

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 10 OCTOBER 1961

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

CIRCULATION AND COST OF "HANSARD"

Mr. SPEAKER laid on the table the report of the Chief Reporter, State Reporting Bureau, on the circulation and cost of "Hansard" for the session of 1960-1961.

QUESTIONS

REVALUATION OF LAND, PARISH OF ENOGGERA

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) asked the Minister for Public Works and Local Government—

"(1) To what extent was the revaluation of land in the Parish of Enoggera, announced September 27 based on inflated land speculation and sales by private companies and land developers in the suburbs of Gaythorne, Mitchelton, Everton Park and Keperra?"

"(2) If such land sales, which are based on the cost of bitumen road construction, concrete water channelling, interest charges, high profit margin and, in some cases, sewerage, have been used as a basis for revaluation and in view of the fact that other land owned in these suburbs has become part of Brisbane's dust bowl with a lack of all reasonable services, due to neglect by previous Council administrations, will he advise whether it is possible to have a review made by the Valuer-General of the savage increase of 202 per centum in the rateable value of this land?"

"(3) If not, when will official notices be forwarded to land owners in this parish to enable them to prepare appeals against the increases?"

Hon. H. RICHTER (Somerset) replied—

"(1) Valuations for the revaluation of the City of Brisbane are being based on a fair appreciation of the market. Valuations for the Enoggera Division were applied after a thorough investigation of the sales over the whole of Enoggera and adjoining Divisions and are in no way related to that section of the market which could be termed inflationary or speculative. Enoggera Division includes parts of the suburbs of Bardon, Ashgrove, The Gap, St. Johns Wood, Dorrington, Newmarket, Alderley, Enoggera, Gaythorne, Mitchelton, Oxford Park, Grovely, Keperra and Ferny Grove. It also has a rural area extending to Upper Kedron and adjoining the Shire of Pine Rivers. Everton Park is in the Kedron Division, the valuation for which has not yet been issued."

"(2) See answer to Question (1)."

"(3) Official Notices of Valuation were posted to owners on Wednesday, September 27, and should have been in the hands of individual owners on the following day."

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SENTENCE OF JOHN REID CLARK FOR DANGEROUS DRIVING

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

"(1) Did a man named John Reid Clark run down and kill a pedestrian on a zebra crossing and later in the Brisbane Supreme Court this week before Mr. Justice Matthews did the jury find Clark guilty of dangerous driving?"

"(2) (a) What is the maximum penalty for this crime, as determined by Parliament recently by amendment to 'The Criminal Code' and (b) what sentence was imposed by Mr. Justice Matthews on Clark?"

"(3) Did Mr. Justice Matthews also say in passing judgment that as driving a car might be important to Clark his driving license would be suspended for only six months, only half as long as he (Mr. Justice Matthews) would have otherwise done?"

"(4) If the answer to Question 3 is in the affirmative, can the people take it to mean that the period of suspension of a criminal's driving license is determined not by the circumstances of the crime committed or the verdict of the jury, but by the inconvenience that such suspension might cause the criminal?"

"(5) Is it a fact that during the Parliamentary debate on the amendment to 'The Criminal Code,' which doubled the previous penalties for 'dangerous driving,' he and all Members participating in the debate and on a measure at present before the House stressed the need for adequate penalties as a strong factor in reducing the awful carnage on our roads? If so, were these opinions made known to the judiciary?"

"(6) Did Mr. Justice Wanstall earlier this year, when sentencing a criminal to a three months' jail term for a similar crime, before Parliament doubled the maximum penalty, say, *inter alia*, 'a jail sentence in these cases should be the rule rather than the exception?'"

"(7) In view of all these things, does he consider that the sentence imposed by Mr. Justice Matthews on this killer to be adequate and, if not, what action does he propose to take to see that Parliament is re-established as the only law-making authority in the State?"

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

"(1) John Reid Clark was tried before Mr. Justice Matthews and a jury in the Supreme Court, Brisbane, on a charge that he unlawfully killed one Lily Edgar Porter. On September 27, 1961, he was acquitted of manslaughter and was found guilty of the offence of dangerous driving."

"(2) (a) Where the conviction is upon indictment the maximum penalty for this misdemeanour of dangerous driving is a fine of £500 or imprisonment with hard labour for two years, or both such fine and

imprisonment. Where the offender is convicted summarily the maximum penalty is a fine of £100 or imprisonment with hard labour for six months, or both such fine and imprisonment. (b) Mr. Justice Matthews ordered that Clark be fined £20 and if the fine was not paid within one month that he be imprisoned with hard labour for three months. He further ordered that Clark be disqualified from holding or obtaining a license for a period of six months."

"(3) Mr. Justice Matthews said in passing judgment, 'I realise that in your position driving a motor car may be essential so far as your work is concerned and in view of that I am reducing the period of disqualification which I would otherwise impose by half, but I think that that period would be as severe on you as a longer period would be on other people.'"

"(4) See answer to Question (3). The answer to Question (4) is 'No.'"

"(5) The debates as recorded in Hansard are readily accessible to the Honourable Member. Apart from the publication and circulation of Hansard, no special action is taken to bring the opinions of members to the notice of the Judges who, in any event, cannot take judicial notice of such opinions."

"(6) When sentencing a person named McIntosh, who was convicted of dangerous driving on September 1, 1960. His Honour Mr. Justice Wanstall, after saying to the prisoner that he had been acquitted of the crime of manslaughter, and it would be wrong for him to sentence the prisoner as if he had been convicted of manslaughter, did make the following remarks: 'I have had put before me circumstances in a number of cases which have been tried in this court over the past two years, in which the accused person has been found guilty of one or other of the offences under Section 328A of The Criminal Code and in which the courts have imposed sentences of imprisonment ranging from three months to six months. Some of these cases are not at all comparable with yours, and they do not influence me. On the other hand, it is my view that the offence of dangerous driving is a serious one, having regard to traffic conditions today. It is also my view that where a person is found guilty of the offence of dangerous driving it should be the rule rather than the exception, having regard to the dangers of the road, to impose a sentence of imprisonment, although not necessarily a long one. I do not think it is an offence which calls for the imposition of a heavy sentence.' In McIntosh's case the dangerous driving was the driving of the motor car around a bend on the incorrect side of the road from Southport to Brisbane, which resulted in the collision with the other car. In Clark's case, the dangerous driving consisted of momentary inattentiveness. The two cases are not comparable."

"(7) The question of whether there should be an appeal against the sentence imposed in Clark's case is under consideration. The circumstances of this case and the sentence are being examined and compared with the circumstances of other cases of dangerous driving since 1958 and the sentences imposed therein by the various Judges. These cases number thirty-six in twelve of which the offender was ordered to serve a sentence of imprisonment."

STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER

LETTER FROM MR. JUSTICE MATTHEWS

Mr. SPEAKER: Following on notice of his question last Thursday week, the hon. member for Townsville South made a certain statement. Since the House adjourned for the Budget recess, I have received the following letter from Mr. Justice Matthews:—

Judges' Chambers,
Brisbane, October 9, 1961.

"Dear Mr. Speaker,

I refer to 1961 Parliamentary Debates, No. 6, page 553, second column under the heading 'Withdrawal of Disorderly Member'.

As this matter mentions my name I would be deeply grateful if you would allow me, through 'Hansard', or in any manner you deem advisable to record my strongest objection to being abused in this way by a member of your Parliament, and whilst dismissing the other matters as unworthy of notice, to deny that I have ever over-indulged in intoxicating liquor.

Yours sincerely,
B. H. Matthews."

In fairness to the hon. member for Townsville South I should also mention that he approached me in regard to making a personal explanation in the House. The explanation was on the lines that he was not referring to Mr. Justice Matthews; that he made the remark in a heated and personal brush with another hon. member.

In view of the Judge's letter and what I have said, any further statement by the hon. member for Townsville South would be redundant.

PAPERS

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

Report of the Public Service Superannuation Board for the year 1960-1961.

Report of the Commissioner of Police for the year 1960-1961.

Report of the Commissioner of Land Tax for the year 1960-1961.

Report on the operations of the Agricultural Bank for the year 1960-1961.

Report of the Insurance Commissioner for the year 1960-1961.

Report of the Department of Public Works for the year 1960-1961.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

- Order in Council under the Traffic Acts, 1949 to 1960.
- Orders in Council under the Elections Acts, 1915 to 1959.
- Orders in Council under the Maintenance Orders (Facilities for Enforcement) Acts, 1921 to 1959.
- Report of the Queensland Trustees Limited for the year 1960-1961.
- Orders in Council under the Co-operative Housing Societies Acts, 1958 to 1961.
- Orders in Council under the Stamp Acts, 1894 to 1961.
- Regulation under the Harbours Acts, 1955 to 1959.
- Audit Inspector's Report on Books and Accounts of the Queensland Coal Board for the period from August 13, 1960, to August 15, 1961.
- Order in Council under the Mines Regulation Acts, 1910 to 1958.
- Orders in Council under the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1957.
- Regulations under the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1957.
- Reports on the operations of the Bundaberg, Ipswich, Mackay, Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Townsville District Abattoir Boards for the year 1960-1961.
- Report of the Air Pollution Committee on Survey of Air Pollution carried out in the Greater Brisbane and Ipswich areas—March 1, 1959, to February 29, 1960.

FEES PAID BY CROWN TO BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS

RETURN TO ORDER

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Return to an Order made by the House on 6 September last, on the motion of Mr. Mann, showing fees paid to barristers and solicitors for the year 1960-1961.

DEATH OF MR. J. H. C. ROBERTS

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (11.23 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this State by the late James Henry Cecil Roberts, Esquire, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland.

