway workers, it will also sound the death-knell of many transport firms that have been built up in the State over many years.

I do not want the Minister or the Premier to think I have a brief for the transport companies, but I believe that if any firm or organisation has built up a business through hard work and diligence, no Government has the right to introduce a Bill to wipe it out overnight, and this Bill will do that.

Knowing the Premier as I have known him over the last quarter of a century, and knowing him to be a man of honesty and integrity in politics, I am astounded that he is prepared to sit in the Chamber and hear all the allegations that have been made against him, the Public Service, the Commissioner for Transport and the Minister for Transport, and still be content to let the Bill go on without having an inquiry into the allegations.

I will quote some of the allegations made by Mr. Bolton of Cobb and Co. Before doing so, I point out that during the debate today there has been much laughter and derision from hon. members opposite relating to statements by Mr. Bolton.

Not only does Mr. Bolton indict the men referred to in the report, he also indicts himself. He said he was in touch with the Premier and the Premier was in touch with him; that the Minister for Transport was in touch with him, and he was in touch with the Minister. If this man is a man of straw who is not to be trusted and whose word is no good, why should the Minister for Transport get in touch with him, and why should the Premier get in touch with him on certain matters? The matters he spoke to him about were in regard to Mrs. Leybourne's position

—after her husband died—on the co-ordinated service between Brisbane and Toowoomba. There was horse-trading according to Mr. Bolton, between himself and the Premier relating to the establishment of the co-ordinated service.

Mr. Chalk: Did what Mr. Bolton suggested ever come about?

Mr. MANN: I sat for 1½ hours listening to the Minister and I did not cross-question him. He is not going to cross-question me. I am going to tell the story in my own way. If he can laugh, and the Premier can laugh, it will be left to the public of Queensland to decide who are the men of straw, and who are the men of credit.

Bolton has had the courage to put his charges on paper, and they have been laid on the table by the Leader of the Queensland People's Party (Government laughter)—Queensland Labour Party. They are full brothers sometimes. Are the Government going to laugh all these things off? Are they going to deny that the Premier was negotiating with Mr. Bolton for a co-ordinated service to Caloundra, by Mrs. Leybourne, on the understanding that if it came off Bolton was to be given a further extension of service to Miles and Wandoan?

Mr. Chalk: That is Bolton's statement.

Mr. MANN: Yes, that is right, and the hon. gentleman led him on to believe it.

I am trying to point out to the Committee that this morning every hon. member behind the Minister ridiculed Bolton and his document. If Bolton was a man of straw, why would the Premier ring him and have a secret interview with him, and discuss transport matters with him?

Mr. Chalk: The approach could have come from the other angle.

Mr. MANN: If the approach had come from Bolton and if he was a man of straw he would have been denied an interview, but because he is a man of affluence and a man whose word has never been doubted until now, and a man whom anyone would think worth while, the Premier has interviewed him on several occasions, and telephoned him, and Bolton has telephoned the Premier.

Mr. Duggan: The Minister has never denied it.

Mr. MANN: I know that.

The first charge involves the Commissioner himself, and the fact that he has taken out a writ against Mr. Bolton.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That matter is sub judice and the hon. member will not refer to it again.

Mr. HANLON: I rise to a point of order for an explanation of this matter. Are we aware as a Parliament that the Commissioner's statement of claim and the writ he

has taken out relate particularly to these matters, or are we in the dark on what they relate to?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair is aware of the fact that a writ has been issued by the Commissioner for Transport against Mr. Bolton.

Mr. HANLON: On what grounds?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair is not interested in the grounds. That is the matter that is sub judice.

Mr. DUGGAN: I rise to a point of order. Assume that the writ is taken out on a matter completely unconnected with transport. How is it competent for this Parliament to decide that the matter is sub judice if it is unrelated to the matter before the Chamber?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I rule that the matter is sub judice. I am not personally aware of the full details of the writ, but I know that a writ has been issued—I have been informed so—and I rule now that the matter is sub judice and cannot be referred to again.

Mr. Duggan: I move—

“That the Chairman’s ruling be disagreed to.”

With respect, Mr. Taylor, I must do so, not that I suggest that you are being unreasonable or unco-operative in the matter. You are always very co-operative but I think an important principle is involved here because action for defamation or libel could be taken on a matter that is quite extraneous to consideration of the principles of this Bill, and because of that the matter could be allowed to die, and then you or some other person in your place in this Parliament could rule that we could discuss the matter because action had been taken though the material in the statement of claim had not been set out, and so the debate of the Parliament would be unduly circumscribed. That is wrong. So I most respectfully and regretfully move a motion of dissent from your ruling.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The question is that my ruling be disagreed to and the subject is open for discussion. Each hon. member is allowed five minutes and the debate must conclude in half an hour.

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) (4.43 p.m.): I support my Leader in his contention. I had no wish to trespass on your ruling, Mr. Taylor, or onto matters over which Mr. Kropp might well have taken out a writ against Mr. Bolton, but I contend that the story in the Press is that the Commissioner for Transport has taken out a writ against Mr. Bolton and no specific charges have been made. It is only on general grounds. It may have been that they had a row or

an argument down at the office of the Department of Transport. It could have been anything.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have just been handed a letter dated 1 November, which Mr. Speaker has received from the Solicitor-General. It reads as follows—

“I have to advise that the Crown Solicitor today issued a writ out of the Supreme Court, Brisbane, on behalf of Mr. Norman Eggert Kropp, the Commissioner for Transport, against Mr. William Robert Fossey Bolton, claiming damages for defamation. The defamation which is the subject of the claim arises out of material contained in a dossier which has been published by Mr. Bolton to certain members of the Legislative Assembly.”

Mr. DUGGAN: That is the type of information I was hoping you would be able to furnish the Committee with and I am glad that you have been in a position so promptly to provide it. In view of it, I desire to withdraw, if I may, my motion of dissent.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. WALSH: Mr. Taylor—

The CHAIRMAN: Is it a point of order?

Mr. WALSH: Yes. I want to move a motion against your ruling.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is already before the Committee a motion against my ruling and it has not been decided. Although the Leader of the Opposition has indicated that he wishes to withdraw it, no decision has been reached. If the hon. member wishes to speak to that motion disagreeing to my ruling, he may do so.

Mr. WALSH: Yes, thank you. I wanted to be sure of that as I understood that, because of the letter you read, the Leader of the Opposition had expressed his intention of withdrawing his motion dissenting against your ruling.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have overlooked this point. The Leader of the Opposition has asked leave for his motion to be withdrawn. I will now put that as a question.

Motion (Mr. Duggan), by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Duggan: I did not want to embarrass Mr. Kropp.

Mr. Chalk: I appreciate that.

Mr. WALSH: I rise to a point of order. I disagree with your ruling, Mr. Taylor, and I am moving a further motion to disagree with your ruling.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! A ruling was given, dissent was announced, it was dealt

with as a question, and that ruling is finished with. I now call upon the hon. member for Brisbane to continue his speech.

Mr. WALSH: On a further point of order, are you in a position to inform this Committee whether the writ issued against the Commissioner for Transport is of a personal or an official nature?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have already announced to the Committee that the writ was issued by Mr. Kropp, as Commissioner for Transport, and by the Solicitor-General. Consequently, it is not a personal matter. The hon. member for Brisbane.

Mr. MANN: I intended to accept your ruling, Mr. Taylor. I did not want to embarrass the Commissioner for Transport any more than I wanted to embarrass anybody else. I have been embarrassed many times here and it has not worried me. Consequently, when I rise to speak I think that, so long as I keep within the Standing Orders, if I embarrass anyone it is just too bad for them. I know you will not stop me saying this, Mr. Taylor, because this is something that is in the dossier. I am sure that, even with all my tolerance of what people say about me, if that had been published about me I would have taken out a writ against the man who published it. It refers to the hon. member for Toowoomba East, and it says—

“Mr. Anderson, the Liberal member of Parliament, was touching the Government for over £5,000 a week while the railways were losing millions.”

If that is not enough to warrant Mr. Anderson's issuing a writ, if it is not enough to make the Government ensure that one of their members takes the appropriate action, I do not know what is. It goes further and says this—

“Curly Anderson is a weak, slippery villain, and his brother is a bold, determined one.”

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member cannot quote statements that are disrespectful and not approved by the Chamber as orderly. Consequently, I ask the hon. member for Brisbane to refrain from quoting anything further of that nature.

Mr. MANN: I bow to your ruling, Mr. Taylor, because I know you are a very fair and impartial Chairman.

In the document that was published, Mr. Bolton made a further allegation and he included the Premier in it. He said—

“The Premier knew, Bischof knew, and I knew the name of one police officer who protected Western Transport.”

That is something to which I believe the Premier should take strong exception, and I think he should accede to the request of the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party to defer the Bill and hold an inquiry into the statements that have been made.

I sat in the Speaker's chair in this Chamber and heard member after member of the parties now occupying the Government benches, who were then in Opposition, clamouring and demanding an inquiry when Mr. Creighton made allegations against Mr. Foley. The Government of the day gave them an inquiry, but I say to you, Mr. Taylor, that none of the allegations on that occasion were half as damning or half as serious as the charges in this case. I should like the Premier to clear his own name. I know that the Minister for Transport is a bit like myself; he has a thick hide; but I believe that the Premier, for the sake of his own reputation and that of his party, should have an inquiry into the allegations that are being made. I support my Leader and the hon. member for Barooona in the suggestions they have made to the Government.

I know that it is not parliamentary to refer to what is said by other people if it is a reflection on the character of the persons about whom they are speaking. However, this man goes further and says that the Minister for Transport had a conference with leading transport operators in Toowoomba—Anderson, “Nigger” Brown and others—and they came to a certain conclusion. The Minister was going to put these proposals to Cabinet but Cyril Anderson had a look at them and did not agree with them. Consequently the Minister did not go on with them. To save his and the Government's reputation the Premier should have a full inquiry made into these statements.

The announcement this morning that the Government were going to call in consultants for a thorough investigation into the operations of the Railway Department is another justification for suggesting the withdrawal of the Bill. After all, the railways should be co-ordinated with road transport. Never mind about bringing in Americans! Let them get hold of consultants here. Let them get hold of the Commissioner and the general managers and say to them, “We have to make the railways pay. We have to find some way of catching up with the lag.” Let them get down to working out a co-ordinated service between the railways and road-transport. Then we would be doing something to rehabilitate the railways. This business of giving a licence to every Tom, Dick and Harry who comes to Mr. Kropp for one is wrong. It will not do any good. It will not do the road-transport industry any good, and certainly it will not do the railways any good. Buses run to Wynnum about every 20 minutes. Six or eight trains run to Wynnum every day, but they run half empty. Should there not be some co-ordination between the trains that run to Wynnum and Sandgate and the buses that run alongside them?

Mr. Chalk: Do you want the buses stopped?

Mr. MANN: Some of the buses, if necessary. I would say “Yes.” I am not an expert or a consultant, but if there is a bus leaving

here at 6 o'clock that runs straight to Wynnum except for a few stops on the Wynnum Road, and there is a train leaving at the same time for Wynnum, which would you travel in? Of course you would travel in the bus! But if there is a train leaving at 6 o'clock with another one leaving at half-past 6 or half-past 7 and there was not another bus until 8 o'clock, if you wanted to travel to Wynnum between those times you would have to take the train. I think there should be more co-ordination.

Mr. Bolton's story includes reference to the line from Biloela to Rannes. I know that line very well. He tells the story there that there should be co-ordination between road transport and the railway.

Mr. Chalk: Who does he suggest should be made the co-ordinated carrier?

Mr. MANN: That would be a matter of co-ordination between the Railway Department and road transport. I am not putting up a case for the carriers. I am trying to point out to the Minister that the Bill will not have the effect that he and his Government think it will have. Something should be done to preserve the railway system. It is an asset worth millions of pounds that belongs to the State. The way the Government are going, and according to rumour, which appears to be true, they are eventually going to scrap the railways altogether. Without bringing in any Americans at all you could get Bolton, Anderson—

Mr. Chalk: You have been reading the dossier. It is all in the dossier.

Mr. MANN: That is right. I have read it from cover to cover. I am making no apologies for reading it.

Mr. Chalk: You loved reading it.

Mr. MANN: I would say this: the Minister has not got an ounce of manhood in him. If the Premier allows this Bill to go through and does nothing about the charges in that document—

Mr. Chalk: Don't get excited about it.

Mr. MANN: I am not getting excited. As I say, if the Premier does nothing about the charges, I will have to alter my opinion of him, too. (Government laughter). The Minister can sit there and laugh, and every hon. member on the other side can laugh, with him, but if something is not done about this document their hides are as tough as this desk. I know that you cannot stop road transport; I know that the people want the best and cheapest form of transport.

Mr. Aikens: Why does not the railway run its own?

Mr. MANN: I do not know. It is not for me to say. I know that the amount of money that would be required to purchase transport to compete with private operators would run into millions, which the Government have not got. Consequently, I believe that

the Government should endeavour to meet the position, not by this Bill, but by a thorough understanding of all the problems. I venture to say that when this Bill was framed none of the managers of the Railway Department, perhaps not even the Commissioner himself, were consulted. The Government have treated this as a motor-transport Bill and the whole responsibility revolves about Mr. Kropp, the Commissioner for Transport. All the railway managers should have been got together; surely they could have devised some way. I have some comments here by Mr. Wills, a late Commissioner for Railways, who said some years ago that the railways were essential and should be improved and geared for the benefit of the community.

Mr. Chalk: No-one has denied that.

Mr. MANN: The way this Government are going on—closing lines—is a denial of it.

Mr. Chalk: That is your idea.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MANN: The Minister says that no-one wants to close the railways. I am arguing that this Bill will be their death knell, and every Tom, Dick and Harry who wants to start a transport service will be given the opportunity of going to the Commissioner and getting a licence.

I do not agree with the hon. member for Townsville South about the drivers of trucks, because I know many transport drivers of good repute.

Mr. Chalk: You live in Spring Hill.

Mr. MANN: I am not worried about the fellows in Spring Hill; I am worried about the Minister's silly grin. He cannot see that this Bill is a danger not only to himself, but also to the whole of the State. I tell the Government that it will kill the railways. The Minister was trying to discredit people in the transport business. This Bill will discredit the railways and bring ruin to them. I am not worrying about votes; this is bigger than votes. Perhaps hundreds of railwaymen—very few of them in my area—will be affected.

Mr. Chalk: Hundreds of thousands?

Mr. MANN: If the railways are closed down altogether there will be thousands of them. The only line remaining open will be the main coastal line. All the other lines will close. With road transport running parallel with the railway and competing with it, particularly in the country areas, the railways must go back.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. MANN: Mr. Taylor, I cannot understand what hon. members opposite are saying; too many of them are interjecting. I cannot understand what anyone is saying but I believe that if the Government, after the indictments that have been made against them and published and tabled here, go on with this Bill

they stand condemned in the eyes of everyone in the community. Those charges are not the only libellous ones; there are 260 sheets of that document and every sheet has £1,000 worth of libel on it if what it contains is not true.

I challenge the Government to take some action and I challenge the hon. member for Toowoomba East, Mr. Anderson, if he has an ounce of manhood in him, to have a writ issued to defend his honour and his integrity as a member of this Parliament. He owes it to the Parliament to protect its integrity.

Mr. Aikens: He might not place as high a value on it as you do.

Mr. MANN: I place a high value on Parliament. No-one can charge me with doing anything wrong in this Chamber. Even if I do anything wrong outside, it is not done wilfully. (Government laughter.) Each hon. member owes it to the House and to himself to take action in such circumstances. If any stigma attaches to his character, or any charge is made against him—I do not mean by a person of straw or a ratbag, but a charge by a man such as Bolton, a man of affluence, a man whose word has never been doubted until now by Government members—he must defend himself. Until the present time Bolton has been regarded by hon. members opposite as an honest citizen and a man of standing in the community. By their laughter, Government members stand condemned. They will stand condemned in the eyes of everyone if they do not postpone the Bill and institute an inquiry into the charges in all their ramifications.

Mr. BAXTER (Hawthorne) (5.1 p.m.): The Bill is one of the most stupid, industrially and economically, ever introduced in this Chamber.

It will create a tremendous amount of unnecessary unemployment, even in the field of road transport. As was said earlier, the little operator will come in and cut prices and force large operators who now employ many men to sack those men. Industrially, I disagree entirely with the Bill. Further, on the explanation given by the Minister, it will be the end of rail transport in many areas. It may mean the closing of 50 or more branch lines, and the sacking of a large proportion of the 30,000 employees of the department. The effect in the far-flung portions of the State will be very severe. Only men such as the hon. member for Townsville South, who have worked in the department in the far-flung areas, will be able to appreciate that this measure will bring about ghost towns in the West.

The Bill will have a severe effect in the electorate of Roma. Of the people now living in Roma, almost 50 per cent. of them are in some way connected with railway work. If the Bill is passed half those people will be unemployed.

Mr. Aikens: He does not care. He reckons they do not vote for him anyway.

Mr. BAXTER: He is not the least bit interested, because he is one of a party—the Country Party—that foolishly fell for the Liberal line that this Bill would assist them in getting their produce to the city. It will have no such effect. If they had wanted real assistance and economic development of Queensland, members of that party would have been better advised to support a move to improve rail transport. In saying that, I am not being derogatory of those persons who are living in the district and driving trucks—I know many of them; in fact, I have relations out there who drive trucks—but I am interested in the section of the community that will suffer most from the passage of the Bill, that is, the rank-and-file railway workers in Queensland. Once we move west from Toowoomba we find that every country town lives on the railway. Once we move up the coast, all the towns from Gympie onwards—and even Gympie to a large extent—depend for their existence on the railways. People are spending money in these towns now, and we will destroy them if we take away the spending power of the workers. If we take away that spending power that is the end of the town and the end of prosperity in the district. Even the productivity of the land is tied economically to the ability of the worker to purchase. It would be far better if we spent on the railways the £100,000 that we are going to give to Ford, Bacon & Davis to tell us how to run the railways and improve them. Why not build the railways up? I am a great believer in spending money on the railways in Queensland. We are approaching an era of great development in Queensland because in the South they have reached saturation point and the business people down there have to find somewhere else to spend their profits. They will have to spend it in Queensland.

It is a retrograde step to close any railway branch-line. It is our duty to keep them open and keep the money circulating. Why not spend the £100,000 building a railway for semi-trailers? Why not bring in a semi-trailer system? Why not tie the road and rail-transport systems together? Why not co-ordinate them so that from the time the goods are loaded to the time they reach the consumer they are handled by both modes of transport? Why not be fair and spend the money for the benefit of Queensland?

A Government Member: How far would £100,000 go?

Government Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BAXTER: The Government spent money on the Hytten Report. It cost us £1,050, and what did we see for it? All we have seen is one little item in the Press on 23 May, 1958. The Minister said that Professor Hytten had been engaged to make a full inquiry into the transport policy, and

he suggested that a full inquiry would provide a fair basis for competition. What else have we heard about it? Professor Hytten has gone around, and the report has gone into a box. We have thousands of comments from the Minister. He said he would show us the way out of the quagmire and that he would balance the railway budget. Is it really necessary to go to the extent of taking from the people of Queensland the means of transport they are justly entitled to?

In our very sparsely populated State, is it not our duty to keep the railways alive so that when the State becomes more closely populated we will have the amenities available? Is there not some way to join the railways and the transport hauliers? Is there not some way to overcome the difficulty and straighten out the present very nasty situation? Is it not caused only by the action of the Minister in making it cheaper for a co-ordinated service, and dearer for hauliers, to travel over certain routes? Let us be fair and work it out on an equal basis.

This morning I tried to ask the Minister what principle he was going to work on with the 3d. a ton-mile, but he would not answer the question. I do not know whether it is based on a percentage sliding scale, a milage basis, or just a flat rate from here to Timbuctoo, on a 4d. or 3d. basis. Because of my knowledge of the railways, I realise that there must be some revision of freight rates. For instance, if you send a parcel from the interstate railway parcels office to Perth you find there are 27 different freight rates. It does not seem quite right, does it? When you want to send a parcel from Roma Street station to a station in North Queensland, you could find they have three or four freights. Somewhere along the track we have to get down to a flat rate for the transport of goods by rail to given areas. I would be a fool if I did not say that; because of my previous occupation I know as much about railways as any other hon. member.

Personally, I think the Bill was flown as a kite to give some prestige to certain people who are following the doctrines of certain political parties—the Country Party and Liberals—within the Chamber. It has been spoken of as being correct by many members from this side of the Chamber and it has never been denied by the Government, so I must accept it as being correct.

There is something very dangerous tied up with the Bill. I do not know which speaker it was, but one hon. member said that Queensland is fast entering a category that could be termed a police State and that some of the actions outlined by the Minister this morning could very easily be accepted as among the characteristics of Mr. Krushchev. He put into the hands of one man the sole right to decide whether a person shall be entitled to receive a licence or permit. Into the hands of only one man has been put the right to decide whether to give his friend a certain privilege, or a reduction in licence fee, or the right to operate without a licence.

That is fraught with danger and I do not think it was fair to the unfortunate man placed in that position. I have no doubt whatsoever as to the honesty and capabilities of Mr. Kropp, but I do not think it is fair that any man should be placed in such an invidious position and to be made an Aunt Sally for all. At least he is entitled to protection. That is why it is wrong to have a commissioner in charge of one section as big as this. Let us have two or three.

Mr. Chalk: Would you—?

Mr. BAXTER: Yes, I would agree to a board of two or three. Then you would have some protection for those persons and possibly a means of preventing at some future time any "rotting" and racketeering on the issue of these licences.

I think the Minister said—and I hope he will correct me if I am wrong—that a sergeant in the back-blocks—in the Outback—would have the right to issue a permit.

Mr. Chalk: I didn't say that.

Mr. BAXTER: If that is so, there is something wrong.

Dr. Delamothe: You are making that up.

Mr. BAXTER: I am not making it up; I have it written down. I ask the Minister, through the Chair, who would issue a licence in Roma?

Mr. Chalk: It would be issued through the police station.

Mr. BAXTER: That is just what I said.

Mr. Chalk: No. You said a police sergeant.

Mr. BAXTER: A police sergeant would be in charge, or an inspector, or some member of the Police Force. I will change the word "sergeant" to "inspector", if it suits the Minister better. Out in the Condamine area it might be only a sergeant. Although I might be wrong in the rank, I am still right in the argument I am putting forward. A policeman holding some rank would issue the licence.

Mr. Chalk: Don't you want that?

Mr. BAXTER: It will boomerang somewhere along the track, and those particular problems must be dealt with. We could not make it definite whether it should be a C.P.S., a sergeant of police, or an inspector of police. I think those are two things that are definitely wrong in this Bill, and there is no way in the world that it will meet with the approbation of all who will be covered by it.

The figure of 3d. a ton-mile was mentioned, and it was stated that the Government were going to reduce the railway freights that came into operation on 1 October to a flat 3d. a ton-mile. How in the name of goodness can the Government substantiate arguments put forward by the Treasurer, accepted

by the Minister, and accepted by all members of Cabinet, for that increase on 1 October, when freight on stock went up by 20 per cent. and fares rose by from 10 to 25 per cent.? Just over a month later, by making that increase, the Government are doing a complete somersault and coming right back to where they were—reducing freight to a flat 3d. per ton mile.

Dr. Delamothe: Who said that?

Mr. BAXTER: The Minister said it this morning. He cannot deny it. The Government have never been able to substantiate their policy on that question ever since they have been on the Government benches. They have been given a lot of Press publicity in an attempt to beguile the people into thinking that they were doing something for the State of Queensland, but they have never been able to fulfil consistently the promises they made at any particular time. The waste of money under the administration of this Government has been tremendous. They are going to spend £100,000 in bringing a company here to tell them how to run the railways, a company from a country that cannot run its own railways at a profit. To put the matter in its correct perspective, I quote the following passage from an American industrial journal—

“During the post-war years general indexes of industrial progress steadily advanced; yet the railroad industry, with an investment of almost 28 billion dollars, returned last year the lowest return.”

The company the Government are bringing out here could not tell the American Government and the private railway enterprises how to run their own railways successfully. How can we expect them to be able to tell us how to run our railways? In a country quite foreign to their line of thought it is purely a further waste of our money.

