

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 1961

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

vehicle transporting oil in bulk, the sum of threepence by the weight of the oil carried in the bulk tank expressed in tons (including fractions of tons expressed in hundredweight) and by the number of road miles on which such oil is carried on the vehicle pursuant to a permit. (ii) A charge under 'The Roads (Contribution to Maintenance) Acts, 1957 to 1958,' at the rate of one-third of a penny per ton of the sum of—(a) The tare weight of the vehicle; and (b) Forty per centum of the load capacity of the vehicle, per mile of public highway along which the vehicle travels. (b) A charge under 'The Roads (Contribution to Maintenance) Acts, 1957 to 1958,' at the rate of one-third of a penny per ton of the sum of—(a) The tare weight of the vehicle; and (b) Forty per centum of the load capacity of the vehicle, per mile of public highway along which the vehicle travels."

"(2) (i) A permit fee under 'The State Transport Act of 1960' calculated by multiplying in respect of each and every vehicle transporting petroleum products in packages the sum of three pence by the load capacity of the vehicle expressed in tons (including fractions of tons to the nearest hundredweight) and by the number of road miles on which such petroleum products in packages are carried on the vehicle pursuant to a permit. (ii) A charge under 'The Roads (Contribution to Maintenance) Acts, 1957 to 1958,' at the rate of one-third of a penny per ton of the sum of—(a) The tare weight of the vehicle; and (b) Forty per centum of the load capacity of the vehicle, per mile of public highway along which the vehicle travels."

TOWNSVILLE ABATTOIR BOARD

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

"(1) At the end of last financial year what was the total indebtedness of the Townsville Abattoir Board?"

"(2) What were its total annual (a) operating costs, (b) administrative costs, (c) interest and redemption commitments and (d) any other costs?"

"(3) What effect has the foregoing on the retail price of meat in Townsville?"

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick) replied—

"(1) The Balance Sheet of the Townsville District Abattoir Board shows the total loan indebtedness of the Board at June 30, 1961, was £209,045. The interest and redemption on the greater part of this is repayable over terms of twenty years."

"(2) The following were the total costs debited to the Board's Income and Expenditure Account—(a) Operating costs, £71,241; (b) Administrative costs, £6,441; (c) Interest, £11,460; (d) Depreciation, £9,819. The following amounts were also paid during the year—Redemption payments, £18,234; Compensation payments

THURSDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER, 1961

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

QUESTIONS

ROAD TRANSPORT FEES PAID BY OIL COMPANIES, TOWNSVILLE

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) asked the Minister for Transport—

"(1) What permit or other fees are paid by oil companies transporting oil in bulk by road radiating from Townsville on (a) the oil and (b) the empty tanker on the return trip?"

"(2) What fees are charged on the road transport of oil not in bulk?"

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

"(1) (a) (i) A permit fee under 'The State Transport Act of 1960' calculated by multiplying, in respect of each and every

for closure of slaughter yards, £2,751; Payments to Treasury for interest on special Treasury Loan, £3,150; Purchase of plant, £548."

"(3) At the Townsville District Abattoir it has been necessary to charge a rate of 50s. per head for slaughtering of cattle. This slaughtering charge of 50s. per head for an average trade bullock is equivalent to a cost of approximately 2d. for every lb. of saleable meat obtainable from the beast. The killing charge represents the greater percentage of the Abattoir Board's income, and with other receipts is calculated to meet the whole of the operating costs of the Board."

RECLAMATION OF SALT-PAN COUNTRY BY AMPOL PETROLEUM COMPANY

Mr. COBURN (Burdekin) asked the Premier—

"(1) Has he read in 'The Advocate' (the newspaper published in Ayr) of Friday, 23 June, 1961, that Mr. W. G. Walkley, Managing Director of Ampol Petroleum Company has expressed particular interest in the possibility of reclaiming vast areas of salt-pan country along Queensland's coastal strip by building dykes similar to those in Holland and converting it to lush pastures?"

"(2) Has any approach been made to him or to any other Minister of the Crown in regard to the reclamation of these lands?"

"(3) If so, what assistance is the Government prepared to give in support of this proposed scheme which, I understand, will be centred mainly in the Lower Burdekin?"

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

"(1) Yes. I understand that Mr. W. G. Walkley, C.B.E., Managing Director of Ampol Petroleum Co. Ltd., was a guest speaker at the Top Management Conference conducted under the auspices of the Australian Institute of Management at Townsville on Saturday and Sunday, May 13 and 14, 1961, respectively. At this conference, Mr. Walkley delivered a paper entitled 'It Can Be Done,' and in the course of his address he suggested the possibility of reclaiming vast areas of salt-pan country along the coastal strip of Queensland and converting it to lush pastures."

"(2) It was mentioned to the Treasurer at Rockhampton in particular relation to the Fitzroy Delta with no mention of the Burdekin area."

"(3) The Government would be prepared to favourably consider proposals for such reclamation. There are already successful projects fringing Broadsound. A splendid example is at Glen Prairie, and another on the Lower Fitzroy at Fitzroyvale. The cost is high, but the benefit is really significant."

CONSTRUCTION OF SMALL-BOAT HARBOURS

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

"(1) How many small boat harbours have been constructed or are in the course of construction on the Queensland coast and from what fund are they financed?"

"(2) Is there an order of priority for the construction of these harbours and how is it arrived at?"

"(3) Where would the port of Townsville, which is acknowledged to be the second in Queensland, stand in this priority?"

"(4) Did he receive a request from the Townsville Motor Boat Club in October, 1960, for the provision of such a harbour and what is the present position with regard to that request?"

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

"(1) Three boat harbours are in the course of construction financed from the Commonwealth Aid Marine Works Fund."

"(2) No."

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

"(4) Yes. A satisfactory preliminary examination has been made of the proposal and the site is to be surveyed by the survey launch 'Ferret' at present in North Queensland. Following the survey, plans, etc., will be prepared. The provision of funds for construction work will be considered in conjunction with next year's programme of works from the Fund. I would remind the Honourable Gentleman that the fine new jetty at Magnetic Island was the first major expenditure from the Fund. I have not lost hope that some day the Honourable Gentleman will feel impelled to make some expression of gratitude rather than, by the language of his question, to appear to be complaining of the treatment of Townsville."

IMPRISONMENT OF HUGH O'KANE

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) asked the Minister for Justice—

"(1) Was one, Hugh O'Kane, on or about 20 January, 1961, at Glenmorgan convicted by two Justices of the Peace, constituting a Court of Petty Sessions, who imposed a fine of three pounds and in default of payment of the said fine sentenced him to fourteen days' imprisonment for each of two separate offences?"

"(2) Does not the official Minute of Conviction show that these sentences were to be served concurrently?"

"(3) Does that not mean that Mr. O'Kane should, accordingly to law, have served only fourteen days' imprisonment if he did not pay the fines?"

"(4) Was not Mr. O'Kane in fact imprisoned for twenty-eight days for the offences referred to above?"

"(5) Does not this mean that Mr. O'Kane has served fourteen days more in gaol than he should have served?"

"(6) If the answer to Question (5) is in the affirmative, (a) has not Mr. O'Kane been wrongfully and illegally imprisoned by the Crown for fourteen days, (b) who is responsible for this and how has it come about that Mr. O'Kane has been wrongfully deprived of his liberty and (c) what action does he propose to take in this matter?"

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

"(1 to 6) Enquiries are being made in relation to this matter. I ask the Honourable Member to repeat his question on Tuesday next."

ACCESS TO SCHOOL OVAL, BURANDA GIRLS' SCHOOL

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

"(1) In view of the fact that only £193 13s. 7d. was spent on maintenance and improvements to Buranda Girls' State School from 1 July, 1960, to 30 June, 1961, will he reconsider my representations made to him on 22 July, 1960, on behalf of the Parents and Citizens Committee of that school for the construction of steps to provide safe access to the school oval as a total State responsibility?"

"(2) If he will not accede to this request for the construction of these necessary steps, what are the reasons for his refusal?"

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

"(1) Each application for playground improvements must be directed to my Department in the first instance. Where it is expected that this improvement will be provided without any local contribution, it is redirected to the Department of Public Works, since funds are not made available to my Department to meet the cost of such projects. It is therefore not intended to resubmit to the Public Works Department the application made by the Buranda Girls School Parents and Citizens' Association for the erection, at total cost to the State, of a set of steps leading to the oval."

"(2) This application was considered by the Department concerned but it was disallowed, as it was decided that the project was one towards the cost of which some local contribution should be made. The granting of subsidy on this project will be sympathetically considered if suitable application is made."

WATERING FACILITIES ON STOCK ROUTE, LAURA TO COEN

Mr. ADAIR (Cook) asked the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation—

"Owing to the shortage of watering facilities on the stock route from Laura to Coen, will he have an officer of his department inspect the area with the view to having suitable watering facilities provided?"

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick—Minister for Agriculture and Forestry), for **Hon. A. R. FLETCHER** (Cunningham), replied—

"Provision has been made for the construction of four stock route water facilities between Laura and Coen, and tenders for these facilities were advertised last February. No tenders were received at the closing date. Tenders for these facilities are again to be advertised at an early date."

SCHOOL AT WHITE ROCK

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

"Owing to the urgent necessity for the building of a school at White Rock and the desire of parents and residents of the area to have the school ready for the commencement of the 1962 school-year, will he endeavour to have work commenced on the building as early as possible?"

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

"The Honourable Member for Cook can be assured that when the site for the proposed School at White Rock is secure to my Department, no time will be lost in making a recommendation to the Department of Public Works for the provision of a suitable school building."

PAPER

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

Report of the Manager, Golden Casket Art Union for the year 1960-1961.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

CONCESSIONAL RAIL FREIGHT RATES TO GOONDIWINDI

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Minister for Transport) (11.12 a.m.), by leave:—

On Thursday, 14 September, the honourable member for Toowoomba East, Mr. Anderson, in criticising recent concessional rail freight rates to Goondiwindi, stated—

(1) During the twelve months ended 30 June, 1960, the freight rate on second-class goods from Brisbane to Goondiwindi was £15 per ton.

(2) During that period the loss on the Warwick-Dirranbandi section of the railway was £588,534.

(3) Now freight rates to Goondiwindi have been reduced to £5 for first class and to £6 10s. per ton for second class, which will only further contribute to railway losses.

(4) That the whole approach to this freight concession has been made very hastily, without thought being given to the economics or the wisdom of the venture.

Unfortunately, I was not able to secure full Departmental details of loadings, etc., for Goondiwindi prior to the closure of the Address-in-Reply debate. However, as the issue raised is a very important one and the Hon. Member's conclusions are not based on fact, I now acquaint this House with the position.

It is not correct that the first-class rate from Roma Street to Goondiwindi has been reduced to £5 per ton. The rate of £5 only applies to sugar, golden syrup and treacle. Wire netting is rated at £5 8s. and fencing wire and posts at £5 12s. per ton. Excepting in instances in which the charges at the ordinary classification rates and conditions are cheaper, the rate of £6 10s. applies to all other goods except woolpacks, wool, livestock, goods of a dangerous nature, motor vehicles, fibre glass manufactures, foam and sponge rubber manufactures, insulating materials, boats, bitumen, petroleum products and empty 44-gallon drums.

It is not correct that the approach was made hastily without thought to the economics or the wisdom of the venture, nor that the action will result in the incurring of greater railway losses on the South-western Line.

The decision to recommend the freight reductions as subsequently approved for traffic from Brisbane to the South-western Line was made only after the matter had been thoroughly investigated and given mature consideration. Not only were the records of traffic to and from the area studied, but the Department's Goodwill Officer for the South-western Division made a survey of the transport position in the area.

The statements by the Hon. Member refer solely to the township of Goondiwindi, and the following information is therefore also in regard to Goondiwindi only.

Complaint has been made to the Hon. Minister for Labour and Industry by a Queensland merchant of loss of business to the Goondiwindi area to firms in Sydney who were able to undersell them due to the rail freight rates from Sydney to Boggabilla being cheaper than those from Brisbane to Goondiwindi.

Records of all traffic classified as "B" class and higher between Brisbane and Goondiwindi, excepting such commodities as petroleum products, wool and livestock, revealed that for the 11 months ended 31 May, 1961, the average per month had been only 10 tons 8 cwt. for a revenue of £130, this being despite the fact that freight rates on second-class goods to Goondiwindi had been substantially reduced in 1959 to the £15 as stated by the hon. member.

The survey conducted by the Goodwill Officer revealed that—

(1) The New South Wales Railways were securing to rail from Sydney to

Boggabilla sugar, syrup and treacle at £5 per ton and groceries and associated lines, including soaps, at £6 10s. per ton.

(2) Traffic rated by New South Wales Railways in excess of £6 10s. per ton was mostly being carried by road by an interstate transport at £8 per ton ex Newcastle and £9 per ton ex Sydney.

(3) Cartage charges Boggabilla to Goondiwindi township were £1 per ton, as were cartage charges from Goondiwindi railway station to Goondiwindi township.

The information received as to the traffic from New South Wales to Goondiwindi indicated that a considerable increase in the tonnage of goods carried to that town could be secured to the Queensland Railways without loss of revenue even at a substantial reduction in the freight rates.

It was decided that in view of the application of the same local cartage charges from rail at Boggabilla and at Goondiwindi, it was necessary to—

(1) Equal the New South Wales Railways charges for sugar, syrup, treacle, groceries and soap.

(2) Allow £1 per ton less than the road charges from Newcastle to equate the cartage necessary from rail at Goondiwindi and also provide a further margin of 10s. per ton as an incentive to regain the business from the interstate haulier.

It is presumably the hon. member's opinion that the expenditure on the south-western line will increase due to the necessity to run additional trains. This is not so, and the existing train service will handle the increased tonnage. For instance, advantage is being taken of the passenger train which departs Brisbane at 4.35 p.m. on Wednesdays and arrives at Goondiwindi at 5.53 a.m. on Thursdays. It was previously the practice to attach to this train one goods wagon containing loading for all stations on the south-western line, but since the introduction of the concessional rates up to three wagons have been attached to this train departing Roma Street, with another wagon being attached at Toowoomba, this being arranged without any inconvenience to the passengers travelling on the train.

As previously stated, the traffic between Brisbane and Goondiwindi in certain commodities prior to the freight reductions on and from 28 August approximated 10 tons per month. For the week ended 15 September the traffic in similar commodities conveyed from Roma Street to Goondiwindi was 18 tons 12 cwt.

In reporting on the matter on 13 September, the General Manager, Toowoomba, wrote as follows:—

"Firms in Goondiwindi previously professed absolute loyalty and satisfaction

with the service given by certain Queensland hauliers. It is obvious now the loyalty was based on the question of landed costs for when New South Wales railways introduced a cheaper rate the Queensland road hauliers were bypassed. Since the introduction of the concessional rates by the Queensland Railways Department the volume of traffic to Boggabilla from Sydney and Newcastle has decreased. On Friday, 25 August, prior to the rates being introduced, 30 tons arrived at Boggabilla for Goondiwindi firms, but on Friday, 1 September, only 4 tons arrived, the same position existing on 8 September. The fall off is solely due to return of the trade to Queensland.")

The hon. member has quoted a loss of £588,534 on the Warwick-Dirranbandi section for the twelve months ended 30 June, 1961, but it should be mentioned that this loss covered the section, Killarney Junction to Wallangarra, including the branch lines, Killarney Junction to Maryvale, Killarney Junction to Killarney, and Cottonvale to Amiens, and the section, Warwick to Dirranbandi, including the branch line, Inglewood to Texas.

The position as it relates to Goondiwindi was, therefore, misrepresented by the honourable member.

SALE OF COLLINSVILLE STATE COAL MINE

PROPOSED DISALLOWANCE OF ORDER IN COUNCIL

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (11.30 a.m.):
I move—

"That the Order in Council dated 14 September, 1961, covering the sale of the State Coal Mine, Collinsville, laid on the table of the House on 19 September, 1961, be disallowed."

If the Government feel that they are justified in selling this mine, the extensive mining leases, buildings and other improvements that are part of the sale, they are mistaken.

They are a private-enterprise Government, disposing of very valuable public property at bargain rates, to a company which is a subsidiary of a large overseas firm with its headquarters in London. We have the unsatisfactory state of affairs that Queensland's natural resources are being exploited, not for the benefit of our State, or for Queenslanders, but to win profits for a company whose shareholders, in the main, are living overseas.

There are few Government members who have any idea of the magnitude of the reserves of coal in the Bowen field. There are at least seven seams extending over an area of 1,700 square miles. On the field, there is good coking coal, and the seam which has been worked by the State Coal Mine and the Bowen Consolidated Mine is good coking coal. In 1956 the C.S.I.R.O.

reported that it was the best coking coal tested by their department to that date. As the known deposits of coking coal in Australia are limited, and the known quantities in Queensland are very limited, and because it is so essential for the production of steel, hon. members should realise how valuable is this seam of coal which is far from being worked out. When we realise that this seam, and six others on the Bowen field, with the exception of the mining leases held by the Bowen consolidated Company go to the purchasers with the sale of the mine, we get some idea of the value of the assets that the people of Queensland have lost and the company has gained, especially when the working of the seams is to be the exclusive right of the purchaser. We not only object to the sale of the Collinsville State mine, but also to the method adopted in the negotiations that led up to its sale. The terms of the sale protect the interests of the buyer from beginning to end in price, method of payment and future working of the collieries. It is evident that the Government have given little thought to the protection of the interests of the owners of the mine—the people of Queensland. It is evident that the former employees of the colliery are to be thrown to the wolves. I sound this note of warning: if the company is to enage labour, as indicated in yesterday's newspapers, it is asking for trouble.

Hon. members should know that the 2/- a ton royalty on coal won is limited to coal sold in Australia, and all coal exported from Australia will be free of this royalty. Also, the company is not compelled to produce a minimum amount of coal in any of the 10 years stipulated, or a guaranteed tonnage for the 10 years. All hon. members must realise what a great advantage this gives to the company.

We challenge the right of the Government to sell the mine because they have received no mandate from the people of Queensland to do so. Why was the decision to sell made by a section of the Cabinet? Would it not have been wiser to bring the matter to Parliament, and permitted Parliament to make the decision? Certainly it would have been more democratic. Parliament was asked to ratify the Amoco and bauxite agreements and we should have been given an opportunity of expressing our opinion on the sale of the Collinsville State mine.

We have often heard Government members, particularly Cabinet Ministers, complain of minority rule in the trade-union movement, yet, in this important transaction, 45 Government members allowed seven Cabinet Ministers to make the decision that led to the sale of the mine. Sickness and other causes prevented four Ministers from attending that Cabinet meeting. The Leader of the Opposition and I were in Canberra attending the Federal conference of the Australian Labour Party when the decision was announced.