"2. That Mr. Speaker be requested to convey to the relatives of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together

with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland, in the loss they have sustained."

The late Mr. Cecil Roberts, who was well known, particularly in rural circles of this State, was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1920 as member for the electoral district of Pittsworth and served in this Parliament for only the one term. But, in coming to the House, he brought with him, as a founder of primary producer organisation in Queensland, a great wealth of experience in rural industry and, consequently, made many valuable contributions to debates when laws relating to the land and its production were being framed in this House.

I doubt whether from the early days of this century there was a more authoritative spokesman for the producer than the late Cecil Roberts. In 1912 he was the inspirational force behind the formation of the Queensland Farmers' Union, which was the first real attempt to organise the producers of the State, and at that time he toured the State extensively, enlisting support for the organisation, which eventually merged into the Queensland Producers Association, thus forming the basis of the excellent producer organisations that we have in Queensland at present.

The late Mr. Roberts had a practical background for the organisation of the producers into the co-operative movement that he sponsored so well. On his own property at Croxley, near Pittsworth, he established in 1897 a stud of milking Shorthorns, the fore-runner of the Australian Illawarra Shorthorn strain which has made its mark in the dairy-ing industry, not only in Queensland, but in other parts of Australia.

In later years he forsook the shorthorns and changed to Jerseys. He had an excellent Jersey stud. He also was a horse breeder. He made quite a contribution by introducing new breeds of sheep, particularly the long-haired variety from Tasmania and New Zealand.

On the practical side of primary production he made his contribution to Queensland. On the political side he was one of the founders of the Queensland Country Party, and he served that organisation with distinction at all times. As one would expect of a man of his energy and ability he played a great part in various sporting activities on the Darling Downs. He held high official rank in tennis, Rugby Union and cricket associations. He was the president of the Oakey Show Society for a number of years, and a member of the Royal Agricultural Society Committee at Toowoomba. In a long and active life extending to his eighty-fourth year the late Mr. Roberts devoted a great deal of time to the service of others, and the State is definitely the poorer for his passing. He is survived by one son. He lost another son in World War II. I am sure all hon. members will join with me in

extending to his relatives, condolences and sympathy on the passing of a man who made such a great contribution to the development of the State.

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (11.28 a.m.): I did not know Mr. Roberts in his Parliamentary capacity but, on behalf of the Opposition, I am very happy to join with the Premier in recording our appreciation of the service he rendered the State. As a young man I did know of Mr. Roberts because he lived in Toowoomba for many years. As the Premier said in his excellent chronological outline of the deceased member, he was very active in agricultural activities on the Darling Downs. As he pointed out, the late Mr. Roberts was responsible for the formation of the Farmers' Union. As one who became increasingly interested in public affairs I have a ready remembrance of the great number of letters Mr. Roberts sent to the Press on matters affecting the welfare of those engaged in the rural industries of the State. He was indeed a man well equipped to discharge that responsibility. He had first-hand practical experience in land matters; he was an avid reader; he was able to apply himself very effectively to the problems confronting the man on the land. As the Premier has pointed out, he was a well known figure on the Darling Downs for the interest he took in recreational activities—in football and various other sporting organisations that the Premier has outlined. He left a great reputation behind him for being a fearless and well-liked man, one who liked to engage in controversies but one who always conducted himself with dignity and with purpose. The State is the poorer for the passing of a man of his calibre. Of course, the name of Roberts is well known on the Darling Downs and has been closely associated with the Darling Downs for very many years. Wherever you go on the Downs the names of Cecil Roberts and other members of the family are well known for the prominent part the family have played in the various activities in the areas in which they lived.

As I say, I did not have the pleasure of knowing him very intimately. I knew of him only as a public figure but the Opposition join with me in expressing our very sincere condolences to the relatives of the late Mr. Roberts in the loss they have suffered in the passing of a man who has left his mark not only in the agricultural field but also in this Assembly.

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon) (11.30 a.m.): I wish to associate my party with the motion of condolence before the House. I endorse very fully indeed the tribute the Premier has paid to the deceased gentleman.

I recall that in my young days on the Darling Downs I heard him address public meetings on more than one occasion. He

was certainly a dynamic personality and played a most important role in the affairs of primary producers. In those days it was not an easy matter to organise primary producers. There was much opposition to organisation and the deceased gentleman played a very important role in that direction.

Whilst I did not subscribe to his political viewpoint I could always appreciate the excellent work he put into the organisation of primary producers. It is true that he lived a long and useful life as a citizen of this great State and it is very evident, now that that useful life has drawn to a close, that we should pay him the tribute that he deserves.

I have much pleasure in associating myself with the motion of condolence to his family.

Motion (Mr. Nicklin) agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

SUPPLY

COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT— RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

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

Debate resumed from 28 September (see p. 576) on Mr. Hiley's motion—

"That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1961-1962, a sum not exceeding £1,594 to defray the salary of Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor."

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (11.33 a.m.): The week's recess has afforded us the opportunity of examining the Financial Statement that the Treasurer presented to the Committee a little more than a week ago. I have taken the opportunity of going back over the debates of recent years and I have read with particular interest the statements made by successive Treasurers. I have in particular read the contributions, both whilst in Government and in Opposition, of the Treasurer and the Premier, and I have found that whilst there have been occasions when the Treasurer has altered his point of view, he has generally chosen, both in Opposition and in Government, to seize the opportunity, when the Financial Statement was being discussed, of painting and generally canvassing the economic picture as he saw it, either in the State or in Australia as a whole. He has occasionally chided hon. members on this side with not making a very detailed examination of the financial tables that are embodied in the various Estimates and that he incorporated in his Financial Statement.

So far as I could see, there was only one occasion on which he dissected with great care the movement of funds by the then Labour Government and he chided the then Treasurer, the present hon. member

for Bundaberg, with concealing information. However, in the main his attacks were on the accountancy practices rather than charging the Government with concealing information. He felt that there should be a more simple accounting method. That was his general theme, although, as I say, he did on occasions develop criticisms of actions of Treasury officers and even the Treasurer himself. On almost every occasion, except the one I have referred to when he spent almost the whole of the speech on a dissection of the public accounts of the State, he took the opportunity of giving his views on railway finances, on the parlous conditions confronting the agricultural and rural industries of the State, and, generally on the economic effects of the Little Budget, the movement of interest rates and matters of that type.

The Treasurer's statement on these subjects made interesting reading at all times because it is acknowledged, and I say this to him at the outset, that he has the capacity to state a case and is generally regarded as being perhaps the most effective member of the Government to deal with financial matters.

Having said that, I want to say also that my reading of his previous speeches reveals that many of the things he criticised so trenchantly when in Opposition he has not been able to correct now that he has the full opportunity and the responsibility for doing so. Because of his financial experience as an accountant prior to his entering Parliament it was perhaps logical that he should be chosen as Treasurer. Despite the many things he criticised when in Opposition we now find that he has had with reluctance, or with a full measure of approval, been obliged to follow the same pattern. He has introduced measures that he roundly condemned when in Opposition.

When the Treasurer delivered his financial statement last week, I referred to it as a "booze and betting Budget". The Treasurer no doubt will have an opportunity, or will seek it, of trying to repudiate the accuracy of that designation. He may say it is customary when budgets are introduced for Opposition members to try to use some colourful phrase as its designation, and the mere fact that I chose to label it "a booze and betting budget" will no doubt provide him with the opportunity of answering my statement in that fashion. But the fact remains, and it is a rather remarkable and ironical situation, that the hon. gentleman who so trenchantly attacked the previous Labour administration because of what he considered to be their predisposition either to tax the people too severely or to serve the liquor interests of the State—and he spoke of the very crying social evils that would follow the application of extended betting facilities in the State—now proposes to introduce such a measure.

I crave the indulgence of the Committee to allow me to go through some of the matters revealed in the previous speeches of the

Treasurer. At the outset I point out that I do not propose to do as he did so frequently when in Opposition, and leading the debate in financial matters. In 1957-1958 he thanked the Premier for giving him the opportunity of leading the debate. In case he accuses me of not tackling the problem by giving a detailed dissection of the accounts of the State, I point out that I shall leave much of the detailed criticism of some of these things to two or three other hon. members on this side of the Chamber who will follow the pattern adopted by the Treasurer when he was in Opposition.

I intend to canvass generally those things that I think should be said by the Opposition at this very important time in the political history of the State. I make no apology for quoting matters much more briefly than I did on a previous occasion. These are the words used by the Treasurer when criticising the Budget introduced by the Treasurer of the former Government, the hon. member for Bundaberg, "Let us eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we shall die." He made a great play on those words and said that we were spending with the abandonment of a drunken sailor. When asked why he picked out a sailor, he said, "Because they spend more prolifically than most other sections of the community."

After examining the 1961-1962 Budget introduced by the Treasurer, it seems to me that this is a case of Satan reproving sin, because he seems to be doing the things for which he criticised Labour administrations. Let us take some of his speeches in previous years and see how he faced up to these problems. Amongst other things he said—

"Anyone who studies the Australian economy must agree never was there a need for sound financial policy and never was there less evidence of it in any State Budget in my recollection."

He went on to say—

"Unless the practice of increased Government spending is stopped, we will torpedo the backbone of the Australian economy. We cannot solve it by presenting budget after budget each year, spending more money."

He continued—

"The rate of spending from loan funds is lamentable. The State debt per head of population in 1945-1946 was £122 6s. 9d. whereas in 1955-1956 it had grown to £186 17s. 8d. Not only are we spending more of the income from the Consolidated Revenue Account but we are also following a course where we are constantly piling up the level of the nation's debt per capita."