Instead of squandering that money, let the Government do the right thing. Let them approach the subject of transport in a sensible manner. Let them co-ordinate the railways and the road-haulage system. Let them get into agreement. I am sure it can be done even if it means that the railways may have to lose a certain amount of their business to the road-haulier. But they have to do something to maintain employment. With increased unemployment they will find themselves with a small—I hope it is small—depression on their hands. Railway-workers will become unemployed; ghost towns will be created. Employers in local industries who employ somebody's son or daughter in small country towns will be compelled to make dismissals. There will be no way to keep them in employment. The whole thing will boomerang. Hon. members on the land will also suffer.

An Opposition Member: The graziers.

Mr. BAXTER: Not so much the graziers, because I know it would not interfere with my two friends from the South-west. The
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share-farmers are those who will suffer most. They will take their products to the towns only to find that there are not enough people to purchase them. They will lose their selling power. All these things will snowball. The big haulier will suffer because of the operations of the small men who, I make bold to say, are not going to play fair. They will operate on their own to the disadvantage of the big haulier, who will be doing the right thing by the State in employing people and paying them at least the award wage. We cannot afford to let the situation develop anywhere in Queensland where people are dismissed from employment. That angle must be watched very closely. It is one of the big dangers of the Bill.

My greatest fear is that the operations of the Bill will create in their wake a great deal of unemployment. Where displaced workers will find employment I do not know, because already we have a large army of unemployed without its being augmented by the effects of the Bill.

I completely disagree with the Bill, industrially, politically and economically. It is a Bill that has given us nothing that is not already contained in the present Act.

Mr. BURROWS (Port Curtis) (5.23 p.m.): The hon. member for Townsville South said that the Bill would sound the death-knell of the railways. I think every person will realise that the Bill deals a death-blow to the railways, but there is something even more serious than the death-cry of the railways. The debate has indicated a state of affairs which, if the Government proceed to try to laugh it off and treat with their present indifference, could easily sound the death-knell of democracy or decent and honest Government in Queensland. The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt, a Queen's Counsel, made many inane interjections. I was going to say that he did not have sufficient courage, but perhaps I could use the words that were alleged to have been used in describing the Premier when it was said that he was the weakest and most gutless Premier Queensland ever had.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. member has applied that remark to the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt, it is offensive and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. BURROWS: I intended to qualify it by saying that they were the words used in the paper that has been tabled here today.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BURROWS: I did not create the words or use them; they are not in my vocabulary.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BURROWS: The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt sits on the sidelines. He did not have the courage to get up; he just shifted from one seat to another. He was like a little fox-terrier dog, barking and digging holes in the ground and causing bigger dogs to fight, although not himself game to fight. I challenge him to get up.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not to issue any challenges in the Chamber.

Mr. BURROWS: I am afraid I cannot quite understand why I am challenging anybody. It is futile to challenge anybody who never accepts.

Government Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the hon. member please proceed with his speech on the Bill.

Mr. BURROWS: I will challenge the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt inside or outside. I will not repeat the charges that have been made—I could not repeat them all—but by interjection he said, “Do you believe the charges?”

Mr. Hart: That is right. Do you believe them?

Mr. BURROWS: It would be presumptuous for any one of us to say that anyone was guilty before we heard a reply to the charge. Did the hon. member believe the charge in the murder case last week—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. member continues in that strain I will ask him to resume his seat. He is supposed to be debating a Bill. Will he please either proceed with that or resume his seat?

Mr. BURROWS: We have been asked if we believe charges that have been made in the papers that were laid on the table of this Chamber. The point I want to make is that it is not in accordance with British justice for anyone to believe charges before the person who has been charged or impeached has a chance to reply. If no-one is being impeached by the document that has been laid on the table, I would like to know what is necessary before a charge or impeachment does take place.

Mr. Hart: It is at least necessary to say you don't believe them.

Mr. BURROWS: It is not my province to believe them, but up to date nobody has refuted them; nobody has stood up and denied them and it would be presumptuous, as I said, on the part of anybody once a charge is made—we may have different opinions about guilt or otherwise—to say that the persons charged are guilty. I know that in conversation we say, “Oh, he appears to be guilty”, but that is not sufficient. The charges have to be substantiated and they cannot be substantiated. It would be just as ridiculous for me to say that I believe the charges as it is for the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt to say that he does not believe them. Neither he nor I is qualified to express such an opinion once serious charges are made.

Mr. Hart: You said you do not believe them?

Mr. BURROWS: As I said before, let the hon. member get onto his feet; he is not game. This debate has been proceeding since 11 o'clock this morning.

Mr. Hart: Get going.

Mr. BURROWS: The hon. member has not got going, even to this stage.

Another interjection that he has repeated half a dozen times is that no prima facie case has been made out.

Mr. Hart: That is what you say you do not believe.

Mr. BURROWS: These charges are made against the Government of which the hon. member is a member. I know it is rash for a layman to comment on points of law, but he can at least read the newspaper. It would be absolute presumption on the part of any hon. member or anyone else to say that no prima facie case has been made out.

Mr. Hart: I was only quoting you.

Mr. BURROWS: When a charge is made against a person in a court, it is not the province of the prisoner to rise and say that no prima facie case has been made out and therefore the case must not go to the jury. The right to say that a prima facie case has or has not been made out is not that of the accuser or the accused; it is the right of an impartial authority, and that is my point.

I would not know Mr. Bolton if I saw him outside this Chamber, or anywhere else. I have never seen the man, but I have made inquiries about him, including inquiries of Government members. I have said, “Has this fellow Bolton got any money?” They have replied, “My word! He has a lot of money and he is a man who has a pretty big business.” I understand that apart from that he has other interests. He is not a man such as the ratbag at Canberra who made charges and had no money and finished up in gaol. Government members have told me that Mr. Bolton is a man of substance, a very philanthropic man. I understand he has very generously and commendably made gifts to various charities. I heard today that, as a result of his generosity, Toowoomba now has an art gallery.

I did not make any inquiries until I read the statement that has been tabled. I wanted to find out whether the man who prepared it was a man of substance and intelligence. My inquiries in every quarter have indicated that he is a man of considerable substance, ability, capacity and intelligence. He has made these charges and they have been tabled. What else has a man to do to show the need for a full and open inquiry on this or any other matter? The statements are very damning of the Government. He has impeached the Premier; he has impeached the Treasurer; he has impeached the Minister for Transport and other members of Cabinet. He has definitely impeached the hon. member for East Toowoomba, and we cannot afford to

say to the people, "He is a liar," or something like that. His statements either have to be disproved or accepted. Every criminal who has ever been charged has denied his guilt. The hon. member for Brisbane said that he would be very disappointed in the Premier if he did not take some action on these charges. The hon. member for Brisbane was merely voicing the opinions and sentiments of 90 per cent. of the population of Queensland.

We cannot afford to have these things said about the Government and not have them inquired into. These statements are now public property. I challenge Government members to institute the inquiry. The reputation of their Government is at stake. Are they going to allow these things to be said about the Government and just sit there like a lot of yes-men, under orders from the Cabinet not to take part in the debate? Surely to goodness they have been elected to positions of responsibility! The charges that have been made are serious, and if they are not grave enough to make the Government appoint a commission to enquire into them, I do not know what would make the Government act. If Bolton's assertions are not right, then, in his own words, he should be in gaol. If they are right, the Government should resign. If any more serious allegation than that is required by the Government to justify a royal commission, I would say if we had a dozen kidnapping cases here, the Government would merely say to the public, "It did not occur; don't believe it," or the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt might say, "No prima facie case has been established." He is a Q.C.; I wonder what "Q.C." stands for.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BURROWS: If I used the vocabulary of the hon. member for Townsville South, I might be able to say something, but I will spare him.

The Government have announced they intend to appoint a committee to inquire into the problems of the Railway Department.

Mr. Hodges: That is not in the Bill.

Mr. BURROWS: No, but it has been announced, and it is one of the reasons for my suggestion that consideration of this Bill should be deferred.

We would expect that inquiry to be a serious inquiry. It could not be treated as frivolous because it has been announced that it will cost £100,000, yet we find the Government rushing this Bill through. This Bill could interfere with the findings, or it could contradict the findings. In the face of the appointment of that committee, and the expenditure by the Government of £100,000 to inquire into these problems, the Government bring in a Bill that is very closely associated with those inquiries, and in all probability the Bill could constitute part of the findings. The setting up of this full and expensive inquiry into railway affairs should

have been sufficient to make the Government realise that it was inopportune and premature to bring down the Bill at this stage.

After hearing the Minister's rather sketchy description of the Bill, I understand that there is going to be an "open go" on the road. If that is so, there will be chaos such as we had when there was a shortage of coal and the Railway Department could not handle all the loading. An "open go" was allowed for the carting of coal from Callide to Gladstone. Every Tom, Dick and Harry who could grab a lorry got in it and started carting coal. Ninety per cent. of them were very decent fellows, but there were some hare-brained gentlemen amongst them. There were at least two fatalities, caused by reckless driving. Some men were doing two trips a day every day of the week. It took about 16 hours a day to do it if the driver had luck, had no punctures, and everything ran to schedule. We have road transports going through my electorate—I do not know whether other hon. members have had the same experience—and I have seen these men pulled up and camped alongside the road at all hours of the night.

I remember that at election time a road transport passed me while I was at a meeting, and later that night, on the way to Galdstone, I overtook the transport just as the driver was pulling off the road for a sleep. It is quite common, travelling on those highways at night, to see transports pulled off the road. Very often they barely pull off and the motorist has to go nearly off the highway to pass them. Some of the drivers are very decent. As with politicians, there are good and bad among them. There are many problems attached to the "open go" that the Bill, as outlined by the Minister, will lead to.

I had a yarn with two young men who, in my opinion, were not mature enough, anyhow—I will be kind to them—to accept the responsibility of a loading that, I suppose, would be worth hundreds of pounds. Out of curiosity, I asked them where they came from and they told me that they came from Melbourne and were going to Rockhampton. One of them added that he was getting £25 for the trip from Melbourne to Rockhampton and back. If that sort of thing is necessary to maintain or bolster up road transport, we would be better off without it.

I agree with those other hon. members who say that there will be a complete breaking-down of employment conditions and awards as we know them. I do not doubt that there will be what the Americans call "hi-jacking." There will be thieving and pilfering as it develops, and other problems will arise, too.

I want to qualify all I have said with the statement that I do not think there is any possible way we can live without a certain amount of road transport, but I do think that an uncontrolled and open "go," as the Minister more or less indicated it would

be, will bring chaos and an intolerable state of affairs that could be very disastrous in many respects.

It is quite common to see a load of wool passing through Gladstone on the Bruce Highway. The transports always stop at what they call the Corner Service Station, about 15 miles out of Gladstone. Going up, they take a load of groceries or supplies for the sheep stations they are going to for the wool and, in the course of conversation with some of them, I have learned that the merchants in Brisbane or Sydney get in touch with those sheep stations and say, "We will send you a load of groceries," or station supplies, or it might be wire or anything else they want, "on condition that you sell your wool back to us, and we will not charge you freight on the groceries as long as you pay the freight on the wool." The freight on the wool by road transport will be a little under what it would be by rail. We will find that sort of thing developing. The hon. member for Rockhampton South will confirm that the merchants in Rockhampton are already feeling the pinch. In days gone by, Walter Reid, Denhams, Goldsbrough Mort and the various other warehouses in Rockhampton supplied many of those stations; but the pastoralists are not ordering from them now because they are getting their supplies by road transport. So we will have centralisation in a very vicious and dangerous way. That is another aspect we must study.

These matters must be examined carefully. The Government have rushed into this legislation, and if they persevere with it in an endeavour to get it through quickly and ignore all these difficulties, they will be very sorry afterwards, and Queensland will suffer. If we inquired more carefully into it and studied the Bill more carefully, we on this side of the Chamber might modify our opinions. But I believe that if the Government considered all the implications and heard evidence from people who are likely to be affected, they might change their opinion and modify the provisions of this Bill, or perhaps bring down an alternative measure.

To sum up my opinion, I should say that I am opposed to the Bill because it has been brought in hastily and is ill-considered.

Mr. Nicklin: On what grounds do you make that statement?

Mr. BURROWS: For instance, the Minister for Justice proposes to bring in a new Companies Act. It will be fairly revolutionary, but not nearly as revolutionary as this measure. In his wisdom he has said, "We will introduce this Bill about the beginning of December, but we will not proceed with it until March or April next year in order to give members an opportunity of studying and understanding it and being in a better position to debate it." The implications of the new Companies Act would be very small

compared with the implications that I can visualise as a result of the revolutionary changes contained in this measure. The position could well become chaotic if the Bill is rushed through, and I appeal to the Minister and other members of Cabinet to consider seriously deferring further consideration of it. Let the Bill be printed, by all means, but defer further consideration until March or April.

Mr. Chalk: And let the border-hopping and everything else continue?

Mr. BURROWS: The Minister did not tell us how he was going to cure border-hopping any more effectively by means of this legislation than he did under the existing legislation. Let us clear everything up. This is a big problem, and it needs careful consideration. I do not want to be "slang-wanging" the Minister, and I do not want the Minister to be "slang-wanging" me. We are not doing anything for Queensland when we do that. Why not be sensible about this Bill and give hon. members and the general public time to study it? In the meantime, as I said, let us prove—and I sincerely hope, for the sake of good government and clean and honest government in Queensland, that we can prove—that this man Bolton and his charges are wrong and that he has acted criminally in the charges he has made.

(Time expired.)

Mr. WALLACE (Cairns) (5.50 p.m.): Like other hon. members on this side, I rise to take part in the debate not knowing what the Government really have in mind. I believe that the Government's decision to bring down this Bill is perhaps one of the most momentous decisions that has ever been made in relation to the future of this State. The decision to introduce the Bill is a further indication of the Government's policy to grant to private enterprise the right to control the whole of the transport system throughout Queensland. It is a Bill that will create monopolies for transport facilities in various areas. As the hon. member for Cook mentioned, the monopoly that has been created in Mossman was created by the Mossman Tramway Bill. It gives the Mossman Milling Company the right to control completely the whole of the transport system in the Mossman—Port Douglas area. The small operators in the area, of course, will not be able to compete with the Mossman Milling Company because that company has a franchise for the road haulage of sugar from Mossman to Cairns. They will be able to compete more than favourably against the small operators who have served that portion of the State faithfully and well for many years.

Mr. Chalk: Is that against your idea?

Mr. WALLACE: I am one who believes that fair is fair. The Mossman Milling Co. have already been given a concession and they should be prepared to allow people who have invested their money in trucks

and other equipment to continue their carrying activities in the Mossman area. The Mossman Tramway Bill will mitigate very considerably against those small operators.

In my opinion the legislation is intended primarily to completely destroy the railway system of Queensland. I believe that in all sincerity because of the statements of hon. members opposite both since they have been in Government and when they were in Opposition. The Minister has been very critical of the hon. member for Toowoomba West. At all times when the Minister was in Opposition he was most critical of Mr. Duggan and the operations of the railways. Since he has taken over the portfolio himself the hon. gentleman may have changed his mind somewhat about the difficulties confronting the Minister in charge of the Railway Department.

I believe it is the Government's intention to destroy not only the railway system but also the railway employees and the unions covering them, and the Transport Workers' Union, too. Under the permit system, by reason of the fact that every Tom, Dick and Harry is able to get a permit and move wherever he wants to, the Transport Workers' Union does not have a chance to police its members. Not only is it the Government's intention to destroy railwaymen and their unions, but they are also trying to break through in every other union that it is possible to break through, particularly the Transport Workers' Union.

Not only I, but everybody outside as well, would be interested to know why the Bill was brought before the Committee today in view of the declaration of the Minister for Transport that the railways are to be investigated by the American firm of Ford, Bacon & Davis at a cost of £100,000. Like other hon. members, I believe that there are in this State men fully capable of investigating the railways in the best interests of this State. I do not think we have to go outside the State at all. Whilst many people may have different opinions from me on the Commissioner for Railways, I believe Gerry Moriarty is one of the very good railway men. He is definitely a top line railwayman. In the ranks of the employees in the Minister's department there are other very efficient railway men from whom could be selected one who would be fully capable of investigating the Queensland railway system and recommending new methods of working that would possibly put it on a more competitive basis than at present. Nevertheless, I do not believe that the railways should be expected to show a profit.

I believe that a railway system is a public utility created to provide a service to the people. Whilst it is providing that service—and our railways have done a tremendous job down through the years—I do not think the department or the Government should expect it to pay its way.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not think the Minister had anything to say about railways when introducing the Bill. It is a transport Bill and I think railways are apart from it.

Mr. WALLACE: I think railways are an adjunct of transport. I am trying to make a comparison between the railways and other forms of transport. It is reasonable to assume that if an investigation of the Railway Department is to be undertaken there should also be an investigation of road transport. I believe both are very closely tied together under the present set-up and it is useless to investigate one without the other.

Mr. Taylor, you have been inclined to stop me making reference to the railways but I contend that the railways and the road-transport system are locked together as a single unit. I had wished later on to make a comparison between the two systems, which have both given tremendous service to the State. There is no doubt about that, but in times of national stress, such as during the last war, if there was one railway system in Australia—despite the fact that it has only a single line—that played a tremendous part in the eventual winning of the war in the Pacific, it was the Queensland railways.

I have dealt with the part played by the railways in the successful prosecution of the war in the Pacific. In view of these matters, the onus is on the Government to preserve this portion of public property. The Minister has said that the State can no longer operate under the crippling load of Railway Department deficits. We must continue railway services, even if it means giving the railways some of the protection that is now given to road hauliers.

I have no axe to grind for road hauliers. They have a place along with the railways, and in my opinion both forms of transport could operate amicably in the best interests of the State. But private-enterprise road transport should not be allowed to exploit and control the transport affairs of the State, and I do not think the finances of the State should be used to further the control by private enterprise of the destiny of the State. That is what will happen after the passage of the Bill. Monopolistic control will be given to some of the road hauliers. We must consider the basic facts. Could road hauliers build their own highways and operate successfully? Of course they could not. Their position is somewhat akin to that of the Ansett airline in air traffic. Ansett bought out A.N.A. and demanded and got concessions from the Federal Government over and above those granted to a State instrumentality, T.A.A. He was provided with facilities to enable him to operate. If road hauliers had to lay down the roads they use, they would be unable to operate. My point is that but for the facilities provided with public money, road hauliers could not continue to operate. Under the present system and the system envisaged in the Bill the Government will

sacrifice the railways, railway business and railwaymen for the convenience of road hauliers.

Mr. Walsh: They might change their mind. I think they had a cabinet meeting on that.

Mr. WALLACE: They may. I agree completely with the hon. member for Carnarvon that until the States have constitutional power to deal with road transport the problem will continue.

I want to deal now with the allegations made by Bolton, which are contained in the screed laid on the table of the House by the hon. member for Carnarvon. Before allowing this Bill to become law, the Government should make some very strong efforts to have those allegations cleared up. They should have taken some very strong action before attempting to bring the Bill in, because the allegations contained in Bolton's report are a grave reflection on the members of the Cabinet, the Minister for Transport and all members of the Government.

If an Australian Labour Party Government had been in power when these allegations were made, I can just imagine the terrible 'stink' that would have been kicked up by the members of the Government, if they were in Opposition. In the past, when similar things have been brought into the Chamber, the Government of the day, when in Opposition, had plenty to say about the attitude of the Government if they refused to grant a royal commission. When certain things happened when the Labour Government were in office, and the Opposition at that time had gone to no end of squealing, the Labour Government set up a royal commission.

In the present set-up, in the interests of the State and the people the Government will be wise to take cognisance of the advice given to them by the Opposition to grant a stay of proceedings in bringing down the legislation, and also to setting up a royal commission to inquire into the subject matter of the allegations.

Some remarkable allegations have been made against certain people, and if I were in the position of the Minister, or any of the Ministers, I would be very indignant, to say the least, and I would want to clear my name and that of my colleagues. It appears the Government are prepared to accept without contradiction the allegations not only against those people who have been named, but also against the Government as a whole. When the people of Queensland read what has been said today on the statements by Mr. Bolton—I wish to state I do not know Mr. Bolton—there is no doubt they will want to know just what sort of people make up the Government when they quietly accept such claims.

Hon. members of the Opposition had no wish to bring this before the public, but

as it has been presented to the members of the A.L.P., the members of the Q.L.P., and some members of the Government, they believe that of necessity the people should know what is going on and what is contained in the allegations. I understand that the hon. member for Bowen, Dr. Delamothe, has been presented with a copy of the allegations, and I suggest it would be wise for him, in his own interests, to speak about them. It would also be in the interests of the Country Party members for Mulgrave and the Tablelands to speak on them, because both of them are concerned with many of the people I mentioned earlier in my speech, people who will be deprived of the right to continue to earn their living by carrying goods. If those two hon. members do the right thing for the people operating in their areas, they will get to their feet and give voice as the Opposition are doing tonight. Some very cross words have been spoken by different hon. members today. When the amendment was moved for the purpose of having certain things heard, I just could not understand why it should have been rejected. I am at a loss to know why you, Mr. Taylor, blocked the amendment, because it seemed to me that the second amendment put forward by the hon. member for Cook removed the objection to the first one. Of course, I suppose you have the say here and you know what you are basing your ruling on, but members of the Opposition are at a loss to know why it should have happened.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! While reminding the hon. member that his time has expired, I must tell him that it is not the practice of the Parliament for an hon. member to criticise a ruling by the Chairman once the decision has been made and the matter dealt with.

(Time expired.)

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) (7.26 p.m.): It was quite apparent from the remarks of the Minister that he proposed to make very wide and radical changes in the transport administration in Queensland. In his speech today he set out his proposals very comprehensively and then later he informed us that he intends to seek advice from overseas on the proper method to adopt in effecting improvements in the transport and railway services of the State. I mention the railway services because they are inevitably tied up with the road-transport system, in the consideration of which we must be guided by the economics of the railways. It is not much use deciding upon changes in the road-transport system if we are then going to consult experts from overseas on the running of the transport system generally.

In consulting overseas experts the Minister and/or his Government are casting reflections on the very responsible and capable officers in both the Railway Department and the Department of Transport.

Mr. Chalk: Alice in Wonderland!

Mr. MELLOY: That is just what the Government are like.

Mr. Chalk: Do you know who appointed those consultants and who brought them to Australia in the first place?

Mr. MELLOY: I think it is only a let-out for the Government. These people are going to be invited here to advise them on the administration of the transport system.

Mr. Davies: It is just a cover-up.

Mr. MELLOY: That is so. Their attitude is that the chaos in the railway system and the transport system is not the fault of this Government or of this administration but rather the fault of the advice tendered to them through the inadequacy or the incompetency of the officers advising them, so they are seeking further advice from overseas.

Mr. Lloyd: They have been in government three years.

Mr. MELLOY: They have had ample opportunity over the past three years to get down to tintacks on the transport system, to call in our very capable engineers and commissioners to advise them on what should be done to bring the chaos to an end. Instead, they are going to consult an overseas advisory board, which is what it amounts to. I say it is only to cover up their own inadequacies, and to bolster up the suggestion that they have not been properly advised by their engineers and commissioners. Over the past few years this Government have had various other plans to solve the great difficulties that confront them in Queensland and to get the department out of its troubles. In February, 1959, the Government announced that they had a £10,000,000 five-year plan for the complete rehabilitation of the State's rolling-stock, and the Minister said at that time that the Government were making a concerted drive for business for the railways. He also said—

“Our figures this year show a big improvement, and we are determined to maintain and further improve that position.”

What has happened? This year we have a record deficit in our railway accounts. We also know that hundreds and hundreds of men have been dismissed from the railway service and that many more will be dismissed before the end of the year; branch lines have been closed down, and fares and freights have been increased. If that is what the Minister calls maintaining and improving the position of the railways, it is a sorry prospect for the Queensland railways during the next three years.

Mr. Hughes: To what extent can you allow the railways to become a burden on the State?

Mr. MELLOY: The only solution to the problem is the return of the Australian Labour Party as the Government in three years' time. The Railway Department will then have a chance of providing for the people of Queensland the services to which they are entitled.

In April this year the Minister said that the Government were not considering any increases in fares and freights, and would not impose any increases before the State election. He told the Country Party convention this year that there would not be any increase in freights, but that the rate scales would be overhauled to make a fairer proportion. He said the overhaul would be more to even up the schedules than to secure much extra revenue. But what happened? On 1 October rail fares and freights were increased considerably. I will not go through them all, but we all know to what extent suburban rail fares were increased—in some cases by up to 100 per cent. It is quite obvious, of course, that the Minister was not going to tell the public of Queensland before the election that he was considering these increases, but the public was quite unprepared for the vicious increases that were imposed early in the life of this new Parliament.

Mr. Walsh: There was an increase of 100 per cent. in the freight on fertiliser to Cairns.