The Executive of our party met and agreed that the Acting Leader of the

Opposition, the hon. member for Kedron, should write to the Premier asking him to call Parliament together to deal with this important matter. Unfortunately, the reasonable request of the Opposition was firmly refused and minority rule was allowed to prevail.

It is apparent that the Government gave little consideration to the excellent service given by the mine and the mineworkers to the economic development of North Queensland. They are giving almost a monopoly in North Queensland to the purchasing company, which will result in the railways paying more for their coal.

It is interesting to recall that in 1956 the Premier made the following statement—

“The State Coal Mine must not be closed. Collinsville State Coal Mine must continue to operate. It would be an economic tragedy to close the mine. Collinsville has produced high-quality coal and is the principal source of supply to North Queensland industries. It would be unthinkable to close the mine and deny industries their coal requirements.”

What he said in 1956 applies with equal force and truthfulness in 1961. But the mine has not only been closed; it has been sold, throwing 260 mine workers out of employment and bringing unnecessary hardship to the 660-odd inhabitants of Collinsville. The mine was closed on 16 April and it will remain closed until some time after the purchasers take over on 28 September. There may be some justification for selling the mine—though I will not admit it—but there is no justification whatsoever for closing the mine and keeping it closed for over six months. Therefore the Government have been directly responsible for creating unemployment, with its attendant misery to many excellent citizens. At the moment there are 74 ex-employees of the mine still looking for work in vain and this number will be increased by 16 when the meatworks at Merinda closes. This, of course, involved the wives and children of the unemployed, numbering 54 wives and 95 children.

The reasons advanced by the Government for selling the mine are: low production, industrial unrest and financial losses. These charges cannot be substantiated, for the production per man-shift underground at the Collinsville State Coal Mine is amongst the highest, if not the highest, in Queensland. The report of the Queensland Coal Board for the year 1960-1961 reveals that the output per man-shift at the coal face, at Collinsville, for the six months from July to December, 1960, was 23 tons and for the six months from January to June, 1961, 25.12 tons. The figures for Bowen Consolidated for the same periods were 9.91 tons and 9.59 tons, and for the West Moreton District 6.63 tons and 6.49 tons. I think that is sufficient indication that the slander about the alleged loafing of miners at Collinsville is not substantiated.

The industrial record of the Collinsville miners is as good as that of any in the State and the percentage of days lost through industrial disputes was as low as .24 in 1960 and .28 in 1959. The figure for the private mine next door, Bowen Consolidated open-cut mine, was 8.32 per cent.

There were losses in the State mine but they were not caused by the mine workers. Critics of the Collinsville State Coal Mine have directed attention to those losses and quoted profits made by Bowen Consolidated and other mines but have refrained from mentioning the losses of those mines.

(Time expired.)

Mr. INCH (Burke) (11.40 a.m.): I am privileged to have the opportunity of seconding the motion so ably moved by my colleague the hon. member for Ipswich East for the disallowance of the Order in Council covering the sale of the Collinsville State Coal Mine. In seconding the motion, I firmly believe that I am expressing the utter contempt and disgust of all sections of the Collinsville community, the trade union movement, and the people of Queensland as a whole, for the Government's action in selling one of the vital assets of the State. Like their colleagues in the Federal sphere, they are cursed with an insane desire or urge to rid themselves of State and national assets by selling them to private enterprise. These assets are part and parcel of the national heritage of the people, and they should be exploited in the interests of the people of Queensland, not in the interests of overseas shareholders.

The terms and conditions under which the mine has been sold give a very clear indication of the insane haste of the Government to rid themselves of our State enterprises. They have sold a State asset for £202,000. Actually speaking, they have virtually given away a mine capable of producing many millions of tons of high-grade coking coal. One of the worst features is that, prior to the sale of the mine, the Government closed the mine and threw hundreds of men out of employment at a time when—and I impress this upon the Government—there was serious unemployment in Queensland. This is the Government that said they were going to do so much to provide jobs for the people of the State. They sold this State asset to private enterprise and, before doing so, created a further pool of unemployment in Queensland. That was one of their main aims, because the only way in which they can control the workers of the State is by having them living and existing on unemployment benefits.

One particularly important feature of the sale is that the mine was highly mechanised and contained mechanised equipment worth many thousands of pounds. This was also included in the sale, as was the branch railway, which was sold for £2,000. At the end of two years, the company that has

purchased the mine will be allowed to sell any part or the whole of the mine to any other person or company wishing to purchase it.

It would be very interesting to find out just who are the members of Davis Contractors Pty. Ltd. It seems peculiar that a company such as Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. should allow an outside company to operate a coal-mine next door to the mine operated by it. Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. has many ramifications and has many interests overseas. I should not be in the least surprised to find that it is connected in some way with Davis Contractors Pty. Ltd., which is operating in Scottville and which has also done contracting work for Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. Hornibrooks have also done contracting work for Mt. Isa Mines Ltd., so it seems to me that there is a possibility of some tie-up between Davis Contractors Pty. Ltd. and Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. and that, through its activities, Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. had an interest in the purchase of this mine.

(Time expired.)

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah) (11.45 a.m.): I find it difficult to appreciate the views expressed by hon. members opposite who wish to perpetuate the spirit that dominated the mine. We have heard so much about the constant stoppages at the Collinsville mine, which resulted in low output and very considerable losses in State revenue. It is the old sad story of State enterprise that we have experienced for so many years. We have had it in State butcher shops, State stations; we had it in the Peak Downs socialistic venture. At least one hon. member who has spoken was in agreement with the previous Government when they decided to close down that enterprise. We know that that type of undertaking is capable of some degree of efficiency only in countries where force is used, such as behind the Iron Curtain. No-one can say that the Collinsville miners were not given the most up-to-date equipment available. If they so desired the men had every opportunity to continue to work for the Government yet, not once, but many times, they were weighed in the balance and found wanting.

I am glad to have the opportunity to compliment the Minister on the action he took on this issue. It was the only action he could take in view of the attitude in the mine with which he was confronted from time to time. Had these men had a good record there may have been some justification for their present attitude, but their attitude while working in the mine was often an open defiance of law and common fairness. I cannot understand why hon. members opposite should be so desirous of continuing the Communist influence that operated at the mine. No-one here can deny that there has been that influence. It has been the policy upheld by the union at Collinsville over the years that has caused the losses. I am sure very few people in Queensland have much respect or sympathy for the Collinsville miners. Since the Minister

took action I have heard many people compliment him. Again in a letter I received this morning appreciation was expressed that at last the Minister had taken definite action. Does not the hon. member agree with a fair day's work for a fair day's pay? Does he want others to pay for the losses which could have been prevented? Would hon. members opposite like the losses incurred from time to time in the operations of the State coal mine to be deducted from the amounts spent in their electorates? Losses incurred in the past have meant that less money could be spent on public works throughout the State. The attitude adopted by hon. members opposite will receive little sympathy or support from the people of Queensland as a whole because they know the past record of the Collinsville employees. Everywhere people are complimenting the Minister on his action.

(Time expired.)

Dr. DELAMOTHE (Bowen) (11.50 a.m.): I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, that you have put a darg of five minutes on me because I could speak for five days.

At least some members of the Opposition should have gone to Collinsville during the last four or five months and acquainted themselves with what was happening there but the only representative of the Opposition who has been near Collinsville at any time this year is the mover of the motion and he arrived there one night and spent the whole of his time at the local Kremlin—

Mr. DONALD: I rise to a point of order. I ask the hon. member to withdraw that statement. I spent the whole of my time in Collinsville with respectable citizens of that town, members of the Australian Labour Party.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I accept the hon. member's explanation.

Mr. DONALD: I rise to a point of order—

Mr. SPEAKER: I must inform the hon. member for Bowen that when an hon. member declares that a statement is incorrect and asks that it be withdrawn, the hon. member must withdraw it.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I will withdraw in deference to your ruling, Mr. Speaker. Without wasting any further time I shall read from the report of the Royal Commission of February 1956. Obviously, the members of the Opposition have never read it so I will acquaint them with it. It reads—

"This leads us therefore to the last judgment which we have to make—that we believe that . . ."

They then stated that they thought there was some risk of future losses and concluded—

"If there was not considerable improvement by 30 June, 1957, and a reasonably profitable year not obtained by 30 June, 1958, we are of the opinion that the whole

matter should be raised once more to examine afresh the question of continuance or discontinuance of the mine either altogether or as a mechanised mine."

That was a Royal Commission that set the end of 1958 as the date by which profitable operations should be shown but this Government continued the operation of the mine in the face of that direct recommendation. They continued it for as long as they possibly could.

Let me inform hon. members of some of the losses. The accumulated loss from 1943 was £1,000,000, the equivalent of a subsidy to every man in the mine for every year of almost £5 a week. Do hon. members opposite expect the people of Queensland to go on carrying that for all time?

Dealing with production, in 1949 the man-shift production at Collinsville was 1.88 tons.

Mr. Donald: That is not right.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: The hon. member should quarrel with the Coal Board's report. In 1961 it was 1.86. The mover of the motion has quoted 23 tons, coal-face production. Of course it was; it was mechanised then. The Minister had introduced all sorts of improvements but in spite of them, the man-shift production dropped, compared with 1949.

According to the local miners' secretary 260 men were dismissed when the mine closed. The hon. member for Ipswich East has told us today that the number of miners unemployed is 74. That is not bad, is it? Those men need not be unemployed for one day because the manager of the Scottville mine made an offer to Mr. Millar, the miners' union President, to take them to Scottville for a third shift, and the offer was refused.

A month ago the union approached the mine manager and asked him if the offer was still open and he said, "Yes." They put it to the miners' union at Scottville and it was turned down. So nobody need talk to me about opportunities for employment. Hon. members opposite who talk about the Government's throwing employees to the wolves do not know what they are talking about. They have never been to Collinsville and know nothing about the situation.

(Time expired.)

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) (11.55 a.m.): It is quite clear that the Government have arranged the sale of the mine by regulation, instead of by an Act of Parliament, in order to stifle discussion on the subject. We have a Government of secret, hidden reports and a Government that believe in government by regulation. Despite the astounding statement by the Premier in 1956 that "it would be an economic tragedy to close the mine—it would be unthinkable to close the mine and deny industries their coal requirements.", we now find that the Government are happy to dispose of the assets of the people, under a hire-purchase, time-payment agreement, the terms

and conditions of which could not be bettered by any of the extravagant hire-purchase companies operating in Australia. The conditions of the purchase price of £202,000 are that payments be made of £50,000 on agreement, £2,000 within six months, a further £50,000 by 31 December, 1962, and a further £100,000 by two annual payments of £50,000 during each of the ensuing years, with a provision for payment of 2s. a ton on coal produced and sold in Australia. If all the coal produced is exported, the Government will not receive anything under the provision for payment of 2s. a ton. The sale of the branch railway should be fully debated in the House. Its sale for £2,000 amounts virtually to a gift. The item is included in the sale price of £202,000. The whole deal is a scandal and should be a matter for inquiry by the House. Opportunity should be given for a full debate on interest rates and general terms of the arrangement rather than a debate of this nature in which hon. members have only a few brief minutes to deal with this important subject.

The Government have sought much publicity over the transport of miners from Mt. Mulligan. The callous treatment of Collinsville workers is in direct contrast to their treatment of the Mt. Mulligan miners.

The Collinsville mine was closed on 16 April, 1961, five months ago. The association of the Minister for Mines with this cold-blooded disregard for the welfare and happiness of the 200 men and their families has certainly lost for him whatever reputation for fairness he may claim to have won. It is suspected that he may have fought against the closure of the mine but was overwhelmed by the Liberal members in the Government, in the same way as he was disciplined and silenced by Menzies and Holt after his heated outbursts against the Federal Government's neglect of Queensland.

It is interesting to note that one of the Government members who spoke so vehemently in favour of the Government's action accompanied the Minister for Mines on his very delightful trip round the world. I refer to the hon. member for Barambah.

Work does not stop with the takeover and sales of firms, businesses, and so on. Why then has work stopped at Collinsville? What has happened in regard to the sale of the coke works, advertised in "The Courier-Mail" of 22 April, 1961?

The company that bought the Collinsville mine is evidently doubtful about accepting the seniority rule of the union for the engagement of labour. I join with the hon. member for Ipswich East in warning the Government that there will certainly be serious industrial trouble if the policy of the union in that regard is not recognised by the employers. I am pleased to know that there will be a conference at the week-end between the company and the union. The policy of the union is that when a colliery closes and re-opens in

the future members should be re-employed in accordance with their original seniority basis. Apparently the Government are backing the company in a policy of selective employment and victimisation.

Neither I nor my party support the Communist Party, but as against the few communists on the Collinsville field there are hundreds of decent, good Australian people who are not communists. Because the Government and the company have a grudge against a few people the Government are allowing the company to persecute good Australian citizens. Because these people upset the quiet and peace of the Cabinet meeting in Bowen they incurred the wrath of the Liberals who in turn forced the Minister to decide to close the mine. The whole matter calls for a thorough investigation. The secrecy surrounding the deal is typical of the secrecy maintained with other actions of the Government. The mine workers of Collinsville have a splendid record of production per man-shift, and their good industrial record has not been challenged by any Government member. The hon. member for Ipswich East gave the production figures and spoke of the record of these men. Because of the actions of a few communists that may have been on the field the Government have seen fit to persecute hundreds of other people and to grant a considerable concession to the purchasing company.

(Time expired.)

Mr. JONES (Callide) (12 noon): I support the recommendation that the Minister made for the closure of the Collinsville mine. As has been mentioned by previous Government speakers, hon. members opposite have not gone into this matter as closely as they should. As a member of the Minister's Mining Committee I have travelled this State. I applaud the Minister's actions. He has given a great deal of thought to all matters concerning his department, and I congratulate him on his handling of this matter. I believe that the Committee today should realise that it was the influence exerted by certain people in that area that prompted the Minister to make this recommendation. I know that because I was associated with the Minister. The only other State mine is in my electorate. I was with the Minister when he talked with the miners at Ogmore.

Mr. Houston: There are no Communists in Ogmore.

Mr. JONES: We have many decent miners at Ogmore. I went there with the Minister and officers of his department, and the Minister talked to the men. Things have improved at the Ogmore mine. It is true that the mine was working at a loss, but I am pleased to say that since the beginning of this financial year a satisfactory profit has been made and production has been stepped up.

Ogmore is an independent community and may be compared with Collinsville where the people depend on the mine. There are

100 men employed at the Ogmore mine, but they have a totally different outlook from the miners in Collinsville. As the Minister interjected, there are a fine lot of people in Ogmore, with a great community spirit. When we were there we saw the Minister open a beautiful community building, built voluntarily by the people in the district and the men in the mine. Everyone there is justifiably proud of it. Many of their wives are members of the Country Women's Association. They are playing a very important part.

Mr. SPEAKER: I trust that the hon. member will tie his remarks up with the motion.

Mr. JONES: It is important that the Committee should realise the difference between Ogmore and Collinsville. I have been in both areas with the Minister. I impress on the Committee that in the Collinsville area there is a certain section of the people with whom hon. members opposite associate.

The previous speaker made a threat. He said that there would be trouble looming in the Collinsville district.

Mr. DAVIES: I rise to a point of order. My words were not a threat. I am not the secretary of the union or an official of the union. I issued a warning to the Minister.

Mr. JONES: That is my point. The hon. member stated that we could look for trouble in the Collinsville area when the new company took over. I say in reply to members of the Opposition that the Minister has had the courage to bring recommendations to the Government that have been approved and that the people of the State have applauded him.

(Time expired.)

Mr. WINDSOR (Ithaca) (12.5 p.m.): I support the Minister for laying the Order in Council for the sale of this mine on the table of the House. Hon. members opposite have memories that must go back a couple of years when the Minister brought the miners from Mt. Mulligan and paid all their expenses to rehabilitate them at Collinsville. Many a time the hon. member for Ipswich East has complimented the Minister on the pensions scheme, yet today he says we are not interested.

What is wrong with industry today is that we have stand-over men and professional saboteurs who are trying to sabotage every one of our important industries. The Collinsville State Coal Mine is not the only one that has been sabotaged. Look at Mort's Dock, where 700 men have been put out of action. When they break the back of the company they start squealing to the Industrial Court and want all the help they can get.

In the Army a self-inflicted wound was punishable almost by death. Offenders were court-martialled and treated as traitors and cowards. People who allow stand-over men

and saboteurs to hold a gun at their heads and pull the trigger do not deserve any sympathy from decent Australians. Every time an industry in this country is sabotaged and destroyed, there is great rejoicing in Moscow as well as in the ranks of the A.L.P.

Look at what happened to our shipping trade. In 1945 Australia's shipping industry had the world at its feet—it was the cheapest form of transport in the country—but it was sabotaged and today there is hardly a harbour in the State handling a ship. And why? Because they brought about its suicide.

I heartily support the Minister on the sale of the Collinsville mine. People who inflict wounds on themselves do not deserve sympathy. I have no time for them, and I am going to do my darndest to put this country where it should be. Let us fight for what is right and let us see that those who deserve punishment are punished.

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (12.8 p.m.): I refrained from entering the debate earlier because I was anxious that hon. members more intimately associated with the matter should speak first; but if I did not speak at all my motives might be misconstrued.

I want to indicate very definitely that the Opposition object on several grounds to the disposal of the Collinsville State Coal Mine. Firstly we object to the fact that an Order in Council has been the instrument chosen to permit of the debate of the subject in the Parliament. If it was necessary to incorporate the Mt. Isa agreement in a special Bill to enable us to speak on it for a reasonable length of time, it is equally important to have ample time to debate this matter. An important principle is at stake and it should be as thoroughly debated and equal opportunity afforded to examine it dispassionately.

I regret very much indeed that the hon. member for Bowen has cast serious and wrong aspersions on the hon. member for Ipswich East, who is well known for his close affiliation with the Miners' Union and for his anti-Communist activities ever since he has been connected with the industry.

Mr. Evans: Oh, I am not too sure of that.