What do we find from the hon. gentleman's summary of his Financial Statement? On every occasion he mentioned it there were loud cries of "Hear, hear" from the hon. gentlemen behind him. He said first that there would be record spending from the Consolidated Revenue, Trust, Special and Loan Funds. He put it forward, as a matter of credit, that the Government are spending

record sums from these various accounts, and yet, when in Opposition he decried this tendency for the Government to keep on spending. I am not necessarily saying that I agree with what he said in Opposition. I am not unaware that with an expanding population there must necessarily be increased expenditure to meet the requirements of an expanding State and a growing population. That is natural. If we do not accept that proposition we will go back. Later on, I quote some references by the Premier, when Leader of the Opposition, on the railway deficits in 1915-1916. If we go back far enough we find that the amounts spent were microscopically small compared with what they are today. Nevertheless, during that debate he directed special attention to the spending policy of the Government and how the burden of debt was piling up the whole time, at the expense very often, of the private sector of the economy outside which is struggling to meet the cost burden amidst great competition. All these things he said with great force and clarity in previous years.

Then the Treasurer said that another matter for concern was that interest on the increasing public debt at the currently high rates, has brought a sharp lift to the annual normal increment. What is the record of the hon. gentleman if he felt so strongly on those matters in those years? What has he done since he has become Treasurer? He cannot hide behind somebody else. He must assume responsibility for the mismanagement in the last three or four years. When he came into office he had an excuse, and he could say that in the main the Estimates had been prepared by the departmental officers and approved by the outgoing Government, that his policy was restricted to the last quarter of the financial year. We had no quarrel with him on that occasion, but since then he has had continuity in office as Treasurer in the Government. The Government must now take responsibility for any credit or otherwise for the financial administration in this State since they came to office. If it was wrong in 1954-1955 and 1956-1957 in the eyes of the present Treasurer for the public debt to be mounting, and if he criticised that, how does he square up the increase in the public debt from £252,799,369 in 1956, to £342,449,858 at 30 June, 1961, and the rise in the debt per head of population from £186 17s. 8d. to £230 16s. 2d.? The Treasurer will have to eat his words, because he continued—

"If the burden of national administration is to be allowed constantly to expand and the whole weight and measure to correct inflation have to fall on the production side of the nation, we may find ourselves in the position where we have succeeded in killing the goose that so far was successful in laying many golden eggs.

"In the long run that course if followed might succeed in endangering our whole social service edifice and expose our system

to the repeated need for a measure of devaluation—both things to be avoided at all costs."

He went on to say that one of the most significant features of the then Budget was the fact that an attempt was being made to obtain additional revenue by increasing railway freights. He said, "The Treasurer has budgeted for an increase of £5,800,000 in railway revenue." The present Treasurer said on that occasion, "I don't think there is a ghost of a chance of getting it." He went on in the course of his speech to make some declarations about how absurd it was to budget for a figure of that kind, not that he was so much concerned particularly with the fact that railway freights were being increased, but that the Treasurer's estimates were wrong. All the financial records show that something to the order of £5,300,000 extra revenue was obtained in that year from that department. In that and in a subsequent debate, he said "He appears to be wrong in this prognostication," and he added—

"I fully expect that there will be some new taxation. The Government should not entertain the thought of any new tax that adds to the cost structure of the community."

He elaborated on that theme at some length and said that any new tax was to be deplored and that steps should be taken to try to reduce taxation.

He said, too, in putting forward what he said were positive measures—

"The second thing is that there must be some easing of governmental spending. The time is over-ripe for this State to consider making formal application to the Commonwealth Grants Commission."

He said that the Government had not tackled the problem of collecting sums of money from interstate hauliers. When challenged to indicate what the Government of the day might do about that, he said, "If the Government tried, they might be surprised at the result." Now they have had four years in office and I challenge them to show what success has attended their efforts to get some money from the interstate hauliers in that regard. It is easy enough when in Opposition to say that the problem is a simple one and that corrective measures should be taken, but he has not been very successful. Indeed, there has been a constant, hysterical series of outbursts from the Minister for Transport about border-hoppers. Into almost every speech he imports some reference to the dreadful interstate hauliers who, he says, are using our roads and not making a commensurate contribution to the revenue of the State.

As the Minister for Transport is present in the Chamber let me say that he has leaned very heavily on the Treasurer for advice and help on financial matters. Indeed, it is currently common knowledge about the

place that whenever he gets into a sticky financial position in Cabinet and elsewhere, he relies very strongly on the Treasurer to extricate him from the dilemma. So his lack of criticism on other occasions is not surprising.

Mr. Chalk: I do not have to get someone else to write my speeches.

Mr. DUGGAN: I have never been guilty of that. I do not want to become involved in irrelevant interjection but, whatever criticism can fairly be levelled at me and whatever failings I have, I cannot fairly be charged with finding it necessary to have other people write speeches for me. Indeed I am quite capable of making a speech without notes on the slightest provocation and without any form of assistance from anybody.

Mr. Chalk: Wise or unwise.

Mr. DUGGAN: As a matter of fact, even those words were contained in the Treasurer's own Budget speech on a former occasion. He said that rightly or wrongly something or other should be done. So once again the Minister is echoing some of the words of the Treasurer.

The Treasurer went on to make some other statements about what should be done about the economy and he said, *inter alia*,—

"We must control hire purchase interest rates.

"The wheat position can shrink from its present position of eminence it has enjoyed over the past five years and wheat-farmers can still obtain a comfortable living."

He criticised the building up of reserves and the action of the then Treasurer in then engaging in real estate transactions on behalf of the Government. He agreed with the Treasurer that it was a bad approach to Federal-State financial relationships that free spending should be rewarded and careful finance penalised. He called the then Treasurer a miser, but admitted in his 1955 Budget speech that the State could not have spent more and that additional funds would only have added to the State's already overflowing reserves. He was also pleased to acknowledge that the vote for education had moved up by 20 per cent. and that provision had been made for substantial increases in staff. He also commented on the fact that Commonwealth funds derived from taxation should not be lent back to the States but should be given as grants. He supported the Burdekin dam proposal, but since then he has altered his views on that matter and now strongly condemns it.

Let us see what his record is in regard to some of these things. He said in fairly colourful language that he doubted whether there was justification for bringing in one tin of English biscuits or chocolates, one tin of Scotch marmalade or butterscotch, one pound of Dutch cheese or a Welsh washing machine, decorative china from

Denmark, or even a motor vehicle from Germany. Let me say that the Treasurer has no direct responsibility in determining import controls. But no doubt he will be taking to the hustings very shortly, and I am sure that he will be defending very vigorously the financial record of his friends in the Federal Parliament who are doing exactly that. Not only are they permitting the importation of one tin of chocolates, but they are permitting the importation of thousands of tins of chocolates and tens of thousands of pieces of decorative china, German motor vehicles—Volkswagens are flooding the market—and Scotch marmalade. One has only to go to a store in Queen Street to see on display a wide variety of Scotch marmalade and butterscotch.

He went on to say that hire-purchase interest rates were too high. What has he done about that? He has some governmental responsibility, and he now has the legislative ability to give effect to his policy. He chided the then Treasurer about the high interest rates that were being charged by hire-purchase companies, and he criticised him although he said he thought there was no constitutional process available to any one State Government by which they could be controlled. He did say that, if there was constitutional competence, it had to be done by agreement between the States. What positive action has he taken, either himself or through the Minister for Justice, to see whether some agreement could be reached between Governments to deal with this position?

Can he still say that there is a fairly comfortable living for the wheat farmers of this country? Many of them are changing to other forms of production because of what they believe to be the precarious state of the wheat industry. In many instances wheat is being sold at below the cost of production. The deficit is made up from funds under the Wheat Stabilisation Fund, but these funds are being seriously eroded and I do not think the Treasurer is entitled to say that there is a comfortable living in the wheat industry.

He criticised the then Treasurer for indulging in real estate ventures, but I do not think there would be a Treasurer in the history of Queensland who has indulged in real estate ventures to the extent to which he has. We have seen a series of new buildings throughout the State. There was a grandiose plan for a new Main Roads building, some of which was to be used for private rental purposes, and the site of the present Main Roads building was to be used for the erection of a new State Government Insurance Office, the excess area in that building to be used by private people. In Toowoomba a very substantial building has been erected for the State Government Insurance Office, and again some of the space has been let to private persons. The same thing applies in other places throughout Queensland where new buildings have been erected.

I am not necessarily being critical of the erection of all these new buildings, but I am saying that the Treasurer condemned that policy when he was in Opposition. Now that he has the opportunity of reversing it, he is accelerating and encouraging the trend towards the State's indulging in real estate ventures.

The only thing that I can find on which the Treasurer has been consistent in all his speeches is his firm declaration that he was determined to use all the available Trust and Special funds in order to bring about the position where Queensland could establish a claim as a claimant State. There has been no deviation from his policy in that regard. He has deplored the principle of State landlordism. Those are the only two directions in which there has been any consistent pattern that he has endeavoured to apply and observe. All his protestations when in Opposition about making Queensland a claimant State have not led to Queensland becoming a claimant State, because of the altered system now applying to the disbursement of Commonwealth funds.