Mr. MELLOY: As has been pointed out, freights in country areas were increased greatly. I have here a comment by the Gayndah Chamber of Commerce, which sent a telegram to the Government protesting about the “steepness and discriminatory nature” of these increases in freights. The chairman, Mr. Vieritz, said that the increases discriminated against the primary producers and played into the hands of road transport. He said that large quantities of maize, butter, oranges and cattle were railed from Gayndah, and that the Gayndah people had always been loyal to the railways, but now road freights for these goods would be as much as 20 per cent. lower than rail freights. That was the general reaction to the increases imposed by the Government.

These increases, of course, did not carry with them any extra services to the people, and if the railways are to attract public patronage, they will have to provide service. It is no wonder that the country people are turning to road transport for the carriage of their goods. There is no rail service to the country at the week-ends. It means that any goods lodged at Roma Street on Friday afternoon, even if the trucks are loaded that night, are not railed from Roma Street until Monday morning. It means a two-day delay in the transport of freight from Roma Street to country districts. Is it any wonder that country people turn to road transport for the carriage of their goods, even though it means using a service provided by operators who engage in border-hopping? At least they provide a service that the Government should

provide but do not. When the Labour Government were in charge of the Railway Department they did not delay the carriage of goods even though they may have imposed greater freight charges over the week-end.

No maintenance is now done on engines over the week-end. Any engines requiring maintenance are held until Monday morning when it might be several hours before they are available to haul trains.

It would appear from what I have read in the Press that the provisions of the Bill were forecast some time ago, inasmuch as they are based upon what occurred at the State Country Party convention when the principles of the Bill were enunciated by a Country Party member. I shall quote statements made by Mr. Sparkes, the delegate from Condamine, from which it would appear that the policy propounded in the Chamber by the Minister has been based on a resolution moved by Mr. Sparkes. In moving a motion that called upon the Government to formulate a new approach to the problem of the railways versus road transport, Mr. Sparkes said, "If ten men want to operate a transport service between two towns they should be allowed to do so." That is what the Bill provides; under its provisions any number of operators can operate a service. In that respect the Government are carrying out the wishes of the Country Party convention as announced by Mr. Sparkes. He also said, "A road transport service should not be the preserve of any one man." The Bill provides that it shall not be the preserve of any one man, or, for that matter, of any one company. It provides an "open go" for the field in road transport. He said, "The only restriction should be the payment of fees sufficient to cover the wear and tear on roads." That is what the Bill provides for—3d. per ton-mile on the load of the vehicle. Mr. Sparkes also said, "Railway branch-lines that cannot operate economically should be scrapped." Again that has been done by the Government. He further said, "The present licensing system is opposed to the Country Party's belief in free competition." The Government are proceeding to eliminate the licensing system and to institute the permit system. So it can be seen that the basic principles of this Bill are based on that motion by Mr. Sparkes at the Country Party convention. As a matter of fact, there must have been some sharp talk at that convention because that motion was amended and considerably watered down to read—

"That the Government continue its efforts to solve the problems of road and rail transport so that these two essential components of our transport system can function as complementary units."

That is an indication of just where the terms of this Bill came from. It is not in the best interests of the community that we should agree in any part to this amendment of the Transport Act.

Our Leader has introduced a paper, which has been laid on the table, in reference to a

suggestion that a commission of inquiry should be appointed to inquire into the charges made by Mr. Bolton. It is essential that that inquiry be held because they are outrageous charges if they are not true; they are completely damaging to the people named in them.

The Minister and various other members of the Government have asked whether we believe what is stated in those charges, and what are our authorities for such statements. Whether or not we believe them is not the question. That is why we suggest that the Government institute an inquiry into the charges; we want to know whether we should or should not believe them, and it is the responsibility of the Government to place in our hands the evidence as to whether they are correct. That is why we say they should be inquired into. We are not in a position at this stage to say whether or not we believe them.

Mr. Lloyd: There are 20 witnesses.

Mr. MELLOY: There are definite witnesses and those witnesses are named in the statement. If the charges are inquired into it will settle once and for all whether that sort of thing has been going on and whether the Government, the Minister and the Cabinet are responsible for, and guilty of, the things stated in the charges. Not only members of the Opposition but the people of Queensland as well will want to know whether they are correct. It is in the interests of the individuals concerned, and their honour and integrity, that the charges should be inquired into. We can then be asked whether we believe them or whether we do not.

Mr. Hughes: Almost every Labour speaker today has said he does not believe them.

Mr. MELLOY: It is not a matter of whether we believe them. It is quite wrong for anybody to say whether or not he believes them until they are inquired into. When that is done the people of Queensland will know the truth of the whole matter.

Road transport, of course, is definitely tied up with the services given to the people of Queensland by the Railway Department, and many other things are involved in the successful functioning of the railways in this State. One of the big factors is the employment of railwaymen. Unless this Government are prepared to get down to tin-tacks and control its railway system properly there will be tremendous unemployment amongst the railwaymen of the State. The position is getting worse, and will get worse still. The Bill, if passed, will lead to a reduction in employment in the railways. It must boost road transport and therefore must bring about a diminution in rail traffic. To attract passengers on suburban lines we must provide clean, safe and fast transport. The Australian Labour Party Government laid the foundation for an efficient service in the suburbs of Brisbane by commencing the scheme of electrification and quadruplication. If we are to forestall the carriage of the

majority of suburban passengers by buses and cars, we must proceed with the scheme of electrification on which, to date, £9,000,000 has been expended. We are too deeply committed to allow it to bog down. If the Government proceed with it, the people will be happy to avail themselves of the efficient service the railways will then be able to give. The public wants service. If the railways give it, the public will patronise the railways. The number of suburban passengers in recent years has been decreasing. Passenger traffic can be won back only by good service.

I suggest that the Government scrap the Bill or wait until they have the advice of the American consultants. After the Government receive their recommendations we may be able to deal conscientiously with some alterations in the service envisaged under the Bill. It may be shown that many others are undesirable and not in the interests of the public.

I reserve further comment until a later stage of the measure.

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) (7.49 p.m.): Mr. Taylor—

The CHAIRMAN: Before calling on the hon. member for Townsville North, I should like to point out that under Standing Order No. 141 the Chairman may call attention to remarks which in his opinion are tedious repetition. I am not anxious to curtail the speech of any hon. member, but I point out that from several hon. members I have heard the same comments, particularly in regard to railways and papers that have been tabled. I ask each hon. member before he rises to speak to think whether he has something new to contribute to the debate. I am not anxious to draw attention to the fact that in speeches I have listened to all day I have heard the same thoughts expressed by many hon. members.

Mr. TUCKER: Like you, Mr. Taylor, I have not seen the Bill and do not know what it contains. I therefore think that in my speech I have to cover a wide field, to make sure that what has to be said is said.

I venture to suggest that the Bill will later be known as "Chalk's Calamity." In the months and years ahead men will curse it and hold it up as a prime example of the short-sightedness of the Country-Liberal Government.

As all hon. members know, I come from Townsville. In that great city of the North dwell hundreds of railwaymen. There are also many hundreds of other workers who are dependent indirectly on the railways for their living. I do not know precisely what this Bill contains, but it is possible that the livelihood of each and very one of the workers in the North may be threatened by it. This applies not only to the workers in Townsville but to the workers in towns farther north and farther west, who are dependent either directly or indirectly on the railways.

It is not meet that I should sit idly by and not express my opinion. Rather should I join wholeheartedly with my colleagues in the A.L.P. and attack the introduction of this Bill because I am sure it will not benefit the people I represent. I will attack it with every weapon at my disposal. An attack on the living standards of my people warrants an attack from me, and most assuredly this Bill is an attack on the railways. I may be forgiven for saying that 800 men were sacked from the railways last year and we have heard that some 550 will be sacked this year. I state emphatically that one year after this Bill becomes law double that number will be sacked, and the Minister is not so naive as not to realise that.

I have no argument against legitimate road transport. I know it has contributed, and will continue to contribute, to the welfare of this State. I predict that every owner of a 3-ton truck will suddenly blossom into a transport operator in a race for the supposedly golden harvest. There will be a rush of such operators from the border right up the coast, while established transport operators will be put out of business.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. TUCKER: You can tell your story.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman will address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. TUCKER: He is very provocative.

The established transport operators will be put out of business. The reputable firms will disappear and chaos will result. The good conditions and awards that these reputable firms have established will disappear with them. As more and more operators appear the laws of the jungle will prevail, as the competition will be more and more keen. We will have the old spectacle of drivers taking benzedrine, and going without sleep for days, and trucks being grossly overloaded. The Minister says the trucks will be inspected. What sort of an inspection staff will be necessary to carry out such a colossal job? What sort of an inspection staff will be necessary to inspect strictly every operator who will blossom from the border to the Cape, and away out west? I venture to suggest it will be definitely beyond the scope of the normal inspectorial staff, and that many hundreds of staff will be necessary to cope with it. How could the Transport Act be policed? This Bill is an open invitation to break down and smash working conditions as we know them, and to scab labour and snide and unscrupulous people. Will these operators have the development of the country at heart? The answer is no. This rush of operators that will come in will have their eyes on the easy pounds to be made. Will it not mean that the eyes of the road-transport business—the "plum" transport jobs—will be picked out, with the dregs left for the railways?

When this Bill becomes law there will be nothing to stop that. The moment it goes

through—as it undoubtedly will—there will be nothing to stop these people from picking out the eyes and the plums, and taking all the easy transport jobs, by which easy pounds may be made, and the Railway Department will have to try to support itself on the very dregs of transport.

In times of drought the railways carry fodder. Will the road transport operators do that? Of course they will not! Will they cart water cheaply to small towns? Will they cart it to small, thirsty western towns cheaply in times of drought? Of course not! We know it and the Country Party knows it; surely the Minister knows it, too. Not one member of the Country Party has so far raised his voice in protest. I hope some of them will. Surely they will tonight.

I cannot see but that this more or less sounds the death-knell of the small western towns. When it is not profitable to haul goods to or from those areas, road transport will drop them like a hot cake. Private enterprise will not run out there at a loss. Certainly it will not go to areas, often drought-stricken, that cannot afford to pay high prices to keep it operating, yet the railways, the lifeblood of the State, have always helped them in times of drought and given them a fair deal.

The road-transport operators are concerned only with easy money. They will come in when the Bill is passed and it will be too late then to protest when railway branch-lines have been closed and the rails ripped up and, as a previous speaker suggested, possibly sold to Japan. We should take note of what has already happened where branch lines have proved unprofitable and have been closed. With the spending power of large numbers of railway employees removed, business will languish. We had a perfect example of that in the big railway strike in 1948 when business was hard hit. Many people are hurt besides the railway employees themselves. Repercussions are felt by small shopkeepers and many others dependent on them for their living. If hundreds or even thousand of railway workers are dismissed, many other connected with them will be affected, especially in the smaller towns, and even more particularly in towns like Emerald, which are completely dependent on railwaymen for their livelihood. Small western towns could disappear if the railwaymen are dismissed.

Queensland cannot go ahead without the railways. In the last war they played a vital role in defence. Everyone involved in the last war, and no doubt many not directly involved, will remember the valuable contribution made by the railways and the splendid effort of all railway workers. We can all remember the tremendous amount of rolling-stock provided and the huge quantities of goods transported by rail to the North. If the Bill means that many branch lines will be closed, what are we to put in

their place? Hon. members opposite should remember that before voting in favour of this measure.

In distant areas, the railways are the arteries that keep this State pulsing with life. The western areas and the far northern areas are built around the railways, and the railway lines are the lifeblood of the people there. Are we going to fling away in a weak-kneed gesture that which has taken almost 100 years to build? That is what is happening now, with the closing of lines and the encroachment of road transport onto railway transport. Slowly but surely the railways will disappear if the present administration remain in office.

I agree that border-hopping under the cloak of Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution has been an iniquitous business that has cost this State a tremendous amount of money. I realise, also, as was stated earlier, that the Commonwealth Government should do something to assist the States to curb border-hopping. But I am sure that the blame for the present position of the Railway Department can to some extent be laid at the door of the Minister and his advisers. I do not agree that he has shown very much business acumen during his administration. It has become increasingly obvious to me over the last three years that the railways would be pressed by road transport. What measures has the Minister taken to meet that challenge? What measures has he taken that prove his regard for his portfolio and for the thousands of men who are dependent on sagacity for their living? Has he proved himself a leader, disputing every inch of the way? I say he has not. Has he inspired his men with his live-wire ideas and his ability? I say he has not. Rather, the announcement today of the £100,000 inquiry will spread defeatism in the minds of railwaymen from here to the Cape and out to Bourke. Why have we not seen already "railpaks" adopted? Why have not the railways entered the road-transport field as a subsidiary service and made the other operators look to their laurels? That is what I would call leadership—a man who definitely took the lead and showed us that he was really trying to do his best for the railways.

The present Bill is a perfect example of the defeatism that pervades this Government. In the allegations tabled today, a few lines struck my eye. I shall not mention the gentleman's name, but he is supposed to have said that two Ministers of the Government said—

"A Government can never admit it is wrong. It has to bulldoze its way over its opponents."

In their rush to push this measure through, are the Government not adopting that attitude? Surely the members of the Country Party have not been bulldozed. But if not, why are they silent now?

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (8.4 p.m.): I am in complete agreement with the sentiments and utterances of hon. members on this side of the Chamber, and I see no justification for the introduction of this Bill. I listened very attentively to the whole of the Minister's introductory speech, but I did not find one word in it, let alone one sentence, to justify its introduction. I think it has been incorrectly named, because it appears on the Business Sheet as "A Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to transport." I think it would be more aptly termed "a Bill to ensure against the successful operations of the State railways, and to bring about the dismissal of some hundreds of railway employees", because that is what it will do. I am convinced by the argument advanced by the Minister and the silence of other Government members that that is what it is intended to do. It is a piece of scientific sabotage of the railways, which has been carried on by this Government ever since they assumed office 3½ years ago. The document that the Leader of the Opposition offered to table this morning—and that was in fact tabled by the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party—has been given to the Leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for Baroona, the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party, the hon. member for Bowen and another Government member, and what is contained in that document alone is sufficient justification for the Opposition's request for an inquiry into the charges that have been made. The accusations are not for us to deny or believe. We are not the accused, nor are we the accusers. It is the duty of those accused to clear themselves of the charges made against them. That is all we are asking—nothing more and nothing less.

I crave your indulgence, Mr. Taylor, and the indulgence of the Committee while I quote three or four paragraphs of the document that was made available through the hon. members I have mentioned, and invite the people who have been indicted by it to get to their feet and let us have their version of it. Several Ministers are accused, as well as the Premier and one private member who was, and still is a very prominent member of the Liberal Party. Here is one allegation—

"A statement in court by Mr. McCawley on behalf of Western Interstate Pty. Ltd., that in those cases where the defendant did not go over the border it was done with the prior approbation of the Minister for Transport and Bolton's allegation that the five witnesses Anderson had proposed to call to prove such approbation were J. C. Anderson, Mr. R. Anderson, N. Britton, Campbell, then President of the Liberal Party and now Member for Aspley, and Sherrington, Deputy President of the Liberal Party."

Some of those men are outside and have not the right to participate in the debate, but Mr. Campbell is here and so is Mr. Anderson. If they value their good names they cannot remain seated; they must rise and either claim that the accusations are false or give their

views on the charges that have been made. I am not making an accusation, neither was my Leader or any other hon. member on this side, but a very prominent business man has made these accusations. In present-day society we say a man is successful if he is a successful business man and has been able to accumulate a large bank account. I do not know Mr. Bolton, but I am given to understand that he is a wealthy man and a very successful business man. Therefore we cannot dismiss his accusations with laughter, smiles or shrugs of the shoulders.

Here is the next allegation—

"An alleged statement by J. C. Anderson that if the union had not pulled out from following Westerns' trucks that they would have squashed Brady, the organiser, between two trucks and spread him over the road."

That is not just idle chatter. Perhaps this has not happened in Australia to a great extent, but there is a growing tendency to follow the American way of life in Australia—far too much for my peace of mind and for the good of Australia—and we know that what is suggested in that allegation has happened in America not once, but scores of times. Not only has such action been taken against union organisers—men whose duty it was to protect their members and get better working conditions for them—but as between rival transport companies there has been disaster after disaster, and act of sabotage after act of sabotage. Therefore, we must take notice of these things. They are an indication of what private enterprise will do when someone gets in its way, particularly representatives of the working-class who guard the interests of their members.

I quote further from this document—

"That the Premier had told Bolton that no-one could blame him if he did the same as others, in other words, sham interstate operations."

In accordance with your wishes, Mr. Taylor, I will refrain from quoting further from that document, but I feel that that alone should compel the Premier to defend himself, not only in this Parliament but also in some other tribunal at least to clear his name and the Government. Many people still have the same confidence in him as they have had over the years. I think of Frank Nicklin as an honourable man, as I did many years before I entered this Parliament. But if he chooses to remain silent and refuses the request of both parties in Opposition, then he must forgive me and others for thinking less of him than we did previously.

In the Minister's opening remarks he said that the efforts of the Government to overcome transport problems had fallen far short of expectations. If that is so he cannot blame members of the Opposition—he cannot say it is because he has insufficient power—because he went on to tell us that the Minister has the power to veto any decision made by the

Commissioner. Therefore, he must take full responsibility for the chaotic conditions that have grown out of his own administration.

We are led to believe that the Commissioner will have full power when this Bill becomes law, and that that will improve the position. If the Minister himself says it will improve the administration of the Transport Act if he cannot interfere with the administration of the Commissioner, I agree with him. He also said that he has encouraged deputations from road hauliers. The Minister has been very approachable and anxious to meet deputations, but, after having listened to what they said, he has not given them much satisfaction.

He said the shortcomings of the 1946 Act were that it gave little consideration to granting licences in the country areas, and that it enabled those people who had been granted licences to form monopolies and completely protected them from competition, and that those companies had not provided good service to the areas in respect of which they had been given licences. If that is so, it is a condemnation of his own administration. They had the railways to compete against and if the railways did not offer competition to hauliers who had been given licences by his Commissioner, he cannot blame the road hauliers or the Opposition. He must himself accept all the blame.

He went on to say that the road hauliers had been able to accumulate thousands of pounds. His words were that the policy of the department administered by him had enabled the road hauliers to pour thousands of pounds into their pockets. If he says that those people had a monopoly and did not serve the country well, why did he not use the powers given to him by the 1946 Act and take the necessary steps to remedy the position instead of waiting three and a half years and then bringing down a Bill that will destroy the transport system of this State?

Mr. Walsh: Why didn't he tell the Commissioner to issue more licences?

Mr. DONALD: That is so. No-one can deny that, if the position that then existed was not entirely eliminated by the Road Transport Act of 1946, it was almost so. The hon. member for Bundaberg said this afternoon that it brought about stability, and that is so, but that was 1946 and this is 1960, 14 years later. If that Act is not sufficient to deal with the present situation can the Government blame past Governments? Was it not the duty of the Minister for Transport and the Government to amend the Act long before now, if it had been found that the Act was as bad as they say it was.

It has been said that country people were affected to the greatest extent by the 1946 Act. The Country Party has been the major partner in the Government for the last three and a-half years. Do Country Party members admit that they have allowed the people they represent to be abused and exploited by road hauliers during that time? I am

not making that statement; it was made by the Minister. And he had the remedy in his power. He had it at his fingertips and could have overcome the problem.

He wants to remove the protection that he says is enjoyed by the railways. I do not know what protection the railways enjoy, but I do think they are entitled to some protection in view of what has happened over the years. Road hauliers pick the eyes out of the commodities to be transported from one point to another and leave to the railways the poorer-paying goods and those that are difficult to handle. The railways have done exceptionally well, and I do not think they have been given any undue protection. In fact, the competition to which the railways are subjected, and have been subjected for years, is totally unfair and against the interests of the railways and therefore the interests of the State.

I ask the Government in what way the road-transport people are meeting their fair share of the burden represented by the cost of constructing and maintaining the roads. The railways have to construct their lines, buy the properties through which the lines run, maintain the property, maintain the permanent way and pay interest on the money borrowed for those things. Much has been said about allowing road transport to operate under fair, or equal, conditions. Then let us ask the road hauliers to pay something for the construction of the roads. Are they prepared to do that? Are they prepared to pay interest on the money borrowed to build roads? The State has to borrow money and pay exorbitant interest on it so that roads can be built for the use of road hauliers. What do we find? They are not paying one penny. It is idle for hon. members opposite to suggest otherwise. They know as well as I that the interstate haulier does not pay one penny towards the upkeep of our roads, and for that we can blame the opposition to the banking legislation of the Chifley Government, which was a very wise enactment. We would not have been in the economic mess we are in today if it had not been challenged—if the supporters of the Country and Liberal Parties had not gone to the Privy Council and had it declared invalid. Ever since the decision was given in that appeal, Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution has been worthless and has been operated not in the interests of the States but against the interests of the States. The Premiers and Transport Ministers of Queensland, New South Wales and to a lesser extent Victoria, have done their utmost to overcome the provision that enables interstate hauliers to drive through their States without contributing a penny to the cost of the damage they do or a fair share of the cost of maintenance and construction of the roads. That fact cannot be denied. The Minister has gone to interstate conferences of State Transport Ministers to try to find a way out of the difficulty. They have engaged the most brilliant legal men in the Commonwealth and still cannot get a solution. They cannot find

their way out because their supporters blasted their way through the Commonwealth Constitution, and so denied justice to the people of Queensland when they successfully challenged Mr. Chifley's banking legislation before the Privy Council.

The Minister says there will be equal terms for everybody throughout the State and no preferential treatment for any part of the State, but he did not explain how that was going to be done. Nor did he say, "I am going to see that the railways, which are the property of the State and the people, get an equal share, and have an equal opportunity to run their business as the road hauliers are running theirs."

The Minister emphasised that under the existing legislation there are monopolies, and they have to be removed. If he was honest he could stop that practice very efficiently under the existing legislation. There was nothing to prevent him from granting a licence to a firm that would compete against the people with the monopoly, and there was nothing to prevent him from making conditions unfavourable for those who were not giving a proper service.

The Minister did not mention that it was the intention to fix a rate to be charged by the hauliers for services rendered.

No-one can deny that excellent service is rendered by the Government of Queensland to interstate hauliers, and no-one can deny that excellent service is also given to the air companies. However, the railways have to bear a burden for those in misfortune, and other people, as hon. members have pointed out previously, in the moving of starving stock and the carriage of fodder and water to people when there is none, and have to help to develop the State at the expense of the people. Until recently the people have been cheerful enough to endure the losses incurred by the railways because they knew that the railways were giving very excellent service to the State and were playing an important role in its development.

The Minister said this legislation will test the sincerity of intrastate and interstate hauliers. Why have we to amend legislation to test the sincerity of these people? I am not saying they are not honest, but the Minister has said they are not honest because they are not carrying out their obligation to give the service they should be giving, and have formed themselves into monopolies. The Minister could correct these anomalies by using his existing power. He is not getting extra power under this Bill; he is passing it on to the Commissioner. Let us hope the Commissioner will use it more advantageously than the Minister has during the last 3½ years.

I do not blame people who choose to use road transport. If it is cheaper and more efficient, then it is only natural that they will use it. The Minister criticised the actions of the Hanlon Government in 1947 but he must have made some mistakes himself.

The issuing of licences and permits to all and sundry must result in many failures. If we have uncontrolled competition, what will be the result? We will have cut-throat competition, and people who are not qualified to operate these services will try to operate them, and they will do everything in their power to break down the working conditions and wages of the men they are employing.

I should like to refer now to what the Minister called "restricted goods". As far as I could follow him, they were coal, cane, timber, grain, alcohol and cement. One of them, at least, is not important, but the others are very important commodities. We are told that these goods will be carted without charge. How are we to check on them? Will it not be comparatively easy for the operators to hide some other commodities in the load? We are told that the maximum tax will be 3d. a ton-mile and that the Commissioner will have the responsibility of deciding the various rates below that maximum, but he cannot go above 3d. a ton-mile. We do not know whether by that payment the haulier will justify his use of the road or whether it will return to the State the money expended on constructing and maintaining the roads.

The Minister accused the Opposition of being disciples of gloom, but in introducing the Bill, and in his administration over the past 3½ years, he has been the creator of gloom and destitution.