Mr. DUGGAN: Again I object very strongly on this matter. The Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity has the last say, and for a quarter of an hour, and already he has indicated that he has doubts about a member, which I regard as an extremely offensive statement. If the Minister, who has the capacity to argue, cannot argue the facts of the case without casting aspersions on the loyalty of these people, then he has no right to his portfolio. That is shown in the correspondence which discloses that he

said the mine had been sold when the Acting Premier said the matter had not been discussed. What right has an irresponsible Minister to say that he can dispose of an important State asset when Cabinet approval has not been obtained? What is the use of bringing the matter before Parliament? If an irresponsible Minister can indicate to the public that a State asset has been sold when the matter has not been discussed by Parliament, one can understand why the Government have treated contemptuously the powers of Parliament by bringing in the ratifying authority in a way that restricts us to five minutes each in debating it? What I object to particularly—this is quite apart from the merits of the proposal put forward by the mover of the motion—is that this is only one of the phases of the Government's action, since coming into power, of deliberately and premeditatedly selling the State's assets. They have sold on a freehold basis land belonging to the State to speculator people who will give some money to the Crown for some purpose. They have been doing that consistently. The Treasurer has got rid of our trust funds that were in credit and they have sold valuable assets of the State.

No doubt the Minister will say that they offered the mine to the miners for nothing. What right has a Minister of the Crown to offer a State asset to people for nothing if he accepts that the mine has a minimum value of £200,000? What right has he to make a cheap political gesture by offering it to anybody for nothing, knowing full well that it will be contemptuously rejected?

Mr. Armstrong: It was not much of an asset.

Mr. DUGGAN: If it is not much of an asset, why was it sold for £200,000?

Mr. Armstrong interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: Why did not the hon. member get up and talk about it? It is significant, also, when the Government talk about all these financial losses, that £301,000 of those losses has been accumulated during the four years in office of this Government, the Government that were going to promote industrial stability and see that good relations existed between employer and employee. All I can say is that, because of pique, because of their insensate lust for power, and because of their desire progressively to dispossess the State of valuable assets, they have sold a mine that has made a very important contribution to the economy of the State. When considering losses, we should remember that the Railway Department bought its coal at a 5 per cent. discount for many years. The Collinsville mine was sold by the marketing authorities to sell its coal at 5s. 8d. a ton less than the price at the adjoining mine.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: Why is not the hon. member a member of the Liberal Party? I

protest because we have not had an opportunity to have a full-scale debate on this question; I protest against the way in which the sale was negotiated; I protest against the loading of the terms of the sale in favour of the company; and I say that the terms of the agreement have not been fully observed in consultation with the unions. For these and many other reasons the Opposition supports the motion moved by the hon. member for Ipswich East.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (12.13 p.m.): In the few minutes still available, I should like to add my voice to the protest registered by hon. members on this side of the House against the sale of the Collinsville State coal mine. To indicate how weak the Government's case is, four Government members have spoken in the debate, knowing very little about the matter and merely utilising the time available.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LLOYD: They have not spoken against the argument put forward by the hon. member for Ipswich East. Let the Minister make this a debate in which he can argue with the hon. member for Ipswich East whether the mine should have been sold. The Minister knows as well as I do that this was a pre-meditated action on the part of his Government. Instead of being insulting to hon. members on this side of the House, let him answer the question whether there was some consultation with Mount Isa Mines Limited before Cabinet went to Bowen and announced that the mine would be closed.

As the Leader of the Opposition said, £300,000 of the £900,000 loss during the whole history of the mine has occurred during the four years in office of the present Government. Instead of destroying the credit of the workers, let the Government examine their own administration to see whether the management has been the cause of closing down a mine employing 260 men and, as a consequence, putting some thousands of people in the district out of work.

(Time expired.)

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity) (12.15 p.m.), in reply: We know that the Leader of the Opposition has to do what he is told whether it is right or wrong, wise or unwise. We are a body of business men who have conducted our own businesses successfully. No State, no company or no person can run a concern successfully if losses are incurred year by year. When we analysed the position at Collinsville it was very clear why the losses were occurring. When I was appointed Minister in charge of mines I did everything possible. I have received commendations from the Leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for Maryborough, and half a dozen from the hon. member for Ipswich East, for doing what

the Labour Party was not game or allowed to do. After the disaster at Collinsville the widows were not even granted the miners' pension, but I altered that. I did everything I possibly could to bring about goodwill, but hon. members opposite would not know what that was.

The Leader of the Opposition said that more losses were incurred since we have been in office. Of course there have been losses. Prior to our Government taking over there was an explosion in the mine, owing to negligence to some extent, in which seven men were killed. All the mechanisation was covered with dirt by that explosion. I set about putting men onto non-productive work to rehabilitate the machinery. It was all working in January this year, and that is when the trouble started. I do not want interjections; I listened to hon. members opposite when they were speaking. When the contract miners were working in No. 2 tunnel it was usual for them to knock off at 11 a.m. but the surface men had to keep on working. Was not that the darg? Of course it was the darg. Immediately the mine was mechanised and the contract miners ceased they set a darg again where I was putting a tunnel to produce cheap coal. They refused to work. Let me give hon. members the story about what really happened. Hon. members opposite know as well as I do that they decided to strike on temperatures. I met Mr. Millar, the Com. I said, "Why not refer it, as the award says, to the Inspector of Coal Mines?" We referred it to the Inspector of Coal Mines and he agreed with the ruling of the manager of the mine. Mr. Millar said, "I won't accept his ruling." They went on strike. I said to him, "The Coal Reference Board can deal with this matter. Send your men back to work and if the Coal Reference Board disagrees with the ruling I will pay overtime." He said, "I don't want any b—— Coal Reference Board. We and my party—the Communist Party—make the decisions in Collinsville." He said that in front of five witnesses. He walked out as he said, "We make the decisions." I took action to move the Coal Reference Board but on the day the board was to hear the dispute Mr. Millar was not available. He went to Collinsville and sent the men back to work under the same conditions. He came to Bowen and the miners marched up and down the streets in that town. We took no objection to that. The Premier and I discussed the matter. There were 30 deputations. We met a delegation from the Collinsville miners first and told them what we had done. We talked of retrenchment. "Bluey" Millar knew about it; he had met me a dozen times. He pleaded with me to delay the retrenching until he could arrange for the single men to be sent to other areas. He asked for a month, and then six weeks, and I agreed to six weeks. He agreed to suggest that all men who were eligible should take long-service leave. He then went to the Press and said that we wanted to sack

the single men. What we did was to act on his recommendation and we have witnesses to that. We told the deputation that day that we had work for the men. The chairman of the Bowen Shire Council was there; the hon. member for Bowen was there. We told them we had work for them and they left us, we thought, satisfied that work would be found pending the opening of the meatworks and the commencement of the sugar season. We offered to give them the mine because every time we met them they talked about nationalisation. They said, "We will tell you how to run it." All the Premier and I said was, "We will let you run it; we will let you have it." What did they say? "We can't run it under the capitalistic system."

Now hon. members opposite are growling and whinging because we have sold it, and have done something with what the miners of Collinsville said was worth nothing. They said they would not have it on a shovel and we have £200,000 plus 2s. a ton for 10 years plus 6d. per ton royalty.

Mr. Duggan: Why did you not bring it before the House? Why should you offer to give it away for nothing?

Mr. EVANS: The Leader of the Opposition says, "Why did we not bring it before the House?" Let me remind hon. members of the State sawmills, the butcher shops, and the State stations on which they lost £4,500,000. The Leader of the Opposition was in the House then. Did they bring that before the House? No! Right or wrong, wise or unwise, away they went, because they lost £4,500,000 on them.

An Opposition Member: Why should you sell the people's assets?

Mr. EVANS: Hon. members opposite say, "Why sell the people's assets?" Our attitude on that is very definite. We protect the people's assets, and we are not going to allow a bunch of "Coms." to lose any more money in Queensland. They have lost £1,000,000 up to date. If hon. members opposite wish to protect that type of fellow, if they are desirous of running an asset that will lose £1,000,000 they will never finish on this side of the House.

Now let me deal with the Communist convoy. A convoy came down from Collinsville sponsored to a great extent by hon. members opposite. It was sponsored by them in the various places through which it passed.

Mr. Lloyd: That is not right.

Mr. EVANS: These are facts. They came to Ipswich and the hon. member for Ipswich East met them.

Mr. DONALD: I rise to point of order. I do not mind criticism and I do not mind argument, but I hate untruth. Apparently the Minister has nothing but untruths. I did not meet a convoy that came from Collinsville or anywhere else.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Minister to accept the hon. member's statement.

Mr. EVANS: I accept the statement that the hon. member did not meet them, but the Deputy Leader conducted them through the House.

Mr. LLOYD: I rise to a point of order. The Minister is obviously stalling for time. However, I shall give him the satisfaction of denying the fact that I conducted them through the House. I did meet a delegation from the Miners' Union at Parliament House which it was my prerogative to do.

Mr. EVANS: He admits that, Mr. Speaker. The convoy did go to Rockhampton and Mackay and A.L.P. members were asked to billet them. They said, "We will billet any A.L.P. member." But how many A.L.P. members were in the convoy—only one, the rest being communists.

Mr. Lloyd interjected.

Mr. EVANS: The hon. member met them and mixed with them. If he chooses to fly with crows, he has to take the risk of being shot at. The Comms. got into Collinsville and wrecked it. They did everything in their power to prevent our making profits. After the mine was mechanised it did make a profit, but the Comms. would not work; they decided they would not let the Government make a profit. They instituted a darg, slowed down the work and held stop-work meetings. As they were determined that no profits would be made, there was no alternative to the action taken. It was not a matter of my being guided by the Liberal Party or the Country Party. My action was dictated by common sense and it was taken to protect the people of Queensland whose assets the Government are controlling. We have been applauded from one end of Queensland to the other. I have letters in my pocket from 20 women in Collinsville.

Mr. Duggan: Read them out.

Mr. EVANS: I will not. Hon. members opposite would then want me to table them so that these women could be crucified. They wrote pleading with me not to let the Comms. beat us, not to allow them to go back, and stating that we had to get rid of the rabble that was causing all the trouble. Hon. members opposite who in the past commended me and told me I had done a great job as Minister, today adopt the attitude that I should be subservient to people who endorse a foreign ideology, people who are more interested in Russia than they are in the decent people of Queensland. On the other hand, some hon. members opposite are very quiet. The hon. member for Ithaca, for instance, is not speaking today.

Mr. WINDSOR: I rise to a point of order. I am the hon. member for Ithaca.

Mr. EVANS: I am sorry. I meant the hon. member for Baroona.

Mr. Hanlon: If you had brought in a Bill we could have all spoken on it.

Mr. EVANS: The hon. member's father was a very capable man. He was a member of the Government that disposed of State stations. No Bill was brought in at that time, nor was there any justification to bring in a Bill on this occasion. The State was losing money because of the actions of the wreckers, the loafers and the men who put a darg on production. I make no apology for my recommendation to Cabinet and to my party, a recommendation that was endorsed unanimously. In their own hearts, hon. members opposite know that the action that has been taken is in the best interests of Queensland and the decent people of Collinsville.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Question—That the motion (Mr. Donald) be agreed to—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 25

Mr. Baxter	Mr. Inch
„ Bennett	„ Lloyd
„ Bromley	„ Mann
„ Burrows	„ Marsden
„ Byrne	„ Melloy
„ Davies	„ Newton
„ Dean	„ O'Donnell
„ Donald	„ Sherrington
„ Dufficy	„ Thackeray
„ Duggan	
„ Graham	Tellers:
„ Gunn	Mr. Tucker
„ Hanlon	„ Wallace
„ Houston	

NOES, 36

Mr. Beardmore	Mr. Madsen
„ Bjeike-Petersen	„ Morris
„ Camm	„ Müller
„ Campbell	„ Munro
„ Chalk	„ Nicklin
„ Coburn	Dr. Noble
Dr. Delamothe	Mr. Pilbeam
Mr. Evans	„ Pizzev
„ Ewan	„ Ramsden
„ Harrison	„ Richter
„ Hart	„ Row
„ Hiley	„ Sullivan
„ Hodges	„ T'vlor
„ Hooper	„ Wharton
„ Houghton	„ Windsor
„ Hughes	
„ Jones	Tellers:
„ Lonergan	Mr. Armstrong
„ Low	„ Tooth

Resolved in the negative.

SPECIAL OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENTAL LOANS

LAPSED MOTION

The following motion, standing in the name of Mr. Knox (Nundah), having been called—

“(1) That this House, being extremely conscious of the necessity to obtain capital to competently proceed with the full development of Australia and of Queensland, urges the Loan Council to give mature and sympathetic consideration to the raising of

special developmental loans overseas as distinct from the normal loan-raising programme, these special loans to be particularly applied to the extension of such items as electricity development, sewerage and water supplies and road development, the House being firmly of the opinion that the welfare of the country and the standard of amenities and the general health of the community would considerably benefit as a result of such use of this imported capital;”

“(2) That Mr. Speaker be requested to convey a copy of this resolution to the Right Honourable the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth for transmission to the Loan Council.”

and the hon. member not moving the motion, the House proceeded with the next business.

AUSTRALIA AND THE EUROPEAN COMMON MARKET

Mr. HARRISON (Logan) (12.37 p.m.): I move—

“(1) That this House, recognising the possible effects upon the economy of Australia should Great Britain, the traditional market for much of this country's primary produce, join the European Economic Community, strongly supports the Commonwealth Government's expressed attitude to this question, including the request of the Commonwealth that Australia be afforded the opportunity, during the negotiations between Great Britain and the member States of the community, to present representations for consideration by the parties;”

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

On 3 August, 1961, in the House of Commons, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom gained approval by 313 votes to 5, for the following motion that he had moved concerning the European Common Market—

“That this House supports the decision of Her Majesty's Government to make formal application under Article 237 of the Treaty of Rome in order to initiate negotiations to see if satisfactory arrangements can be made to meet the special interests of the United Kingdom, of the Commonwealth and of the European Free Trade Association; and further accepts the undertaking of Her Majesty's Government that no agreement affecting these special interests or involving British sovereignty will be entered into until it has been approved by this House after full consultation with other Commonwealth countries by whatever procedure they may generally agree.”

The decision by the United Kingdom to negotiate for admission to the European Economic Community has been described, correctly I believe, by the Prime Minister of Australia as—“a decision of enormous political, economic and historic importance for Great

Britain herself, for Europe, for the Commonwealth in general and Australia in particular, and for the world."

The step by Great Britain has aroused feelings of great anxiety in all Commonwealth countries and amount countless people as to its final outcome. These feelings of anxiety, I know, are shared to the full by all hon. members of this House.

In attempting to analyse the situation at this stage, it must be conceded that, until the present negotiations are concluded, the final outcome of the United Kingdom's application will remain very much a matter of conjecture. There are, however, some points that stand out clearly. Obviously the final decision to join the European Economic Community is one that must be made by Great Britain herself. The second point is that, through personal visits by senior British Ministers to each Commonwealth country, Great Britain has explained her position and sought the Commonwealth's views in return. The attitude taken by Australia was that a decision by the United Kingdom to join the European Economic Community must increasingly involve Great Britain not only in the economic policies of Europe but also in their political policies, resulting in a gradual weakening of her present Commonwealth ties and creating a serious threat to Australia's trade relations with the mother country.

Mr. Duncan Sandys, speaking for Great Britain, has given an assurance in these words—

"We have no thought of considering any proposals which would prevent Britain from continuing to play her full part in the affairs of the Commonwealth and the world. Special arrangements to protect the interests of Commonwealth countries would form part of the agreement between Britain and the 'Six,' if this could be concluded."

Despite this assurance, there exists in many quarters a grave misgiving that a grouping of strong European nations into one common economic unit must create a self-sufficiency in internal trade to the detriment of trading opportunities for the rest of the world. Mr. McEwen has pointed to this as a direct danger to world relationships, through the adoption of inward-looking instead of outward-looking policies.

In the joint statement issued after the talks with Mr. Sandys in Canberra, Australia has specially requested that when negotiations involving her export industries are being discussed, she should have an opportunity to be directly represented.

It is clear that, as a group, the present members of the European Economic Community, generally referred to as the Common Market or the "Six," have made spectacular progress in the industrial field, but in their first four years of existence they have not made the same progress in operating their agricultural programme. In this first four-year period it has become evident

that agreement on a common agricultural policy will prove to be the key to continued success and expansion of the Common Market idea, and important talks are about to take place to decide what steps should be attempted in the agricultural programme for the next four-year period. Since agriculture is a matter of such vital concern to the United Kingdom, it would appear that the recent almost unanimous decision in the House of Commons—313 to 5—was a timely move on the part of the United Kingdom to ensure that she put herself in a position to take a full part in the forthcoming Common Market talks, which will now have the additional responsibility of trying to hammer out an agricultural policy or programme acceptable to an enlarged group of nations.

Australia's chances of participating in these talks, as requested in this resolution, would seem to depend on the willingness of the negotiating members to agree to our request. It is very much to be hoped that Australia will be represented, preferably, I would suggest, in the person of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. John McEwen, who has long proved his ability as an able and courageous trade negotiator for Australia, and who has not hesitated to point out the dangerous position facing Australia. In the meantime the Commonwealth Government have set up a special committee of Ministers to watch every move on the Common Market situation, while the permanent heads of the Department of Trade and the Primary Industry Department have consulted closely with the representatives of all industries likely to be affected, before proceeding to London to present Australia's views prior to the opening of the negotiations that are shortly to take place.

The general consensus of opinion at the moment is that the United Kingdom will be hard put to succeed in negotiating terms of entry acceptable to herself, to her Commonwealth partners and to her partners in the European Free Trade Association, but that, nevertheless, for various compelling reasons she eventually will join the European Common Market.

For us, the implications of such a step are so far-reaching, and so devoid of any guarantee that the United Kingdom will succeed in obtaining the concessions she seeks, that we can only look at the situation with any sense of reality from the standpoint of the United Kingdom's finally accepting membership on the basis of full adherence to the terms of the Rome Treaty of 1957. From that standpoint only is it possible to make an estimate of the full effect upon our Queensland and Australian economy.

To be fair, in examining the background to this decision by the United Kingdom to seek membership of the Common Market, we can scarcely help feeling a certain amount of sympathy for the United Kingdom in wrestling with the problem when we take

into account the tremendous pressures which have been put on her by her natural reluctance to make a move that could seriously upset her relations with her Commonwealth partners and her partners in the E.F.T.A., and then set those against her concern about her own worsening position in world trade—Great Britain's share of expanding world trade has fallen in recent years from 22 per cent. to 17 per cent.—her concern about the fear of finding herself eventually shut off from trading with the whole Common Market group, and her concern about her involvement with the political pressures—in which no doubt the U.S.A. is involved—to create a strong, united Europe from the group of nations opposed to Communism.