Because of the record spending that has taken place the Government from time to time have mentioned the tremendous improvement in education. I intend to say more about that later, but in fairness I say now that perhaps it is the one aspect of Government policy that is less vulnerable to attack than any other. I pay credit to the Administration for what they are doing but I do not say that because they have done any more than any Government mindful of their responsibilities to the people should have done. In a few minutes I shall show that despite the tendency of the Minister for Education and Migration to contrast on many occasions what was done by previous Governments by way of volume of spending, with what his Government have done, the situation did not exist at that time in regard to the volume of secondary school pupils as has existed in the last few years consequent upon the tremendous increase in the population of secondary school age. What is being done by him in that direction is praiseworthy as far as it goes, but it is no different from what any responsible Government would have done. Indeed, it is no different from what the Labour Government in New South Wales are doing now. The figures in the current New South Wales Budget show a percentage increase for education greater than the percentage increase by this Government. The same pattern is being followed more or less by Victoria and the other States. Every Government in Australia are faced with the problem of providing additional funds for education.

Another rather interesting feature of the Treasurer's attitude is that at one time he was rather fearful that the Government might take some steps to increase the State's gambling facilities. He said that there was neither production nor saving in gambling, but that instead there was a diversion of national manpower from development and

a contribution to national waste. I am not going to waste words to argue that now because there will be an opportunity when the gambling Bill is introduced. But I am sure the Treasurer will have some uneasy moments when he introduces the proposed legislation to square up with his general views on this matter when he was in Opposition. He will need all his skill in debate and all of his casuistry to counter what he has said on this subject on previous occasions. The present Budget shows the extent to which he is dependent on gambling facilities to give him more money. In other words, he has thrown over moral principles. As long as he can get the money the end justifies the means. That is the attitude of the Treasurer.

He objected to the previous Government's policy towards retirement. He said that it was wrong and wasteful to make people retire. Have the Government reversed that policy? If anything, they have made people retire at a younger age. They have given some of them no option about taking the normal 18 months' extension but told them to go. Again, it may be a wise policy. I have said before that I see nothing wrong in an examination being made by the trade unions and the Government of the day of the possibility of optional retirement of public servants who are in good health.

Mr. Hiley interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: I am only saying what the Treasurer has said.

Mr. Hiley: You have changed your ground. You said that we have ordered people to retire.

Mr. DUGGAN: I do not think I used the word "ordered." If these things are so well known outside I regret the fact that they are not so well known in the public service. If they were I would not have so many people asking me to intercede on their behalf with the heads of departments to see that they get their normal extensions. If the Government feel so strongly about it—

Mr. Hiley interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: The Treasurer now wants to twist the position. He objected to the Government's policy on retirement. He is now trying to twist on the matter.

Mr. Chalk interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: The Treasurer needs a far better advocate than the Minister for Transport. When we are dealing with transport we will deal with the Minister who has the worst record of any transport Minister in this State's history.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to address the Chair.

Mr. DUGGAN: I address the Chair and say through you, Mr. Taylor, that the present Minister for Transport has the worst

record of any Transport Minister in this State's history. I say also that the present Treasurer has the worst financial record.

Mr. Chalk: Don't get worked up.

Mr. DUGGAN: It will be a sorry day for the Minister when I do. This Government have been condemned in my view in that, in the short space of four years, they have become a smug and complacent Government, quite impervious to criticism. No matter what is raised the Government say it is a nine days' wonder and that something will crop up in the course of a few days. I do not know of any Government in the history of this Commonwealth that have become so smug and complacent in such a short period of time.

In his 1959 Budget Speech, the Treasurer, at page 6 had this to say—

"The Government considers that the changed circumstances are compelling reasons for presenting a balanced budget . . ."

I shall, in a few moments, show the Treasurer's record in this regard, I drew attention to what he said while in Opposition on what should be done—more balancing of budgets, more careful husbandry of the State's finances and spending more to increase employment. On the other hand he has had five deficits in a row, which is the worst record of any State in the Commonwealth.

I have not checked Tasmania, but this is the Treasurer's record—

Year	Deficit £
1957-1958	1,514,308
1958-1959	1,190,856
1959-1960	164,675
1960-1961	618,243

The estimated deficit for this year is a figure approximating that sum.

Mr. Windsor: It is not a smug Government.

Mr. Bromley: A mug Government.

Mr. DUGGAN: I am indebted to the hon. member. I sometimes drop my aitches; perhaps I should have dropped my "s" on this occasion. There is coming up a deficit of £3,500,000 or £4,000,000 for this Government's term of office. The Treasurer, no doubt, will say, as he has said previously, that the Opposition in a completely irresponsible way will condemn the Government because they have not made any provision for employment and will then growl about Budget deficits. I would not mind so much if the Government went in for deficit budgeting in times of difficulty but they have been telling us that this is a prosperous period. They have never stopped saying, "Return this Government to power and there will be more men in work, more industries operating", and making other glowing references that are well known. The glowing references by members of this

Government when trying to sell themselves outside are well known. If these are such glowing, prosperous times there is no need for a Budget deficit. The Treasurer has agreed with that on previous occasions but he has changed his mind now. There should be a movement in prosperous times to balance budgets even if deficit budgeting is necessary in times of economic stress and strain.

Mr. Hiley: You have been listening to me.

Mr. DUGGAN: I said it long before the Treasurer came here at all. I studied a Swedish economist 20 years ago on that principle and have quoted him on it, so I am not, if I may use a colloquial term, pinching the Treasurer's views in this regard. He cannot have it both ways. I would not mind if there was prosperity, and I would not mind if the Treasurer was budgeting for a deficit if there was evidence of an arresting of the unemployment problem, but in the last 12 months, and I take for a comparison the figures for August this year and last year, the number of unemployed has doubled. No doubt the Treasurer, in the same way as the Minister for Labour and Industry has done, will quote figures for December or January, but I am taking the figures for August this year with the comparable figures last year. The number of unemployed has increased in that time by almost two and a-half times, and the problem will be accentuated by a combination of applications of policy of the State and Federal Governments.

The Treasurer's decision to reduce subsidies has already had an effect on a company that manufactures fibrolite pipes for water reticulation. It has had to put off one shift of 40 men. That is only one result of the Government's action. In the last few days I have received evidence of the sacking of increasing numbers of men. In the last fortnight 12 men who worked within 100 yards of Parliament House have been sacked by a company that has operated in Australia for many years. This is the first time in that company's operating experience in Brisbane that it has been compelled to dismiss 12 men.

In Toowoomba and other places mounting evidence is available of men who have been dismissed from jobs. I should not mind particularly this year if the Treasurer budgeted for a deficit as long as the Government could point to the fact that they had arrested this trend to unemployment and could produce some positive evidence that this grave social problem was being overcome. They fail on all counts, the financial count and the provision of work for our people.

When he was in Opposition the Treasurer was very much opposed to any increase in taxation, but what is his record? In 1958 he increased driving fees to bring in an additional £150,000 in a full year. He has

increased registration fees. When a Labour Government increased registration fees, he condemned them very roundly and pointed to the fact that those fees in Queensland were disproportionately high when compared with the fees in other States. But that did not deter him from increasing registration fees when he took office.

The betting tax in 1958 was increased, to bring in £130,000 for part of a year. In 1958 he increased pilotage fees to bring in £369,000. He diverted to consolidated revenue the proceeds of liquor licence fees by a proportion over and above what he considered was the measure of safety for compensation for surrendered licences. In 1959 he increased stamp duty fees on conveyance, transfer of shares, hire-purchase agreements and policies of insurance to bring in £690,000 a year. It may be said that stamp duty on the transfer of shares would not affect the needy section of the community, but conveyance charges on insurance policies and hire-purchase agreements do affect the needy section of the community. I would not mind so much if the Treasurer selected people who had demonstrated that they had the capacity to pay, but the fees I have mentioned affected those who had not such capacity. He increased transfer fees on the sale of Crown land, with expected additional revenue of £200,000. Despite all his criticism of rail freights and increases in freights, he has increased them. Now he intends to impose a fee of £1 for the testing of an applicant for a driver's licence. That is a most unfair imposition on the driving community, in view of the heavy increases in third party insurance premiums and the already high cost of registration. Where are we going? How much longer are we to be confined to such taxes, and how much longer are we going to depend for development on taxes from liquor, gambling, and the sale of our land to real estate developers, as well as the diversion of funds to consolidated revenue. This year the Treasurer has budgeted for an increase in fees of £1,500,000 from racing and liquor licences. I think his actions are wrong. I make the point that the Treasurer likes to pose as one who is concerned about the small man in the community. In the case of the proposed liquor fees, who is going to pay them? Does the Treasurer suggest, for instance, that Carlton United Brewery is going to absorb this 2 per cent. increase in fees? Does he think that the other brewery in Brisbane will absorb it, or the hoteliers will absorb the 2 per cent. increase? Of course they will not! They will ask for an increase in price. Price control has been removed from most things, and in any case, being on marginal profits, I suppose they are entitled in strict equity, to recoup themselves for a tax imposed by the Government. That applies throughout the community to those who choose to refresh themselves occasionally with a glass of beer, or something of the kind. I do not think it will act as a

deterrent because it takes a little more out of the money that the breadwinner may take home. It would need a very bold person, however strong his convictions, to say that he could eradicate the spending of money on beer and alcohol which is so popular in Australia. The Treasurer cannot claim any credit for that.

He has had five deficits in a row. It is true that New South Wales is budgeting for a deficit this year but in their appropriation they have the astronomically high sum of £59,000,000 for education, which includes £42,000,000 for primary and secondary education. Last year's vote was £55,000,000. Just as a matter of interest, the Treasurer said that the number of persons in the Department of Education this year is expected to be 10,352, compared with 10,906 in 1960-1961. So, we find a reduction, with all this talk about expanding school populations and it seems as if economic cuts are being applied.

Mr. Pizzey: We do not include those from the college this year who would normally come out at the end of the year.

Mr. DUGGAN: The same thing happened last year. I am just quoting what is mentioned here.