The road hauliers, with their semi-trailers and other equipment, are to be allowed to use the roads without charge when travelling empty. And the Minister talks about equal opportunity! What about the railways? They take some very important commodities from Southern Queensland to Cairns and come back over a thousand miles with empty trucks. For every mile a railway truck runs there is an interest bill of over 4d. a train-mile to be met. And the Government talk about protecting the railways! The railways belong to the people, and whether they like it or not the people of Queensland have to find 4d. a train-mile for people who live out of this country, and who neither toil nor sweat.

The road-transport people are destructive. This may not bear directly on the Bill but when a weighbridge was built at Gables they chose to destroy lovely gums and other trees—simply to catch some men who were robbing the State, someone who was dishonest, someone who would not pay what he owed the State. Simply to check on dishonest practices they saw fit to destroy many beautiful trees. Even if they destroyed only one, that would be too many; but at least 100 trees were destroyed. It was one of the most beautiful spots on the run from Ipswich to Brisbane, though not nearly as pleasant as the section from Goodna to Redbank, which has been eliminated by the new roadway between those townships. Very few people will applaud the guilty act

of destroying those trees to put a weighbridge there when there are so many other sites on the miles and miles of road.

(Time expired.)

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) (8.29 p.m.): My main concern about the Bill is the subject of road hauliers and road transport generally. Since 1946 we have seen the great damage that has been done by road transport to many of the highways of the State, particularly in the southern portion. I understand that in 1946 the charge was 3d. a ton-mile. Bearing in mind the length of road we have had to rebuild since then because of damage by heavy interstate transport, and transport within the State. I should think that to maintain it and avoid extra expense to the Government, the tax would have to be higher than 3d. a ton-mile.

I am surprised that members of the Country Party, in the main, have not voiced their opinion on this matter. If it is a question of road transport against rail transport, many aspects of the problem will have to be considered, particularly those relating to road transport and road hauliers.

Every hon. member knows what happens when floods hit Queensland. I have been held up on many roads, and I have seen transports held up, also. How are we to get fodder and supplies to people in country areas if the rail services are curtailed by giving road hauliers an "open go"?

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. NEWTON: The way things are going, anything is likely to happen. We have seen what has happened before the introduction of this Bill, and if the Bill goes through there is no doubt in my mind—and I am sure there is no doubt in the mind of any hon. members on this side of the Chamber—that the number of applications will be so great that the department will be working 24 hours a day for months and months to deal with them. If this happens, the Minister will have no alternative but to close down all railway lines, those in the city as well as those in the country.

In the case of flood, the Government will be asked to give some relief to people in the flooded areas. I believe that it should be given, but how can the Government give it? The only way of taking goods to those areas will be by air transport, which will involve the Government in even greater expense. If the railways were retained, that expense would not be incurred. Since I have been a member of the Chamber, to every question we put forward the Government's answer is the same—"Finance".

I agree with hon. members who have said that a committee of inquiry is desirable. It has been suggested by hon. members opposite that nothing good would come out of an inquiry. One thing that could come out of it would be a recommendation for the use of co-ordinated services for both goods and

passengers, and I believe that this would be one possible way of overcoming our transport problem. The Cleveland line was closed recently. A co-ordinated road service between Cleveland and Manly would have been a great asset. It would have retained passengers for the Railway Department and assisted the private bus companies in that area. The use of co-ordinated services would be a modern approach to our present requirements.

As Country Party members know, in western areas there have already been bitter complaints about the prices charged for goods that have been carried by road transport. One has only to go to St. George, Goondiwindi, Dirranbandi, or Cunnamulla, or to Alpha and other places on the central line, or to Tambo and Blackall, to hear what the people are saying about road transport. The roads are being cut up, and their pockets are being hit hard.

We have heard very little from hon. members opposite on this Bill. Perhaps they know more about it than I do, although they say they do not. The farmers have not hesitated to raise their voices against the charges they have to pay, and I say quite openly that the coalition Government are creating a monopoly. Wherever railway lines are closed—and I ask hon. members to mark my words—the big transport companies will come in and swallow the small transport operators and hauliers and then tell the people what prices shall be paid. In the long run we shall pay dearly for the Government's present move.

The aspect of the Bill about which I am mainly concerned is the protection of the transport drivers and the general public. I know something of this subject because I have seen in certain areas what goes on with transport drivers. A driver will leave Sydney one day, drive all night, and arrive in Brisbane the next day. If you ask him how he does it he drags out a bottle of "pep" pills. He lives on pills. Nobody can tell me that a driver working under those conditions is driving in the best interests of public safety. The Minister should take that point into consideration. The Bill contains no provision to ensure that drugs are not taken by transport drivers to keep them awake on long journeys.

What concerns me most about the document that was tabled is the suggestion about what would be done to the Transport Workers' Union official if he interfered; that if they could get close enough to him they would squash him between two trucks. Knowing trade-union officials as I know them, that is easily understood. Mr. Brady was the man named. He would be doing only what he thought was in the best interests of his members, but because he endeavoured to do so he was threatened. We need a better approach than that. That is the only part of the document to which I intend to refer.

I heard it said today that workers in the Railway Department would not be affected

by allowing transport companies to operate. That may be so, but I say that railway workers will be greatly affected. Indeed, I go further and say that workers in outside industry at present handling Government contracts will be faced with a very difficult problem. It is true, as one hon. member interjected, that the railway workers will have to try to join the transport companies to get jobs. What will happen to the public money that has been spent on railway workshops in the metropolitan area? Already, because of dismissals the buildings are standing idle and have been left to rot. That is the result of the Government's attitude in not endeavouring to solve the problem. The Minister and the Government have weakened and are dancing to the tune of the monopolies and the road hauliers.

Mr. Chalk interjected.

Mr. NEWTON: What I am saying is true. The Minister is proving it by introducing the Bill. He has given the green light to one of the greatest monopolies in the State, if that is what the Bill contains.

A Government Member: You should have been here.

Mr. NEWTON: I have been in the Chamber all day. I have listened with keen interest to all that has been said. I have listened intently because I can remember that when the Minister for Transport was on this side of the Chamber he never hesitated to attack members of the Australian Labour Party Government on any transport matter whatever. He was always in the forefront of the attack and was one of the then Government's most bitter critics. He has had the task of administering the portfolio for three and a half years but it is only at this late stage that he comes in and says, "This is what has to be done to overcome the difficulty." What has he been doing for the last three and a half years? He has been hoping he could overcome the problem and save his face, but at last he has been forced to come to the Parliament and lay his cards on the table, showing us just what has happened in this department under his jurisdiction.

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (8.41 p.m.): You have said, Mr. Taylor, that you do not want to listen to tedious repetition, so I shall be brief.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I could not be as brief as members on the Government side have been. They have said nothing. I shall be brief, but I wish to bring forward one or two salient features that are connected with the introduction of the Bill. In a debate such as this, although it may mean tedious repetition, these matters cannot be emphasised too strongly or too frequently in order to demonstrate the sorry mess this State will be in if this Bill becomes law.

In the Minister's opening remarks he said that if the railways cannot compete successfully in certain areas they must retire from the field. That is typical of the attitude he has adopted because of the sorry mess in which he finds his department and his anxiety to excise any portion of it that may be a liability to him. That is why I feel he will be quite firm in securing the passage of this Bill through the Parliament and at the same time prevent, as much as possible, attention being drawn to the hopeless mess into which he has brought our railway system.

He expressed concern about the growth of monopolies in the transport business. But have the Government been concerned about other monopolies that have grown up in this State? Why the sudden concern about monopolies in one particular section of industry?

Mr. Lloyd: He could have controlled it by licensing.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: He could have. By doing that he would have made a move that would have prevented at least one monopoly from growing up.

Unemployment in the railway system cannot be divorced from the provisions of the Bill. The Minister is prepared to spend £100,000 on an inquiry into what is wrong with the railway system. What would it matter if he spent £200,000 or £500,000? If this Bill is passed the business will be lost to the railways and, no matter what this proposed committee finds—no matter what scheme it puts forward—the railway system will have been destroyed. Why go to the trouble and expense of finding out what is wrong when, by the time it comes to a conclusion, the business is lost to the railways?

Mr. Davies: The story of Humpty Dumpty.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That is why the Minister should be prepared to delay the passage of this Bill that is, if he is trying sincerely to find out what is wrong and what remedies to apply. When he has discovered that, he can introduce this Bill in the light of what this proposed fact-finding committee recommends.

In every case where efficiency experts have been called in to recommend and make suggestions to improve a business, what has been the result? What was the result of the inquiry into the workings of the Brisbane City Council administration? That inquiry did not bring in one extra penny of revenue. It was a shameful waste of public money, as will be the institution of this £100,000 committee suggested by the Government.

Experience has proved that these things are all right on paper but when it comes to their practical application I have never seen any notable result from an inquiry by any efficiency expert. Under the Bill every Tom, Dick and Harry will be able to get a permit to carry goods, but how will their operations

be policed? There will be so many applications that a tremendous staff will be needed to police them.

It is only a few weeks since the Minister, in reply to my question said that the Government could not provide a rail link to Inala owing to the shortage of funds.

Mr. Chalk: That is true.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Yet they are now prepared to spend £100,000 on an inquiry that will prove nothing.

Mr. Chalk: It will prove nothing?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: It may prove something, but it will prove it too late. The Minister is laughing. Is it any wonder that the railways have got into such a sorry mess. He could not even attend to a job of fixing a railway crossing that would cost £100. He can now find £100,000, but a few weeks ago he said that the Government could not afford to build a rail link to Inala. The co-ordinated service to Inala caters for 800,000 adults and 400,000 children a year, and for six or seven years efforts have been made to alleviate their transport difficulties. At present these passengers pay £1 0s. 6d. weekly in rail fares, whereas a rail journey of the same distance would cost 14s. 3d. The Minister said that the Government could not provide that service, but now they are prepared to waste £100,000 on an inquiry which is too late in any case.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Government members are loud in their interjections, but we have not heard any of them defending the Government against the charges of Opposition members.

I am not concerned about the persons who are named in the document that has been tabled, but the allegations are serious. An honest Government would have nothing to fear from an investigation.

Mr. Dewar: We have not.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Then why has the debate lasted so long without any indication from the Premier that he is prepared to hold an inquiry to ascertain whether or not the allegations are true?

Mr. Dewar: Unsigned, and unconfirmed words.

Mr. Walsh: Not unsigned.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I repeat that an honest Government would have nothing to fear from such an investigation, but their reluctance to agree to one will create doubts in the minds of those who read this debate or whose attention is directed to it.

The Premier has always claimed that he is a gentleman. He should guard his reputation jealously and should agree without hesitation to an investigation of these

matters. The Government cannot brush the allegations aside. We had one instance of that earlier in the session. We now have a further instance of their reluctance to agree to an investigation. To this stage of the debate they have not adopted the line they adopted before, that, if the Opposition members laid charges, those charges would be investigated.

Mr. Dewar: You lay a charge.

Mr. Walsh: They are in the document.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Opposition members have provided enough evidence. If the Government will not hold up the Bill, at least they should acquiesce in our request for an inquiry. In the interests of good government, and the good name of the Government, they should have no hesitation in calling for an inquiry.

Mr. THACKERAY (Rockhampton North) (8.51 p.m.): I wish to speak on this legislation, but before I commence I should say I hope I have complete silence from hon. members on the Government side.

As our Leader said this morning, today will be remembered as Black Thursday. For many reasons, each and every railwayman, when he reads a newspaper in Queensland tomorrow, will be saying to himself, "I always thought Mr. Chalk had the interests of the railwaymen at heart and that he was fighting for our survival and growth." How untrue that statement is concerning Mr. Chalk. I can remember his going to Rockhampton and talking to the railwaymen in the Rockhampton railway yards and telling them he was their friend and would support them. He said he had much outside influence against him, but he was doing everything in his power to support the railwaymen of Queensland.

I do not intend to engage in the controversy or the mud-slinging that has taken place between the Minister for Transport, the Premier of the State, Mr. Bolton and Mr. Anderson. I believe that when thieves fall out—and it looks as though they have—they should solve their differences in the best way they can.

There should be no monopoly controls in industry in Queensland, whether it is road transport or any other form of transport.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member, referring to members of this Chamber, made the remark, "When thieves fall out". That is an offensive statement, and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. THACKERAY: In deference to your ruling, Mr. Taylor, I will withdraw the statement, but that is how it appears to me.

I was speaking about monopoly control, and it is refreshing to see how, on the one hand, the Minister comes in fighting against monopoly control, whereas his colleagues in the Cabinet, as the Leader of the Opposition said, wholeheartedly support monopoly

control as may be seen from various Bills that have been brought forward. The Minister for Transport knows that quite well.

The Transport portfolio is one of the most difficult portfolios in Australia, or in any part of the world. More men have met their Waterloo in it than in any other portfolio; I am sure the Minister will agree with that. Except for the Railway portfolio the other most dangerous portfolio would be for the Army, because we all know what happened to Frank Forde during the war years.

We in the Opposition are quite happy to see the wrangling that is taking place in the Government ranks, because it brings us closer to being the Government. As a matter of fact, I can feel it in my bones right now that we will be moving over there. When we open "The Courier-Mail" we will see that it is reported that members of the Government have voted against this Bill. When the bells ring on the division tonight I will be interested to see who is missing, and who is pleading sickness and has not the courage to be here and vote according to his beliefs. There will be many members of the Government tonight who will have political sickness because they have not the courage to vote on this Bill, as they are directly opposed to it.

If hon. members read the report of the symposium of transport in Australia today and study it very carefully they will find that the cheapest form of long distance transport is sea, next is rail, then road, then air. I believe a co-ordinated service on a State basis is long overdue. Most likely the Minister for Transport will laugh at that, too, because he has other ideas, but it is imperative that we preserve the railways for times of need, such as war. We certainly cannot afford to neglect them. I suggest that we should institute a co-ordinated service in this State with a minimum of delay. It is in our own interests. If the railways are to survive the Bill should be withdrawn, for it will mean the dismissal of hundreds of railway employees in Queensland. I am sure the Minister knows its implications for railwaymen. When he took office he said he would make the railways pay. He has made many statements about the railways, including one published in "The Courier-Mail" of 7 February, 1959, in which he spoke of a £15,000,000 plan for a five-year project to rehabilitate the railways. I like the five-year projects of this Government! They remind me of the Minister for Labour and Industry, or Marco Polo, as we know him.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is repeating statements that have been made previously.

Mr. THACKERAY: I bow to your ruling, Mr. Taylor, but I was not aware that this statement was made earlier. Anyhow, I am just bringing this in about the five-year plan,

like the five-year plans of the Minister for Labour and Industry—and I do not think any other hon. member has said that yet.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister for Labour and Industry has no association with the Bill.

Mr. THACKERAY: No, but I am just tying it up on the five-year plan. The Minister for Transport seems to be keen on five-year plans, too. But they all forget to put these plans into operation. They all go overseas to get their five-year plans. Although the Minister for Transport has not been overseas, he was down enjoying the Melbourne Cup.

Mr. Chalk: You will lose those hands if you keep waving them about.

Mr. THACKERAY: That's quite all right. My hands are free and I like to keep them free. I want my hands free all the time to cope with the "birds" over there.

Although the Minister expressed his intention to bring in a five-year plan, he knows that he has no plan to bring in. He talks about what he intends to do for railwaymen and how he will look after them. How about the railwaymen who have been away from home for three or four years? What about retrenchments? What about starving stock? What about every other thing that the railways work on?

Mr. Chalk: What about them?

Mr. THACKERAY: Do you honestly think the road transport operators will look after those people in time of distress. Of course not! What about these great statements of yours when you were the most caustic critic of the Leader of the Opposition? What about your brilliant promise that you were going to make the Queensland railways pay? You are bogged down so far that you do not know where to go.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I assure the hon. member that if he is addressing the Chair, the Chair does know where to go.

Mr. THACKERAY: All I can say, Mr. Taylor, is that I am having a rough time here tonight.

The Minister for Transport does not know where he is going. If he thinks the Bill is the cure-all of Queensland's transport problems, he is entirely wrong, and he should know it. It will result in wholesale sackings of railwaymen and it will give the road-transport operators in Queensland an "open go." He will not be able to police the Bill in its entirety and he knows it. Where does he intend to go from there? I will guarantee that within 12 months this measure will be repealed. He will then have another brain-wave and bring in another measure. He will probably go to South Australia and have a talk with the gerrymanderer there—the Premier of that State—and see what transport scheme he has in operation.

The Minister must either withdraw the Bill or appoint a royal commission into transport in Queensland. He cannot have it both ways; he must do one thing or the other. The people of Queensland are fed up with this present crisis, and the allegations that have been mentioned in the Chamber today, and the strong case put forward by the Opposition, call for a royal commission. I believe that the Premier and the Minister for Transport should appoint a royal commission.

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) (9.1 p.m.): I find it very embarrassing to speak on the matter under consideration, because I hate dealing with subjects such as those that have been raised today. However, I think there is an obligation on me to deal with the document and the report that have been tabled for the information of hon. members, which I have been reliably informed have been in the hands of the Government for some time. They have had adequate time to consider carefully the serious allegations contained in those documents and the extraordinary charges that have been made, and one would expect that, if they had one atom of defence, competent speakers on the Government benches would have been ready to rise to their feet to defend the Government and leading Cabinet Ministers against some of the gravest charges that have been made against any Government in this country.

Mr. Chalk: Do you believe the document?

Mr. BENNETT: In answer to the Minister's question, Mr. Taylor, as a legal man, I would have to apply my mind judicially and judge the documents according to the way in which they are received and in the light of the demeanour of those who are charged, and the conduct and circumstances of the witnesses. If one applied a judicial mind to the evidence presented here today, I would say, as a legal man, that by their petrified silence, by their acquiescence, and by their failure to deny those grave accusations, many of them must contain the truth.

One would expect to find that the Government had a clean record in their short term of office since the last election. But what do we find? In this short period, extraordinary challenges have been issued to them by the hon. member for Fassifern, a former Cabinet Minister—serious charges and challenges that have not been withdrawn and that have been left undenied by the Government. We have seen the questionable practice of this Government in connection with Crown land, a subject on which allegations have been made not only by me but also by the former Minister, who, I am sure, entirely agrees with my contentions. Now we have perhaps the gravest charge of all relating to the scandalous operation of the Transport Department by the present coalition Nicklin-Morris Government.

The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt says that no prima facie case has been made out. We are not dealing with matters that come

within the jurisdiction of the Court of Petty Sessions, the lowest jurisdiction in the State. We are dealing with a damning indictment that comes within the domain of the criminal court of the Supreme Court of Queensland. You do not deal with prima facie cases in that arena. If a case is proved beyond reasonable doubt you are convicted. It is not a question of whether a prima facie case is made out, it is a serious and damning indictment that must be answered by the Government.

I do not need to repeat what the Premier, when Leader of the Opposition, said about allegations that were made against the then Government.

Mr. Sullivan: Just repeat what everybody else said.

Mr. BENNETT: I know by their skulking silence that hon. members opposite know my allegations are true. If they have any courage they will get to their feet and I will answer any case they like to make.

I understand that on 7 November, 1958, there were many grave allegations that I know the Minister and his Cabinet are not game to answer. I am instructed that on 7 November, 1958, Messrs. Hart, Connolly and Hiley tore strips off the Minister, and at that party meeting he was told that if he did not clean up the transport mess quick and smart someone else would have to do it for him. I am also instructed according to the reading of this report and the document tabled—

Mr. Knox: Are these your instructions?

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. member would not appreciate what I am saying. He makes so many inane remarks. I realise, of course, that the hon. member for Nundah is bound by his party's decisions. He has been told that he has to sit in silence. Mr. Anderson's name is mentioned frequently in the report. He has played a prominent part in the transport activities of the Government, and according to the report he is receiving a handsome return for the part he is playing in his Government's activities. One would think that, as a self-respecting member of the Chamber, Mr. Anderson would get up and argue that the allegations, at least so far as they apply to him, should be thoroughly investigated. If he does that he will have my wholehearted respect and admiration, because I think that that is his bounden obligation.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. BENNETT: I know that the hon. member for Wavell does not want any investigation because he is too busily occupied with the Morris-Dewar-Windsor business partnership throughout the State. He does not want any investigation. I think Mr. Anderson would readily agree that since the Transport Ministry has been under the leadership of Mr. Chalk his transport

business operations have made astronomical progress. I think he would readily welcome the opportunity of proving that that progress was made in healthy, open competition rather than as a result of getting preferential treatment from a fellow member of the Liberal Party. It has been claimed—I have heard it claimed in some circles—that because of the peregrinations of the Transport Act and the protection that Mr. Anderson has got—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! As a new member, probably the hon. member for South Brisbane does not realise that the responsibility of each member when speaking of another member is to address him by his title and not by his name.

Mr. BENNETT: Dealing with the commission of inquiry, it has been suggested that the Minister is prepared to pay £100,000 for an inquiry into the Railway Department and no doubt one would welcome it, particularly to improve the operations of the Railway Department following the inefficiency into which it has sunk over the last few years. But I believe he intends to employ American agents whose own railway system in America is running at a huge deficit.

Mr. Chalk: You disagree with what your Leader said.

Mr. Lloyd: Our Leader said exactly that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BENNETT: If the Minister is prepared to pay £100,000 for an investigation into one avenue of his Transport Department, surely he would welcome an independent investigation into the other avenues of his department which would show that such is clouded over with an unhealthy atmosphere that is responsible for doubts and suspicions not only on the part of many members of this Parliament but by a large number of the public itself.

Mr. Walsh: That would not cost even £2,000.

Mr. BENNETT: That would not cost £2,000. There has been talk of my fees. I would be happy to represent the Minister at such an inquiry and I can assure him that there would be justice and fair play for him. He may be comforted by that thought.

The Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation and others of the Government Parties have recently claimed that we like to contain these debates in what they describe as a "coward's castle." I do not think they do themselves credit; all they do by such cheap and nasty references is tarnish the name and reputation of Parliament. We in the Labour Opposition at least on three occasions—and I personally on many more than three occasions—have invited this Government to remove the controversy from what they term the confines of "coward's castle" into any other forum or domain they choose, but they have always

run away cravenly from the invitation. It has been the Government who, on all occasions by their numerical strength and weight of numbers, have contained these arguments and controversies within the confines of Parliament, where there is defamatory privilege.

Here is one further opportunity we give them to remove these allegations and charges to another judicial, fair and impartial tribunal and once more it is the Government and the Cabinet who are insisting that the debate be confined within what they choose to term a "coward's castle." It is they who like to sit in the "coward's castle." We challenge them to take this debate outside the "coward's castle," as they refer to it, but curiously they are never prepared to.

Mr. Dewar: Will you repeat the Morris charge outside?

Mr. BENNETT: I will repeat any charge that you care to ask.

Mr. Dewar: Morris asked you last week to repeat it outside.

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. member refers to him as "Morris." He is the Honourable the Minister as far as I am concerned. He asked me last week to repeat the charges outside Parliament and I said, "Yes, in any forum you choose," but he went to Honolulu; he did not stay here.

Regarding the co-ordinated contract, the hon. member for Toowoomba East told Mr. Bolton that a party meeting had decided that when tenders were received they would first be considered by Cabinet and then by the party.

Mr. Chalk: That is in the dossier, too, is it?

Mr. BENNETT: That is a very serious allegation.

Mr. Walsh: Apparently the Government issued a writ on the dossier, anyhow.

Mr. BENNETT: That is a charge and claim that the acceptance of contracts depends not on the merits of the contracts but on party-political preference, and that the party decides who should get contracts—for instance, transport contracts. No doubt the judgment of the party is influenced by the names of those interested in the contracts and by the amount of money they contribute to the party's campaign funds.

Mr. Chalk: You know that is unfair and untrue.

Mr. BENNETT: I do not. I can only judge you by the conduct of your party.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! When using the word "you", the hon. member must always remember that he is addressing the Chairman.

Mr. BENNETT: I am sorry. I was using the word in an impersonal way, meaning the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must address another hon. member by his correct title.

Mr. BENNETT: The report contains allegations of partisanship, bias, graft and corruption. No self-respecting Government can survive repeated allegations of dishonest administration.

I am merely trying to evaluate the evidence put before us; Government members are the defendants, so they cannot act in a judicial capacity. If the Government do not agree to an investigation of the allegations, I am forced to the conclusion that there must be some truth in them. The Government cannot retain the respect and confidence of the people while serious allegations of this nature are left unanswered.