I have a table here showing the relative strength of the present Common Market group, plus the United Kingdom, compared with Russia and compared with the U.S.A. The figures are taken from the London "Financial Times" and from the Common Market's own journal. I am not going to read all the figures but I point out that the population of the Common Market group, plus the United Kingdom, is 220,000,000. The United States of America has a population of 178,000,000, while Russia has almost the same, with 212,000,000. Another interesting point about the table concerns the imports of those countries. The imports into the Common Market group plus the United Kingdom represent 35 billion dollars, into U.S.A. only 15 billion dollars, and into Russia only 5 billion dollars. I would say that of the 35 billion dollars, representing the imports of the Common Market group plus the United Kingdom, the imports into the United Kingdom would predominate. The table shows that in every other respect the new European group would be potentially stronger than either America or Russia. The idea of European countries outside the communist influence combining in one group is not new, but up to the present the United Kingdom has been unwilling to join any bloc under terms that adversely affected her own agricultural interests and her agricultural arrangements with other Commonwealth countries.

Realising the significance of this the United Kingdom Government have, over a number of years, explored the possibility of joining the European Economic Community with agricultural products excluded.

Failing in this, she then tried to achieve her objective through the European Free Trade Association, which was established by the Stockholm Convention of 1959. The signatories there were the United Kingdom, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Austria and Portugal. Unfortunately, somehow or other this move to set up a free trade area in Europe has not proved to be entirely successful.

It is interesting to compare the fundamental difference between the European Free

Trade Association and the European Economic Community. I quote from some notes of the United Kingdom Trade Commissioner in Brisbane, Mr. Allen. He says—

"There are certain similarities and also certain vital differences between the policies of the two groups. The Free Trade Association like the Common Market, seeks progressively to reduce tariffs between member countries, and to abolish them by 1970. But, unlike the Six, the Seven have no proposals for a common tariff with outside countries. Each E.F.T.A. member is free to maintain such tariffs with the outside world as seem proper to its Government. That is why the aims of the E.F.T.A. do not conflict in any way with the principle of Commonwealth preference."

The European Free Trade Association is essentially a free trade area, not a customs area, and certainly not an economic union, while the European Common Market set up by the Treaty of Rome in 1957 and comprising France, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, is a straightout customs union between six nations, and calls as well for a common agricultural policy.

Although this agricultural policy is not yet decided in the common market group, it has been proposed that for a wide range of agricultural products, the internal market is to be regulated by—

1. Uniform guaranteed price levels throughout the community, which are likely to be well above world prices.
2. Levies imposed on imports, which will bring their price up to internal level.
3. Emergency use of quantitative restrictions against imports, if they reach volume likely to upset the internal price level.
4. Overall control of internal trading arrangements, by State trading instrumentalities to be set up by the community.

The effect of strict application of the Rome Treaty could mean the continued exclusion from the European Common Market of any large volume of Australian exports of food-stuffs.

Mr. Hilton: Did you say they wished to keep agricultural price levels above world prices?

Mr. HARRISON: The idea is to keep their own home prices above world prices.

The acceptance of these conditions without qualification would be disastrous to Australian primary industries. The question we have to ask ourselves now is just what particular Queensland export products are likely to be affected if the United Kingdom joins the common market group. The list includes—and it is a long one—butter, cheese, wheat, sugar, meats, minerals, canned fruit, apples, grain sorghum, barley, small seeds such as millet, panicum and canary seed, eggs and egg pulp, honey and plywood.

Mr. Hilton: What about fresh fruit, apples and pears?

Mr. HARRISON: I said, "canned fruit and fresh fruit"—particularly apples from Stanthorpe.

Although the proportion of Queensland's overseas exports going to the United Kingdom has decreased during recent years, the United Kingdom remains by far Queensland's biggest individual customer.

Queensland's trading position with the world is shown in the following interesting figures—

EXPORTS

In 1958-1959, total Queensland overseas exports were worth £170,000,000 of which 42 per cent. went to U.K., worth £72.8 million; 14.6 per cent. went to other Commonwealth countries, and 42.5 per cent. went to foreign countries.

IMPORTS

In 1958-1959, Queensland's total imports from overseas were worth £47,700,000 of which 44 per cent. came from the U.K., worth £21.2 million; 21 per cent. came from other Commonwealth countries, and 35 per cent. came from foreign countries.

The total value of all Queensland's exports, that is, overseas and interstate, in the same year, was £273,000,000, and total value of imports was £248,000,000, leaving a favourable visible balance of £25,000,000 for the year.

As primary products represent more than 80 per cent. of Queensland's total exports and 90 per cent. of our trade with the United Kingdom, we need to make a searching investigation of the position that will confront us if the United Kingdom finally enters the Common Market and becomes involved in a common agricultural policy based on preference for her European partners in place of the traditional trading privileges she now extends to her Commonwealth partners.

At present all our products enjoy the privilege extended universally to Commonwealth countries of duty-free entry into the United Kingdom market. In addition, most of them receive protection from foreign competition through preferential tariffs ranging from 5 per cent. to 20 per cent. ad valorem. By contrast, the terms of the Treaty of Rome call for a policy of support and heavy protection for the agricultural industries of its member countries. A transitional period has been suggested during which the present six members are expected to adjust their differing trade policies to a common level. By 1967 it is proposed that common external tariffs will apply, ranging from 20 per cent. to 28 per cent. for most products and up to the excessive rate of 80 per cent. for sugar.

With the eventual loss of our existing preferences on the United Kingdom market and the substitution of severe tariffs against us by all member nations of the Common Market, it looks inevitable that many of our primary products will no longer be able to find profitable markets either in the United Kingdom or in Europe.

Mr. Hilton: Is there evidence that the Common Market countries, including Great Britain when she joins, will be self-sufficient in all their requirements?

Mr. HARRISON: I will deal with that later, although I will not have time to do so today. Fortunately, wool and sheepskins are products that are expected to continue to enjoy free entry. In the limited time at my disposal in this debate, I could not possibly deal with all the remaining Queensland products that we normally export to the United Kingdom, and I have arranged with my good friend, the hon. member for Bowen, when seconding the resolution, to deal with certain products including sugar, meat and minerals. I am afraid time will not now permit me to embark on a detailed examination of the remaining Queensland export industries that are likely to be seriously affected if Great Britain enters the Common Market, until this debate is resumed next week.

At 2.15 p.m.,

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

DENTAL ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Chatsworth—Treasurer and Minister for Housing): 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 Dental Acts, 1902 to 1959, in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

PROPOSAL TO REVOKE DECLARATION OF LAND AS SCENIC AREA

HAYMAN ISLAND

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick—Minister for Agriculture and Forestry) (2.16 p.m.): I move—

"(1) That this House agrees that the proposal by the Governor in Council to revoke the setting apart and declaration of the land situated in the County of Herbert, Parish of Hook, Land Agent's District of Bowen containing an area of about 960 acres being Hayman Island situated in the South Pacific Ocean about one mile north-west from Hook Island as a Scenic Area, be carried out;

"(2) That Mr. Speaker convey a copy of this resolution to the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry for submission to His Excellency the Governor in Council."

For the benefit of those hon. members who may not have been present yesterday when I replied to a question on this subject perhaps I could reiterate part of what I said then. My remarks broadly trace the history of Hayman Island as a national park and what we propose to do by this resolution. Hayman Island was proclaimed a national park reserve on 10 October, 1941. It is situated in the Parish of Hook, contains an area of 960 acres, and is held under special lease tenure by Barrier Reef Islands Ltd. The lease is current to 31 October, 1971, being originally granted to a Mr. H. O. Hallam, for a term of 30 years, from 1 November, 1941. It was transferred to Barrier Reef Islands Ltd. on 9 July, 1948. At the time the special lease was transferred to this company, portion of the island was used for tourist purposes. There was some accommodation on the island which was taken over by the present lessees.

On tracing the history of the development of Hayman Island as a tourist attraction, I found from forestry files that on 6 July, 1947, the Government of the day, through the Lands Department, advised the company that when the nature and extent of structural and other improvements warranted it, a perpetual lease would be granted over certain areas. Hon. members will realise that tourists' facilities were considered at that time.

On 11 November, 1948, Barrier Reef Islands Ltd. applied for a perpetual lease over the major part of Hayman Island and a special lease over the remainder. It must be remembered, of course, that even at that time they had a special lease over the whole of the island. In December, 1949, the Surveyor-General, following discussions with the Director of the Tourist Bureau, considered that an area of about 35 acres, in which the major structural improvements were located, could be granted as a perpetual lease, and recommended the granting of a special lease over an additional area of about 148 acres to cover the dam and catchment area, pressure tanks, radio trunk line installation, wells, and 20 chains of tramline. In January, 1950, Cabinet approved of these recommendations and the company was notified of the decision on 11 April of that year.

On 31 December, 1954, the company was advised that, subject to its surrender of the existing lease, namely, Special Lease No. 12327, executive authority would be sought to excise from the national park the area of 31 acres granting the company a perpetual lease over it and a special lease of 150 acres. The company was advised also of the conditions that would apply to both leases, that is to say, to the perpetual lease and to the special lease. These covered tourist accommodation, provision of launches for cruising purposes and other matters affecting the welfare of tourists visiting the island.

Mr. Duggan: When was that?

Mr. MADSEN: Back in 1954. Of course, right from the beginning conditions had been

laid down—and they are on the file—but it was at that stage, apparently, that some definite move was made to have a portion of the island transferred to a perpetual lease and an area held as a special lease in conjunction with it.

On 29 January, 1958, the company made representations to the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation for an enlargement of the area proposed for perpetual lease and for the whole of the remainder of the island to be under special lease tenure to the company. They held it as a whole but asked for a bigger area than the 31 acres.

Mr. Lloyd: They have that as a perpetual lease now, have they?

Mr. MADSEN: No. They have none now. It is still a special lease.

It was stated that acceding to the request would give the company supervision over the land on which is situated its railway line, water storage, tanks, water catchment area and bulk oil tanks. At that stage they stressed the need to have the larger area to prevent pollution of the water catchment area. I want to enlarge on that later because that is a very important aspect of the matter. There is not very much water on the island and the company has to rely on a dam, which, I understand, holds about 12,000,000 gallons, to provide the water necessary for the tourist facilities.

In support of the company's request it was advanced that over £1,000,000 had been spent on making Hayman Island an up-to-date tourist resort and that additional large sums were to be spent in the future on expansion to take place over the larger area. I might mention here that it has been necessary to put the water tanks and oil tanks some distance away from the tourist accommodation, and of course the dam comes into the picture.

Further, it was advanced that special lease tenure offers insufficient security on which to borrow money and that this imposes a considerable strain on the other assets of the company.

Reference to the file over the period since 1948 indicates that facilities for tourists played an important part in the discussions between the Department of Public Lands and the company. In fact, conditions had been laid down whereby the company undertook to provide specified facilities. Anyone who perused the conditions would realise that the company had something to live up to.

It may not be out of place to mention here that there is only a relatively small area of flat land on the island and that on it the main accommodation blocks are erected. The main building improvements take up most of the flat land. The boundary now proposed for the perpetual lease of 225 acres is a horse-shoe-shaped ridge top enclosing this flat portion of the island. I feel sure hon. members will be able to visualise the flat area of land in the middle with a horseshoe-shaped ridge

running around it, providing a water shed at the back of the flat area. In that area, of course, is constructed the dam for water facilities. I suffer from the disadvantage that I have never visited the island but I have a very good map of it here.

Mr. Walsh: Why don't you invite a committee of the House to go up with you?

Mr. MADSEN: I should be very happy to accompany other hon. members.

Reports on file as to the terrain of the island state—

"With the exception of the 30-odd acres of flat land on which accommodation improvements have been effected, the balance of the island rises very steeply from the water's edge.

"In effect, the perpetual lease area encloses the only flat portion, plus watershed which provides water for the accommodation facilities.

"It is sparsely timbered with forest species, mainly poplar, gum and bloodwood, with very few areas of scrub.

"The terrain is mainly rocky with no valleys."

From what I can see of the map, it is a rather hilly little island, with a flat patch on the most southerly portion, the rest being rather rocky ridges.

The island is the most northerly of the Whitsunday group, and therefore its great tourist value lies in its proximity to the reef, which is a popular attraction for tourists. Again going on reports, it would appear that the island has been developed chiefly as a tourist resort from which tours are arranged to enable patrons to view the scenic beauty of the whole Whitsunday group.

The Forestry Department has spent a considerable sum of money on developing tracks, which I understand total about eight miles in length. Of course, in that type of country they are costly to put in, and they have to be maintained year after year. In the proposal before the House, certain qualifications are made in regard to existing tracks, and I shall deal with that aspect more fully a little later.

I believe that, without tourist facilities, the island offers very little other than the beach frontage to the hotel by way of scenic attractions. The little beach opening onto the flat area of about 30 acres is the most attractive part of the island. Those hon. members who have visited it will confirm, I think, that the remainder of the island is not very attractive and that the buildings are on the most scenic part of it.

The vegetation on the island is not very beautiful. Therefore one may well ask whether the cost to the Crown of maintenance of tracks, etc., on the island as a national park can be justified. After all, a great number of people visiting the island

do so through the tourist centre; so therefore, in effect, the company is getting the advantage of the tracks that have been developed and maintained by the Government.

Mr. Lloyd: In what year were all these island converted to national parks?

Mr. MADSEN: In the period from about 1936 to 1942. I understand that was done when the late Mr. Percy Pease was Secretary for Public Lands. I have the dates here, and I will give the details later. Some were converted as early as 1936, some in 1938, and others in 1941.

Mr. Lloyd: Has Ansett Airways still got an interest in Heron Island through Barrier Reef Airways?

Mr. MADSEN: I could not tell the hon. member that.

In proclaiming a national park, surely the essential consideration is not the location of the area but whether the area has the natural beauty or scientific interest that warrants its preservation. In building up our tourist industry, it is necessary that we provide areas where tourist resorts can be developed, and in this case it has been provided and can be extended still further without destroying any natural scenic beauty.

I might mention that it is reported on file that these people have done quite a lot of developmental work and have endeavoured to retain whatever natural beauty there is by saving trees, and so on. That is to their credit. In any case a company that is endeavouring to get some return on capital invested surely is not going to destroy the very thing that is going to attract visitors.

Mr. Burrows: Is this the original company or did it buy from a previous company?

Mr. MADSEN: The company bought it from Mr. Hallam who originally held the island under special lease.

It would be very interesting to know how many people visited the island before tourist facilities were provided. Certainly the figure would represent a minute proportion of the 8,000 folk who each spent an average of 13 days' holiday at Hayman last year. In addition to them, some 15,000 made day trips, the greater percentage utilising the tourist facilities available. Even though people may come only for the day they look forward to taking advantage of the facilities provided.

In revoking Hayman Island as a national park the people of Queensland will not be deprived of an island with natural features which cannot be preserved. There is not a lot that can be done. It is merely a matter of preserving its natural features. It is reasonable to assume that the company is anxious to retain all the natural attractions.

Mr. Graham: Will the granting of a perpetual lease deprive the public of the use of the island?

Mr. MADSEN: No. We are providing the necessary safeguards.

For the information of the House I would point out that there are 51 other islands in the Whitsundays, with a total area of 57,449 acres, all declared as national parks.

From recent Press publicity I think that members of the public may be under the impression that there is some implied intention on the part of the Government generally to alienate national parks and lean too heavily towards commercial interests. This company alone employs about 120 people on the island. If we are to have a great influx of tourists to the Queensland coast, if the coastal towns are to benefit from the tourist industry, and if the State is to benefit from the employment it will create, surely it is necessary to provide the necessary facilities.

Mr. Lloyd: How many acres are you giving them as perpetual lease—225?

Mr. MADSEN: Yes, and a special lease over the remainder, as they have at the present time.

Mr. Lloyd: That is disregarding the recommendation of the Conservator of Forests?

Mr. MADSEN: It is not a matter of disregarding it but a matter of living up to realities.

Mr. Lloyd: Would not your argument apply equally to Lamington National Park?

Mr. MADSEN: No.

Mr. Lloyd: For its development?

Mr. MADSEN: No. There would be few areas that would have the same terrain as Hayman Island with its steep slopes rising from the water's edge and only the one place where people can land. Where else would you get that type of terrain?

Mr. Lloyd: What is the difference in security for the company between one acre and 225 acres?

Mr. MADSEN: These people have an obligation to the public. For one thing, they have to see that they get pure water. That can be done only by having control of this area of land and seeing that there is no pollution. One could well understand what would happen if people were allowed to wander in thousands over the watershed. Would hon. members opposite like to see that?

Mr. Graham: How would it become polluted?

Mr. MADSEN: Apparently the hon. member for Mackay has never been outside a sewered area when he talks like that. If he went to one of these islands where there are no facilities he would understand what happens.

Mr. Hanlon: Does that mean that the public will be excluded? You said before that they would not be.

Mr. MADSEN: Naturally, the people are not going to walk off the tracks. We are excluding tracks from the lease so that they can be utilised. They will have the benefit of the tracks but, at the same time they will not be allowed to roam.

Mr. Graham: Does the same apply to the watershed?

Mr. MADSEN: Yes. The public will have free access to the tracks which will be protected in every possible way. The National Parks Section of the Forestry Department has never supplied facilities on this island—not water or toilet facilities. We must be fair about the facilities that have been made available to the public. There are islands where some of these facilities have been taken away completely because of a shortage of water. That is one of the great handicaps in regard to them.

Mr. Melloy: Will landing rights be restricted?

Mr. MADSEN: Landing rights will be preserved to the people. As I said, we will not lean too heavily towards commercial interests. A glance at the statistics will indicate that in recent years, the total area of national parks has been increased each year, which is a clear indication that the National Parks Association has reason to compliment the Government, that it has nothing to fear from the present administration.

The following figures of total National Park Reservation bear out my contention:—

30-6-1957	..	788,152 acres
30-6-1958	..	837,316 acres
30-6-1959	..	838,134 acres
30-6-1960	..	843,054 acres
30-6-1961	..	848,196 acres

From this it will be seen that under the present administration over 60,000 acres have been added to national parks, compared with 22,891 acres for the four years prior to our assumption of office. Who can suggest that we are robbing the people of national parks, when one sees that upward trend in the area reserved?

Walking-tracks and other amenities designed to encourage and facilitate the enjoyment of the visiting public have been maintained and extended. Between £40,000 and £50,000 a year has been spent in maintaining these facilities in our national parks. I do not think there is a member in the House who can complain. After all, when one is spending money and maintaining tracks that may be of advantage to others surely those others should accept that responsibility. That is what will happen in this case.

Mr. Walsh: That will not cost them much.

Mr. MADSEN: It will not cost them much in actual cash but it will cost them something to maintain the tracks. It has cost the Forestry Department between £1,000 and £1,400 a year to do it and it will at least save us that amount.

Should the House support the action to rescind this National Park Reservation the Land Administration Commission will be authorised to make the following offer to Barrier Reef Islands Ltd.—

(a) A perpetual country lease over an area of about 225 acres exclusive of an esplanade 1 chain wide fronting surveyed portion 1, parish of Hook.