Mr. Pizzey: It is now a two-year course, which makes a difference.

Mr. DUGGAN: If the Minister can prove that there will be no reduction, I will be very gratified to hear it. I can rely only on the figures that I have here. I am not a mind reader, or a clairvoyant, able to know what is in the mind of the Minister unless it is explained to me. This year, in New South Wales, there is an estimated increase of 1,120 in the number of teachers.

In 1961-1962 there is an overall estimated fewer number of people in the Public Service than for the previous year, which is understandable, because so many hundreds have been sacked from the various departments. The New South Wales Government are faced with the same problem, as is every other State in the Commonwealth, but they have made provision to meet it. The Minister for Labour and Industry said that more police officers are needed, and in New South Wales they are facing the same position, but they have made provision for an extra £500,000 this year for that department. There will be an increase of £580,000 on expenditure on mental hospital capital works in New South Wales, and £250,000 extra this year will be spent on mental hospital services. A Labour Government is in power in New South Wales, and we may be charged with not measuring up to our responsibilities on this problem. I do not wish to weary the Committee with a long list of what is to be done in New South Wales this year, but I think I should mention that they propose to make available nearly £5,000,000 for the university, and the

Queensland Treasurer has indicated that he will not match the demands of the University in its programme for the enrolment of pupils. The Minister for Education and Migration has taken credit for what the Government have done for secondary education in Queensland. The Government deplore the fact that there are not sufficient people enrolling for tertiary education in the State, yet the Treasurer says he will not match the university expansion programme. Today, more than at any other time, there is need for expansion of tertiary education in the State. Every country in the world that wishes to deal with the technological problems of the times we are living in, and the modern economics, knows it is essential that there should be improvements in this field.

The Government in Victoria have been faced with similar problems to ours. Indeed Victoria has felt the impact of the credit squeeze more severely than we have because its momentum has taken longer to reach us. Admittedly we felt some immediate effects in the building industry in particular and elsewhere but in Victoria, despite the worsening of the manufacturing position, the laying off of tremendous numbers of workers in the motor industry, and the fact that textile workers were working only four days a week, added to very great movements in the unemployed population, they had a surplus last year of £169,000 and have budgeted for a surplus of £27,000 this year. They have been able to do that despite their problems, while Queensland's Treasurer has not been able to effect budget equilibrium or to make any substantial or worth-while contribution to the solution of the problem of unemployment.

So with our sister State of South Australia. South Australia's actual budget surplus for 1960-1961 was the tremendously high figure of £1,188,000. Despite the same sort of problem confronting them, they are budgeting this year for a surplus of £3,000. In marked contrast, the Queensland Treasurer has not been able to demonstrate his professional competence in handling the matter.

I should like for a moment to direct attention to a matter of tremendous importance to the State, namely, the industrial dispute at Mt. Isa. I do not propose to discuss it at any great length because other hon. members on this side, particularly the hon. member for Burke but also some of the industrial representatives of our party, will be charged with the responsibility of dealing with it in greater detail. However, I want to make the general point that we of the Opposition make no secret of the fact that we welcomed the establishment of such a large and successful undertaking in this State. Some overtures have been made to me to make a declaration on the nationalisation of Mt. Isa Mines. I do not intend to make any such declaration; but I do want to say that the current situation in Mt. Isa is very disquieting indeed.

Many years ago, when we introduced a Bill for the provision of financial guarantees for Mt. Isa Mines, it was not the Labour people who fought the proposal in the Caucus and it was not the Labour people whom we found it difficult to persuade that some measure of financial guarantee should be given to this new enterprise in Queensland. Indeed, I, as Minister for Transport, was on many occasions obliged to defend the policy of Labour Governments on the favourable freight concessions we extended to Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. over a period of years to enable it to establish and consolidate itself. Go back over the pages of "Hansard" and you will find the criticism came from members of the then Opposition, who were of the same political kidney as the Government today. They said we were gambling with a hole in the ground, that we were going out hundreds of miles into the semi-desert country of Queensland and extending guarantees with State finances. In a debate some time ago the hon. member for Maryborough gave a recital of extracts from "Hansard" reports of the debates of that time. I draw attention to these matters to show that we did a great deal for Mt. Isa and that we are very proud that this large mining company was able to come here. I am proud to see it expanding and I am proud to see it making a substantial contribution to our overseas balance of payments. Indeed, it was a Labour Government who undertook to proceed with the Mt. Isa railway improvements. No-one can say that we engaged in any form of sabotage or that we failed to act in the best interests of the State in making provision for adequate transport facilities to enable the production at Mt. Isa to be increased. I do not care what any member of the Government says, I am sure the records will show beyond doubt that there was an eagerness on the part of the Labour Government of 1956-1957 to undertake in a most sympathetic way the building of adequate transport facilities to handle the increased volume of traffic from Mt. Isa. I make it clear that we welcomed the establishment of the mine. I pay tribute to the efficiency of the management of the undertaking and I place on record that a Labour Government helped the company in the initial stages and in the developmental stages, and that a Labour Government were prepared to help them by improving transport facilities for their expansion programme.

There are 3,000 people working in the mine, and the company have demonstrated their ability to operate one of the best mines of its kind in the world today. If it is not the most economical mine, it is certainly the second most economical mine in the world. The reason why there was an injection of so much American capital in the initial stages, and subsequently, was because of the stabilised conditions in this country. Because of the political upheavals and turmoil in South America, Americans tend to look more and more to Australia

as a country in which reasonably stable conditions prevail. I have been to Mt. Isa from time to time, as have many other hon. members. It is not the most pleasant place to live, with dust and high temperatures, and, until the company was able to provide adequate facilities, the problem of getting sufficient water. The distance from other centres made the cost of foodstuffs high, and amenities were not as good as they were in places closer to the coast. The cost of having a holiday was also very high.

With a combination of the application of money as capital, engineering know-how and management, the company has demonstrated its ability to expand on a wide field over a period of years, and Mount Isa has now become one of the great mines in the world. All the wealth that may be in the soil is of no value unless it can be won by the application of human labour to it. All the skill in the world is useless unless there are people who, by their sweat and hard grind, are prepared to go underground and help the management win the great riches from the bowels of the earth. These men do not have the opportunity of going to universities or technical schools to become graduate engineers, metallurgists, geologists, and so on, and of commanding large salaries because of their skills. The ordinary workman may not apply the same type of mental effort to his work as the man with special skill in a particular subject, but he has to work for 7 hours 20 minutes or eight hours a day, or whatever his shift requires, and he also is entitled to a reward for his contribution.

Over a period of years conditions have been reasonably stable at Mount Isa Mine. Certainly there has been no trouble of the type that is occurring now. What is the position today? After the mine has been in operation for many years, we find that the town has been almost paralysed economically because of a dispute about bonus payments between the management and the unions representing the men. In "The Courier-Mail" this morning an advertisement appeared that was authorised by the general manager of Mount Isa Mines Limited, Mr. J. W. Foots. It relates to the industrial dispute, and in the first paragraph it says—

"This statement is made so that the Company's employees and the public generally may know the Company's policy in relation to bonus payments and the present strike at Mount Isa."

There is no strike at Mount Isa at present.

Government members interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: Hon. members opposite can use the term "lock-out" or "block-out" if they like, but the Industrial Commission has not determined that it is not a lock-out. It is true that one of the Industrial Commissioners has expressed his opinion that it is not a lock-out, but it has not been resolved by the Industrial Commission that it is not. I believe that there is strong opinion by counsel that the circumstances of the industrial dispute at Mount Isa Mine do come

within the definition of a lock-out because the employees are prepared to work under the terms of the award.

But this fight is not particularly a fight between the industrial unions concerned and the management. The body responsible for the state of affairs at Mt. Isa is the Government of the State of Queensland. They are the people who are responsible. Hon. members opposite are the people who claim that they are specialists. They are the ones who said, "We do not want a Government in Queensland comprised of ex-shop assistants, rubber workers, railway clerks, manual training instructors, union organisers, meat workers, and people of that kind." They say, "We are a Government of successful businessmen. We have trained accountants, doctors, barristers, company directors, who can make available to the Parliament of Queensland their managerial skill and professional know-how for the benefit of the State. In their various departments they might have specialists who would have more knowledge than individual hon. members on this side, but we pride ourselves on knowing a little more about industrial relationships. All the ordinary people want in this matter is a fair go. As the Opposition, that is all we ask for—that the men at Mt. Isa be given a fair go. They are not being given that at the present time. What a foolish statement to be made by one of the chief executives of Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. that the mine would be closed down indefinitely, if necessary! Is it going to be a war of financial and economic attrition? Are we going back to the depression days when Brown of the collieries in New South Wales said that he was prepared to close down the colliery for 18 months, and then went on a world tour on his palatial yacht? Are we going to have combinations of cartels and monopolies that have the capacity to withstand a financial siege operating in that fashion? The company's financial strength has not been built up solely by the injection of new capital but by the ploughing back of profits. What is the good of talking about £26,000,000 being ploughed back? I am glad to see that £26,000,000 has been ploughed back for the development of the mine but it has been won from the profits of the mine. Shareholders have received bonus distributions. Money and labour are the essential elements to operate any enterprise. Men who are prepared to give their labour and shareholders who are prepared to give capital are a necessary combination. I do not quarrel with the operation of that combination. But if it is good enough to say that a shareholder is entitled to a bonus distribution, without his having to demonstrate need, why impose the obligation on the employee to show need or even an opportunity to convince an industrial tribunal of his claims. But that discrimination is made. Excluding bonus payments that applies not only to the present