Many scandalous aspects of the Minister's administration have been referred to. It is claimed that the Minister said the original Gair Government contract with Storey stank; that it was red hot; that it was worse than "Dim Sim" petrol; that it had taken him a fortnight to get the files from his own officers; that it would be cancelled because public tenders were not called. The Minister must agree that extraordinary allegations about the administration of the Transport Department have been made over the years. Some Opposition members were members of the Labour Government, and I invite the Minister to make the terms of reference of the inquiry or royal commission wide enough to cover the administration of the Transport Department during the last decade.

Then there is the allegation that Elliott stated that Chalk had written to Leybourne, guaranteeing him against loss—and other letters—in flat opposition to the terms of the contract.

Is the Minister prepared to let that allegation go unanswered? It is no use his getting up and saying that the document is all eye-wash. We have observed the conduct of the Government in the past when allegations have been made against them. We know that the Minister and the Cabinet have had a copy of the report for some time. But they failed to ventilate the allegations until they were "skull-dragged" out of them by the Leader of the Opposition when he tabled the document.

Mr. Chalk: He did not table it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BENNETT: Portion of the report says—

"Chalk said he had a map on which Norm had marked out existing routes and the incursions of border-hoppers. Said that Leybourne had to be considered and it might not be easy to find a little run for him as had been suggested. There was Roma, there was South Burnett, Kingaroy and so on, there was Miles, Wandoan, Taroom, there was—and perhaps Bill would be interested in this, perhaps

Caloundra. I said that Mooloolaba, Maroochydore, and so on all could come in this circuit."

Mr. Chalk: Who is "I"?

Mr. BENNETT: The Minister knows who "I" is. He does not need to ask me that ridiculous question. I readily concede that the Minister knows much more about this than I do, and I know that there is more about it that he wishes to hide than I do. The statement continues—

"I don't know whether he was hinting that Leybourne could get Caloundra or whether Cobb & Co. could be interested. On the whole it was the usual dull and boring and discursive interview with nothing very definite about it. The three carriers were to confer again and see him on Thursday next. He had, in my opinion, had plenty of conferences with Anderson (J.C.) . . ."

We know who Anderson J.C. is, too. The statement continues—

". . . and was and is trying to give him extra runs and immunity from prosecution."

Mr. Chalk: Who wrote that?

Mr. BENNETT: We know who wrote it.

Mr. Chalk: You do not know who wrote it.

Mr. BENNETT: We all know.

Mr. Chalk: All right, name who it was.

Mr. BENNETT: It was the fellow Bolton about whom you know so much. The Minister is trying to treat these grave allegations very facetiously. If he had the welfare of Parliament and the reputation of his Government and Cabinet at heart, he would at least be dealing with these allegations in a serious vein.

Then we have the unwholesome aspect. The report refers to the prosecution against Western Transport, or Anderson's Transport; the arrangement of prosecutions against Anderson's so that everything is treated as a first offence. Even Queen's Counsel before the Full Court made extraordinary allegations about an undertaking that was given to Mr. Anderson by the Minister for Transport. The serious allegation was such that, in my opinion, had it been untrue, as a Minister I would have endeavoured to have counsel intervene on my behalf to point out that I had not given the undertaking.

Then, in paragraph 31, there is this claim—

"His knowledge of corruption in the Transport Police and his inaction in regard thereto."

And in paragraph 32 we find this—

"The responsibility for deficits of millions because of his protection of Andersons."

I could not conceive of a more damning indictment than the indelible charge that has been levelled against the conduct of the

Minister in the administration of his department. Surely he is not going to resort to the privilege of Parliament and the strength of the Government to wriggle his way out of the accusations that have been made.

Mr. Chalk: There is another place where it can be remedied.

Mr. BENNETT: The Minister has not taken the action.

The Minister for Transport is not the only one involved in the extraordinary allegations. Very serious allegations have been made against the Premier's conduct and the part he has played. I should imagine that a man in his position, independent of what the Minister for Transport thought, would want to protect his reputation against these many allegations. I think there are at least 17.

(Time expired.)

Mr. GRAHAM (Mackay) (9.25 p.m.): The irresponsible way in which the Government have approached the debate on this Bill calls for comment. We have seen Government members endeavouring to conceal the real issue by trying to belittle Opposition attacks on the legislation. The issue that has been raised by the Bolton report is one that the Premier, the Minister for Transport, or any other individual member of the Government cannot run away from, try though he may. The Government may evade their responsibilities for a while but eventually time will tell and, irrespective of who the Government are, they will have to answer for it. It is pure nonsense for them to adopt the attitude of the three wise monkeys who could hear no evil, see no evil, or, as in the case of this debate, speak no evil. Only one Government member has risen to speak, and that has been the Minister. It was somewhat unfair of the Government to leave him to carry the burden alone. We know, of course, that the other Government members are acting under instructions. Perhaps it is a case of least said, soonest mended. Not one of the Minister's colleagues has been prepared to stand up and support him, either on the charges made by Mr. Bolton or on the Bill. The Government have shown a very grave lack of a sense of responsibility.

What prompted them to introduce the Bill? Over the last year or so, the transport position in Queensland has become contentious and the Government have been forced—and it is their obligation and responsibility—to amend the transport legislation to implement the Act in its proper perspective.

Can we see in the Bill the real intention of the Government? Is it an honest endeavour by them to control road users or is it a deliberate attempt to attack those transport companies that have fallen foul of them by taking advantage of Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution? From the Minister's own statement when introducing the Bill, it is obvious that the real

intention is to attack those transport companies that have by various means been able, in some instances, to flout the law and, in other instances, to take advantage of the Act and build up a strong transport operation in the State. The Minister admits that, through what has transpired in the last three or four years, some of the transport companies have grown almost into a monopoly. The Bill is not a sincere attempt to amend the Act to have sound control of transport but an attack on those who have fallen foul of the Government. If there is no truth in the Bolton report—if, as members of the Government would have use believe, none of the charges can be substantiated—and if what Mr. Bolton has said is a pack of half-truths and untruths, why has it been necessary for the Government to act to protect its Commissioner for Transport? Why has it been necessary for the Crown Solicitor, at the direction of the Premier, to take out this writ to protect the Commissioner for Transport instead of allowing the Commissioner to take action on his own behalf? That shows how shallow the Government's attitude is.

Over the years we have seen a deterioration in railway finances, and the Government are very concerned about what is happening in the Railway Department. I ask, as other hon. members have asked, "What have this Government done for railway administration during their four years in office?", and I think I have a right to expect an answer. No Government have done more to appease their own supporters by giving them privileges that have been detrimental to railway finances. Three years ago they increased from 15 to 75 miles the limit within which transport licences were required for the transport of goods. The Minister has never told us what the repercussions of that decision were. I think hon. members who are farmers will agree with me when I say that that decision cost the Railway Department hundreds of thousands of pounds. In my own electorate, for example, most of the farmers who had motor vehicles were able to take advantage of the increase, and that immediately took many thousands of pounds in revenue from the Railway Department.

Mr. Sullivan: It did not happen in my area.

Mr. GRAHAM: The hon. member's area would probably be the only one in Queensland in which it did not happen. If there has been a deterioration in railway finances in Queensland, this Government have to accept some responsibility for the poor administration of the Railway Department. I know that serious inroads have been made into railway finances by the growth of other forms of transport. It would be difficult—in fact, impossible—for any Government to stop the growth of air transport and road transport. As other hon. members have said—and I agree with them—unless the Government control all forms of transport,

any one of them can get out of hand. That is what has happened in Queensland. Because of a lack of control by the present Government, the road-transport system has got out of hand, and this has had a very serious effect on railway finances. At the eleventh hour the Government are endeavouring to correct anomalies that have grown up by increasing freights and fares that should have been increased three years ago. The Government knew then that the time would come when freights and fares would have to be increased, but they put off the evil day because an election was pending and any increase might have had serious repercussions on the result. As soon as the election was over, despite the fact that railway finances had drifted seriously since 1957, they increased freights and fares, and now they are endeavouring to rectify some anomalies that have occurred under the present Transport Act. This amending legislation is to enable the Government to "have a crack" at some of the companies who have been responsible for flouting the law, as has been shown in the documents that have been tabled.

Mr. Windsor: What about when the wool strike was on?

Mr. GRAHAM: That was only one incident, and the Government are trying to make great capital out of it.

In introducing this legislation, the Minister admitted that they were unable to rectify the anomalies in railway administration, and in today's paper we see that the Government are prepared to spend £100,000 in bringing American consultants here in an endeavour to rectify those anomalies. The answer can be found within Queensland itself. There are ways and means of rectifying the position in the Railway Department, but this Bill will not provide them. As other hon. members on this side have said, the granting of permits without restriction to road operators will have serious repercussions on the Railway Department. The department has served Queensland well, and under capable management it will continue to serve it well. Some areas of Queensland cannot possibly be serviced by any other form of transport. If the Government are prepared to sacrifice the Railway Department to satisfy the needs of a few road hauliers it will be to their own detriment, because eventually events must catch up with them. They cannot run away all the time; they cannot bury their heads in the sand, thinking that the storm will blow over. The storm is only developing. The Premier and the Minister for Transport know that, and I think some other hon. members on the Government side know it, despite their frivolous, irresponsible attitude today. Time alone will prove the truth behind the Opposition's attack on the Bill.

Until the accusations contained in the dossier are answered, and until the public mind can be satisfied about what is contained in it, the Government will remain

indicted. Let the Government do the right thing for once and accept the suggestion put forward by the Opposition. Let a board of inquiry be set up, first of all to clarify the charges that have been made by Mr. Bolton, and secondly to have an investigation into the road and rail transport systems of Queensland—air transport, too, if necessary—so that we can provide in the future a co-ordinated service for the benefit of both the people and the Government.

Mr. DUFFICY (Warrego) (9.39 p.m.): At this late stage in the debate it would be very difficult for me to avoid what you, Mr. Taylor, previously referred to as tedious repetition. That charge could not be made against hon. members opposite because, other than the Minister, not one hon. member on that side has risen to answer the charges from this side of the Chamber. We have carried the debate from approximately 12.30 p.m. until 9.40 p.m. and, although we may have been guilty of some tedious repetition, that charge certainly cannot be laid against hon. members opposite, who have not said anything at all either in defence of their Minister or in refutation of the charges made from this side and by a reputable citizen of the State in the person of Mr. Bolton. Let me say also that I think that the attitude adopted by the Government in this debate reflects very little credit on them.

Mr. Hanlon: They made such a show of themselves in the Muller case that they have been told not to talk.

Mr. DUFFICY: Obviously, if they did talk they would only get themselves further into the mire. It is important to remember that the hon. member for Roma said only yesterday that it was very strange that my colleague, the hon. member for Barcoo, and I did not enter into the debate on the Department of Public Lands Estimates. He was critical of the hon. member for Barcoo and me because we did not. But surely there would be some greater obligation on the hon. member for Roma, and other members opposite, to enter into this debate, particularly as their names have been mentioned on numerous occasions in very serious charges.

Mr. Ewan: No charges have been made against me.

Mr. DUFFICY: I have not been the subject of any charges in connection with land matters, neither has anybody else on this side of the Chamber. Consequently, there would not be any great obligation on me, or on any other member on this side, to enter into that debate. But I suggest that there is an obligation on Government members to refute the charges that have been made in this debate. If they are not prepared to do that, the only reasonable inference to be drawn from their silence is that they are depending on their numbers, irrespective of the rights or wrongs of the case. They know that they have the numbers and they are not prepared, nor have they the intestinal fortitude, to enter into the debate. They sit back smugly and shrug the

whole thing off simply because they realise that they have the numbers when the division bells ring to defeat the very excellent arguments that have been put up by members of the Opposition.

I suggest that that might be sufficient in this Chamber where only numbers count—not logic, not facts, not the substantial merits of the case, but numbers purely and simply. However, I suggest that that will not be sufficient for the people of Queensland. I say in all seriousness that, during the time I have been associated with the political life of this country—a period of approximately 30 years—I have never known any Government in such a short period—three or four years—to have been charged on the floor of Parliament with corrupt and improper practices, not only by hon. members on this side of the Chamber but also by their own friends.

Mr. Roberts: Who is making the charges? You are making the charges.

Mr. DUFFICY: For the information of the hon. gentleman, the charges of corrupt practices were made by the former Minister for Public Lands, and on this occasion they have been made by a reputable citizen of Queensland.

Mr. Roberts: Who said so?

Mr. DUFFICY: Mr. Bolton said so.

Mr. Roberts: We are taking your word.

Mr. DUFFICY: No, it is the word of a reputable citizen of this State. If the charges are not important or are frivolous, why did Cabinet instruct the Crown Solicitor to take action on behalf of the Commissioner for Transport?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dewar): Order! That matter is sub judice and may not be discussed.

Mr. DUFFICY: At least I have said sufficient to indicate that the Government have considered the charges and have deemed them to be sufficiently important to instruct one of their officers to take action on them. But when similar charges are made against the Minister for Transport, the Premier and Cabinet Ministers, the Government shrug them off; they say they are frivolous and stupid. They may be able to support their argument that they are frivolous by weight of numbers in this Chamber, but weight of numbers here is not sufficient to win an argument with the people of Queensland. The Government are not entitled to shrug off the charges, and the Government admit that by the action they have taken in connection with those charges. I suggest that the Minister for Transport should deal with that point in his reply. If he can answer it, I will admit that he can get round corners with more agility than he has shown in the past.

I do not want to labour the matter. I said at the beginning of my speech that it was rather difficult not to engage in repetition,

more particularly when Government members have not attempted to answer any of our questions or put up arguments that can be debated.

Mr. Roberts: We have nothing to answer.

Mr. DUFFICY: Try to convince the people of Queensland that there is nothing to answer.

I am not going to discuss the principles of the Bill for the very obvious reason that I think it should be rejected. I have not a copy of it and do not know what it contains, but I have no intention of making a lengthy speech or discussing the Minister's outline of the Bill. I think it should be rejected in its entirety. I say that for two obvious reasons. I am going to make these two points and conclude my speech because I believe the whole kernel of this debate is bound up in them.

Firstly, in this morning's paper we read of a proposal to employ certain American experts to investigate the whole of Queensland's railway problems. The cost of that investigation will be £100,000 which, after all, is a fairly large sum of money. If, as we on this side of the Chamber believe, the investigation is to be conducted at that cost, surely it is reasonable to suggest that any transport legislation might be deferred until that report has been obtained. I am not prepared to believe—although perhaps it would be reasonable to believe—that a report that is going to cost £100,000 is going to be pigeon-holed, as was the Hytten report, which cost only about £1,000. I suggest that the Government might be at least genuine in their approach to this matter. When they are going to spend £100,000 on experts to get a clear picture and advice so that they may run the railways effectively—which they are obviously incapable of doing—it would be reasonable to defer any Transport Bill until such time as that report has been presented. When it is presented, I hope that it is not only the Government who have a chance to examine it, as was the case with the Hytten report. I hope that Parliament has an opportunity of viewing, considering, and inspecting that report. That is my first reason for believing that the Bill should be withdrawn.

My second reason concerns road transport, which is a very important aspect and about which some very serious allegations have been made. Even if the Minister and the Government are prepared to shrug it off so far as they are concerned, they should not be prepared to shrug it off so far as some of their employees are concerned. Certain statements have been made by a reputable person—not some man of straw or some insignificant individual, but a reputable person—who has said to the Leader of the Opposition, before witnesses, "If the statements that I have made are incorrect I should be in gaol. If the statements that I have made are correct certain other people should be in gaol." Can anything be more

definite than that? He gave my Leader complete authority to say that in this Parliament. It is amazing to me if the Government are prepared to shrug that off. I will direct your mind back, Mr. Dewar, to the time the Labour Government instituted a royal commission on the then Minister for Public Lands. Remember that no definite statements were made by any reputable person then. The only publication of those allegations was in newspapers, without anything very definite about them. There were no definite statements from a reputable person who said that if they were not correct he should be in gaol and that if they were somebody else should be—nothing as definite as that at all, more or less rumours published in the Press at the time. And hon. members opposite who were then in Opposition screamed to high heaven that there should be a royal commission. Of course there should have been because the allegations were made against a Minister of the Crown and the reflections were cast on him and Parliament could not afford to have any reflections of that sort cast on a Minister. So a royal commission was held on evidence very much less definite than that before the Committee tonight.

If the Government are not prepared to have a complete investigation by a royal commission into the allegations that have been made, the inevitable inference that I will draw, and that the people of Queensland will draw, is that they have something to hide and something to be afraid of.

Mr. ANDERSON (Toowoomba East) (9.56 p.m.): I wish to make a brief statement. We have heard a great deal today about the dossier published by Mr. Bolton, and my name is mentioned in it. I deny absolutely the statements quoted by hon. members opposite from that dossier referring to me. I say that they are completely untrue. That is all I wish to say about them at this time. However, I will consult my legal advisers about them. I invite those who have espoused Mr. Bolton's cause in the Chamber to repeat outside what they have said here.

Mr. Mann: Oh, don't come at that sort of thing with us! Why don't you jump in the lake? Why don't you just laugh at yourself?

Government Members interjected.

Mr. Mann: What is the matter with me? I have just as much say as you have.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Mann: I beg your pardon, Mr. Taylor. I was just replying to the hon. member for Toowoomba East. He is throwing challenges and coming the bush lawyer business with us.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I will have to ask the hon. member to retire from the Chamber if he continues to interrupt.

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Minister for Transport) (9.58 p.m.), in reply: First of all I think I should say that, having listened to the debate from the time I resumed my seat this morning until now, I believe that any mention of the Bill during the debate has been completely incidental. The whole of the time that has been devoted to the measure has been taken up with the dossier tabled by the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party.

Mr. Newton: That's not true.

Mr. CHALK: It is true that one or two hon. members made brief mention of the Bill, but it is equally true that they spent more of their time dealing with allegations contained in the dossier than they did referring to the measures before the Committee. I believe that members of the Government have therefore adopted the correct attitude in refraining from rising to reply, because no direct or real opposition or challenge to the Bill has been made by speakers opposite. No case has been made out for this Government to answer on the Bill, but an attempt has been made from when the Leader of the Opposition spoke this afternoon to make out a case for the Government to answer relating to the dossier. Because not all my colleagues have seen this dossier, they have, I believe, adopted the correct procedure in leaving it to me, as a Minister of the Crown and a person charged in that dossier, to make a reply.

Before referring further to the dossier, I shall reply to the points raised by members of the Opposition that had at least some bearing on the Bill.

I was disappointed by the approach of the Leader of the Opposition. Almost his opening remarks were about what he claimed to be a fact—that the hon. member for Toowoomba East had left a sick bed and come to Brisbane to vote for my election as a Minister of the Crown. I am not denying that Mr. Anderson came to Brisbane; how he voted, I do not know. But it ill becomes one who would like to be classed, I am sure, as a statesman to choose such a preface to his remarks on this important issue.

The hon. member then referred to a statement that appeared in this morning's Press regarding the engagement of an overseas firm of consultants to investigate certain aspects of the Railway Department. To quote his own words, he said it was "a very smart move." I want to tell the hon. member that it was not something conceived this morning. The first approaches to Ford, Bacon and Davis were made by me in a document dated 14 October, 1959, to which I shall refer later. This investigation into the Railway Department was not something that was thought up only for the purpose of hindering or stalling the Opposition, but was a matter of importance to the State.

We realised its importance, because we knew that it must work hand in hand with the implementation of this measure covering road transport.

The Leader of the Opposition then went on in an airy-fairy way to talk about the EBASCO report in New South Wales. I challenge him now to prove that the EBASCO report has not been advantageous to the New South Wales Railways.

Mr. Duggan: I will accept that challenge.

Mr. CHALK: He read from "The Sydney Morning Herald" a statement made immediately after the report was introduced, and he set out to prove by it that it had not been well received in the State of New South Wales. I say to him now that if he looks at the set-up in the New South Wales Railways he will admit that the implementation of the Ebasco policy under Mr. McClusker has done more than anything else in any State of Australia to put the New South Wales railways back into a position where it is claimed that within the next two years their revenue and expenditure will at least balance. I am pleased to know that New South Wales, even though a Labour State, has adopted a principle and has found a method whereby it can at least arrest the running sore of its railway activities. Consequently my Government are prepared to proceed along what might be termed somewhat similar lines to get the fullest, clearest and most complete investigation, not into one section of the railway, but, as was stated in the Press this morning, into all sections of railway administration from the top down, and also to include quadruplication and electrification. What could be fairer than that approach? Nothing at all was done by way of any snide approach to undermine the case that the Opposition would be likely to present to the Committee today.

The Leader of the Opposition made a great deal of reference to the fact that Mr. Penfold, an alderman of the Brisbane City Council, has taken over a certain passenger transport company. The hon. gentleman is one who has had dealings in shares in Queensland. After all, that is his right. He will know that there is nothing whatever to prevent Mr. Penfold from buying shares in that company. As he himself administered the Department of Transport for a number of years he knows that that type of approach is allowed, but he has brought this matter up today as some sort of an argument to bolster up his case.

Mr. Duggan interjected.

Mr. CHALK: I referred to the transport of goods by road. I am not going over all that ground again because I do not want to take up the time of the Chamber unnecessarily. I said this morning that we had looked at the position of passenger transport. We realise that in 99 per cent. of

cases the approach to passenger transport by those who have these runs today is a desire to give service. In order to protect that service some protection must also be given to those who control it.

I wish to draw particular attention to the next matter. In making reference to Messrs. Ford, Bacon and Davis the hon. gentleman referred to an American journal. He indicated that the profit on the overseas railways to which he referred was 2.6 per cent. on capital. If Ford, Bacon and Davis can give Queensland 2 per cent. profit on the capital investment of £100,000,000, that is all the State needs as far as I am concerned. The Leader of the Opposition decries the American set-up because they are making 2.6 per cent profit. Queensland urgently needs 2 per cent. profit on its railway investment at the present time. So I say to him now that if Ford, Bacon and Davis can achieve what is being achieved on the other side of the world, the quicker they get to work in this State the better.

The hon. member also said that he had only 25 minutes in which to speak. He knows as well as I do that he has 1½ hours on the second reading of the Bill. He also knows that he could possibly have got an extension of time.

Mr. Duggan: Where did you find that out?

Mr. CHALK: The point is that apparently hon. members did not think sufficiently well of his story to give him an extension of time. He also intended to mislead this Chamber in relation to the 3d. per ton-mile. If he had listened to my remarks this morning he would have heard me say that the basis on which the 3d. a ton-mile would be charged was on the total capacity of the load, but that in cases where special permits were issued for special commodities a reduction would be given. That is right, but I add that where a mixed load is hauled then the maximum rate will be 3d. a ton-mile. Consequently, all this misleading talk about wanting manifests and everything else is so much baloney.

He also referred to the fact that there had been amendments to the Roads (Contribution to Maintenance) Act because there was, according to him, agitation within my own electorate. I throw that back in his teeth. The agitation did not come from that area at all; it came from areas particularly associated with dairying, of which it cannot be claimed that the Lockyer electorate is principally one.

Then the hon. member referred to the number of employees engaged in the Transport Department. I do not deny that there has been an increase in the number of employees there but, if the hon. member will take time to read the report of the Transport Commissioner, which I made available to him this morning, he will see that the amount of work that is being carried out in the Transport Department is at least three times as great—in fact, more than

three times as great—as when he was Minister for Transport. Certain other licensing has also been transferred to the Transport Department and I say now, in defence of every employee in that department, that at the present time, even with their present numbers, they are considerably overworked. When questions are asked here and it is necessary to get certain information out hurriedly, I have to engage staff at overtime rates so that the normal staff and the daily work of issuing licences and of administering that department can carry on. Employees have to be brought back at night to do the work. Every member of that departmental staff is playing his or her part and is fully occupied in the position that he or she holds.

I want now to depart from the other points that the hon. member raised. I propose to deal with them at the conclusion of my remarks.

The hon. member for Carnarvon, who is the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party, did, at the outset—I pay him this compliment—make a reasonable approach to the Bill. He spent quite some time examining it and then he got on to this dossier to which I referred earlier. The one point that he made—and it has been made since by other hon. members—that I consider is the most important, was the suggestion that the whole of this legislation should be held up until the inquiry into the Railway Department is completed. At first thought that suggestion may be acceptable to some people, but I indicated in my Press statement that the investigation would run for at least 12 months. I wanted it to be an absolutely thorough investigation. What the hon. member has asked is that we allow this running sore of road transport to continue for at least another 12 months until we have received the railway report.

Mr. Hilton: It has been running for many years now.

Mr. CHALK: I know, and it has been running to the detriment of the State. If it is allowed to continue much longer, it will result not only in the financial strangulation of the State but also a complete wiping-out of the Railway Department in many districts of the State.