That is the portion right in front of their buildings. There will be an esplanade 1 chain wide reserved there—

“ . . . and 3 chains elsewhere where the proposed lease fronts the sea, . . . Unfortunately, there are not too many flat places where people can land, as I mentioned earlier—

“ . . . and exclusive of all existing walking-tracks for a distance of 6 feet on the side of the centre line.”

The public will have complete freedom to use walking tracks on the perpetual lease.

Mr. Houston: What about any other tracks that may be put down on the perpetual lease?

Mr. MADSEN: That matter has not been considered. At least we are protecting the public in the use of tracks prepared by the Crown.

Mr. Dufficy: When is this matter going to be completed?

Mr. MADSEN: After the passing of the motion.

Mr. Dufficy: Will you be the authority?

Mr. MADSEN: No, it will be dealt with by the Department of Public Lands, once the motion is carried.

Mr. Dufficy: You cannot tell us what is going to happen.

Mr. MADSEN: Certain negotiations have preceded the motion. Negotiations have been going on since 1947.

Mr. Dufficy: If negotiations have been going on, why do you not take hon. members into your confidence and tell us what the Minister for Public Lands intends to do about this matter?

Mr. MADSEN: I have spoken of the preservation of tracks and the preservation and maintenance of buildings in accordance with the desires of the Tourist Bureau. I could take out the file and deal with all the requirements. They are set out in it.

Mr. Lloyd: Why has not the Minister for Public Lands been asked to second the motion?

Mr. MADSEN: Unfortunately he cannot be here.

Mr. Lloyd: That is most unfortunate.

Mr. MADSEN: Nevertheless I am certain that any suggestions made by hon. members opposite for improvement of the conditions of the lease will be considered fully by the Minister for Public Lands.

Mr. Hanlon: Public opinion is against you.

Mr. MADSEN: I do not agree. Unfortunately the public, in forming their opinion, have been misled. I must express some disappointment in that regard at the action of the metropolitan Press. After all, the Press prepared a sub-leader that more or less invited protests, but when action was taken to inform the public correctly of what we were endeavouring to do, the Press, as usual, did not print the letter. My detailed answer to a question yesterday on the subject was almost in line with what we endeavoured to put in the Press for the information of the public.

I venture the opinion that many of those who are protesting are doing so only because the area is a national park, forgetting, of course, that islands more or less en masse were declared to be national parks at a time when the number of tourists visiting the islands was not nearly as great as the number going there today. In other words, these islands were proclaimed as national parks, whether or not they conformed to the true concept of a national park, and the question is whether they should be held indefinitely as such.

Mr. Hanlon: The action does set a precedent.

Mr. MADSEN: I do not think so. After all, the granting to the company of a special lease over the whole of the island was a precedent in itself.

Mr. Walsh: There was a difference.

Mr. MADSEN: There may be a difference.

Mr. Walsh: A very big difference.

Mr. MADSEN: The hon. member may be able to tell us. I have no doubt that many of these things happened while he was Minister for Public Lands.

Mr. Muller: I will tell you the difference when I speak.

Mr. MADSEN: To return to the offer—

(a) The company will be required to give a written undertaking to maintain the forestry tracks in the perpetual lease.

(b) A special lease over the balance of the island exclusive of a three chain esplanade, for a term of 30 years.

Section 175C of the Land Acts provides for the granting of non-competitive country leases in these cases, but no provision is made for the conversion of these perpetual leases

to freeholding tenure for the reason that the relevant section provides that conditions may be imposed to ensure that the land will be used for tourist purposes. This is a positive safeguard against degazetted national parks areas subsequently leased for tourist purposes, to be acquired under freehold title for a use which would not conform with that initially envisaged. The conditions will ensure that the public get reasonable facilities and that the Crown asset is not wasted.

As at present, under special lease tenures, it will be provided in the special lease that the lessee shall not effect improvements without the consent of the Minister, shall maintain the existing walking tracks in good order and condition to the satisfaction of the Minister, and at all time allow the public free and unrestricted access along and over such tracks and esplanade.

Mr. Davies: Tourists will not be permitted to wander off the tracks through the bush?

Mr. MADSEN: In this rocky country which I have described, I should be surprised if anybody wanted to stray from the tracks.

In short the public interest and access will be suitably protected, within both the perpetual and special lease areas.

If the company fails to comply with the conditions at any time, the lease may be terminated. I commend this proposal with every confidence. If we are to develop this area as a tourist area, remembering the terrain of the country, and the difficulty of developing it, other than just the frontage where the buildings are, we must support this motion. I believe that the public interest has been well protected by the conditions laid down.

Mr. Graham: Is there any restriction on the company's disposing of the lease if they get it?

Mr. MADSEN: Yes, there will be restrictions.

Mr. Graham: You have not told us about them.

Mr. MADSEN: I could take all afternoon to tell the hon. member.

Mr. Graham: Well, take all afternoon.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MADSEN: The hon. member for Mackay was a member of the Government that was doing just what we are doing. There were many negotiations on the matter, but nothing definite was done, and now we are doing it. The only difference is that the area will be a little greater which will be an advantage to the people using the island.

Mr. Walsh: Are you right in saying that the previous government did nothing?

Mr. MADSEN: If they did anything, perhaps it was a little less than we are doing because they never reached a satisfactory arrangement.

Mr. Walsh: They initiated the whole thing.

Mr. MADSEN: There are copies of agreements, with conditions laid down, ready to be signed, which go right back to 1947. They are still there. All the principles were laid down in exactly the same way.

Mr. Hanlon: You gave Ansett what he wanted.

Mr. MADSEN: That will be determined by the Land Administration Board. I will not quote the figures because I am not certain of them. Naturally, that will be determined in the usual way under the Land Act. The rights of the public and the Crown property will be protected in every way. There are 51 islands in the group, and if we are to develop the area as a tourist attraction we must make provision for facilities.

Dr. DELAMOTHE (Bowen) (2.49 p.m.): From my personal knowledge of this area, extending over a very long period, I should like to clear up many of the misconceptions of the attractions of these areas that exist in the minds of the Opposition and the National Parks Association. One would imagine that, before entering into criticism, those who pretend to be in a position to criticise should at least have had a look at the island. I have known Hayman Island for over 30 years—in the days when there were no improvements on it. It was used by me and other week-end fishermen at Bowen as a staging place on the way to the Barrier Reef. In those days it was in its virgin state, and barren. Fronting it is a little strip of beach which runs out dry and which is attractive because it has a certain amount of reef on it. Rising steeply, the island was in those days covered in spear grass with a few scattered trees in open forest country. We used to go there because it is only a few days in the year that you can get out to the reef where it runs dry sufficiently to get out and walk around.

Mr. Davies: How does this affect the granting of the special lease?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: The hon. member for Maryborough will have the opportunity to make his own speech. I do not know whether he can learn but if he listens he might learn.

In due course a man named Hallam built a few huts on the island first of all for the convenience of those of us who went over there. In the middle thirties he enlarged the accommodation to what was in those days considered to be a tourist resort—more or less primitive huts with a central dining room.

Then came the war and the Air Force took it over for the duration. At the end of the war it was purchased by Ansett interests and since then they have developed it as the most unusual type of tourist resort in Australia. I have not seen all the resorts of Australia but in my peregrinations I have

seen most of them and I assure hon. members that this is one they should visit if they get the chance.

In the early stages Ansetts had no water supply on the island and water had to be carted from the mainland at great expense. Then an attempt was made to find underground water. Various spears were put down and they got a small supply of brackish water, which nowadays is used for septic and the lawn. Then they installed tanks to get the rainwater runoff. That was not enough and finally they had to spend a large sum of money on putting in a dam to keep the place supplied with water.

Originally the resort was designed as a millionaires' playground but it is far from that now. The American millionaires did not materialise. As a matter of fact, it was designed for 90 tourists and a staff of 120, so hon. members may imagine what it was like. It has been expanded since, and now it is one of the few places off the Queensland coast where ordinary people like us can go and enjoy a Barrier Reef holiday. In the course of the years the company has spent more than £1,500,000 on Hayman Island. At present they employ 120 people continuously, paying out £3,000 a week in wages. As a matter of interest, the tourist side of Ansetts' activities employs 7,000 people in Australia. At Proserpine, the jumping-off place for Hayman, they have spent almost £40,000 on improving the aerodrome and other facilities for the purposes of their island interest.

Mr. Lloyd: Are they going to put another hotel on this island?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: No, but they will expand. They have to expand: it is bursting at the seams. It is a resort that has the patronage of people such as you and me, Mr. Speaker. With that sort of investment, surely any wise investor would look for a more secure form of tenure than the company has at present. I do not think there is anything in that to be criticised.

Mr. Aikens: Have you got any shares in Ansett-A.N.A.?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: No.

Mr. Aikens: You cannot speak on anything in which you have a pecuniary interest.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: No. I have a pecuniary interest in nothing. I should like to deal now with the attractions of Hayman Island. Many of the letters appearing in the Press are written by misguided people who express opinions based on incorrect information. The attractions of Hayman Island are not natural attractions. Bush trees and spear grass are not an attraction, and the attractions of Hayman Island are something altogether different. It is certainly nature, and it is the study and practice of nature in its more adorned forms, that takes people to Hayman Island today.

Mr. Thackeray: I should say that you put that very nicely.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I thank the hon. member for the compliment. Some hon. members were very concerned about the tracks. I have been to Hayman Island a few times in recent years, and of the 8 miles of tracks, the only track that is used very much is from the end of the jetty to the bar at the Hayman resort. The majority of people not staying there who visit the island on launch trips from other tourist resorts call in for light refreshments—perhaps a cup of tea and a sandwich, or something like that—but they seldom walk up the steep hill just to see the view. They do not go there for that purpose. They go to have a look at the place and, as I say, to refresh themselves in the course of their trip round the islands.

Mr. Davies: Why worry about the rest of the island if the bar is the only attraction?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: It is a reason why we should not spend £1,500 of Government money on tracks that are not being used.

The National Parks Association has been worried that the Government are filching from it something of great beauty as a national park. I have tried to point out to hon. members that it does not resemble a national park as I imagine a national park in any one particular. Anything more truly unlike a national park would be hard to imagine. Only a stone's throw from Hayman Island is probably the most beautiful island off the Queensland coast—Whitsunday Island. It is not a tropical island; there are no waving palms and coconuts; but there is certainly bird life there. It is very large—27,000 acres as against Hayman Island's 960 acres—and I am one of the greatest advocates for keeping Whitsunday Island as a national park because it is what I imagine a national park ought to be. The same applies to Hook Island, which is 12,000 acres in area and which also is nearby. To me, it is what a national park ought to be. The Cumberland Group, of which Whitsunday is the largest island, consists of 57 islands of all sizes and shapes, comprising 57,000 acres in all. In the period between 1938 and 1940 the then Labour Government did what I consider to be a great disservice to the people of North Queensland in that almost in one fell swoop they suddenly declared all the islands off the coast to be national parks. Some of them certainly should have been so declared but it was a sheer waste of time in respect of many of them. Unless you were a bird you could not get onto islands like Armit, Eschelby and Double Cone. The only islands you can get onto are those where a launch can pull into a jetty. The rest of them are uninhabited. Many of them you could not possibly get onto unless you flew onto them. There might be good fishing around them but you could not get ashore. Throughout the years people have wanted

to develop tourist resorts on islands similar to Hayman but they have not been able to. I think it was an error on the part of the then Government that the gazettals were not discriminatory. Only the islands suitable for gazettal as national parks should have been included and the remainder left for those who were silly enough to take up special leaseholds.

Mr. Walsh: You would not say that Grassy Island would make a good national park?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: It would make a good tourist resort though. Boyd Lee used to be there. I could tell the hon. member a funny story about him. The effect of that blanket gazettal has been to prevent the development of some of the islands that were unsuitable for national parks as further tourist resorts.

Of course, the matter now has become of much greater moment because tourism has been developed so much in recent years. Everybody talks about visiting the Barrier Reef today. Everybody wants to go there although very few people ever see the actual reef because it is very hard to get there. They like to have a holiday on an island. The restricted number of islands that has been developed as tourist resorts has limited the number of people who can visit the area, apart from those who can cruise among the islands on launches. What hon. members opposite want, and what I want, is the largest number of people of ordinary means to be able to go to island resorts of the type that they can afford. Hayman and South Molle Islands are the principal ones in the area that are within the means of the person who can afford two or three weeks' holiday. That is evidenced by the large numbers of people who go there. We have to prepare in the near future for applications to be made for more of the islands to be thrown open as tourist resorts.

Mr. Sherrington: You mean this will start a chain reaction?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: No. I should say that, over a number of years, there would possibly be one or two applications. One has to look at the matter from the point of view of developing tourism and giving people from our own capital and other parts of Queensland the opportunity of an island holiday within their means. Hon. members opposite apparently want to declare them all and keep them declared national parks whether or not, in fact, they are national parks in the true meaning of the term.

Because of the nature of this island, the subject of the motion, and the fact that this company has made a very large investment there—

An Opposition Member: With a very large profit.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Maybe. Here is an example for southern interests who desire

to invest. Hayman Island provides a large measure of employment and there should not be any objection to giving them a secure title over the area on which their present resort is built, with room to expand and protect against pollution, water arrangements on which they have spent so much money. Nobody will be prevented from landing on the island, even in front of the resort, and nobody will be prevented from enjoying what there is to enjoy on the island or on the land the subject of the special lease.

The natural attractions of the place are nil. All the attractions are man-made, they are not provided by nature. We should encourage this company to provide amenities to attract people and money to Queensland, but we should consider other applications on their merit.

The industry is an expanding one. Sooner or later the present resorts will not be able to cater for all the tourists. If hon. members and the members of the National Parks Association were to look at this matter in a realistic way they would agree that the Government are not purloining anything of value to the people of Queensland.

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (3.9 p.m.): I had occasion to express the opinion on one occasion that if the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry were sitting as a judge in criminal jurisdiction and had sentenced a prisoner to be hanged, the prisoner would probably thank him very profusely for the very nice way in which the sentence had been passed. I think hon. members will agree that on almost every occasion that the Government find themselves in a sticky political situation they put forward the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry to state a case for them. They give him the job because of his very genial disposition, the disarming way in which he presents the proposals for the Government, and the way in which he invites co-operation from Opposition members. He assures us that suggestions put forward will receive his most earnest consideration, and we may be tempted to fall for his political blandishments. While the Opposition on this occasion reaffirms its views that he is a congenial and very courteous Minister and presents his case logically, I want to inform him that we do not intend to accept his invitation to put certain proposals before him for his consideration. To put his mind at rest on the matter and to remove any doubt as to the Opposition's attitude, I now inform him that we intend to vote against the motion.

There are several things that should be said, the first being that it is a matter for more than regret that in such an important political principle the Minister who will ultimately exercise administrative powers in this matter is not in the Chamber. I think the business of the House could easily have

been altered to allow of his being present. What is the use of an assurance from the Minister that certain things will be done when on his own admission all the powers and administrative responsibilities after the passage of the proposal will pass to another Minister? That is the point to which we take exception, because frankly we do not trust the Government. They have been guilty of repudiation of many of their promises from the public platform, not the least of which is land administration. If we accepted the principle that we can leave it to the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry because we like him, we would not have any guarantee that there would not be a Ministerial reshuffle consequent on the problems arising from the internal affairs of the coalition Government. There would be no guarantee that he would be administering the proposal. We can find confirmation of our views on the matter. At the time of the introduction of the consolidating Act dealing with these matters the hon. member for Fassifern who was then the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation was regarded as the most fearless and efficient Minister for Public Lands that one could wish to have. He had the complete confidence of his colleagues. Of course, when it did not suit their convenience to recognise his service and ability, they launched a very savage attack on him. Hon. members will recall the occasion when a series of Ministers attacked him.

But when he had to defend the coalition Government's land administration laws at their political convention, and we were informed by the newspapers that administration of land laws was going to be a hot political question at the convention, he, because of the bold and efficient way in which he was able to answer his critics, won a complete vote of confidence from the convention. He has been rewarded by being kicked downstairs, but his views on that occasion are worth repeating today because they represent the views of all people who have made a study of the subject. This is what the then Minister said, and this is the basis on which the matter should be resolved—

"It is laid down in the Bill that the cardinal principle to be observed in the management of national parks and scenic areas shall be the permanent preservation to the greatest possible extent of their natural condition. That is in conformity with the world-wide concept of national park administration."

That passage occurs at page 1074 of "Hansard" for 1959-1960.

Mr. Muller: I looked it up last night.

Mr. DUGGAN: That was the basis upon which his proposals were presented to Parliament and accepted. The main point of the Opposition was that Parliament should be fully acquainted with any alteration in

that policy, and he accepted a specific amendment to meet the wishes of the Opposition in the matter.

Mr. Muller: That is correct.

Mr. DUGGAN: A specific amendment to meet that requirement.

Mr. Muller: Requiring 14 days' notice.

Mr. DUGGAN: That is right.

Throughout the debate in "Hansard" at that time hon. members will find emphasis on this question of principle embodied in the hon. member's speech. There are so many excellent references to it by various speakers, that I believe they should be embodied in "Hansard" once more. The former Minister said—

"The Governor in Council may exclude from a State forest, national park, scenic area, or timber reserve land required for the provision of accommodation and recreational facilities for the purpose of encouraging and promoting the tourist industry. This conforms to existing law."

In other words, the law laid down by the Labour administration. Then later the Minister said—

"Part V, covering sections 40 to 43, deals with the management of national parks and scenic areas. In the management of national parks and scenic areas the cardinal principle to be observed shall be the preservation of such areas for all time in their natural conditions. This conforms to existing policy and the world-wide concept for such reservations. In closely observing this policy the department has received much praise from various national park authorities including those of the United States of America, where the national park ideal originated.

"I have a very great admiration for the work of the members of the National Parks Association. It is entirely voluntary and it is of great assistance to the department. While some members of the organisation may be inclined to carry their ideas a little far, one has to admire them for the great co-operation they have given in the past and are continuing to give."

We all concede that the members of the National Parks Association have done a very good job in the preservation of our natural and national assets. Because Mr. Kemp, the President of that Association, a very dedicated man, who has done much enthusiastic work with the members of his Association, has seen fit to exercise his rights to express his views in the Press, the present Minister for Agriculture and Forestry takes exception and says he has been misled. I do not think he and his members have been misled. We have been told that there is nothing wrong with the principle embodied in this proposal. There is a special lease which permitted these improvements to be erected on Hayman Island. It is not my purpose to criticise

the Ansett administration or any other private organisation that is operating on any of the islands. Some people saw the possibilities in these islands, they loved the places, and they wanted to make some contribution towards developing them. No doubt they were motivated by considerations of profit, as well as their love for them, and they decided to develop them along commercial lines. They thought there were great natural advantages attaching to Hayman Island and they set in motion a series of proposals that were examined by the then Government and ultimately they were given a special lease. The very term "special lease" indicates that there are special considerations, or special conditions, attaching to it. A special lease could include all the necessary obligations.