Government but also to Labour Governments who adhered to the policy of arbitration. Whether benefits were obtained because of the particular advocacy of union representatives in the way arguments were marshalled, perhaps by pointing out the disproportionate benefit compared with people in other industries, or because of the skill of their labour or comparable skill of their labour, or by agreement with the employers, or even by strike action, we find that every Government involved in wage demands have compelled the parties to go to the court to determine their industrial grievances. I do not want to get sidetracked and speak about the Treasurer and public servants, but there is not the same difficulty or the same protracted negotiations involved in high payments to top public servants as there is in the case of the ordinary person in the community whose wage is covered by the determination of an industrial tribunal. When the Treasurer has had trouble in the dockyards, when the Minister for Transport has had trouble in the railways, and when other Ministers have been faced with the possibility of industrial trouble, on every occasion the matter has gone to the Court because it has been laid down that the Industrial Court was to be the body to decide what industrial conditions and wages should apply to those engaged in industry and whether provision should be made in awards for bonus payments. After many years the present Government disturbed that practice which has been followed with varying degrees of success and with varying acceptance by the unions, but which at least ensured industrial stability at Mt. Isa. The Minister for Labour and Industry disturbed a long-established practice; we warned him it might lead to trouble. I do not blame the Minister for Labour and Industry in particular, other than that he was the instrument. I say quite deliberately and cold-bloodedly—and no doubt it will be denied—that I think it is a payoff on instructions from the Country Party to the Minister for Labour and Industry to introduce an amendment of the law because of the help and encouragement given to the Country Party by Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. management.

I say it is the inalienable right of any person in the community to join any political organisation he likes and it would be wrong of me to say that any person should not exercise his democratic franchise if he wishes to do so by joining the Labour Party, the Queensland Labour Party, the Liberal Party or the Country Party or any other political organisation in which he feels he has some interest and could achieve some results by doing so, but I do question the propriety of the executive officers of a large industrial organisation of the magnitude of Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. to keep aloof from active participation in party membership until there is a change of Government, and a Country-Liberal Government come to power

and then to act as I say these executives did. I name Mr. Fisher whom I know as a very efficient executive in his professional and commercial capacity. I do not know Mr. Foots so well but I understand that he also is a very able executive officer. If they felt so strongly on this matter why did they not join the Country Party while the Labour Party were in power if they had the courage to do it then? Immediately this Government came to power they applied for membership and became active members of the Country Party and I say without hesitation—and I accept the responsibility for saying it—that I think overtures were made from these people to the Country Party, which percolated through to the Premier and culminated in the taking out of the Act provision for profit sharing.

What is the position now? It is all right for the Government to be complacent. They will sit back and hope that the men at Mt. Isa will capitulate but I tell the Premier now that if he feels that the issue of a declaration of a state of emergency with heavy penalties will resolve this problem he is mistaken because the men have done everything the Act lays down should be done.

I have here many extracts from what was said by the Minister for Labour and Industry when this matter came before the House, and for the sake of the record I might as well put one or two of them in. On 21 March 1961, at page 2898, the Minister said—

"I agree that the Court should not have authority to award profit-sharing sums in addition to a fair and just wage worked out in accordance with the circumstances and conditions of the work. That is in accordance with the definition of bonus payments as set out in the Bill. I want to emphasise that my colleagues and I are firmly in favour of, and we encourage, the negotiation of bonus payments outside the Court between employers and employees. I have every reason to believe—indeed I know—that employers will be encouraged to negotiate such arrangements on the passing of this measure . . ."

He said at page 2404—

"Many employers will not give bonus payments under the present Act because they feel that if they do, then very quickly there will be an appeal to the Court for its wide extension.

With the provision removed the fear is removed also. Consequently, with the compulsion removed, I expect that there will be considerable extension of the principle of voluntary profit sharing . . ."

Those were the remarks of the Minister for Labour and Industry. Then he went on to say amongst other things—and I state this broadly—that he was not going to have this Communist junta at the Trades Hall organising the men to come out on strike, that he was going to lay down a very strict code that had to be followed very closely in this matter before he would permit

men to become involved in what is regarded as a legal strike. The unions have pointed out that they have no desire to plunge their members unnecessarily into needless industrial strife. Who is hurt most? It hurts the men more than anyone else. The company has said that it can go on indefinitely, that the mine can be shut forever—apparently with no hardship to the executive of Mt. Isa Mines. But can the men stay out for ever? Of course they cannot. Consequently, there is not a desire on behalf of unions to plunge their members into industrial turmoil.

In legislation introduced by the Minister for Labour and Industry provision was made for the taking of a ballot. In this case that was done and this is the result of the ballot, the voting in each instance being in favour of going out on strike—

Union	Votes
A.E.U.	191 to 27
F.I.A.	90 to 5
Building Workers'	38 to 4
E.T.U.	120 to 19
Clerks'	93 to 62
B.S.A.	109 to 2
F.E.D.F.A.	75 to 35
Bricklayers'	11 to 3
Plumbers'	16 to 6
A.W.U.	869 to 310

The vote of the Clerks' is significant because clerks generally are regarded as being perhaps much more conservative than the rest of the industrial movement in regard to involvement in industrial action.

Even allowing for the fact that some men were on holidays and some were absent from the mine, the majority of the membership of the A.W.U. were in favour, as shown by secret ballot, of strike action being taken if necessary.

I discussed this matter with Mr. Edgar Williams this morning and he was kind enough to send me urgently the opinion expressed by a leading Queen's Counsel in Queensland about the legal strike position that the Minister said was so necessary. The Q.C. is one of the best in his field in Queensland and this is his opinion—

"In my view, all that Section 98 does is to indicate what is an authorised strike or lockout and what is an unauthorised strike or lockout. It then goes on to provide penalties for unauthorised strikes or lockouts. The Section does no more or no less than this. It could be taken out of the Act, perhaps together with Section 99, and its absence would have no effect on the structure of the remainder of the Act."

That is the exact position. The Act provides for strike action, but when the result is obtained in a legal and constitutional way and information sent to the Registrar of the Court no certificate is issued. An impasse is reached. What is the next move in all these things? What did the Minister for Transport do when he had some industrial strike

with the Federated Engine Drivers' Union? Advantage was taken immediately of Section 102 to order the men back to work, and the men would commit a breach of the Act if they did not obey it. What is the use of saying that all democratic processes should be used by the men, including the observance of the safeguard of democratic ballot secrecy, to see a strike is not precipitately engaged in, when action is taken immediately to order them back to work and when they can be subjected to savage penalties imposed by the Crown if they fail to return to work?

The Mt. Isa Company has not been generous at all in the matter. This morning I had brought to my attention the case of a plumber who had been away for six weeks' holiday. He spent £100 in fares to take himself and his family back to Mt. Isa, only to be told there was no work available for him. I am subject to correction by the hon. member for Burke, but I understand that many people who work in distant places such as Mt. Isa take their holidays every two years rather than every year and when they return are re-engaged by the company. This man was not involved in the trouble. He returned to Mt. Isa and was prepared to carry on in his job but was locked out by the management. He spent £100 needlessly in going back to Mt. Isa.

The Government are responsible. They have not promoted industrial harmony. They have aggravated the disharmony by taking away the thing that successive Governments have laid down for the protection of the ordinary working-man. We respect the Court and expect it to give a fair decision on the evidence placed before it. The company has not been fair despite the assurance of the Minister for Labour and Industry, not that he expected, but that he knew, of the willingness of employers to negotiate in such matters. They are paid a bonus of £10 a week at Mary Kathleen, an adjoining mine, with a very limited life—by no stretch of the imagination has it the same possibilities of prolongation of economic operation as Mt. Isa—because the agreement with the British Government expires in three or four years. They can do this yet there is no certainty that the mine will be able to continue economic operations for any long period.

I charge the Government with being primarily responsible and if they want to prevent a disastrous situation in the State, the economic effects of which may be felt for a long while, I exhort them to take immediate steps to rectify the situation and not exercise the powers under the State Transport Act, to declare a state of emergency, which would solve nothing. What is the good of ordering men back to the court when a statutory provision prevents the Court from granting or altering a bonus, except downwards? What is the good of returning this matter to the court when the court has no power to deal with it? Indeed, the records show that prior to the introduction of this legislation the unions made an

application for a variation of the bonus payment which was rejected before this legislation was assented to. Is it any wonder that the men in the A.W.U. who are involved are prepared to back this dispute with the full resources of the union? This support is being given also by the other craft unions involved.

I hope I will not offend anyone on this matter: overwhelmingly the so called strikers are members of the A.W.U. Many craft unions are involved and they are entitled to be as concerned as they are for the wellbeing of their members. The only advice I give them, and I give it with every good intention, is that they do not allow outside interests to involve themselves in propaganda to confuse the issues in this dispute. The issues are simply stated. This Government in their desire to help the tremendously wealthy mine have stopped an industrial practice that has operated for so long, by preventing the tribunal from making a fair determination on the workers' claims, not as a result of the action of the union or the Mt. Isa people, except at the instigation of the executive, I believe, in channelling the request through the Country Party to the Government and its representatives. By this alteration in policy they have produced this great industrial turmoil.

I shall now refer to beef roads. We know that the Government have been taking great credit for extracting certain financial assistance from the Commonwealth Government. No doubt the hon. member for Baroona will deal with the Mt. Isa railway line transactions in his speech. Hon. members will recall that when this matter was discussed during the Supply debate the Treasurer did not use any smart sidestepping with words. When he was asked by the hon. member for Baroona to express his views regarding Commonwealth obligations on sinking fund payments he said, amongst other things—

"We say a sinking fund entitlement is ours as a matter of constitutional right. It is not a matter for decision at all. We say it is settled by the Australian constitution. We say it is a borrowing by the State. They say it is a Section 96 grant repayable, bearing interest, and they say it is not a loan and not a borrowing.