Mr. Duggan: That is what you are doing now.

Mr. CHALK: If the Leader of the Opposition had read my statement in this morning's newspaper, he would note that the firm of consultants will start its work at approximately the same time as the Bill is implemented, and the terms and conditions of reference of the inquiry provide that interim reports will be submitted as the inquiry proceeds. They will be considered in relation to the policy of the Department of Transport. It is far better to have these two approaches working hand in hand than to have one section of the transport services carrying on as it has been over the years. In 12 months we will get a better grip of this very important issue.

The hon. member for Carnarvon then spoke of wool going over the border. I agree that over the years a considerable quantity of wool has been taken over the border, and I am prepared to agree that even under the Bill it is probable that attempts will be made to take more wool over the border. But there is a remedy, and I think it will mean that more wool will be carried by the railways and that we will wipe out much of the back-loading to the far western portions of the State for which the department is receiving no road fees. The basis is that we will load train-lots of wool in western portions of Queensland on specific days at special, reduced rates. That can be done. The procedure in the past was to have a couple of trucks of wool loaded at Emerald, a couple more at Longreach, three or four at Winton, and so on. The job was carried out spasmodically.

Those who have been associated with railway operations, particularly those who have been locomotive drivers or firemen, would know that frequently wool is side-tracked because a train is overloaded or because it is necessary to reduce the train load at a deviation or grade. The Railway Department will go after the wool business, and on this basis will be able to haul the wool at a more competitive rate with which the border-hoppers could not possibly compete. The effect will be two-fold. It will mean a return to the department of much of the back-loading. That is one of the means we are going to employ, and I think it will benefit not only the producer but also the Railway Department and the State.

Let us look further at what the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party objected to so strenuously. He objected to what he termed the onus of proof on the consignor and consignee. I believe that during the time he was a Minister of the Cabinet—

Mr. Hilton interjected.

Mr. CHALK: This is the second occasion I have heard him say he knew nothing about it.

Mr. Hilton: You said yourself it was a new principle.

Mr. CHALK: No, I did not.

Mr. Hilton: Look at your proof.

Mr. CHALK: I have no need to.

The Leader of the Queensland Labour Party was a Minister of the Crown at the very time this provision was introduced, and on that occasion he voted for it. I throw it back to him and say that all we have done is to transfer the clause from the Bill designed by the Labour Party into this Bill.

Mr. Hilton: Why did you say today it was a new principle?

Mr. CHALK: If the hon. member reads my proof—

Mr. Hilton: Why did you say today it was a new principle?

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member cannot wriggle out that way. I said there was a new principle in relation to the amount of fees that would be collected where there was default. The hon. member said he knew nothing about it.

Mr. Hilton: I spoke the truth.

Mr. CHALK: If it was a new principle—and I do not admit that—he said he deplored such an approach to this issue. As a member of the Cabinet, he was one of those who inflicted it on the community as a whole, so I throw it back in his teeth and say that what we are doing in this Bill is nothing more than was carried out by his Government.

Let me return to the remarks of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for Kedron, who referred in his earlier remarks—and an interjection came from Mr. Hanlon a few moments ago on the same—

Mr. BURROWS: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. gentleman entitled to refer to another hon. member by name?

The CHAIRMAN: The Hon. Minister for Transport—

Mr. CHALK: I heard your earlier ruling, Mr. Taylor, and if I could have recalled the electorate that the hon. member represented, I certainly would have used his correct title. I now know the hon. member represents Baroona.

In an interjection, the hon. member for Baroona referred to the Hytten Report. This Government have nothing to hide concerning the Hytten Report. On several occasions in this Chamber I have answered questions about it and hon. members can check the records in "Hansard." I have said that we placed all departmental records for the Railway Department—and in many instances the Department of Transport—before Professor Hytten because we were anxious to try to find some way around a new freight-ing system for this State. Because Professor Hytten was perhaps not fully acquainted with the litigation that was being carried on in this State—and is still continuing—he unfortunately made references in his report to the litigation and to certain evidence which, if the report had been published, may not have been in the interests of either the State or the people against whom the litigation was taken. As a result, that report has been withheld from Parliament. However, it will be available for perusal by the new consultants, and I believe that from it they will be able to garner some benefit.

Mr. Duggan: Americans can read it, but Queensland members of Parliament cannot.

Mr. CHALK: I am certain the hon. member has enough intellectual ability to assess the position that I have been trying to explain to the Chamber. I give him credit for that.

I believe some benefit will be derived from it by the consultants, and that we will get some return.

Let us also examine the reference made by the hon. member for Kedron to what has become known to hon. members as the Bolton dossier. It would be very interesting if he could indicate when the dossier was written and if it has been kept day by day since 1957, also whether the same writer has a dossier on my predecessor, too, and on certain other persons. If this is the action of a man who has kept a dossier over all these years—I propose later to make reference to certain events that transpired and it would be very interesting to have his interpretation of earlier events.

Mr. Burrows: When thieves fall out, honest men come by their own.

Mr. CHALK: I do not accuse anybody of being a thief.

Mr. DUGGAN: I rise to a point of order. The Minister reflects on the integrity of members of this Parliament. Charges have been made and the Opposition have spoken on the need for a royal commission. I invite the Minister now, if he has any dossier on me, to feel perfectly at liberty to use it in any way that he thinks fit.

Mr. CHALK: I do not know whether you can see a point of order there, Mr. Taylor, but I made no claim of having a dossier on the hon. gentleman. He knows that some references are made to him in the dossier that has been circulated, and what I said was that, if this dossier is a day-by-day record with the interpretations of the person who wrote it, I am wondering whether there is also a dossier on him. That is all I have said.

Let us go a little further and examine the other charge made by the hon. member for Kedron about 11 prosecutions—quoting again from the dossier—against Western Transport or Western Interstate interests. He then tried to point out that nothing had been done by the Department of Transport about that firm. I want to say tonight, so that it can be given the publicity it deserves, that neither the Government nor the Transport Department has shown any mercy where it has been able to catch up with the parties concerned. The report I have here sets out that, up to 2nd November, 117 convictions have been recorded against the companies to which the reference was made.

Mr. Hanlon: Have they been charged as first offenders, or what?

Mr. CHALK: I ask every hon. member in the Chamber: Does that indicate on my part, or on the part of the Transport Department or of this Government, a show of feeling or of leniency to the particular company? The hon. member for Baroona asks if they have been first offences. He should have a talk with the hon. member for South Brisbane, who perhaps would be able to enlighten him

on the subject. They cannot be charged with a second offence until the hearing has been completed relating to the date of the first charge. Consequently, many of these prosecutions relate to periods or times prior to the date of the first successful prosecution when summonses were issued. Some second prosecutions are now being heard. This matter is one that I have been very concerned about. I am quite honest when I say that I did not understand it, either, and I sought information on why magistrates were not inflicting a second or, as I thought, a third penalty.

Mr. Hanlon: In view of these allegations, you do not think there is a possibility that these charges have been heard in a special order?

Mr. CHALK: I have a reasonably high regard for the hon. member for Baroona, and I think he might possibly think again on his remarks. That is a reflection on the administration and, more particularly, upon the Solicitor-General of this State.

Mr. Hanlon: These allegations have been made.

Mr. CHALK: They might have been made, but I am giving a correct statement of the position and presenting the facts of the case. These particular companies have been fined £1,648 4s. and have been called upon to pay the sum of £1,789 in fees. That is an indication that we have at least endeavoured to the best of our ability to launch successful prosecutions against them.

Another of the remarks of the hon. member for Kedron shows that either he did not study his brief or he was not supplied with correct information. He accused me of giving to one Rolfe of Crisp Transport the green light to operate over the border. I threw the charge back in his teeth at the time, because that authority was given in a letter dated 13 September, 1956, when his own Leader was Minister for Transport and in charge of the Department.

Mr. Duggan: Do you say there is anything irregular about that?

Mr. CHALK: No, I do not.

Mr. Duggan: Do you say I did anything irregular? I am talking about myself. You do not say that I did anything irregular?

Mr. Hiley: No.

Mr. CHALK: I am sorry that the Leader of the Opposition interjected. In fairness to him, I was about to say that I did not blame him for his approach to that matter. His Deputy Leader was the one who condemned him, not I. When I assumed office, I am prepared to admit that it was some months before I knew of the existence of this letter. Again in fairness to the then Minister, having made a search for it, I found that this particular letter also went to Cobb & Co., United Pacific Transport, R. W. Matthews & Sons, Browns Transport, Western

Transport Pty. Ltd., Carters Interstate Transport, Tranter's Transport and Tweed Fruit Exchange, and to persons by the name of Feros, Bycroft, Feros and Boddy and Morrice. An indication was given there that the hon. member, who was then Minister for Transport, was very concerned about what was going to happen to good licensees because of the inroads that were being made by certain persons who were pseudo operators. Consequently, I feel I must make that point here tonight to remove from this Government and myself the insinuation that was made by the Deputy Leader of the Australian Labour Party.

While I am referring to the hon. member for Kedron, I want to provide him with the information he sought in a question this morning. I told him at the time that I regretted that the information was not available because I realised that he wanted it to use in the speech he proposed to make. There was a reference to his desire to condemn Western Transport interests and an insinuation that this organisation was not paying anything like the fees that were being paid by Cobb & Co. or the interests with which they are associated.

The hon. member asked—

“What was the amount of Road Maintenance Contributions paid during the financial years 1957-1958, 1958-1959 and 1959-1960 by the following transport companies—(a) Western Transport, (b) Browns Transport, (c) Cobb & Coy. and (d) Crisps Transport?”

It will be remembered that the Act did not come into operation until 1 February, 1958, and returns for June have not to be presented until 14 July, so that actually in the first year's figures there are only four months. In the first year Western Transport paid £7,346, in the next year £36,543, and in 1959-1960 £43,005, which gives an indication of the growth of their operations. I am not going to discuss whether they are legal or otherwise, but on the returns submitted to my department they increased to £43,005.

In the first year Browns Transport paid £1,575, in the second year £5,025, and in the third year £4,429, so that they fell back by about £600.

In the first four months the Cobb & Co. group paid £8,637, in the second 12 months £31,968, and for the last 12 months £29,427. They went back while Western Transport increased their figures from £36,000 to £43,000.

Mr. Duggan: I am not trying to embarrass you, but is your implication that there have been some dishonest returns?

Mr. CHALK: No, there is no indication of that. But there has been a charge that Western Transport were not paying in comparison with the amounts being paid by Cobb & Co. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition sought that information this morning, and he would have got it then could I have got it ready for him in time.

Mr. Hanlon interjected.

Mr. CHALK: Let the hon. member be patient. Neither I nor the Government have anything to hide.

Crisps Transport paid £1,638 in the first four months, £6,986 in the second year, and £5,198 in the third year. They fell back £1,800. The three companies outside the Western Transport group that were nominated by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition have all gone back in their revenue, while the Western Transport group have gone up. It could be that the business has transferred from the three companies named to the Western Transport group, but if it has, in fairness to them, there is a clear indication that they have made payment because the other three have decreased and the amount paid by Western companies is much more than the deficit of the others.

The question sought only that information, but I have to make it quite plain that I believe it could be said, "Oh well, they have transferred their business from the normal Transport Facilities payments and gone over to Roads Contributions payments."

I therefore want to give the Chamber the same figures for the same years in relation to the State Transport Facilities Act because that is the other fee collected by the Transport Department. In 1957-1958 (four months) Western Transport paid £26,163; in 1958-1959 they paid £67,223, and in the year just concluded they paid £72,836. Again, under the State Transport Facilities Act this company paid more than it paid in the previous year.

Mr. Bennett: How many times have they been prosecuted?

Mr. CHALK: I think the Leader of the Opposition ought to remind his hon. member that if he is going to take part in this debate he should remain in this Chamber and listen to it. I do not want to have to go over all I have explained, and I believe my explanation has been accepted by the Leader of the Opposition in connection with a number of charges made.

Now let us go a little further. Browns Transport in the first year paid £4,312; for 1958-1959 they paid £15,141; and for 1959-1960, £15,066. So they were just slightly below what they paid in the previous year.

The Cobb group paid £27,281 in the first year, £76,571 in the second year, and they also increased their figure, to £83,272, in the third year.

Crisps Transport paid £856 in the first year, £3,019 in the second year, and £3,974 11s. 6d. in the third year. In fairness to the companies that were mentioned by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition this morning, with the exception of Browns Transport—and there is only a very slight difference there—each company continued to increase the fees it paid under the State Transport Facilities Act. Consequently, I

believe that that information should be included in the records of Parliament to give a denial to the allegation that has been made about the treatment of these companies by either the Transport Department or by me as Minister.

I now proceed to examine some of the remarks of the hon. member for Bundaberg. As usual, he made some reference to ramifications within the Transport Department. I am not going to debate tonight the issues that were debated here on a previous occasion, but then he made reference to the fact that no action was being taken by the Transport Department to try to eradicate some of the operations and/or try to find and prosecute many of the operators who were taking part in border-hopping activities. I have here the figures for fines inflicted in recent years under the State Transport Facilities Act. For the year 1959 the total amount of fines was £10,777.

Mr. Walsh: Chicken feed!

Mr. CHALK: I said this morning the hon. member was a chicken; so he can pick his chicken food up. The number of prosecutions finalised in 1959 was 432. In 1960 the fines rose from £10,777 to £19,506.

Mr. Walsh: How many prosecutions?

Mr. CHALK: He walks in where angels fear to tread. I have said that 432 prosecutions were conducted in the previous year. In the year just completed the number rose to 1,042, an increase of about two and a-half times. Is that not a fair answer to the allegation of the hon. member that we have not done all we could to ensure that the law is carried out?

Now let us consider the Roads (Contribution to Maintenance) Act. For the year 1959, 773 persons were fined £15,266. In 1960 the figure rose from 773 to 2,969 successful convictions, the fines being £41,305 compared with £15,266 the previous year. Yet we have this disciple of gloom accusing the Transport Department of not endeavouring to eradicate the problem. We have done all within our power to make certain that illegal operators are brought to book. But we have only a limited number of police and consequently cannot catch every offender. We know that some 500 trucks in Queensland are engaged in pseudo operations. A large number of officers would be required to watch over every one of those trucks. Certain hon. members have said that these operators work 23 or 24 hours a day, straight driving, and two or three officers would be needed to follow through each complete transaction. Police officers would have to be employed for the number of hours each truck was in operation. I pay a tribute to certain of our police officers who have trailed trucks and have enabled successful convictions over the movement of loads between Brisbane and Charleville. Their work necessitated their being on the road for three days.

Mr. Walsh: How many summonses have been issued against Western Transport since March? You will not answer that question.

Mr. CHALK: I have not heard it.

Mr. Bennett: You are not game.

Mr. CHALK: Let me have it again.

Mr. Walsh: How many summonses have been issued against Western Transport since March?

Mr. CHALK: I am not a walking encyclopaedia. If the hon. member cares to direct the question to me in the morning, I will prepare and submit an answer. I could not be fairer than that, and I invite the hon. member to ask his question tomorrow morning.

Let us examine the remarks of the hon. member for Baroona. Firstly, he dealt with what he had read in the dossier about discussions I had with the dossier-writer and the statement that I had no stenographer at those discussions.

Later on I propose to deal with some of the discussions that took place with this gentleman; I almost said "honourable" gentleman. Let me say that it was at his request—I will give the basis of this statement later—that he came to my office. He said, "Now, we are just good pals; we are friends. What do you want a stenographer here for?" That is confirmed in the dossier. I said, "All right, we will talk over the matter and when we reach a decision we will call for a stenographer." I took this man at his face value. I believed that he had something to talk about concerning transport, and consequently I treated him as I would treat any other person who approached me and said, "Well, look, I just want to talk over a few matters." It is to be remembered this was not in 1960; it was in 1957. I am prepared to admit that I did not know then what I know about him today. There was nothing to hide, and when decisions were arrived at, a stenographer was brought in. I believe the hon. member for Baroona is man enough to accept that as an explanation.

Mr. Hanlon: It is your word against his.

Mr. CHALK: I quite appreciate that.

The hon. member spoke of political spleen on my part. I have never shown any political spleen towards this person. I know that during the previous State election campaign he was an ardent supporter of the Labour Party and the Leader of the Opposition. I know of some of his actions during the time of the split. I do not have to tell the hon. member for Bundaberg anything about that, because he was one of the people who spoke on the Toowoomba platform with Mr. Gair. He is one of the people who knew something of the attitude adopted by this man Bolton in that campaign.

Mr. Walsh: That was his right.

Mr. CHALK: I am not denying it. All I say is that there was no political spleen on my part.

Mr. Hanlon: On what grounds did you cancel his licence and then completely change your attitude? That is important.

Mr. CHALK: Surely the hon. member has had an opportunity to read "Hansard" to find the reason for the cancellation of this company's licences. I do not think I have to take up the time of this Committee to explain that. If it is the desire of the hon. member for Baroona to discuss the cancellation of those licences, then, speaking completely ad lib, I am quite prepared to answer the whole of those charges, because again, so far as the Transport Department is concerned, and so far as my then Deputy Commissioner is concerned—he was Acting Commissioner then and is now Commissioner—we took considered action. It was action taken on legal advice, and I believe it should have been taken then in an endeavour to protect this State from some of the ramifications that have since developed.

Mr. Hanlon: You altered your ground and came to a settlement afterwards.

Mr. CHALK: I have said before that I have quite some respect for the hon. member for Baroona, but if he reads the terms of settlement, and if he reads what has been said on this matter, it was not a question of my coming to some arrangement, or some shirt-tail agreement, with Bolton or anybody else. It was a decision that was arrived at in consultation with his legal advisers and mine. I was prepared to accept the advice of my legal advisers, and he was prepared to accept the advice of his. He was just as keen to get his plates back so that he could allegedly operate legally again. So there was no possibility of any political spleen on my part.

Let me now examine the remarks of the hon. member for Cook.

Mr. Bennett: Why didn't you issue a writ if the allegations about you were untrue?

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member for South Brisbane is not my legal adviser. Thank God for that!

Mr. Bennett: You would not be in the position you are in now if I were.

Mr. CHALK: I wanted the right to debate this point in the Chamber when I presented the Bill. Let him work that out for himself.

Mr. Bennett: You are not game.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member for Cook spoke with great gloom about what the Bill would do to the Railway Department. I say to him that I have more requests from the Mareeba area, which he now represents, for road permits than I have in relation to any other similar distance of railway line

in Queensland, and the hon. member in rising tonight and protesting against the Bill, is protesting against the very people he is supposed to represent in the Chamber. I ask him to take a cutting of his speech back and publish it in "The Cairns Post," because I know that many growers in that area have condemned the Railway Department for the service provided. Anyone who knows the locality knows only too well that the Kuranda Road has been the direct road approach to Mareeba since it was opened. In the olden days you had to go down round the Gillies Highway and road transport could not compete with the railways. Today, however, vegetables and fruit and other commodities can be delivered to the area in a couple of hours and, in the best interests of marketing, in the best interests of the merchants there, in the best interests even of the transport of beer from Cairns to Mareeba, we have requests from the area, and so we are opening the matter up so that we can give a fair and just transport policy to the very area the hon. member represents.

He also walked into the argument about the Mossman sugar mill and accused me of giving to the sugar interests the right to haul sugar from Mossman to Cairns. I do not deny it. Again, I followed the policy laid down by my predecessor, now Leader of the Opposition. While he was Minister he gave certain haulage permits on an exactly similar basis for certain mills in Mackay.

Mr. Walsh: That is not true. There is no railway line to Mossman.

Mr. CHALK: I say that we have given the Farleigh Co-operative Sugar Milling Company the right to haul from Farleigh to Mackay outer harbour at 3d. a ton-mile.

Mr. Graham: Racecourse and Pleystowe, too.

Mr. CHALK: I know. I did not say that I did not. I said the Leader of the Opposition gave it, too, and I have followed the pattern laid down by the hon. member for Bundaberg's Government—I believe he was allegedly heart and soul with the Australian Labour Party during that time. The hon. member for Bundaberg was the Treasurer. He was the person directly concerned as the Treasurer of the State, so he ought to advise his junior member, the hon. member for Cook, on the point he has raised.

Mr. Bennett: Do you know where Mossman is?

Mr. CHALK: I have been to Mossman; I do not know whether the hon. member has. During my time in North Queensland I visited every northern portion of the State, because it was my responsibility to visit those areas.

Let me next examine the remarks of the hon. member for Brisbane. He, too, adopted the gloomy attitude that the Bill would wipe out the Queensland railways overnight. I say

again that the Bill will not do that. It will bring about very keen competition between the Railway Department and certain haulier interests, and I believe that, by the implementation of the inquiry to which I made reference earlier, very soon there will be this competition that is essential in the interests of both the Railway Department and the road transport industry in Queensland.

The hon. member had quite a lot to say about the Bolton story, and he referred also to the matter involving Mrs. Leybourne that is referred to in the dossier. I know that reference is made in the dossier to the fact that the Premier was very keen to see that something was done for Mrs. Leybourne. I ask the Committee, and I also ask Mr. Bolton, "Who made the approach in this matter?" None other than Mr. Bolton! If we look at part of his dossier, we find the terms and conditions on which this monopolistic transport operator was prepared to allegedly do something for this woman whose husband died very suddenly. All Mr. Bolton wanted to do was get rid of this co-ordinated service to Toowoomba. Because of the death of her husband, Mrs. Leybourne became the administrator of that service, and, reading from Mr. Bolton's own notes, he had this to say when he saw the Commissioner and the Premier—

"I told him that I would prefer to see the co-ordinated cancelled."

If everyone was forced to pay £10 2s. 9d. freight to Toowoomba on second-class goods, he would be able to do what he wanted to. He wanted to remove the £5 17s. to Toowoomba so he would be able to charge the people of the city where he lives £10 2s. 9d.

That was the first point. Let us go further and examine in the dossier what he had to say—this is again in the discussion with the Premier—

"I told him I had tried to see Mrs. Jones."

Who is Mrs. Jones? She is also a very small haulier or carrier in the Buderim area. Bolton or his interests have a service to Gympie, but he is particularly interested in getting as far as Maryborough. He also wanted to get a grip on the Buderim service.

He said he would try to get a small run for Mrs. Leybourne, that he would be prepared to finance her into it, and in fact provide men to operate it for her. That was his kindly, friendly interest in Mrs. Leybourne, provided, of course, that the Transport Department would see that the co-ordinated service that she had to Toowoomba was cancelled! Again I ask hon. members, is that the attitude of a man who is prepared to do all this because he is sorry for a particular person? His only interest was £ s. d.—what he was to get out of it. He hoped to get £10 2s. 9d. freights. Was he concerned for the woman who had lost her husband? He was concerned firstly about getting her out and then putting her into some run where

she would be committed to him for the finance involved, and where she would be controlled by staff that he could provide allegedly to help her.

Mr. Bennett: What proof have you got of that?

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member should read the dossier. At page 154 it says—

“We would buy all issued shares in the Co-ordinated at face value, if our run were extended to Miles, Wandoan and Taroom. That would mean that we would be absorbing the loss of £7,000 to £8,000 accumulated on the Co-ordinated contract.”

In relation to this co-ordinated service, £12,000 was the amount of money that was mentioned. In other words, Leybourne put £12,000 in. It is true enough that over the years he lost something like £7,000. Here is this generous disciple who is prepared to give the woman, not £4,000, but the whole of the face value of the £1 shares if she will just slide out and if the Government will give him the right also to run to Miles, Wandoan and Taroom. That was proposal No. 1. He had a second proposal, which was as set out in the dossier:—

“I have taken out figures of the road-side section—Yandina to south of Gympie—of Northern Transport's Brisbane-Gympie line. Handed figures to Kropp. We would be prepared to sell this fine little section of the run—which would net the lady at least £4,000 per annum for a nominal sum of, say, £1.”

Again this is only to get her out of this co-ordinated service.

Mr. Hanlon: Were these matters ever discussed with him by the Premier and the Treasurer over a period of time?

Mr. CHALK: Not entirely in that manner.

Mr. Hanlon: He alleges they were.

Mr. CHALK: I shall deal with the rest of it.

Mr. Duggan: Would you indicate to the Committee whether the co-ordinated service to Toowoomba has been successful from a railway point of view?

Mr. CHALK: I would say it has not been successful from a railway point of view. I shall come back to the dossier, but, departing from it briefly, let me say that the co-ordinated service has not been a success because the very gentlemen who wrote the dossier did not keep to what I term the letter of the agreement that was entered into when he got his plates back. What was said when he got his plates back was that he would revert to rail freights. This is all in the document. In other words, he would charge the higher freights for those goods that could be carted cheaper by the co-ordinated service.