Mr. Aikens: And that the lease is granted for a special reason.

Mr. DUGGAN: Yes. It lays down, very properly, the reason for it, and also the obligations imposed under the terms of the lease.

The Minister was indicted by his own words when he spoke about the tremendous capital investment. He said that the special lease had approximately 10 years to run and that the company had spent £1,000,000. There was no suggestion of inadequate security, and no question of insufficient inducement to spend £1,000,000 of the shareholders' money on the venture. The Minister has certainly not taken us into his confidence and told us that they intend to spend another £2,000,000, £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 on the venture. But already there is a higher degree of capitalisation of the project on this island than of any other off the coast of Queensland, and that was done under a special lease. If the Minister was so concerned about this matter, what was there to prevent his coming into the Chamber today and saying, "Because the company has done such a good job and is anxious to embark on further capital expenditure, we are prepared to give it another 30 years' special lease." For that matter I would not have minded so much if he had said, "We will put the 30-year lease on the expiration of the existing term." But no, he makes it a perpetual lease.

What we are objecting to in particular is that, because we do not trust the Government, we have no guarantee that, if the special lease is converted to a perpetual lease, action will not be taken at some future time to freehold the area. They have already done that in so many cases. Under the land laws they have given people the opportunity to convert special leases into perpetual lease and they have given lessees of perpetual leases the opportunity to convert to freehold. So a very dangerous precedent is involved.

I think Ansetts have done a very good job there and I doubt whether many other organisations had the capital resources and

the know-how to develop the island into the tourist attraction that it undoubtedly is. I do not object to Ansetts' making a proposal to the Government but they have no responsibility to the people of Queensland. The only responsibility the managing director of Ansett Industries has is to his board of directors and to his shareholders, but in this matter the Government have a responsibility to all the people of Queensland, a far wider circle of people than the shareholders of any particular private company. So it is no good the Government's sheltering behind the proposal and saying it is absolutely essential that there should be an alteration in the present agreement. The facts themselves disclose without fear of successful refutation that over £1,000,000 has already been expended. I think that answers that aspect of the matter as succinctly as it needs to be answered.

We have seen this Government alienating Crown land and selling it on the ground that it accelerates development and makes money available. National parks represent a minute fraction of the total area of land in the State and the tendency in most countries is to acquire additional areas, not to alienate existing areas. I checked in the Parliamentary Library a few moments ago but I was not able to discover in which magazine or authority I read that recently in the United States President Kennedy made arrangements for Congress to purchase at an astronomical figure, a vast area of land along the seaboard. He arranged in the legislative enactment that the people in the areas could continue their operations on them but could not sell them or convert them in any way against the purposes for which the land is presently used. His argument was that there was no justification perhaps for the immediate alienation of the land but to protect the interest of those coming after us it was essential that action should be taken now. I do not want to get on to extraneous matters but, in the same way, the reason why the Government felt they could not take over the Southern Electric Authority undertaking at the time, was the amount of money involved in taking over and paying compensation. It was £3,000,000 when the agreement was introduced and it rose to £15,000,000 in 1958. The same argument will be used in all these cases. Once you start alienating land, if you want to re-acquire it at some subsequent date with improvements and so on, the figure becomes astronomical and you cannot finance the take-over, so you hand it over to private enterprise. Is there any guarantee that this sort of thing will not be extended to other areas? What is the position at Shute Bay, where the Government have spent about £500,000? I do not know whether the hon. member for Fassifern cares to express an opinion on it but he has the opportunity to do so. I should not be surprised to learn from him that he was not very enthusiastic about that proposal at the time, but the Government, for purely party political purposes,

decided to spend that sum of money. Then we have the Bingil Bay area. Because of the expenditure of £500,000, some people, including the Federal Treasurer, buy a piece of land, and the value of the land increases tremendously. Is there anything to suggest that on Conway Island, which is adjacent to Shute Bay, very selective residential sites will not be sold to finance some of these operations?

Mr. Graham: What about Lindeman?

Mr. DUGGAN: The same thing applies all over the place. As I say, if we could trust the Government, I would not mind; but I do not trust them, and I think that the public are entitled to protest very strongly about their actions in this instance.

I should also like to record in "Hansard" that when this Bill to which I referred originally was introduced by the then Minister for Public Lands, several Government members commended the Minister for his action in regard to national parks. The hon. member for Barambah, Mr. Bjelke-Petersen, gave the Minister full credit and said that it was desirable that these facilities should be extended. The hon. member for Sherwood, Mr. Herbert, said in his second reading speech—

"I suggest to the Minister that action be taken in the very near future to set aside areas for national parks and scenic reserves before the proposed main road goes right through the North Coast—in other words, before it is too late."

Throughout the debate reference was made to it, particularly by the then Minister.

I do not think it is necessary to spend a great deal of time in developing my argument, because the principles are quite clear. Any action proposed by Barrier Reef Islands could be taken under the terms of the existing legislation. The 30-year term did not prevent them from spending £1,000,000, and certainly no evidence has been placed before the Chamber that anything like that expenditure is contemplated on this occasion. There is no need for the Government to do anything further.

Let us suppose that this venture failed, as indeed it did for a time. It was only as a result of the writing down of losses, and so on, which a very large organisation such as Ansett Transport Industries were able to absorb, that it was able to keep going for a long period. Through the popularising of it, it has been able to break even. As the Minister said, because of the lowering of tariffs, 8,000 people go there annually for vacations and 15,000 for daily visits. But, suppose it should fail because of a recession, when people immediately close their pockets and say that a holiday is something that is desirable but not essential, and the assets begin to deteriorate. What will happen to the place then? There is no obligation on the Government—indeed, there is no financial power—to maintain parks and tracks and

things of that kind. I think the Crown has an obligation to make some contribution in this regard.

In all the circumstances, I believe that the Opposition is justified in taking the stand that it does. We commend the National Parks Association for what it has done, and I commend Mr. Kemp and the members of the Association for their vigilance. I think they are entitled to circularise members of Parliament and to use the columns of the Press to draw attention to this matter. Unfortunately, it seems to me that much of the advice of the Conservator of Forests has been ignored by the Government, because it appears that he thought something like 30 acres should be made available instead of 225 acres being alienated for these purposes. The reason why I say these people should be commended is because if we accept these things complacently, the Government, working on the assumption that it is only a nine days' wonder and that no action will be taken, will become a little bolder and will extend its other policies, and so on. If there is going to be any emphasis on it, why not sell the lot? The practice has started in regard to so much of our valuable land at present held under leasehold tenure. Why do the Government not continue the policy they started four years ago? We have been operating in Queensland now for over 100 years, but in the last four years more Crown land has been sold than in the remaining 96 years. In three or four years, by their reckless actions, the Government have disposed for all time of some of the assets of the State. Irrespective of parties we should not acquiesce in proposals of this kind. In every city in the world the cry is for more breathing space, for parks and the like. In this age of complexities, frustrations, high tension and great speed there is abundant justification for the taxpayers to be provided with havens of natural beauty.

Only a few nights ago I read about the effect of the introduction of certain insecticides in America. Following the spraying of fruit trees to destroy fruit fly infestation it was found that the swallows were decimated. A count showed that in one small area alone their numbers had been reduced from 541 to 46. The results of interference with the operations of the laws of nature can assume the proportion of a national calamity. Collectively the Opposition do not agree with proposals of this nature, and we have no hesitation in saying so. We make no attack on the proprietors of Hayman Island Hotel. I hear someone say "Not much." We made it abundantly clear that we are making no criticism of them at all. I am surprised at an interjection of that kind because I have made that point very clear. The company are entitled to submit any commercial proposal they like, but it is the Government of the day that must determine whether the commercial interests shall prevail or whether the public interest shall prevail. In this matter the public interest should

prevail. In any case Ansetts are not disqualified or disadvantaged by the operation of the existing conditions under which they have operated successfully in the past. As a matter of fact, when the proposal was canvassed originally the Government of the day were motivated by the fact that much of their material was coming from southern States. They undertook to transport materials from the South so that it would not interfere with our housing programme. It meant added cost to the company. Had we given approval for the use of local materials no doubt the work could have been completed at a lower cost than £1,000,000. But the cost did not deter them. I fully appreciate the action of the entrepreneurs outside. No doubt the Minister for Labour and Industry will say that people want this as security. They want it only because they know there has been a change of policy. What I am about to say, I say against the administration of the hon. member for Fassifern when he was Minister for Public Lands. Some of the land developers told me that they were quite happy to spend huge sums of money on land development schemes in Queensland under the provisions of Labour's land laws but they said quite frankly that if the people who lend money know that they can have a freehold tenure they naturally say, "If you can get a freehold tenure we will lend you the money more readily." Knowing that the Government's policy is the transfer of land from perpetual lease to freehold tenure, naturally they ask for that provision. That has been the deciding factor in so many cases. It is no use the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry or anyone else apologising for their policy by saying that private enterprise want it. They want it because they know the Government are vacillating and will meet their wishes. If there were a strong insistence on the preservation of the principle of perpetual lease they would continue with their developmental programmes. Our contentions about land tenure have been proved to be true. Right from the beginning we have been consistent. Our views have been supported by no less a person than the Prime Minister who has said that most of our present economic problem is caused by the land speculation boom. That is accelerated in a large measure by the actions of this Government in relation to Queensland, in encouraging these fancy developmental schemes with their fancy costs, giving an artificial value to land. It has been described by the Prime Minister as being one of the factors influencing the Commonwealth Government in introducing their controls last November. If these matters are traced back to the basis of the controls, the Labour Party's predictions have been confirmed by the result of the implementation of these policies.

Some other hon. members on this side have other points of view in relation to this matter and I do not want to engage in unnecessary repetition, but we are entitled to express our feelings on this very important principle. There has not been an

adequate presentation of the case and for the reasons I gave at the beginning of my speech I strongly object to the revocation of the declaration of these areas as national parks.

Mr. CAMM (Whitsunday) (3.36 p.m.): As the island in question is in my electorate I think I should take part in this debate. When we are considering the granting to Barrier Reef Islands Limited of a lease of 225 acres of Hayman Island—

Mr. Bromley: Are you in favour of giving away all the land up there?

Mr. CAMM: No, but I am in favour of giving people who are prepared to develop the land a chance to do it. The remainder of the island, comprising 735 acres will, under the proposal, be transferred from the control of the Forestry Department to the Lands Department. It is important to consider how this proposal will affect the remaining area of national parks that must be left for the benefit of the people.

Along the coastline from Mackay to Bowen there is an area of 127,882 acres reserved as national parks. It comprises most of the islands along the coast, numbering approximately 60. Someone remarked a while ago that a previous speaker had improved on the Minister's number of islands, but hon. members must realise that some of them are mere islets. There are, approximately 60 islands.

Mr. Walsh: You would not say that an officer had advised the Minister wrongly?

Mr. CAMM: I have been in the area long enough to know that there are approximately 60 islands in this locality. Inland and within easy driving distance of Mackay there are two large areas of tropical scrub land reserved for national parks, with a total area of 121,217 acres. That makes a total of 249,099 acres of land reserved as national park within a radius of 75 miles of Mackay in a segment bounded by a perpendicular northern line and a horizontal western line and the coast.

Mr. Graham interjected.

Mr. CAMM: If the hon. member is prepared to go up there and develop these islands I am in favour of giving him a special lease to do so. I have been there for 20 years and I say without hesitation that there are miles of this country that has never seen the foot of a white man, and never will, unless people are encouraged to spend money and develop areas where tourists can go. What is the good of having 250,000 acres of national parks if no-one can see it?

In the islands area the islands most commonly referred to as the Whitsunday group comprise Lindeman and Shaw group of 10 islands with an area of 8,697 acres. Whitsunday Island and six smaller islands, making seven areas, have an area of 32,342 acres. Hook Island and the Hayman group

consisting of six islands has an area of 13,814 acres. The Mølle group of nine areas, the greatest part of which is on the mainland has an area of 53,102 acres. This makes a very compact group of islands and coastal scrub area of 109,955 acres. I say quite confidently that the greater part of this area has not felt the feet of white men, and never will unless we encourage people who are prepared to invest their money and provide accommodation and amenities so that tourists may live in comfort and enjoy the beauty that undoubtedly exists there. If any hon. member opposite has never been to the area I issue a personal invitation to him to come up there and enjoy a holiday on one of the Whitsunday islands.

Mr. Bromley: At whose expense?

Mr. CAMM: He will have to pay his own expenses.

How can they adopt the attitude that these islands should be retained as national parks when they have never visited them. Why keep them as national parks if people are not going to visit them?

Mr. Bromley: Many of those islands are not national parks under the Act.

Mr. CAMM: They are. Everyone I mentioned is a national park.

Mr. Lloyd: What is wrong with that?

Mr. CAMM: I am quite in favour of it. Hayman Island is at the northern entrance to the Whitsunday Passage but as a natural attraction it would not be better than any island further south. As a matter of fact, it does not approach many of the other islands in natural beauty, although it has the same type of coastline and well-protected beach.

Let us go back a number of years, before the building of the magnificent Hayman Island tourist resort and let us consider some extracts from the report of the Queensland Tourist Development Board in 1947 on the tourist resources of Queensland and requirements for development. The report was presented to the then Premier of Queensland, the late Hon. E. M. Hanlon. It has this to say of the Whitsunday Islands (Hayman to Lindeman Island)—

“A group of Barrier Reef islands which presents great scope for tourist development is within close range of the Whitsunday Passage. These Whitsunday Passage islands are high islands and originally were part of the mainland, but most of them have fringing reefs of coral and in the vicinity of Hayman Island, not far from Hook Island, is a coral reef of about 1,000 acres in area.”

Irrespective of the tenure under which the island is held, the coral reef will still be there. It cannot be shifted. The report continues—

“These islands enjoy the great advantage of shelter from most heavy seas and high

winds of the Pacific Ocean, and form in themselves natural cruising waters of great interest.

“Hook Island, at present uninhabited, is a national park and offers considerable attractions to the interstate and overseas tourist. It may be regarded as a key point for tourist development. On the western side of the island are the picturesque inlets, Nara and Marcona, which are fiord-like in their appearance. They are well protected from most winds and weather; skirted by heavily timbered slopes of scenic beauty; and offer attractive sites for a modern tourist resort of the best type. The beaches are small and rubbly, but would provide good bathing; there are excellent walks on the hill sides and mountain sides if tracks were provided; good facilities for aquaplaning; magnificent views of the Whitsunday Passage; excellent taking-off points for Whitsunday Island cruises; and, generally, facilities for tourist enjoyment which commend themselves highly to us. In our opinion, a modern tourist hotel with safe bathing facilities, bowling greens, tennis courts, mountain walks, aquaplaning, and other sporting facilities, could be provided on sites which we inspected at the entrance to the inlets.”

Those would be Nara and Marcona. In that passage the report comments on the Whitsunday Islands of which Hayman is one, but it has not touched specifically on Hayman Island.

Mr. Bromley: Are you in favour of the revocation of the declaration of Hayman Island as a national park?

Mr. CAMM: Yes. That is why I am speaking. The report continues—

“Whitsunday Island, an uninhabited island, is a national park in the Whitsunday Passage; provides magnificent scenery similar to that on Hook; has an excellent anchorage at Cid Harbour, and an inlet of fiord-like character at Gulnare Inlet.

Cid Harbour, on Whitsunday Island, is an almost land-locked harbour of considerable extent and of great tourist interest. It is situated on the northern portion of Whitsunday Island and has long been regarded as a potential site for a modern tourist hotel. It enjoys, in common with other islands of the Great Barrier Reef, a magnificent winter climate, superior cruising within a 50-mile radius, a great variety of other islands to be visited, and an opportunity for a sea-plane landing-point in order to serve the island directly by air. It has on its shores several sites which could be selected for a modern tourist hotel and facilities for sports and bathing could be provided.”

This is a report by experts. If hon. members opposite have not been there they should listen to it because it will tell them what can be done.

Mr. Davies: The Minister has not been there. You are condemning him.

Mr. CAMM: No, I am not. The report continues—

“A start has been made on a small scale in developing, from a tourist point of view, some of the islands of the Whitsunday Passage.”

Hon. members opposite should listen to this—

“The efforts made on West Molle, South Molle, Hayman and Long are commendable in view of the difficulties which the proprietors have had to face, some of which are—

- Expensive, slow transport of goods;
- High cost of landing goods;
- Difficulty in landing passengers;
- Shortage of water (at times);
- Lack of business during the summer and wet seasons;
- Isolation, militating against retention of staff for domestic and other purposes.

The islands mentioned all have interesting scenic features and are within easy cruising distance of the beautiful Whitsunday Passage. The island operators have been hampered by shortage of capital, preventing them from giving the service which they themselves would desire to give. We are of the opinion that these, and other islands of the Whitsunday Passage, and adjoining islands, offer scope for tourist development.

Lindeman Island, the most southerly of this group, has been established as a tourist resort for nearly 20 years. The proprietors have shown commendable initiative and perseverance in transforming an unhabitated island to an attractive tourist resort.”

Mr. Walsh: Lindeman has been established over 20 years.

Mr. CAMM: Yes. This was the 1947 report. The hon. member can add 13 years to this. The report continues—

“They have recently erected, at their own expense, a landing-strip for the purpose of permitting planes to land on the island; they have provided their own launch services; and they have plans in hand for the extension of the buildings and for the installation of radio communication.”

I have read that report so that hon. members will realise that these experts, sponsored by the Government, were not much wrapped up in Hayman Island as a tourist resort. They said that the best resort would be either on Hook or—

Mr. Bromley: Will you give us the definition of a national park?

Mr. CAMM: The hon. member ought to know that for himself. A national park is land reserved for the people of this State where they can go and look at the beauties

of nature, or the land in its original state. What is the good of having a national park, in its natural state, if no-one can get there and look at it.

Mr. Bromley: Provided there is reasonable access.

Mr. CAMM: Who is to make the access?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. CAMM: The island resorts to which I have referred were mainly family undertakings and it is very pleasing to know that the resorts at South Molle, Happy Bay, and Lindeman, are still being developed by these families.

Mr. Hanlon: What happened to West Molle?