"We say quite frankly that if the argument succeeds the English language has lost all its meaning. If I say, 'Here is £1,000; you have not borrowed it, but you have to pay it back and you have to pay me interest on it,' if that is not a borrowing, then, I repeat, the English language has lost all its meaning. It is a technical argument that a repayable grant under Section 96 is excluded from Section 104A of the Constitution."

Then he goes on, but he says quite clearly that it is a matter of simple English, that the Commonwealth had some obligations on this. And so they went down to Canberra. In one of the earlier Budget speeches of the hon. gentleman when he became Treasurer

of the State, he remarked about the intemperate language that was used by Labour spokesmen in going to Canberra and he said, amongst other things—

"We have yet to be persuaded that the submission of inadequately prepared cases supplemented by provocative remarks in the press, can accord to the standards of responsible public finance or for that matter bring a reader acceptance from the authority to whom they are addressed. Queensland's case in the matter will be prepared and submitted courteously. I have no fear that, on such a basis, the State will receive anything other than fair treatment."

So that was going to be the *modus operandi* of this Government in their dealings with the Commonwealth authorities. We know, of course, that they failed and failed badly in their various submissions; but, with a Federal election pending, obviously Mr. R. G. Menzies felt it was time to do something because there had been very concerted action by Liberal Federal members and Country Party members who expressed their dissatisfaction with the treatment that Queensland was getting in these matters. We have seen from previous information placed before this Chamber the extent to which the Commonwealth has unfairly neglected Queensland in the provision of funds for various works. I have the figures. Perhaps they are not absolutely relevant at the moment but I should have liked to include them in "Hansard."

However, when the suggested journey to Canberra took place, one Minister was alleged to have said, "Well, the 'wigs' on the green," the reporters could get their scribbling pads out and their pens and pencils ready if Mr. Menzies did not come to the party on the Mt. Isa rail project. One responsible Minister, the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity felt so strongly about the matter that he threatened secession from the Commonwealth unless we received more sympathetic treatment on the matter.

So, despite all the talk about temperate language in the past, a report appeared in the Brisbane "Telegraph" of 31 August last that the Premier and Treasurer had left for Canberra for talks on the Mt. Isa railway financial agreement and beef roads. Under headlines reading, "State to get tough. Menzies will face demand," the "Telegraph" reported that the State would demand from Mr. Menzies either a direct advance or provision from sinking fund to finance the project. It also said—

"One senior Cabinet Minister said today: 'This is it. If we fail this time you had better have your pencils sharpened next week. There'll be plenty of news around'."

But there was no need for the sharpened pencils except to record how Menzies deftly swept the lion skins off the visitors from Queensland to reveal them as singularly unbeligerent lambs. What happened? He did make an offer of some money for beef roads and the Treasurer quite unashamedly

said, "I don't care what name they give it as long as they give the money to Queensland. Forget about the approach. Forget about constitutional obligations. Forget about considerations of simple English. Give us the dough. It does not matter if it is given for beef cattle roads or for some other purpose but give us the dough." That is the Treasurer's attitude. He says, in effect, "When I want money I am not concerned about moral principles; I am not concerned about fine distinctions of legal terminology; I am not concerned about what the dictionary says; I am not even concerned about my reputation for being a clear, concise and lucid speaker and for being able to impart to those listening to me my thoughts on these matters—as long as you give me the dough." So they gave them some "dough." Was this "dough" sufficient and was it adequate compensation for their failure to do something worthwhile on the Mt. Isa railway? Time will not permit me to develop that but in all probability the hon. member for Baroona will carry on from where he left off the other day.

What has happened in relation to beef roads? Provision was made in the current Commonwealth Budget for £650,000 for the Julia Creek-Normanton road, with a matching arrangement on the part of Queensland. Recalling that £5,000,000 had been provided for development in Western Australia some years ago, the Prime Minister said that his Government were prepared to find £5,000,000 for beef roads in Queensland over a five-year period ending June, 1966. This was to include the £650,000 already provided this year. The balance of £4,350,000 does not attract matching expenditure by Queensland.

However, the Postmaster-General, Mr. Davidson, said in the Federal House on 5 September that Queensland would receive special Federal aid this year of £5,250,000, compared with £2,450,000 for Western Australia. But the Postmaster-General included in the Queensland figure the £4,600,000 being loaned in respect of the Mt. Isa rail project, for which Queensland will have to pay World Bank rates of interest in addition to amortising the loan in the short term of 20 years.

To interpret the position as reflecting any new attitude of benevolence towards Queensland by the Menzies Government is to completely misunderstand the situation. The Commonwealth has come in belatedly, and under extreme political pressure, with an election looming, to do something in Queensland on the lines of the Western Australian Grant (Northern Development) Act of 1958-1959, which provides for a total grant of £5,000,000 for developmental work in that State north of the twentieth parallel of latitude.

Under that legislation, payments to Western Australia in 1960-1961 amounted to £1,208,000, and provision is made this financial year for the payment of £1,800,000 for

these purposes. Including this year's provision, Western Australia will have received since 1958-1959 £3,663,000 from grants under the Northern Development Act. All of this money was almost entirely related to beef production. Yet we find that Western Australia has a beef cattle population only one-seventh that of Queensland, and its beef and veal production is only one-sixth of that of Queensland. The source of this information is the 1959 figures in the Commonwealth Year Book for 1960.

Under the States Grants (Encouragement of Meat Production) Act, the Commonwealth has provided £2,164,000, and payments since 1950-1951 to the current year, inclusive of this year's estimates, were £1,327,000, or 61 per cent. of the total, to Queensland, and £837,000, or 38 per cent., to Western Australia.

Considering the comparative production figures and the relative values of each State's production to the export economy, the grants are grossly disproportionate, since Queensland rates six times as great as Western Australia as a beef exporter. Of the five mainland States, Queensland produces 21 per cent. of Australia's exports, while Western Australia provides only 11 per cent. of the total exports.

Apropos of what I said a few moments ago about the Postmaster-General, Mr. Davidson, he hinted in his speech that the Queensland Government were looking on the Mt. Isa rail project as a sort of sacred cow, and that other works in Queensland were being starved because of this. He said, as recorded in "Hansard"—

"For the last two years money has been available to Queensland for work on the Mt. Isa railway . . . (but) there have been no drawings in the last two years against the £20,000,000 that we have been prepared to advance. Certain works on the line have been undertaken by the Queensland Government and financed out of funds which could have been used for other purposes."

He said that the State could have used to better advantage funds that were available to it. How often has the Treasurer chided former Governments because they did not use all the money available to them? How he lamented the fact that loan borrowings by municipal authorities throughout the State had not reached the objective of 100 per cent. that he is so proud of achieving last year, whilst admitting in previous Budget speeches that the calls on money from private investments and differential rates paid by hire-purchase companies and land developers prevented full subscriptions being made available. Even if the local authorities were successful in getting 100 per cent., they would not have been able to use all the money because of a shortage of materials and, in some cases, a shortage of labour.

I do not want my protest on this particular matter to be construed as meaning that I

am complaining about this injection of funds, but I do say that Queensland has claimed from the Federal Government less than it was entitled to for the promotion of beef roads because of our export position, and that the Commonwealth Government have not recognised adequately our claims in that regard. They are doing no more than they are prepared to do for another State with a lesser percentage of exports. In season and out of season no State contributes more than Queensland. In view of the contribution Queensland makes towards Australia's balance of payments why do not we get some recognition? What is the good of the Treasurer's saying on the one hand that he understands with crystal clearness and clarity what words mean? What is the good of his saying that he will fight for Queensland down in Canberra when they are politically bribed with an election pending? I cannot prove these things, of course, but I say firmly and with conviction that if it were not for the fact that a Federal election is pending the Treasurer would not have got that £5,000,000 for beef cattle roads. Now he has got it, good luck to him, but as I say, he could have got that with complete fairness without prejudicing his right to sinking fund payments on the reconstruction of the Mt. Isa line. That is my quarrel.

Mr. Aikens: Do you regard it purely as an election bribe?

Mr. DUGGAN: That is an understatement. Even the hon. member with his command of words would have difficulty in adequately describing it other than a political gesture. It ranks with the jerrymandering of the electoral boundaries which is another political trick to win elections.

Because of considerations of time necessarily I have had to confine my remarks to one or two factors of tremendous importance to the State. The Treasurer has not fairly measured up to the challenging problems he posed when in Opposition. Whatever credit he may consider he is entitled to for the presentation of his accounts, I let him have. On behalf of the Opposition I inform him that we are not dealing with the Budget in a cavalier fashion. All I am concerned about is the impact the Government's financial policy has on the economy of the State as a whole. At this stage I shall not deal with his particular departmental division of accounts, whether he has combined certain debts or whether he is paying them out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund. I should like to have dealt with the added return to the Treasurer by the sale of materials, through suspense accounts, which have been considerable. He may argue that they were extravagantly built up. At this stage I am not prepared to argue the merits or demerits of the matter but on his own statement he has had in excess of £1,000,000 flow into his Treasury chest that was not available to the previous Government. The Government sold the Collinsville mine. All these things

show that the Treasurer has had at his command funds sufficient to enable him to do more than he has. All-in-all the record of the Government financially and otherwise has not been as good as we consider that the circumstances and the situation would have permitted. Because of that fact I move—

"That the Item 'Aide-de-Camp, £1,594' be reduced by £1."