Mr. Duggan: Would you say he would be any different from any other haulier in that regard?

Mr. CHALK: I am not debating that. The hon. gentleman asked me about the position and I am endeavouring to give him the facts.

Mr. Hanlon interjected.

Mr. CHALK: I cannot answer two people at once. I believe all hon. members are interested in this. If they are not, they should be. The point of the matter is that he did not then keep to the letter of the agreement. What he has done is to haul to Toowoomba all those goods on which the freight is up to £5 17s. 0d. a ton. He has done that legally in accordance with his agreement. What has become of all the goods that were priced over £5 17s. 0d. a ton? That is the position and that is what has happened. Consequently, because we as a Government, and the Transport Department as the administrator, were not in a position to enforce the basis that would ensure that these goods did go at the increased price, the co-ordinated service has not been successful.

Mr. Hanlon: You did alter the terms of the co-ordinated service?

Mr. CHALK: I did. I endeavoured to assist the co-ordinated service, and I make no apology for that.

Mr. Bennett: The agreement must have been badly drafted if you could not enforce it.

Mr. CHALK: Our legal adviser again comes into the debate! That agreement was drafted by two of the most learned counsel in Brisbane—Mr. Gibbs and Mr. Bennett. Let me very quickly clarify the name Bennett. It was Mr. Arnold Bennett, Q.C.

I have now cleared the point that was raised by the Leader of the Opposition, so let me return to the second proposal recorded in the dossier so that the people of this State will know the sincerity of this individual who has written it. He said—

“I have taken out figures of the road-side section of Yandina south to Gympie of Northern Transport's Brisbane to Gympie run. I have handed them to Kropp. We would be prepared to sell this fine little section of the run which would net the lady £4,000 for a nominal sum of £1 if we were granted a compensating extension from Gympie. Perhaps we could think an extension to Maryborough would not be too much to ask.”

Again indicating the type of person—again indicating the Shylock who has been operating in this matter—if we would not give him a service to Maryborough, he would have been quite happy to get Gayndah or Eidsvold to compensate him—for what? For the benefit he was going to get if the co-ordinated service was removed.

That is an indication of the type of person who has been held up here today by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—I am exonerating the Leader at this stage—and by the hon. member for Brisbane. The hon. member also referred to something in the

dossier about a conference between Bolton's interests, Anderson's interests, and Brown's interests, and myself. No-one denies that. It was my responsibility as Minister to meet these people if they desired me to do so, and a proposal was discussed in an endeavour to overcome the problem.

The hon. member for Brisbane says it failed because Anderson would not agree. Would not any undertaking at which a proposition is put forward to all parties fail if one of them said that he would not be a party to it? I am not saying whether he believed he was getting enough out of the proposal or not; the point is, what condemnation is there of any Minister? What condemnation is there of any proposed agreement if one of the parties to it says, "I will have nothing more to do with it."? Naturally it would fail.

The hon. member for Hawthorne described this legislation as stupid. He said it would end the railways, close 50 branch lines, and create unnecessary unemployment. It is true that there are 50 branch lines in the State and that we are having a look at the financial returns from all of them. But is that not the responsibility of any Minister? I have seen reports that were prepared for the Commissioner and the Leader of the Opposition during the period he held this portfolio. I have studied the decline in the returns from many branch lines over years. The hon. member for Hawthorne in an airy-fairy way described the Bill as stupid. He has not studied the subject nor has he given thought to the implications of what he said. He said something about the Roma electorate and what will happen in Roma if licences or permits are granted for the carriage of goods to that area. In this respect again he showed a complete lack of knowledge or ignorance of the subject. At present no haulier is licensed to carry goods to Roma, but one of the largest operators on a pseudo or allegedly interstate basis takes the greatest percentage of goods to Roma. We are endeavouring to divert those goods to the railways. We have not got that freight now, as the hon. member for Roma knows, and, if we cannot divert it to the railways, then at least we must try to get some return from what I could call a legalised haulier. The hon. member for Roma has nothing to fear from the Bill and he knows it. It will enable him and many of those he represents to take advantage of road transport legally, that is, if they want to use road transport.

The hon. member for Hawthorne then referred to the cost of the proposed inquiry. He made much of the fact that it was going to cost £100,000. An increase of 1s. in the basic wage costs the Railway Department £75,000. The figure of £100,000 represents an increase of approximately 1s. 3d. or 1s. 4d. in the basic wage, having regard to the number of employees in the department. The inquiry, in my opinion, will result in a better service in future and a better basis of employment for railway employees. Why

should there be all this talk about £100,000 when it represents only a small increase in comparison with the basic wage?

Mr. Houston: But you would still fight a basic-wage increase tooth and nail.

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member displays his ignorance. I have never fought a basic-wage increase.

Mr. Houston: Your party has.

Mr. CHALK: Not at all.

Mr. Pizzey: Where?

Mr. Houston: In the Federal court.

Mr. CHALK: A basic wage increase in the Federal court? I think the hon. member had better have another look at the position.

Mr. Houston: The Federal basic wage.

Mr. CHALK: When a basic-wage increase has been granted, it has been passed on. I am trying to point out that the cost of the inquiry is small in relation to the number of employees in the department who will benefit from it.

After referring to the Bill as stupid, the hon. member for Hawthorne said that under it the rights of the Commissioner will be interfered with. I point out that there is no difference in the approach to the issuing of permits, either by the Commissioner or by police stations. What I said was that I hoped, by transferring some of the power or allowing the Commissioner to delegate some of the power, that we would be able to overcome some of the delays.

The hon. member for Port Curtis spoke on the Bill during the early stages of the debate. The Premier agrees with me that the hon. member made a closer reference to the Bill than anyone who spoke. When the Bill is printed I suggest to him that he make a careful study of it. He advocated standing down the Bill until next year. That is not the intention of the Government. We intend to get the Bill printed tonight so that hon. members may have a week or so to examine it fully, and so that the public will also have an opportunity of knowing what is in it. There has been far too much publicity to date by certain people who, in their own interests, have circulated propaganda that is not factual and not in accordance with the Bill.

Mr. Hilton: I will have great pleasure during the second-reading stage in proving that your statements about the onus of proof are incorrect.

Mr. CHALK: All right; I will be quite willing—

Mr. Hilton: You misled the House.

Mr. CHALK: I will be prepared to accept the hon. member's proof if he brings it forward. However, I still say it was in the previous legislation.

Mr. Walsh: In relation to goods from other States.

Mr. CHALK: All right. We will see.

Let us go a little further and examine what has been said by the hon. member for Cairns. He, too, pointed out that the introduction of this Bill would bring about the destruction of the railways. He said there were men in the department fit and able to investigate this instrumentality and referred to the services of the Commissioner for Railways. I am not decrying the services of the Commissioner, or the Secretary. I believe that they both carry out their duties sincerely and to the best of their ability. I have a particularly high regard for the services rendered by the Secretary. I am not being in any way disrespectful to the Commissioner, but I know the amount of work carried out by the secretary and the responsibility of the position he occupies, but in fairness to both those gentlemen I say they are not in a position to carry out the full and searching inquiry into this undertaking that we require. We have therefore procured the services of these consultants.

The hon. member for Nudgee also referred to the appointment of this overseas American firm, Ford, Bacon & Davis, and condemned this Government for their association with that company. I remarked at the time, "Alice in Wonderland", and I said it for this reason: the firm of Ford, Bacon & Davis were not brought to Australia by this Government; they were selected to come to Australia by the previous Labour Government, as the hon. member for Nudgee should know.

Mr. Hanlon: You have retained them ever since.

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member told us a few minutes ago we ought to get rid of them.

Mr. Duggan: They were not brought here for the same purpose. They were not engaged by the previous Government for the purpose that you have engaged them for.

Mr. CHALK: I am not denying the purpose we are engaging them for. I am pointing out that the Labour Party have condemned the employment of these overseas consultants yet, during their term of office as the Government, they selected them as the most capable people to carry out the investigations into the Mt. Isa railway project.

Mr. Duggan: Because we did not have enough local engineers to do the job.

Mr. CHALK: That is possibly the position at the present time.

We have a rather peculiar position confronting us on this matter. The hon. member for South Brisbane squeals in this Chamber, and as an alderman he has condemned the Australian people who were engaged by the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. Bennett: What do you think of Scott & Co.?

Mr. CHALK: I have never had any association with Scott & Co. I am always fair. I do not condemn until I have had an opportunity to assess. But here we have a complete reversal of form. We have firstly condemnation because the Brisbane City Council employs an Australian firm to do work for it, and then, when it suits the argument of the Opposition, they condemn us because we engage the very consultants that they themselves were responsible for bringing to Queensland.

I do not think the remarks of the hon. member for Townsville North were worthy of answering. He said one or two things about the Railway Department but he introduced nothing new, merely repeating what had been said previously.

The hon. member for Ipswich East said the Bill would sabotage the railways. It will not. It will make them, because it will make them keen to compete and it will ensure that they will at least be on a competitive basis.

Then he talked about empty vehicles. The Bill imposes no tax on vehicles running empty.

Finally he talked about the removal of a few trees from the site of the new weighbridge at Darra. We looked everywhere along that road for an available site and the reason for our selection was that it is not possible to bypass it. If we put the weighbridge anywhere else, I know what the hauliers would do. The fact that the hon. member made that one of his main arguments against the Bill indicates that he had very little on which to condemn it.

The hon. member for Belmont said the Bill would bring in a monopoly, but if he studies it carefully he will find that it wipes out many of the monopolies that have existed in the past.

The hon. member for Salisbury referred to what he termed "the sorry mess of transport" and spoke of a rail link to Inala. There are plans in existence for a rail link to Inala and I believe that it is desirable that a line be built there; but I am also mindful of the rapid development and improvement that is taking place in passenger transport by road and of the very high cost of the link. He spoke of £100,000, but how much line would that construct? What we are trying to do is to put the railways back into such a financial position that we will get money in return for the service given and that revenue will exceed working expenditure. If we can do that, I will be the first to join with him in considering spending money on constructing a line to Inala. Until we get the department back onto an even keel, it is impossible to spend that money.

The hon. member for Rockhampton North made his usual contribution to the debate—one that is not worthy of any comment by me.

Mr. Bennett: You can't answer it.

Mr. CHALK: There was nothing to answer. The hon. member was not here during the speech.

Mr. Bennett: I was here. Why don't you tell the truth? I was here all right, and I was here for the previous speech, too, as you know.

Mr. CHALK: I will concede that you were down on the Gold Coast. I hope you had a good time. Did you make a quid?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Bennett: Why do you tell such lies?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Bennett: I did not go down to the Melbourne Cup and waste a couple of days down there.

Mr. CHALK: The Leader of the Opposition said I had a free flight to Charleville in the Boeing yesterday, too. I think that remark ill-becomes him. He knows that yesterday was a great day in the history of Qantas. They invited some 90-odd V.I.P.'s to go on that flight, and I went as a representative of the Government.

Mr. Bennett: Who paid your way down to the Melbourne Cup?

Mr. CHALK: I paid my own way to the Melbourne Cup. I did not go there on departmental business. I went there because I believed I should have two or three days' break and because an invitation was extended to me to attend the Centenary Melbourne Cup. The hon. member now knows the full story if it is of any interest to him.

The hon. member for South Brisbane allegedly offered certain legal advice. I may say that he has completely prostituted his profession. He said something about a prima facie case. I say to the hon. member that a person does not have to go before the Supreme Court unless there is a prima facie case against him. Again this shows that the hon. member needs to brush up his law a little. I am not a legal man, but I do know certain things. Consequently, as I pointed out to him this morning when his question was completely off the beam, if he spent a little more time studying law instead of trying to get filth and garbage to tip in this Chamber he would be a lot better off.

Opposition Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. CHALK: Let us now examine some of the points raised by the hon. member. He referred to tenders called by this Government, but I do not know which particular item or department he is speaking about. When I took over as Minister for Transport, I laid it down that where applications were called for road-transport runs a number should be drawn from a hat. I believed

that was the fairest way. I heard condemnation, probably completely unfounded, of my predecessor.

Mr. Bennett: From whose hat were they to be drawn?

Mr. CHALK: Again my legal friend shows complete stupidity in his approach. We arranged to have them drawn under the supervision of the Audit Office. A little barrel was turned over, a stick was inserted, and a number was taken out. Nothing could be fairer than that.

Mr. Bennett: That is very efficient, isn't it? Don't deal with the merits of the case; just put a stick in!

Mr. CHALK: The point is that it was drawn in accordance with what is the normal practice of the Audit Office. If the hon. member has any basis for saying these things, they do not apply within the Transport Department.

The only other person who spoke was the hon. member for Warrego. In replying to the question raised by the Leader of the Opposition, I believe I can reply to the points made by the hon. member for Warrego. The charges that have been made in this particular dossier are made by one Mr. Bolton, who is associated with transport interests. Firstly, I want the Committee to know who this person is. Many hon. members have said that they have never met him. I know that many hon. members have read the dossier. No reference is made in the dossier to the person himself, but it is supposed to be a record made by him, or his brother, of conversations that have taken place between him and members of Cabinet from the Premier down, members of the Transport Department and members of the Police Force, a record made at places in many instances where nobody would ever believe or conceive that any person would be so low as to record what he alleges he said or someone else said. I say that it is unsafe for any citizen to speak to this person in any place. I offer that as advice to every hon. member. This person could not even remain straight at the Toowoomba Grammar School Old Boys' dinner on 22 October this year.

Mr. Bennett: Now you are getting personal.

Mr. CHALK: It is in the dossier.

Mr. Hanlon: It was not mentioned by us.

Mr. CHALK: I am not saying that it was mentioned by the hon. member. I am going to reply to the charges because the dossier has been tabled, and because many people's names have been branded. I reserve the right to give my reply and to deal with those portions of the dossier about which I think hon. members should know something. This person, who is an old boy of the Toowoomba Grammar School, went along to the old boys' dinner and then, if

we believe him, he went home and prepared notes of a conversation he had with another old boy, in which he named very prominent people in the Toowoomba Grammar School. He made reference to a particularly unfortunate happening to another old boy. What in the name of goodness had that to do with transport. He did it for one reason. He wanted to implicate the person to whom he spoke. There are other references to statements in the dossier that touch on the personal life of different people. He refers to a little girl and speaks of the immorality of one of his closest haulier friends with whom he has been associated over a long period of years. That is the type of person who has written that dossier.

Mr. Dewar: And the A.L.P. has been prattling the case.

Mr. Duggan: What did you say about the A.L.P.?

Mr. HANLON: I rise to a point of order on this matter because we made it very clear that because of the very factors the Minister is now seeking to peddle publicly in the Chamber, we deliberately did not table the full dossier but we endeavoured to present only the essential charges.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. HANLON: I am entitled to make this point because the hon. member for Wavell—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The right place to make a personal explanation is in the House tomorrow morning.

Mr. DUGGAN: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Wavell said that this unsavoury stuff is being patterned on the A.L.P. case.

Mr. Dewar: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. DUGGAN: That is completely untrue. It is a reflection on every member of the A.L.P. We deliberately refrained from introducing any unsavoury elements.

A Government Member: You bogged down in the mud.

Mr. HANLON: I rise to a point of order. I feel I am entitled—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I want to point out that I am ever anxious to uphold a point of order in which the integrity of an hon. member is personally affected, but the hon. member for Wavell did not mention any particular member, and consequently there is no point of order.

Mr. DUGGAN: I will say on a point of order that I am proud to be a member of the A.L.P. When the hon. member said he patterned it on the A.L.P. he referred to me as a member of that organisation and I ask for a withdrawal.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have ruled that there is no point or order.

Mr. Duggan: We are not getting fair play.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! When the Leader of the Opposition says that he is not getting fair play from the Chair it is a reflection on the Chair, and I ask the hon. gentleman to withdraw it.

Mr. Duggan: I must admit I am having difficulty. I unreservedly withdraw the remark but I still am having difficulty.

Mr. CHALK: Before the interruption I was endeavouring to point out what I might term the calibre or character of the person who has been responsible for the preparation of the major portion of this document. I want this Chamber to know the exact motives that I believe are behind this dossier. Let us look at the financial effect that this Bill will have on this individual. Let us first examine his association with transport interests. On 30 June, 1957, there was in existence a company registered as Commonwealth Transport Pty. Ltd., which has no licence in this State. The shareholders of Commonwealth Transport Pty. Ltd. are William Robert Fossey Bolton, who had 50,001 shares, Grant Bolton had one, Henry Bolton had one, Marion Bolton had 118,000 and Leon Wruck had 100. That company had 168,103 shares.

We now proceed to another company registered and the list of shareholders in respect of it on 14 May, 1957. Commonwealth Transport Pty. Ltd. held 133,000 shares in a firm known as Australian Transport, which also has no licence in this State. W. R. Bolton—that is William Fossey—has 64,000; Marion Bolton has 9,000, H. T. Bolton, one of those mentioned in the dossier, has one, G. M. Bolton one, and D. G. Bolton one. In that company there are 206,000 shares. 64,000 of them are owned by W. R. F. Bolton and 133,000 of them come from Commonwealth Transport Pty. Ltd., which in all has 168,000 shares but in which 50,000 are held by William Robert Fossey Bolton and 118,000 belong to Marion Bolton. There we have two companies, and, although of those shares, 114,000 are owned by W. R. F. Bolton, the balance all resolve around the same individual.

The next company is Cobb & Co. As at 14 May, 1957. Australian Transport held 35,000 shares. I have given hon. members the composition of Australian Transport. It is comprised principally of shareholders of Commonwealth Transport, and from Commonwealth Transport we go to Australian Transport, and now we find that, of 36,901 shares in Cobb & Co., 35,826 shares are held by Australian Transport, which is principally William Fossey Bolton, and 1,012 are held by William Fossey Bolton personally. So we have this build-up in all these transport companies, all virtually one person.

Now we will have a look at one of the licensed companies, Downs Transport. As at 8 May, 1957, Downs Transport had 3,037

shares, 1,458 of which were held by Cobb & Co., and Cobb & Co., as I have proved by the establishment of the other companies, is none other again than William Fossey Bolton.

Mr. Duggan: Is there any violation of any law of Queensland in those operations?

Mr. CHALK: No. This information can be procured by going along to the Companies Office.

Mr. Duggan: Is there any violation?

Mr. CHALK: No. If the hon. gentleman is patient, I will be able to prove my point. I am not violating the law, nor am I saying that any laws are being violated.

Mr. Duggan: I am not saying you are violating the law, but has there been any violation?

Mr. CHALK: No. I am not saying he is violating any law, but I want to prove the reason for the preparation of this particular document.

Let us look at Northern Downs Transport. We find again that Cobb & Co., which principally is William Fossey Bolton, has 10,000 shares of the 10,023 shares in that company. The other company with a license is South Queensland Transport, in which, at the time of the examination, 1,465 of the 3,073 shares were held by Cobb & Co. What I have set out to indicate is that in the shareholding of all these companies, the main person is none other than the one person who wrote this document. His little "Empire."

Let me go a little further. Let me examine what the licensing system can mean to this individual. I referred this morning to the monopolistic hold that a certain person or persons have over transport interests. I state now that the particular person in all the companies to which I have referred is William Fossey Bolton. For the year 1954 the net profit, according to a statement prepared by J. L. Rawlings, Bolton & Co. and signed by H. T. F. Bolton, one of the persons who prepared quite a bit of the dossier, was £98,892. But it was adjusted for income-tax purposes because it is stated that the amount of depreciation written off in the actual return was greater than the amount permitted for income-tax purposes. The actual income-tax assessable profit for the 12 months for these companies—principally one person—was £120,607. I do not say that any person is not entitled to make that profit if he is prepared to enter into operations with his own business. Under the Act as it stands, he has been able to purchase or secure certain licenses, and in 1954 he was making a profit of £120,000.

Mr. Duggan: In the 10 years I was Minister for Transport I did not peruse one single balance sheet of any operator.

Mr. CHALK: This balance sheet is taken from the files that the Leader of the Opposition had in the Transport Office during the period he was Minister.

Mr. Duggan: I did not look at a single balance sheet during the time I was in office.

Mr. CHALK: I did not say the hon. member did. All I said was that this balance sheet was in the office files during the period he was Minister for Transport.

Mr. Bennett: Is it your intention to put him out of business?

Mr. CHALK: No. I am going to develop my own argument.

That was in 1954. We all know the development and the increase in road transport that has taken place since then. We also know that in 1956 the Labour Government increased rail freights, and because of his then adherence to the licence, this William Fossey Bolton was only too pleased—although he had made £120,000 out of the people for whom he hauled—in accordance with the licence he had, to raise the freights on his haulage to coincide with rail freights.

Mr. Roberts: A better goldmine than Mt. Morgan.

Mr. CHALK: I do not know much about Mt. Morgan, but that is an indication of the profits that have been earned by this individual annually over a number of years.

We have heard on many occasions of the large sums of money he is prepared to give to charity. He did not give the money to charity in the general sense that a citizen would. He gave it away so that he would have less income tax to pay. In other words, he was handing out your money and mine to reduce his taxation commitments. That was money that could possibly have been passed on to the consumers of goods in Toowoomba and on the Downs. As a result, he has received considerable kudos because of the donations he has made to charity, but I say that he stands exposed on this.

Mr. Graham: Wouldn't that same argument apply to all philanthropists?

Mr. CHALK: If the hon. member wants to peddle his case, that is all right.

Mr. Hanlon: This sort of thing may be true, but it does not change the charges he has made.

Mr. CHALK: The hon. gentleman should be a little patient.

Let us now have a look at the character assassination and at the pimping—and I use the word advisedly—of this man over a number of years. He has made many charges in the dossier but, because of his peculiarity, because of his selfishness and his greed, he was always prepared to try to get information on some other haulier by any possible means whatsoever. Then he could not get quickly enough over to the Department of Transport to place on record what someone else was doing and to seek immediate action by the

department. He made records of conversations with almost any person he met so that it was almost not safe for anybody even to say "Good day" to him in the street, and I will prove it. It has not happened just since 1957. Everywhere he went, every little bit of information he could get, he was prepared to run along to someone to try and injure another person.

On 2 July, 1957, which again was prior to the advent of this Government—and I do not raise it on that point but I cite the date—Bolton went to the office of the Department of Transport and talked to the then Commissioner, Mr. A. J. Anderson. He said—

"Following on our interview of the 26 June last I should like to add that I have ascertained from the C.S.R. Company that Maryland Transport, the worst of the sham interstate operators, have delivered a load of sugar from C.S.R., Brisbane, to J. C. Hutton of Warwick. I should also like to report this, with considerable pleasure, that one Austin of Texas overturned a load of 13 tons of tobacco at Sandy Creek near Warwick last week. This was mainly, of course, Queensland tobacco."

He said that he reported with pleasure that a load of Queensland tobacco was overturned.

Mr. Houston: Was that later proved to be true?

Mr. CHALK: I was not Minister at that time.

Mr. Houston: What about the report? Doesn't that give it?

Mr. CHALK: No. I am referring to the record. I have never made a further search of it because it was not my responsibility. But let us go a little further. He said—

"I suggest that two good detectives could interview the C.S.R. Co., Brisbane, J. C. Hutton Pty. Ltd., Brisbane, and J. C. Hutton Pty. Ltd., Warwick, which companies keep excellent records and the driver of the Maryland vehicle could be traced by these gentlemen and I should think that in these circumstances you would get a series of admissions."

Again that is a clear indication of the manner in which this transport operator would firstly go to a reputable company, get a little information there, then go to another company and get a bit there, and then immediately, because these people were coming into some of the licensing, possibly, within his area, he would go and report to the Department of Transport.

Mr. Houston: Did he report it during your time?

Mr. CHALK: If the hon. member will just be patient—I have had plenty of reports, too.

Mr. Houston: Are they founded?

Mr. CHALK: Some of them have been followed through. Some of them you could not get convictions on. I believe some of them were true, but he told them for a purpose.

Mr. Houston: But it is all true?

Mr. CHALK: Let us then examine a letter that he wrote on 27 July, 1957, to the Secretary of the Commissioner for Transport. He said—

"We acknowledge with thanks receipt of your letter of 21 February. We are disappointed at the lack of action herein and assure you that the subterfuges of Ryan and Cannon and their principals, the oil companies, merely result in Queensland roads being used for the carriage of petrol and other oil company products—tax-free—from Brisbane to Texas, where the goods are disposed of."