Mr. CAMM: It is not a tourist resort today. Hayman Island however, passed into the hands of Barrier Reef Islands Ltd., who, from the outset, set out to make it a show place for tourist attraction. They had to develop these islands as family concerns because other people would not come there to work. It was too far from the mainland. The families have stayed, and it is pleasing to know that second generations are on the islands. Hon. members opposite cannot convince me that people who have stayed there all these years, and looked after these islands, will do anything to spoil their natural beauty. Their very business existence depends on it.

Mr. Graham: Nothing you are saying justifies the Government's decision.

Mr. CAMM: I have not finished yet. I am just leading up to it.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I remind the hon. member for Whitsunday that he must address his remarks to the Chair. He is not obliged to take any notice of interjections.

Mr. CAMM: Thank you, Mr. Taylor, but I assure you I do not mind interjections. They just help to show me that hon. members opposite have a great deal to learn about the Whitsunday islands.

What a colossal amount of work and money has gone into making Hayman Island the tourist attraction that it is! It had no permanent water, and the provision of water was always one of its main problems. However, with the construction of an immense concrete dam, a colossal undertaking costing thousands of pounds, the problem has been overcome. Over £1,500,000 has been spent by the company up to date, and a further £200,000 expansion programme is contemplated.

Mr. Sherrington: They did all that on the special lease.

Mr. CAMM: Yes, and they will still do it on the perpetual lease. Today the resort employs on the island a permanent staff of

120. They have built their own school. It is staffed by the Department of Education but the building was provided by the proprietors of the island. At Proserpine, on the mainland, a staff of eight married adults and three single girls deals with the bookings and transport of the tourists. The total direct wages paid would be well in excess of £3,000 a week. Then there are the indirect benefits the industry brings to the town of Proserpine. The granting of the perpetual lease will considerably increase the company's payment of rates to the Proserpine Shire Council.

Mr. Aikens: Did you get a majority on Hayman Island?

Mr. CAMM: Absolutely. Proserpine has a first-class air terminal and sealed air-strip, mainly through the efforts of the company.

Mr. Walsh: Don't you give any credit to the Labour Government, who subsidised it?

Mr. CAMM: Of course! I did not say anything about that.

Mr. Walsh: You said it was mainly due to the efforts of Ansetts.

Mr. CAMM: I have never yet criticised a Labour administration. Air passengers arriving and departing mostly as tourists on Ansetts' own air service numbered 14,646 in 1959 and 14,844 in 1960. Of course, many tourists arrived by other planes and by coach, train and private cars. Surely a company that has brought so much benefit to a district and is prepared to invest so heavily in such an undertaking is entitled to some security of tenure of the land involved—land on which they have spent so much money and on which they have done so much for the tourist industry, not only their own island but the whole tourist industry in the Whitsunday area? When Hayman advertisements go out they refer to the whole of the Whitsunday islands. I am confident that any who rely for their living on the attractiveness and beauty of the islands will do nothing to spoil that natural beauty. Anything and everything that has been built or planted on Hayman Island has only enhanced its value as a tourist resort and enabled many people to see and appreciate the Whitsunday islands on the Barrier Reef who would not have ventured there had the accommodation and amenities been of a lower standard.

Mr. Bromley: In 1956 the President of the United States said that Queensland then under a Labour Government had the best system of national parks.

Mr. CAMM: Then he would say it even more today.

After all, the natural beauty in the shape and the rocky, craggy coastline of the island, its proximity to coral reefs, and its beautiful climate can never be destroyed or altered, and the granting of a new lease does not mean that any attractions will be lost. Rather, further improvements and attractions

will be added and there is still an area of over 1,000 acres nearby if anybody wants to explore and enjoy the bush in its natural state. I have resided in the area for 25 years. I have fished in the area every spare weekend, and I should say that only a handful of the tens of thousands of people who come to the area would want to go to Whitsunday Island and Hook Island and camp there. They want to stay where the buildings and the amenities are.

Mr. Walsh: The Minister for Labour and Industry does not agree with you.

Mr. CAMM: The Minister for Labour and Industry will speak for himself. Hayman Island is 18 miles from the coast, and for years it has been used as a staging point by anyone wanting to go fishing. One goes to Able Point and leaves by boat at about 4 o'clock for Hayman Island and goes to the Barrier Reef next day to fish. He returns the following day via Hayman. With the completion of the Shute Harbour Road and jetty, one will be able to go past North and South Molle, up between Hook Island and Whitsunday Island, and go through comparatively calm water towards the reef.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the £500,000 that had been spent on the Shute Harbour Road. I think that was the best investment ever made for the benefit of the tourist industry. It just shows how little hon. members opposite have studied the question when the Leader of the Opposition says there will be a move soon for allotments to be cut up for building purposes on Conway Island. I have lived in the area all my life, and the hon. member for Bowen has also been there for many years. I do not know of any Conway Island not far from Shute Harbour. It is non-existent.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. CAMM: Conway Range is about 22 miles down the road from Shute Harbour, and Conway Park is on Conway Peninsula.

Mr. Graham: He said Conway Park.

Mr. CAMM: He may have said that, but I thought he said Conway Island. It was mentioned a short time ago that visitors were not welcome on Hayman Island. I have been going there with fishing parties for a great number of years, and I have never once visited the island and been told that I was not welcome. If we went there in our old fishing clothes, we went round to the workers' canteen and had a few drinks. If we were on a trip and were dressed respectably, we were quite welcome to go into the hotel and have a few beers and a talk.

Reference has also been made to the American visitors to the island, and this brings to my mind that early in October a group of American tourists is hiring the "Esmeralda," a launch that goes round the

islands. This is not the first occasion on which it has been hired by American tourists. I had the pleasure of talking to one American woman who went on a similar trip, and she said that in all her years of travel she had never enjoyed a trip so much.

Mr. Bennett: Perhaps it was because you were there.

Mr. CAMM: Maybe it was. I did not know that I had that effect on her, but the hon. member may be right. The "Roylen," which goes out from Mackay, has also been hired by American tourists, and so have the boats on Hayman and Molle Islands. All the boats cruising round the Whitsunday Islands have been hired by Americans.

On one occasion a fishing party of which I was a member called at Hayman Island and asked the manager, Mr. Geoff Henderson from Brisbane, to go on the trip. In turn, he asked an American freelance journalist who had been working in Hong Kong to go with the party, and he came out and had a very enjoyable day's fishing. As a matter of fact, we caught so many fish that all he did was sit there with a movie camera and take pictures of the fish coming into the boat. What a wonderful advertisement for any tourist resort!

Mr. Aikens: You have to get down in the bottom of the boat to bait your hook.

Mr. CAMM: Yes, when there are sharks around.

As the representative of the area I heartily support the action of the Minister in granting a special lease to Barrier Reef Islands.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr. CAMM: Unfortunately, I did not get up to Hayman Island on my election campaign, but I have been invited to go there and enjoy the beauties of the Barrier Reef. If hon. members can get a week off I should be only too pleased to take them up with me.

Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (4 p.m.): I rise to make my position quite clear. I protest most violently at the motion in its present form, that is, the revocation of the declaration of Hayman Island as a national park. I do not offer any objection to the proposal affecting the portion of it that is being offered as a perpetual lease. I make that point because I am really aggrieved at the proposal in view of an assurance I gave the House when I brought down the Forestry Bill in 1959, which had a very direct bearing on the control of national parks. The Leader of the Opposition referred to some of the remarks I made on that occasion. I said a good deal in addition to what the Leader of the Opposition has quoted. The present proposal is a complete repudiation of the assurances I gave the House when dealing with that Bill. Therefore I think I should be failing in my duty if I did not make an effort to clarify the position. I told the House that I would

do everything humanly possible to jealously protect and guard the future of our national parks, particularly those parks within the Whitsunday Passage. We have to take a slightly different view of the parks on the Whitsunday Islands from those on the mainland. The Whitsunday Passage is recognised as the showplace of Australia, if not one of the showplaces of the world. As a matter of fact old sailors and tourists have told me that they have not seen anything to excel the beauty of the Whitsunday Islands. I have been on most of them. They are really miniature mountains in the sea although, of course, some of the islands are large. Some of them have no access unless you pull a boat alongside and then play the part of a goat and jump out on the rock and scale the mountain. Islands like Hayman, South Molle, Long and Lindeman have very fine beaches. I made it my duty to inspect the islands so that I might be able to deal with the many applications coming to me for possession of them.

Another very important principle was introduced in the 1959 legislation. There could not be revocation without a reference of the matter to Parliament. I made provision in the Bill for the Minister in charge of forestry at the time to give 14 clear days' notice before action was taken. The real reason for doing that was so that the people generally might have an opportunity to examine what was contemplated and thereafter raise any objection that they thought desirable.

Mr. Walsh: That was in the previous Act, too.

Mr. MULLER: It was not. The previous legislation provided only for the referring of the matter to Parliament before action could be taken. The last legislation was an addition to that, that 14 days' notice must be given and that, in my opinion, was very important. The Minister has complied with that provision of the Act and we have had 14 clear days' notice. There is another provision in the legislation dealing with a special type of perpetual lease. That was a further amendment of the Act.

Following its introduction during my period of office, we did offer perpetual leases to other islanders in the Whitsunday Passage, but none of them to the extent of 220 acres, with the one exception of Lindeman Island, the proprietor of which asked for a perpetual lease to cover an airstrip which they had built on the island. Provision was also made that this type of perpetual lease is not capable of being converted to freehold, but I want hon. members to realise very clearly that perpetual lease, so far as security is concerned, is as safe as freehold.

Neither the Government nor anybody else can resume perpetual lease any more than they can freehold, without compensation. Hon. members can disabuse their minds of the thought that it is only perpetual lease and that so-and-so can be done in the future. It cannot. The Government would have to

advance very strong reasons why it should be resumed just as has to be done with freehold. There is not a great deal of difference between perpetual lease and freehold.

I am not offering any violent objection to the granting of perpetual lease for the purpose of protecting the area on which these improvements are erected, but all the others got leases of about 15 to 20 acres. They got them to cover the areas on which improvements were erected. The point must be appreciated that there is not much land on any of these islands on which one can build or to any extent improve. In the other cases, the 15 to 20 acres covered them fully. I wish to be clear on the point, however, that there was one island of which an exception was made and it was done after I had inspected it. It was Lindeman Island.

When I made the inspection my attention was drawn to the fact that the means of access were very difficult—the waters were rough, and the only means of approach was from Mackay which meant a sail of about four hours. That, together with the rough water, did not encourage tourists to visit the island and the proprietors decided that they would build an airstrip right on top of the little mountain to which I previously referred.

I inspected the site. It was right on the mountain. One edge was over the sea, and the other where it would not affect tourists or anyone else. After inspecting it I made a recommendation that they be granted a perpetual lease for the building of this airstrip.

I can see no harm in doing that. I understand from the Minister's proposal today that this company want something similar for the purpose of building a dam. I do not know whether that argument can be the same because, on my knowledge of dam construction and the catchment area of a dam in that country—hard, rocky country—there could not possibly be any pollution and, if there is pollution in the ordinary way, with the tracks and the special lease, there will be pollution in the future unless people are kept right off the area.

On leaving the flat portion of Hayman Island the mountains, and the tracks, rise very sharply. Those tracks have been maintained by the Forestry Department over the years, and it appears that, with the revocation of this declaration they would revert to the control of the Lands Department. To my mind, there are dangers in this proposal. First of all, if it goes back to the Lands Department it opens the way for another form of tenure. All the other islands are national parks, and most of them are special leases. While the Forestry Department maintains those tracks the islands are open to the public but with revocation of the proclamation of the area as a national park it then reverts to the control of the Department of Public Lands. A special lease can

be interfered with at any time. Pressure can be brought to bear. The company will naturally ask for another form of lease and there is a possibility of its being granted. It can be converted to a perpetual lease. I am of the opinion that these people are wanting 225 acres for reasons other than the building of a dam. I know the water supply at Hayman Island is and always has been a problem, but the granting of a lease over 225 acres will not mean purer water. I would not quibble about the special lease over 225 acres if it was not for the fact that the whole of the island is going to be taken from the control of those charged with administering national parks.

I think the hon. member for Bowen mentioned the possibility within the next few years of applications for different forms of tenure for other islands. I feel quite sure they will be made. In my time as Minister I received a number of such applications, but I always resisted them. I did not even go to the extent of recommending that special leases be granted. The aspect I am hurt about and sad about is this: The moment we depart from present practice, revoke the proclamation and give this company a special lease of the whole of the island with perpetual lease of 225 acres, what can we do when the other proprietors come along with similar proposals? I cannot see how we could resist pressure from other people to grant what has been granted in this case.

The Ansett Company has done a very fine job. There is no-one in Australia for whom I have greater respect than Reg. Ansett, for the pioneering he has done and his piloting of the company through a difficult period. He has done a magnificent job. The tourist accommodation at Hayman Island is quite good. It has been referred to as "snob class" accommodation; other people say it is another class. In fact the company caters according to the pocket of the tourist. If he has plenty of money, it caters for him, and if he wants something at a lower tariff it still caters for him.

Mr. Melloy: They take all you have.

Mr. MULLER: If you are a tourist you are expected to spend a great deal of money.

The taking of this island from the people is a very serious matter. We cannot get away from the stark truth that if the company is given a perpetual lease of some of it, and a special lease of the remainder, it becomes the company's property. On the Minister's own admission the Forestry Department will not attend to the tracks. That will be the responsibility of the company.

I am not at all impressed with the other sob story about the beach and the esplanade being retained. The request for the esplanade was made years ago. The esplanades at Southport, Redcliffe and elsewhere have been retained, and there is nothing very

wonderful about that. Further, the jetty on this island I understand was built by the Proserpine Shire Council. The island is visited frequently on Sundays and at holiday time by people who, when they leave the jetty, are able to proceed down the esplanade and make use of the beach. If my interpretation of the lease is correct, visitors could move around the island only at the pleasure or goodwill of the company. I cannot see any other interpretation of the lease. I have been through the mill in the matter of special leases. They vary in many different ways. Some leases are granted for a special purpose. There are certain terms that can be set down in the conditions of contract and others that cannot. There is no telling. At any time a Minister may come into office and decide that because of the circumstances he should amend the lease and give the tenants better tenure. I know that at times we must look at national parks on the mainland—not so much on the islands, which should be left for posterity—to see if they are hindering development. We have no right to profit from the islands. They should be left for future generations. No-one should be allowed to gain control of them. However, the position is different on the mainland. Conway Park, which has been mentioned, covers over 48,000 acres. When I was Minister I permitted portion of it to be used to build a road to Shute Bay to serve the islands. Quite naturally the National Parks Association protested against my action, but it was in the interests of development. As the hon. member for Whitsunday said, we must provide for national development. At Shute Bay there was a suitable anchorage that we did not have elsewhere. It is a quiet, sheltered little place. When we put the road through we encroached on the national park, and to defray the cost of the road, I proposed to take some of the land adjacent to the road for subdivisional purposes. I could see nothing wrong with that. I was told by the National Parks Association that they did not object to the opening of the road, but they did object to this land being taken for sale. I did not think that was a very serious matter and I went on with it as far as I was permitted.

Then, there was the other proposal concerning the Great North Coast Road to Sunshine Beach, about which we hear so much today, and the national park at Mudjimba, where the air strip is built now. I found that it was necessary to encroach on that park for the construction of the road and the airstrip, but we substituted another piece of land which was more suitable, in my opinion, for park purposes. We cannot be stubborn about these things. If a national park is hindering development, we must look at it very carefully.

Mr. Gaven: You should have done something about The Spit.

Mr. MULLER: If I had had my way, that would have been done. That would be a matter of common sense.

I raise violent objection to the revocation of the declaration of this area as a national park because all the things mentioned in the proposal could be done without it. All the improvements could be effected without a perpetual lease. Let no-one be deluded into believing that these people cannot spend all their money on the necessary improvements for tourists on 225 acres. They could do it on less than half that area, and build a dam too. It would not alter the water-courses. The mountains are as steep as a wall. If they could find a suitable place for the dam it would not matter two hoots whether the balance of the area was held under perpetual lease, or special lease, or kept as a national park. The real principle behind this is the revocation of the declaration of this area as a national park. That is entirely wrong. If we give these people complete control of Hayman Island, what will we do with South Molle, which is controlled by the Bauer family who are doing a good job? They are entitled to similar treatment. We would have to consider Lindeman Island for the building of an airstrip. That is perpetual lease.

The argument for Lindeman Island is very much stronger than this because it must have an airstrip to give suitable access. Moreover, people come very long distances.

At one time Ansetts' talked about an airstrip but it would be wellnigh impossible to build one on Hayman. So we must be big enough to realise the tourist potential. If it is necessary to set aside enough land to enable the company to cater for tourists, I quite agree with it, but I do not agree that it is necessary to revoke the declaration of a national park simply to enable them to do what is proposed.

The Leader of the Opposition said he would not trust the Government. It is not a matter of trusting this Government; it is a matter of trusting any Government or any Minister. Sometimes they do not last very long. But while we are in office it is our responsibility and we should endeavour to see that it does not happen.

Some hon. members may not realise the view taken by people outside. The National Parks Association does a mighty job and in a voluntary capacity. It is a labour of love and we must appreciate it. The members of the association realise what these beauty spots mean even to tourists and, if we are really serious about protecting tourist resorts, the way to do it is not simply to alienate the land so that it can be passed on to other people and anything might happen.

There is another serious objection that I raised every time an application was made to me. I had numerous applications from people with overseas interests. We should consider security. If the land is alienated

it could at some time or other revert to alien control. Under the existing law an alien can hold land in Australia. He need not even be a resident of Australia. Anyone could gain control of islands like the Whitsunday Islands with protection behind them. They could be passed on to someone else and in the event of enemy action they could become dangerous. For the reasons I have given, I think I should be tumbling down in my job if I voted for the motion. Many people have applied to me in the past to get control of islands. Often I could not understand what value they would be to them. In many cases the money they would need to spend would return less than 1 per cent. on the investment.

If the argument is used that it must be done for tourist purposes, I absolutely differ with the contention. Given a reasonable area—200 acres or even less—they can provide all the tourist facilities needed. An island like Hayman should never fall from Crown control. The Minister says that control will pass to the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation. Nevertheless, when the motion is passed the land will cease to be a national park—it is in a danger area—and we should be establishing a precedent that will be very hard to resist if others ask for similar treatment. So I register my strong protest against the proposal. Perpetual lease is all right, but not the revocation of the declaration of the island as a national park. I propose to vote against it.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (4.25 p.m.): From what the hon. member for Fassifern said, this appears to be directly opposed to the Forestry Act that was introduced about 12 months ago. I think hon. members on this side of the House are in complete agreement with his remarks. It is a remarkable piece of legislation, because we are asked to give the Government power to transfer a national park from the control of the Conservator of Forests to the Department of Public Lands so that it can come under the provisions of the Lands Act. I am sure that the Minister is not sincere in putting forward his case in support of the legislation. Knowing him as well as I do, I am sure that pressure has been brought to bear on him.