Now listen to this! He goes on—

"We suggest that the present is an opportune time for licensing of all oil companies and their re-sellers and that their licence be cancelled on the first fraud on Queensland revenue—as in the circumstances described by us."

In other words, he accuses the oil companies of fraud. But because he cannot bring an action against them in a certain way, he then asks that these companies be licensed, that the re-sellers be licensed, and then that the Government of the day take the licences from these people as a means of redress.

He also had this to say about Ampol and Atlantic—I am sure no oil company in Queensland will ever talk to this man again when they know some of the ramifications of his activities—

"Further to our letter of the 11th July, regarding shams, frauds and devices employed by . . . Ampol Petroleum, Atlantic Petroleum Co., Warden and Austin, we enclose copy of report from our manager at Texas regarding frauds practised in that district."

I could go on and give the Committee further details showing the type of person we are dealing with, but we are now beginning another day and I do not wish to go on much longer.

It is true that I have a copy of this dossier containing over 200 pages, and it is true, as the hon. member for Baroona said this morning, that it takes a little over five hours to read it. I was interested to hear him say that, because it took me about the same time. The very first reference in this record is to 15 August, 1957. It is interesting to recall that I was sworn in as a Minister of the Crown, together with my Ministerial colleagues, on 12 August, 1957. The very first line of this dossier says, "First interview with Mr. Chalk—15/8/57." The day I was sworn in I did not get as far as the office, because it was late and, at

the request of the Premier, we all assembled to discuss certain matters. I was at the office on the 14th and the 15th. The dossier says, "This interview had been arranged with Mr. Chalk on 16/8/57." The way in which the dossier has been prepared indicates that in most cases the approach came either from the Premier to Mr. Bolton or from the Minister to Mr. Bolton. That is the way this man has put it in his report. I say that in 95 per cent. of the cases the approach did not come from either the Premier or myself, they came from Mr. Bolton or one of those persons whom he organised to make the approach. I would not use the word "stooges" because I think some of them are innocent.

Mr. Bennett: Were they members of the Liberal Party?

Mr. CHALK: One of them was a member of the Labour Party, Mr. J. D. Kane, and I will deal with him in a moment.

Mr. Hanlon: What about Senator Wood and Bruce Wight?

Mr. CHALK: I did not mention them. I said that one of them was a member of the Labour Party. The point is that I had hardly put my feet under the desk in my office as Minister for Transport before I received a request from Mr. J. D. Kane to see Mr. Bolton. Those hon. members who know their political history and know something about the operations of the Transport Department prior to the change of Government know that Mr. J. D. Kane, a former Labour M.L.A., was employed by Cobb & Co., or some of Mr. Bolton's transport interests, as an officer who made representations on behalf of the company. There are numerous records in the Transport Department of approaches that were made by Mr. Kane to the department before this Government took office relating to Mr. Bolton's interests.

That approach was made to me. Mr. Kane informed me that Mr. Bolton would very much like to see me, that he realised I was taking over a very difficult portfolio. He said that he was experienced in transport matters and that he felt certain he could help. As one newly appointed to the office and as one who has, I believe, during the whole of my time as Minister always been willing, whenever time permitted, to see any person, naturally I agreed to that appointment. It is equally true that having agreed on the 14th for the appointment on the 16th I found that there was a matter in my own area, something that I should go home to, on the 16th. Consequently as an act of courtesy I rang Mr. Bolton and said, "Look, I have made an appointment with you for the 16th. I cannot keep it. Can you come on the 15th?" That was the first time. Bolton does indicate that was the case. He does not set out the position clearly but at least he does indicate that such was

the case. But right throughout the proceedings there is an attempt to make out that the Premier, myself, the Treasurer or some other Minister always made the first approach to him. I say that in every approach ever made as far as Bolton was concerned in regard to transport matters there was one thing paramount in the mind of Bolton, and that was Bolton.

Mr. Duggan: When did you first discover that trait?

Mr. CHALK: It took me some time to discover it. I had never dealt with a person in the same street as Bolton, but I learned as time went on. I learned about the smooth tongue that said, "Don't have any stenographer in here, I only want to talk to you about the weather." The Department of Transport officers have experienced exactly the same approaches. The Leader of the Opposition probably received the same approaches. I do not think I got any different treatment from what he got. But that was the line of approach. On every subsequent occasion such was the case.

Mr. Bennett: But you still continued to see him.

Mr. CHALK: I believe as a Minister it is my responsibility to see people until I find that their actions are false. Recognising him as one of the major hauliers of the day, I did not refuse to see him. If I had, heaven only knows what would have been recorded in the dossier. It has been very evident to me throughout the debate that hon. members opposite have gone to great pains to have recorded in "Hansard" extracts from the dossier accusing people of criminal acts. Hardly one speaker can be exonerated when I say that they have used portions of the dossier to make certain that recorded in "Hansard" are pieces of the statements contained therein—

Mr. Duggan: You must admit that no-one did it until you jeered at us because of our lack of courage in not tabling the dossier.

Mr. CHALK: I draw the attention of the hon. member to the concluding remarks on his speech. I propose to read them. Before he sat down he said—

"In view of the allegations made by Mr. Bolton—,"

and these are his words—

"... a prominent and reputable transport operator—"

I hope the hon. member still thinks the same—

"... in this State over a period of years, I ask for a royal commission to investigate amongst other things the allegation that—"

and then the hon. member proceeds to outline his allegations, which I propose to answer before I sit down. I will keep you here for another half hour.

Mr. Duggan: My point is that I did not table the dossier but said I would make it available to you and the Premier.

Mr. CHALK: A few moments ago the Leader of the Opposition contended that nothing was done by the A.L.P. until something was said about a challenge. The reference by the Leader of the Opposition to the challenge was made after the speech by the hon. member for Carnarvon, and "Hansard" will show it. It was not made until the hon. member had the dossier on the table and somebody commented on the A.L.P. The hon. gentleman said that nothing was said until then but I say that, by asking for a royal commission and recording in "Hansard" the particular allegations, he was the one who started to place in "Hansard" particular parts of the document.

Mr. Duggan: My point is—and I want to make it perfectly clear—that there was nothing of a dishonourable nature so far as a person outside or inside this building is concerned who had no connection with these charges. We have tried to do that right through the piece, and at no time have we tried to bring in anything of that sort.

Mr. CHALK: I am prepared to listen to the remarks of the hon. member but I draw his attention to the ten charges that he made at the completion of his address. Hon. members opposite have taken great pains today to place in "Hansard" the statements that have been made and are contained in that dossier. They have made it plain that they did not necessarily believe them—that they did not necessarily believe Mr. Bolton—but they made it equally plain, I believe, that in their opinion Mr. Bolton himself believed the charges. All I can say is that, if Mr. Bolton did believe his charges, he has at least one thing in common with one member of the A.L.P., this is, a readiness to associate with criminals with the knowledge that they are criminals. I will let hon. members think that one over.

Mr. Hanlon: To whom are you referring?

Mr. CHALK: I refer to the remarks made by Mr. Commissioner Alderman, Q.C., in relation to an inquiry that was held and with which one member of the A.L.P. was associated. I refer to the Redcliffe inquiry.

Now let us look a little bit further. I say that Bolton has one particular purpose in this dossier. He is using it as a form of blackmail to attempt to force this Government to defer the Bill so that he can preserve his licence for at least 12 months longer—and remember he made £120,000 in one year, so that even if he was liable for damages of a few thousand pounds through that document, while he is operating for 12 months he is coining £120,000.

Mr. Knox: The A.L.P. is a party to the plot.

Mr. HANLON: I rise to a point of order. We are not thin-skinned over here, but I think we are entitled to some reasonable protection from the Chair, that it should be exercised equally for both sides of the Committee. I ask you, Mr. Taylor, if I made the statement that the Liberal Party was a party to a plot like that, would you take any action?

Mr. Dewar: We would not take any notice of it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Wavell is not helpful to the Committee in making such remarks.

Mr. Hanlon: The remark was made by the hon. member for Nundah.

Mr. Knox: I made the remark.

The CHAIRMAN: I did not hear the remark, because I was listening to the Minister, and consequently I cannot say what the remark was. However, I did hear something about the Labour Party. If the hon. member is attempting to score off members of the Opposition because he knows that I cannot force an hon. member to withdraw a statement referring to a party but can only force the withdrawal of a statement referring to an individual hon. member, he is embarrassing the Chair.

Mr. Knox: I do not wish to embarrass the Chair. If I have embarrassed the Chair I withdraw the remark that caused the embarrassment.

Mr. CHALK: I have pointed out the purpose behind this dossier. Over the years Mr. Bolton has attempted to set himself as a road-transport czar, and has left no stone unturned to attain his objective. I think the references I have made to him—and I have many more—clearly indicate that he will leave no stone unturned to attain his objective.

On the advent of the present Government, Bolton paid court to members of the Government to further his ambitions. He approached many members of the Government. That is all referred to in the dossier. He approached them for the main purpose, I submit, of furthering his own ambitions. At the time he was playing a ruthless, double game. He was writing down the submissions at every interview or his interpretation of the submissions at every interview, for the purpose of building up a case for revenge if he failed. This is the first occasion that I have come closely in contact with a person with this type of mind, and I feel, as I said earlier, that I must warn people of the danger of ever conversing with this particular person. I do not want to go over the whole of the T.G.S. dinner night proceedings, but any hon. member can have a look at the dossier.

If hon. members do not think Bolton is a shrewd and cunning schemer, then let me refer to one letter, one little dossier—call it

what you like—that I hold. On 19 September I had an interview with a person named J. D. Kane. Mr. Kane came to see me. When he left I found a letter on my table. The letter bears the initials of Mr. Bolton and is on Cobb & Co. paper. It is a memo to Mr. J. D. Kane, and this is what it says—

“Re Gordon Chalk and Gairconomics. You might write Gordon this way.”

I was apparently known to him as “Gordon” by then. It continues—

“. . . or better still, call on him and get him to consider this:—

Bill knows you are very busy and does not want to trouble you. At the same time, he thinks that our case—that is—the case of Cobb & Co. and of all decent road carriers, should be before you”—that is, me—“all the time.

Whilst he . . .”
that is, Bill—

“. . . was a bit hot under the collar, he wrote the attached, which, if you have time, he would like you to read and return. It is private setting-down on paper of his thoughts. He gave Cyril Anderson a copy of the first part last Sunday, to give to Curly, so that Curly could study it and make representations to Gordon. Otherwise, except for a copy with Bert Yeates—our solicitor—it is purely a Cobb & Co. private record at present.”

This is another letter he is talking about, but this is the letter I have. The letter continues—

“Bill reckons that you”—

that is, I—

“had the solution to the railway problem way back in 1954 and all the talk then of Moriarty and others working 15 to 20 hours a day was, the greatest indictment that could be presented against these officers, with their long experience. Perhaps the Commissioner and his top brass were afraid of the smart blokes in the railways learning how to handle anything. They were able to cover up their own deficiencies by always being round the place. Gordon proposed an Investigating Committee in 1954. He could pick hundreds for the job from the service—all top raters.”

Now let us listen to the top-raters.

Mr. Jones: What year was that?

Mr. CHALK: That was 19 September, 1957.

This is Mr. Bolton’s selection from the few that he knew—

“Norm Kropp for energy, coolness and financial brain.”

I wonder if he thinks the same today.

“John Neeson, for personal charm, goodwill and staff control.”

He was the previous Minister’s private secretary, and a very reliable and highly regarded officer of the Railway Department.

“Eric Riding for workshops control and splitting up of malcontents and general finance policy, and that tough little Engineer that I fought with in the South-western floods of 1956, for Running Control.

“I don’t see that it would hurt us to let Gordon know how the actual facts strike blokes like us, who have quite a good knowledge of Railway practice as well as an excellent knowledge of Road Transport. We are trying to help Gordon—but at the same time—his Railway Commissioner has his ear all the time. I think he would appreciate a frank expression of opinion. In any case, I am sure he would appreciate plain speaking rather than crawling.”

This is the person who in this dossier proceeds to belie, and endeavours to condemn, members of the Cabinet, members of the Transport Department, and citizens of the State.

Mr. Houston: Have you a copy of your reply to that letter?

Mr. CHALK: No, I did not reply to it. It was written to Mr. Kane, not to me.

Mr. Houston: Why didn’t you forward it?

Mr. CHALK: I believe Mr. Kane left it there deliberately for me, and I go so far as to say that I think that Mr. Bolton told Mr. Kane to leave it there.

Mr. Houston: You did not investigate it?

Mr. CHALK: No, I did not investigate it; nobody came back for it; it stayed in my files.

This morning the Leader of the Opposition gave 10 points in relation to the suggested appointment of a royal commission. The first was—

“1. Western Transport have been given political protection in alleged sham interstate transport operations over the past three years because of pressure exercised on the Government by Mr. M. J. R. Anderson, M.L.A.”

I have indicated to the Committee tonight that 117 prosecutions have been successfully launched against Anderson’s transport interests. Does that indicate that those people have received any special treatment? Is it not a fair indication that this Government have dealt more forcefully with that firm than with any other firm associated with border-hopping?

The next point given by the Leader of the Opposition was—

“2. That this allegation was confirmed by Mr. Leech of the Transport police on the 30/9/60, when Mr. Leech allegedly stated that they were going well with all except Western Interstate Transport. He was disgusted at the way they were still getting away with it. They did their job and then nothing further happened.”

First of all, I have indicated in answer to No. 1 that 117 prosecutions were successfully

launched against the company and, secondly, Mr. Leech denies ever saying such a thing. I will prove now why I am prepared to believe Mr. Leech rather than the person who penned those words. I will examine charge No. 3, which reads—

“3. That this allegation was further confirmed in an alleged conversation between Bolton and Detective Sergeant Ingram.”

(an old boy of Toowoomba Grammar School, and a well-thought-of lad in Toowoomba, too)

“. . . on the 22nd October, 1960, when Ingram stated that Detective C. Becker, a detective seconded to the Transport Police, had told Ingram that he was disgusted with the Transport Police, that he would work on a case and get it all ready and then it would be stopped higher up. They would get prosecutions and convictions against some little fellow who would plead guilty but not against the big fellows.”

Those hon. members who have seen a copy of the dossier know that page 245 contains a record by Bolton of his conversation with Lloyd Ingram, detective sergeant, at the Toowoomba Grammar School Old Boys' fork dinner in Toowoomba on 22 October, 1960, only a very short time ago. He says—

“Met Lloyd Ingram (Detective Sergeant), yarned with him—Gordon Grant, Bill Wright present. Spoke of the Thorne case, then got on to the Pressler case, Police generally and Transport Police.”

All of that was recorded, heaven only knows what for. The next paragraph also deals with a particular event. Then it goes on—

“Ingram asked me if I knew Charlie Becker—a detective seconded to the Transport Police. Said I hadn't met him. I had heard he was a smart fellow. Lloyd—”

Now he is getting back to the familiarity—

“Lloyd said that was so. He was disgusted with the Transport Police and wanted to get back to the C. I. Branch.

He had told Lloyd that he would work on a case and get it all ready and then it would be stopped higher up. Charlie used to be in the Company Squad, and wanted to get back. As Lloyd was going away with John McDonald I told him I would like to meet Becker. He said he would be pleased to arrange an appointment. When did I go to Brisbane? Once a week, generally on Tuesdays. Well, if I would ring Lloyd at the C.I. Branch he would arrange a meeting.”

I want hon. members to note particularly the reference in this record to the prosecutions being stopped by the “higher-ups.”

Detective Ingram has been approached on this matter and his story is entirely different. He admits the conversation with Mr. Bolton.

He said he had never met him before, but he was introduced to him. He went on to say—

“I said, ‘Do you know Detective Sergeant Becker in Transport? He happens to be a personal friend of mine.’ Bolton replied, ‘No. I heard he was a smart fellow.’ I said, ‘He is a very good detective. The last time I was talking to him he did want to get back to the C.I.B. He gets cases ready over there and they take a fair while to go through.’”

Note the very little bit of twisting by this professional twister who is associated with transport. He very cunningly pins a couple of extra words on indicating that they are stopped by the higher-ups.

Mr. Hanlon: You have had these matters inquired into already. Could you tell us whom you deputised to make the inquiries?

Mr. CHALK: At this stage, I have a document that was handed to me by another Minister. This particular report has been furnished to me, and I do not know anything other than the contents of it.

The point is that we have a very clear little bit of twisting by the greatest professional twister in transport in relation to just two words, and I say that the whole document has been written not as a complete precis of everything that took place but rather as the interpretation of the frenzied mental condition of a person who, realising that sooner or later the position would arise that he might lose this particular gold mine, of his, was prepared to record in it those things that suit his own particular case.

Let us now look at No. 4 of these allegations, which is—

“That two of the Road Transport Police had told Bolton that their duties consisted of protecting the yellow b—s.”

Again we have this allegation, and again we have a case of the interpretation of this person.

The next allegation is—

“That T. P. Anderson, Milner and others in the Transport Department were protecting Anderson's Transport.”

Has there been any indication, or is there any clear evidence, that there has been protection? I believe that what I have said in the Chamber tonight is a clear indication that my departmental officers have carried out their duties and their responsibilities. Yet this man is prepared, by the publication of this document, by arranging to pass it on to the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Q.L.P. and others, to damn in the eyes of the public the very men who hold responsible positions. Why? Because of his hatred, his desire, and his realisation that the days of his gold mine are over. The sixth point was—

“That Mr. Anderson, M.L.A., had asked Mr. Sherrington of the Liberal Party to get Chalk to take a plainclothes man off

Western Transport's doorstep and that Bolton thought Sherrington might have done so."

Note the word "though"—it was not anything that was proved. I say that at no time has Sherrington ever spoken to me about a police officer and Anderson. But this person is prepared to publish that in that document so that it damns Sherrington, me, and a police officer. The seventh allegation is—

"That the Transport Minister, Mr. Chalk, had urged a conspiracy for Brown, Anderson and Bolton to submit a dummy tender for the co-ordinated contract."

That is an absolute mis-statement of fact. It is true that the three hauliers came to my office and told me that they were very concerned about the co-ordinated service, and that it would ruin their business. I said to them, "If it is going to ruin your business why in the name of fortune don't you get into the business yourself? If you are going to lose through road transport, if you realise that this is coming in, why don't you go away and decide to form a company yourselves if you want to, and submit a tender?" According to the dossier I am supposed to have suggested an amount of £4. Again another deliberate basis of falsehood. I believe that the basis of £5 17s. a ton was arrived at as the first-class rate on goods to Toowoomba. It was realised by many people at the time, because of the tonnage involved up to £5 17s., that was somewhere around the figure that the Government would be prepared to accept, realising that on the one hand there would still be ample goods to be hauled by the haulier at £5 17s. or less, and with the amount of tonnage something like 10,000 tons of goods over £5 17s. would be a fair figure to the railways. But again to support his damnation of myself and my Transport Department he very shrewdly in the dossier puts his interpretation of a conversation. He says—

"That when Brown and Bolton refused, Anderson had submitted a dummy tender in the name of Leybourne and that when Brown had asked Anderson how could the Government give the contract to you, a member of their Parliamentary party, Anderson had replied, 'You don't think it would be in my name, do you?' And that Anderson had later admitted that there was a connection between Leybourne's and some of his concerns."

I have had the most comprehensive search possible made into the affairs of Leybourne to see if there was any connection between Leybourne and Anderson. I have gone to no end of trouble. One responsible accountant has come to me and said that he is prepared to put up a bond of £500 if there is any association between Anderson and Leybourne. But again this Shylock has written these things in his dossier for a specific purpose; to damn Leybourne's and Anderson's interests. Yet he was prepared to hand over £12,000 to Mrs. Leybourne if only she would relinquish this co-ordinated

service to Toowoomba. I say again it shows the type of individual and the depths to which he is prepared to sink.

The next point is—

"That the Premier had been prepared to connive with Bolton in an arrangement whereby Bolton would purchase a run to suit Mrs. Leybourne in return for the granting of additional runs to Bolton."

I believe I have already dealt fully with that in this Chamber earlier tonight. The next one is—

"A statement in court by Mr. McCawley—"

No doubt a friend of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Duggan: He took your place at the Western Transport social the night "Curly" Anderson won.

Mr. CHALK: I did not see whose place he took, but I do know that he went to the social. I repeat—

"A statement in court by Mr. McCawley on behalf of Western Interstate Pty. Ltd., that in those cases where the defendant did not go over the border it was done with the prior approbation of the Minister for Transport and Bolton's allegation that the five witnesses Anderson proposed to call to prove such approbation were J. C. Anderson, M. R. Anderson, N. Britton, Campbell, then President of the Liberal Party and now Member for Aspley and Sherrington, Deputy President of the Liberal Party."

This particular matter has been one in which there was certain litigation. It was one which, at the time it was made, concerned me very much because I contend that I can say quite sincerely in this Chamber tonight that never at any time was any prior approbation given by me to Anderson's interests or to any other haulier for that matter, in connection with these charges that have been laid.

Mr. Hanlon: Will the hon. member for Toowoomba East confirm that? He instructed the solicitor.

Mr. CHALK: I am speaking for myself at the moment. The point is that it is true that on many occasions not only Anderson but Bolton, Brown, Crisp and other hauliers as well have come to me and said, "Look, So-and-so is border-hopping. We are licensees, what are you going to do about it?" I knew exactly the contents of the letter that had been written during the time that the Leader of the Opposition was Minister for Transport. I knew the contents of that letter and I possibly at some time or other have said, "Well, I cannot stop you going over but if you go over and get caught you will pay the penalty." I know no more than that and if that is prior approbation then I do not know what prior approbation means.

Mr. Hanlon: It was on that sort of statement that the Foley case was based.

Mr. CHALK: I am not concerned with the Foley case; what I am concerned about are the facts of this matter. I throw back into the teeth of the writer of that particular document that I ever, at any stage, gave prior approbation to any haulier to go across the border. I believe—and it is recorded in the dossier of this person that I did so—that during the whole of the period that I have had the administration of this Transport Department I have kept my hands perfectly clean. I have endeavoured to carry out the high oath of office that I took.

Mr. Duggan: I should like to make it perfectly clear that I made that statement regarding your honesty at the beginning of my speech.

Mr. CHALK: I thanked the hon. gentleman at the time for doing it. I do not think there is any personal animosity between the hon. gentleman and me in this matter. He is entitled to place his case before this Chamber. It is a certain opinion that he has. That is his right. I have to reply, in defence of myself and in defence of the Government I represent here. I believe that tonight I have given a clear and sincere account of my stewardship and the stewardship of my departmental officers during the period I have held this portfolio. All I can say is that the Government have answered the charges that have been made. We have indicated the type and calibre of the individual who has made these charges.

Finally I think it would be good if we paid a little closer attention to the Holy Word. We open the House with prayer and we respect the Holy Word. Thus to conclude, I should like to refer the person who wrote this dossier to the Gospel of St. Luke, Chapter 18, verses 10 to 14—

“Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

“The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

“I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

“And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

“I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

I leave it to this assembly to judge who is the Pharisee in the matters that have been raised in this Chamber today.

Question—That the motion (Mr. Chalk) be agreed to—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 38

Mr. Anderson	Mr. Müller
“ Beardmore	“ Munro
“ Campbell	“ Nicklin
“ Carey	Dr. Noble
“ Chalk	Mr. Pitbeam
“ Dewar	“ Pizzey
“ Ewan	“ Rae
“ Fletcher	“ Ramsden
“ Gaven	“ Richter
“ Hart	“ Roberts
“ Herbert	“ Row
“ Hewitt	“ Smith
“ Hiley	“ Sullivan
“ Hodges	“ Tooth
“ Hooper	“ Wharton
“ Hughes	“ Windsor
“ Jones	
“ Knox	<i>Tellers:</i>
“ Low	Mr. Harrison
“ Madsen	Dr. Delamothe

NOES, 26

Mr. Baxter	Mr. Houston
“ Bromley	“ Inch
“ Burrows	“ Lloyd
“ Byrne	“ Mann
“ Davies	“ Marsden
“ Davis	“ Melloy
“ Dean	“ Newton
“ Donald	“ Sherrington
“ Dufficy	“ Thackeray
“ Duggan	“ Walsh
“ Graham	
“ Gunn	<i>Tellers:</i>
“ Hanlon	Mr. Bennett
“ Hilton	“ Wallace

PAIRS

Mr. Evans	Mr. Diplock
“ Morris	“ Adair
“ Lonergan	“ Tucker

Resolved in the affirmative.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

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

The House adjourned at 1 a.m.