The hon. member for Fassifern said that he might not have any objection to the transfer of portion of the island to perpetual leasehold tenure if the remainder stayed under the control of the Conservator of Forests as a national park area. I believe that that was the case he presented. Reading through the order for leave on the introduction of this legislation, we can see the dogmatic and stupid attitude that has been adopted by Government members in regard to the advice received from the Conservator of Forests. This question has not been given due consideration. Apparently the Conservator of Forests rejected the idea that 225 acres should be granted as perpetual leasehold.

Mr. Madsen: What would you say if the Conservator of Forests recommended the ratification?

Mr. LLOYD: I do not know that. As I understand it, the Conservator of Forests rejected the idea that it is necessary for the company to have 225 acres transferred to it on perpetual lease. His recommendation was that 31 acres was a sufficient area to cover all the improvements made by Ansett-A.N.A. and to give them the necessary security of tenure to enable them to raise the money to carry out improvements in the future. I think it is important that part of the recommendation of the Minister should go on record in "Hansard." He said—

"And whereas the Conservator of Forests has advised that he is opposed to the granting to the Company of a Perpetual Lease over the area of 225 acres as applied for and has recommended that the area of the proposed Perpetual Lease should not exceed an area of approximately 31 acres this being the area originally proposed for the purpose of the said Perpetual Lease comprising practically all the flat land on the Island and containing all the main improvements effected by the Company thereon and that in his opinion"—

this is most important when we consider that the Government are making the present proposal to us—

"further improvements works may impair the scenic attractions of the said Island and that should a larger area be granted under Perpetual Lease the objectives in reserving the said Island as a National Park or Scenic Area would be defeated as it would not be possible in such case for the Department of Forestry to manage effectively the balance of the area of the Island for the free and unrestricted use and enjoyment thereof by the public in accordance with the provision of 'The Forestry Act of 1959'."

He went on to say that if the Government persist in their proposal to grant a greater area than 31 acres to Barrier Reef Islands, the Conservator of Forests would then recommend that the whole of the island be taken out of his control because he could not possibly maintain the island as a national park under the proposal put before him by the Government. The Conservator's opinion was that the only alternative was to wash his hands of the matter altogether and place the responsibility with the Government and with the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation—in other words, to throw the whole of the island, which had been declared a national park in 1941, to the tender mercy of Barrier Reef Islands Ltd. to care for and maintain in the interests of the company.

What is the reason for the creation of a national park? There is only one. Any person with a knowledge of ecology knows that it is essential in the public interest that the Government should protect the land from

exploitation. Therefore it has become necessary in Queensland, on the recommendation of the Conservator of Forests, to declare from time to time additional areas of land as national parks. Areas have been declared national parks to prevent the destruction of the land for immediate profit return. But in their brief period of office the Government have indicated that all they are concerned with is immediate profit, not with the permanently recurring dividend to the people of Queensland. Private enterprise is not concerned with the permanently recurring dividend from the lands they destroy. Therefore, in the interests of the people, as far as we possibly can, with reasonable tolerance, we must protect national parks and scenic areas. The Government have given two reasons for the introduction of the motion. First of all, they say that the company have no security under the present tenure. They say that they cannot borrow money. But in the past Barrier Reef Islands borrowed money from the lending public, from Mt. Isa Mines Ltd., probably from the Adelaide Steamship Company and possibly from Ansett Airways themselves. They borrowed the necessary capital to expend £1,000,000. If they could do that in 1948 when the hotel was opened, when they had only the security of a 22 years' lease remaining, if they wished to enhance their present security surely the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry would listen to any argument that there should be a review of the lease under different conditions. I am surprised at the other excuse used by the Minister. He spoke about it costing the Conservator of Forests £1,200 a year to maintain the walks on the island in the interests of a private firm that has been utilising the tourist attractions of a national park to pay dividends to its shareholders. Certainly the company operated at a loss for a few years but apparently it is now a going concern paying dividends. It is surprising that the special lease originally granted did not contain provisions to force the company to maintain the many walks on the island.

Mr. Madsen: Whose fault was that?

Mr. LLOYD: The special lease was granted in 1941 but it was not until 1948 that Barrier Reef Islands decided to develop the island. May be there was some carelessness earlier but in 1948 there would have been an examination of the lease when permission was granted to the company to build on the island. At that time the Government were particularly anxious to provide all the necessary assistance to any company that would take advantage of the opportunity to provide improved tourist facilities in the area. Now that the concern is paying its way the position should be carefully examined again seeing that a profit is being made from the land owned by the people. The Government should have the power to carefully examine the lease again. If it is costing the Conservator of Forests £1,200 a year, surely

some responsibility should be thrown onto Barrier Reef Islands. I cannot understand the argument used by the Minister. If there is power under the present law to renew the lease or amend the existing lease, there is ample opportunity for the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry to negotiate with Barrier Reef Islands. There is no necessity for the whole 960 acres to be transferred to the control of the Department of Public Lands. Security is a very weak argument. I know that there is a proposal to build a new water supply. As the Minister has stated, there is a danger of pollution. There is an undertaking to be given by the Minister for Public Lands—at some time when he may be here—that the whole island will be available for public purposes. At the same time the Minister has stated that it is necessary to give a perpetual lease over 225 acres so that Barrier Reef Islands Ltd. can exercise some supervision over the public to prevent pollution of the water supply it has established. I believe the Government have ample power to force Barrier Reef Island Ltd. to provide the necessary toilet facilities, if that is the only argument. The transfer of this island from the Conservator of Forests to the Lands Department to my way of thinking places it under the Lands Act which provides an opportunity to all holders of perpetual leases to convert to freehold.

All we know is that the land is to be transferred from the Conservator of Forests under the Forestry Act to the Lands Department to be controlled under the Lands Act by the Commissioner for Lands. The Minister gives us an undertaking that when the transfer is effected there will be a perpetual lease drawn up giving ample opportunity to the Government to prevent the eventual transfer from perpetual lease to freehold tenure. That is not included in the resolution before us. It is hearsay. All we know is that it places the land within the scope of the Land Act and under that Act, there is opportunity given to any leaseholder to make application to convert to freehold.

The hon. member for Fassifern went right to the kernel of the matter when he said that it was all very well for the Minister to give an undertaking in face of the power that exists for conversion from leasehold to freehold. He cannot bind any other Government or Minister by directing them to reject an application by Barrier Reef Islands Ltd. for the conversion of Hayman Island from perpetual lease to freehold. We have an undertaking by the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry but we have no such undertaking from the Minister for Public Lands.

We know that the Conservator of Forests has refused to consider the transfer of more than 31 acres of Hayman Island from special lease to perpetual lease under the Lands Act. If the Government wished to give Barrier Reef Islands Ltd. a secure tenure to encourage them to expand, what is the difference

between 1 acre and 225 acres for security purposes? The only real security the company has on that island is its existing improvements—the hotel structure itself, which apparently cost £1,000,000. That is a substantial security on which to advance money, so 1 acre is no different from 225 acres, from the viewpoint of security.

Therefore, we cannot believe it is necessary in the public interest to transfer 225 acres of special lease of national parkland to the Department of Public Lands, as a perpetual lease and also transfer the balance of some 700 acres from a National Park. We cannot understand the policy of the Government. If the company only wants perpetual lease for purposes of security why is it necessary to transfer the balance of the land in the special lease to the Department of Public Lands and at the same time revoke the declaration of that land as a national park? Some 960 acres will be taken over by the Department of Public Lands. The proclamation of it as a national park is to be revoked, but why is that necessary? If the Government wanted to provide security for the company, surely they could excise 225 acres and give the company a perpetual lease of it. Their action in giving a lease over the balance of 960 acres is an indication that something is wrong and that the Government have not been correctly advised. We do not agree that the "Almighty pound" is sufficient justification for this action. The Government are apparently determined to allow private enterprise to develop an artificial tourist centre. That has happened in other places. Private enterprise destroys the natural beauty of an area and turns it into an artificial centre. We find a classic example in the Hawaii Islands at Waikiki Beach. That is purely and simply an artificial resort. Even the beach sand has to be brought from other parts of the islands. Private enterprise is interested in creating artificial tourist resorts rather than in preserving the natural beauty of those places.

The Government have not given the matter the consideration it deserves. Pure sentiment does not enter into consideration. The question is whether the action is right or wrong.

The occasion will arise when the policy on national parks will have to be reviewed in certain areas to permit development, but never at any time will it be found necessary to transfer to the tender mercies of a company, areas of national park land as large as 968 acres. Companies are interested only in securing a return for their shareholders and conducting profitable ventures regardless of the future loss to the people of Queensland.

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry) (4.43 p.m.): I have been staggered by the speeches of hon members opposite in which they have demonstrated completely and clearly that they do not know what they are talking about. They would have us believe that

under the relevant Act freeholding of the land is possible if the lessees want a freehold title to it.

Mr. Lloyd: Who said that?

Mr. MORRIS: The hon. member said it.

Mr. LLOYD: I rise to a point of order. The Minister for Labour and Industry is suffering from hallucinations. All I said was that we have to accept a hearsay undertaking from the Minister for Agriculture and Stock, but that we have no proof of it.

Mr. MORRIS: I accept the hon. member's statement, but my point is, and he should know it as he has been advised of it several times, that under Section 175C of the Act conversion to freehold tenure is impossible. The hon. member does not know what he is talking about. He does not have to accept the word of anybody, if he does not want to do so; all he has to do is to study the Statute. He will discover that his statement is absolute nonsense as most hon. members realise. Let us look at one or two other remarks. It was said by one hon. member opposite that in making this decision we deprive the people of the use of the island. That is just as silly as the statement a little while ago. When there were no settlements on these islands, the number of people visiting them in a year could be counted almost on the fingers of one hand. There were no facilities for them. In the last two, three or four decades there has been a great deal of improvement in accommodation and it is now possible for hundreds of thousands of people to visit the islands. There seems to be the belief that because this island was gazetted as a national park it should remain so for all time. That belief can be described as being empty and fallacious.

We should spend a little time considering the aims and objects of the National Parks Association of Queensland. Their first aim is to preserve intact, in their natural condition, the existing national parks of Queensland, and to secure the reservation of all suitable areas. That is a most laudable and desirable aim. If anyone wants to know if that ideal and aim has been accepted by the Minister and the Government, and implemented, all he need do is look at the facts. He will find that in the last four years, approximately an additional 60,000 acres of national parks have been proclaimed. Anyone who would not accept that as a demonstration of the sincerity of the Government would be very hard to convince.

Every hon. member on this side of the House is very much in sympathy with the ideals of the National Parks Association. However, I repeat the words they use—"Suitable areas". Are these areas suitable? I submit they are not suitable for national parks. A great deal has been said about the system in America where very large areas are reserved as national parks. However, the speakers who used them as an example

did not tell us that they apply to mainland areas, not island areas. These island areas would not be accessible to holidaymakers were it not for the transport provided by the resort proprietors.

I have had many letters from friends of mine in the National Parks Association of Queensland. I repeat that I believe that their ideals and aims are very laudable, and I agree with them, but of all the places that I know, that in the years gone by have been dedicated as national parks—and I think I know most of them—the least suitable is Hayman Island.

Anyone who has been to Hayman Island will agree that there is almost nothing on it that could be suitably classified as a national park.

The 60,000 additional acres that this Government have dedicated have been areas ideal for national parks. Any reasonable man would be delighted to exchange one acre of those dedicated lands for even 10 acres on Hayman.

Let us look at it a little more closely. What is the area that is being made available to the resort proprietors? The Minister described it as being a horseshoe-shaped area bounded approximately by the ridge that is the peak of the mountain itself. The whole of that horseshoe is a water catchment area. I have been there a few times and I hope to go there many more times. Anyone who has been there will know that, although it is a lovely place to go for a holiday and has good accommodation, it has the overwhelming disadvantage that it has very little suitable water. Indeed, I have been on Hayman when the proprietors have been forced to restrict very greatly the use of water by people staying there. At certain times water has been of greater value than many other liquids sought by some people. The only way the proprietors can get suitable water is by constructing a dam and the only source from which the dam can be filled is the catchment area contained within the horseshoe. That is the simple truth of it.

A little while ago the hon. member for Fassifern said that on Lindeman a special lease should be given for a larger area because of the need for an airstrip. I agree. But would any hon. member argue that the provision of a good water supply is less important than the provision of an airstrip? Even if an island has the most luxurious accommodation in the world, if it has no natural water we cannot expect to develop it as a tourist area.

The Minister for Education and Migration reminds me of Daydream Island. I suppose there is no more attractive island than Daydream anywhere on the Queensland coast. It once had accommodation for tourists, but today only the concrete platforms remain where the buildings have been pulled down.

Mark you, Mr. Speaker, Daydream was one of the prettiest islands off the coast. Why were the buildings pulled down? Firstly, there was no water supply on the island and, secondly, it was not possible to build one. But on Hayman Island we have people providing accommodation who are industrious enough and long-sighted enough to say, "We must have water. The only way to get it is by putting a dam in a certain position and using the horseshoe area as a catchment area." It is as simple as that. I doubt whether anybody in his right senses who is interested in providing accommodation would give you two shillings for the balance of the island; it is not worth it. As I heard the Minister for Education and Migration say, it is as bald as somebody's head. I do not know whether he was referring to my head, but it is more bald than I am. I repeat that the remainder of the island is useless for any other purpose.

I think we should keep in mind that the principal aim of the National Parks Association is to secure the reservation of all suitable areas. In the four years that the Government have been in office, an additional 60,000 acres in suitable areas have been declared as national parks.

There are one or two other matters that I wish to bring to the notice of the House. I heard the Leader of the Opposition, when speaking in this debate, refer to land speculation. He did not relate it to this area, but why introduce that subject when the House is debating a proposal to provide a couple of hundred acres for the provision of water and when we all know—he knows as well as anybody else—that land speculation can never take place in relation to it?

Let me take it a little further. Hon. members opposite said, "When an important matter such as this is being debated, why is not the Minister for Public Lands in the Chamber?" I suppose there could be no better illustration than that that hon. members opposite are merely trying to whip up a little bit of opposition because they have received a few letters from people who do not quite understand the situation on this island. Why should the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation be accountable to them for not being here today?

Let us now have a look at the procedure. When this motion is passed by the House—I have no doubt that it will be passed, because there are sufficient sensible people here to vote in favour of it—it will go through all the normal steps that are provided in a case such as this. At this stage I cannot tell hon. members in detail what those steps will be, because the motion has not yet been passed, but there are further steps to be taken when it is ratified. First, the Department of Public Lands lays down certain conditions that the lessee must abide by. Conditions are laid down not only by the Department of Public Lands but also by the

Department of tourist services. Although it is impossible to talk about what exactly will be done in the future I can say that I have seen many leases pass through the department, and they have not varied in any great degree. I have no doubt that this one will not vary a great deal. What are the conditions we have imposed on Lindeman Island? First of all we imposed the condition that satisfactory accommodation shall be provided. It must be kept in satisfactory condition, if not, various penalties are provided including the forfeiture of the lease. Apart from satisfactory accommodation having to be provided and adequately maintained there are many other conditions. One condition provides that the lessee shall do nothing to prevent the general public from going onto the island and going onto all areas of the island except the areas within the provisions of the special lease. Just as we can prevent people coming within our own fences but cannot prevent them from going anywhere else, the lessee has to agree that he will do nothing to prevent people from going onto all portions of the island that are not under his own direct control. The lessee has to do more than that. So that he can conduct his resort satisfactorily he has to provide a means whereby visitors can land on the island—jetties and facilities of that nature. Not only is he not stopping people from visiting, but he is making it very much easier for them to visit than it would be if the island were in its natural state. There are many other conditions that are always applied. It is one of the requirements that the lessee shall provide suitable and good transportation from the mainland to the island.

An Opposition Member: The Minister said that you have to keep to the tracks. He is getting off the track now.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I advise hon. members on my left that I will be the judge of when a person is off the track. I do not want any advice from hon. members on my left.

Mr. MORRIS: Hon. members opposite have been crying because they wanted to know what were the conditions of the lease. I am telling them. One of the most important conditions is that the lessee must provide transport to the islands. In doing so he must conform with the very strict regulations imposed by the Department of Harbours and Marine on vessels travelling in these waters, which are regarded more or less as open waters. Transport is provided not only to the island under lease but also to islands in the vicinity, and the dozens and dozens of other national parks which would not be visited were it not for that transportation. There are many other provisions. He is required, for example, to ensure that no foreign noxious plants are planted on the island, and he must get rid of noxious weeds. Maybe that is why some people do not go

there. He is also charged with the great responsibility of taking measures to prevent the mutilation or destruction of flora and fauna—the coral, the marine life, the bears and that sort of thing.

If these islands were not occupied it would be open to anyone who had the transport—and very few have—to despoil an island. There would not be anyone to prevent it. In this case, the lessee is responsible for preventing that and, in fact, he does so, as I have seen on very many occasions.

There are many other conditions and I can only repeat that, when the Minister concludes this debate it will be the responsibility of the Department of Public Lands to look to their conditions. The Department of Tourist Services will be responsible for looking to their conditions, and hon. members can take my word that those conditions are not easy to evade. We do not find anybody who wishes to evade them. These people who provide this accommodation are combining with the State and building up an industry that is a great and wonderful one. Without it we would be much less prosperous than we are at present.

I could mention other conditions, but having listened to the Minister introducing the motion, the hon. member for Bowen who seconded it, and the hon. member for Whitsunday, I believe that we have had a thorough and complete explanation of the many aspects of the matter. I entered the debate because I wanted to make it abundantly clear that all this nonsense about it being possible under the Act to convert to freehold is so much eye-wash introduced possibly from lack of knowledge rather than for any mischievous purpose. I also wished to point out the vitally important fact that, as a result of these people providing accommodation, tourists can visit the dozens of other islands that they were not able to visit before.

I have the greatest sympathy for, and am in agreement with, the principles of the National Parks Association, their number one aim and objective being to preserve intact, in their natural condition, the existing national parks of Queensland and to secure the reservation of all suitable areas. I go further and say that this Government have in fact proved that they agree by making 60,000 more acres into national parks than existed when we came into office.

When one combines all of these factors the statements from the Opposition side of the House are shown to be absolutely without foundation. They are absolutely unjustified; they show a complete lack of knowledge of the facts or they are presented wrongly deliberately.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Walsh, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5.10 p.m.