For the satisfaction of Commander Hutton, the A.D.C. at Government House, I assure him that we have never been parties to a wage-slashing campaign and the £1 will be reimbursed from our pockets. Time does not permit me to deal with other financial matters but other speakers from this side will deal with matters of importance to the State. All-in-all we feel that this "booze and betting" budget does not do justice to the tremendous opportunities to govern efficiently in the interests of Queensland as a whole.

Mr. ADAIR (Cook) (2.15 p.m.): The Treasurer has given us ample time during the recess to peruse the Budget he introduced before Parliament adjourned. It is a very gloomy Budget so far as the Far North is concerned. The only two bright aspects of it are in the proposals to introduce legislation relating to the liquor laws and S.P. betting. I put up a "Lone Star Ranger" fight in this Chamber earlier this year on the S.P. betting issue when the sergeant of police and a detective at Mareeba were transferred from my area because S.P. betting was being conducted in the town. I have no fear of contradiction in saying that it has been carried out in every town in the State and that there is no way in the world it will be stopped because Australians will bet and no one can stop them.

The Government have done the right thing in moving to legalise off-the-course betting. I have no idea what provisions the Bill will contain but I hope that they are sensible and will give the people living in distant areas an opportunity to have a bet if they want one.

I understand from reports in the Press that there will be a ban on betting imposed within a 20-mile radius of a town in which a race meeting is being held. An anomaly could arise there because in many towns clubs have to construct racecourses anything from 5 to 8 miles from the town. Taking Mareeba and Atherton as an example, if a race meeting is to be held for Atherton it must, in fact, be held at Tolga which is 4 miles from the town. Mareeba would then fall inside the 20-mile radius. I do not think it would be fair to provide that all betting in a town the size of Mareeba should cease when there is a race meeting being held at Tolga. I ask the Treasurer to look at that aspect of the matter as it will happen not only in that area but in many other areas as well and, when this legislation is introduced race meetings will probably be held more often than they are now.

From Press reports on the proposed new liquor laws licence fees will be increased by 2 per cent., from 4 per cent. to 6 per cent. of liquor purchases and publicans will be forced to increase the price of beer. That will be unavoidable because these people bought their licences on the basis of a 4 per cent. licence tax. If I were buying a hotel the first thing I should do—in fact the only thing I should do—would be to see what the liquor licence was. It gives an indication of the sales of wine, spirits and beer by the previous licensee. It has been said that the increase of 2 per cent. will not apply to spirits. I think it will apply to spirits just as it will apply to beer, and that it will mean an increase in the price of spirits. Publicans will be forced to pass it on, having bought their hotels when the fee was 4 per cent.

I have always been in favour of the right to drink on Sundays. In the Far North and Far West people who desire to drink, particularly canecutters and other hard workers, should be entitled to do so, but I think the proposed hours are undesirable. The average woman wants to have her husband home in time for lunch, which is usually ready from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. If the suggested period from 12 to 2 is not altered to 10 a.m. to 12 noon or 10 a.m. to 12.30, much difficulty will be experienced by housewives whose husbands come home late for lunch. I have nothing to say about the later period on Sunday, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The Budget is not a very bright one for North Queensland generally and for my own area in particular. The only large-scale developmental project at present under way is the Barron Falls hydro-electric scheme, and most of the employees there were originally brought from the South. Before the project was commenced I asked the Premier to see that as much local labour as possible was absorbed, but my request was not acceded to. Most employees were brought from the southern part of Queensland. Local miners are capable of doing the work. Only a few miles from the project we have the Herberton and Irvinebank mineral fields where men are crying out for work, and they are probably more capable than the employees brought to the area. I have said it is the only big project being undertaken. Last year many men were employed on the construction of the Mulligan and Cook Highways but this year no similar work is to be undertaken.

Most of the sugar mills will be closed in about two months. Many canecutters will seek employment in the South, but many hundreds of local residents who cut cane and work in the mills will then be unemployed. I predict that by Christmas or late December thousands of men will be unemployed in the district. I cannot for the life of me see how they will be able to find work. Timber mills will be closing down during the wet season. Already the plymills are

closed and hundreds are out of work. When the sawmills close there will be no other avenue of employment available in the area.

Since this Government took office four years ago we have had many lines closed down. Firstly, the Mt. Mulligan line was closed. I venture to say that if a Labour Government had been in power that line would never have been closed. I have had long talks with the Minister who represented the area, and he claimed that available records indicate that there is any amount of coal still in the Mt. Mulligan mine.

Port Douglas was closed and the men working on the wharf had to go to Cairns for work. For several months after the closure they were forced to travel to and from Cairns every day. It is a long way, over 40 miles there and 40 miles back, and they did this for over 12 months. The Mt. Mulligan miners had their fares paid to Collinsville and I think homes were built there for them, but unfortunately the water-side workers did not get the same treatment.

Then, the Mt. Garnet railway line was closed. This is an important railway line. The tin from the dredges in that area was carried on it and the line created a fair amount of work for the railwaymen in the area.

The next closure is to be the Cooktown-Laura line. It is just on 70 miles from Cooktown to Laura, and during the wet season the railway line affords the only means of transport. For three or four months of the year, during the wet season, there is no chance of alternative transport. When the Laura river floods there is not a hope in the world that anyone or any goods can be carted by lorry. Before the Minister decides to close this line in December he should give the matter very sympathetic consideration. The closure will affect the line, the 12 men working on it, and their wives and families. They will have to leave Cooktown and seek employment elsewhere. Many of them have been there all their lives and have built their homes which they will be unable to sell because no-one will buy them. Cooktown will become a ghost town. There is no Main Roads work and the sawmill has closed. The Government should carry on the Cooktown-Laura line until the timber position is stabilised and Rankine Bros., who own the mill and the timber stands in the area, are able to start the mill again and employ the 26 men who were previously employed by Bunning Bros. Once the wet season starts, in about December, even vehicles with four-wheel drive will not be able to travel over that road. That is why it is so important to keep the line open.

What is so hard to understand is that some suburban lines in Brisbane are showing a far greater loss than the Cooktown-Laura line but there is no way in the world they will be closed down. One Sunday morning, only a few weeks ago, I travelled by rail to

Ipswich and I saw from the notice board that there were 23 trains scheduled for that day. I had my gold pass with me but when I boarded the train nobody asked to see my pass, nor did anyone ask for it when I alighted. I did not see anyone else challenged for a ticket and I took particular notice. It is beyond me how the lines can pay but it is certainly very unfair to allow suburban lines to remain open at a loss with all the other means of transport available when, with the closure of the Cooktown-Laura line, the people in that area of the Far North will have no means of transport. I do not think the investigators will do anything about the closure of lines in the metropolitan area; probably they have the good oil not to touch them.

Recently it was said that Messrs. Ford, Bacon & Davis had suggested that the Cairns railway workshops be closed. The subject is just as important to me as it is to the hon. member for Cairns because I have many men in Edmonton and on the other side of Cairns who are working in those workshops. If they are closed down, up to 200 men will be put off.

Mr. Wallace: More.

Mr. ADAIR: I believe that to be true. Most of those men have been employed in the railway workshops since they were lads; their homes are in Cairns and district, and if they are lucky enough to be transferred to jobs elsewhere they will have to sell their homes and move. Cairns is the centre of a vast area and lines radiate to Mareeba, Ravenshoe, Einasleigh and Forsyth. It is convenient for repair work and the Cairns workshops are capable of doing all types of repair, yet it has been recommended that they be closed. I do not know whether the Minister has made a decision on the matter, but I hope that, in his better judgment, he will not close the Cairns workshop.

There has been much discussion about the beef roads from Normanton to Julia Creek and from Georgetown to Mount Surprise. If the Government go ahead with the Normanton-Julia Creek road first, all the cattle that normally would go to the meatworks in Cairns and the saleyards in Mareeba will go to Townsville. I ask the Minister to recommend the construction of the Georgetown to Mount Surprise road first, because the cattle will then continue going to the meatworks at Cairns and the saleyards at Mareeba. Burton Brothers are carting a large number of cattle from Laura and the Gulf Country to Mareeba with their road trains, and I hope that the Government will give priority to the Georgetown-Mount Surprise road.

There is no reference in the Budget to any grant of money for the extension of the Tinaroo Falls irrigation project. It is one of the greatest irrigation schemes in Australia.

Mr. Davies: They can thank the Australian Labour Party for that.

Mr. ADAIR: They can thank Harold Collins and the Labour Party. Anybody who went up there and followed the miles of channels and saw the large body of water flowing to Dimbulah and through the tobacco area would be impressed by what irrigation is doing for the area. Recently water was let out into the Walsh River from the Tinaroo Falls dam. I saw photographs taken 140 miles from the dam where the water had saved over 5,000 head of stock. The water has now gone over 200 miles down the Walsh River and will be of great advantage to graziers in that area.

The present drought is one of the worst in my lifetime. I have never before seen cane dying in the Barron Valley, and young cane there is now being irrigated. With such a wonderful irrigation scheme and a surplus of millions of gallons of water, it is a pity that good tobacco land cannot get the benefit of the scheme. The value of the tobacco crop in the area last year was £4,750,000, and I am sure that figure could be doubled if the scheme were extended.

Mr. Davies: Is the average quality of the leaf good?

Mr. ADAIR: Yes. I have been informed that the average price last year was about 135d. to 140d. per lb. and that only a small percentage of the leaf was rejected. I am sure that tobacco-growing will be carried on in the Mareeba area long after it has ceased in other areas. The land is suitable and there are experienced tobacco-growers in the area who will be able to cope with any obstacle. Their biggest obstacle, of course, is the buyers' market. As I said in the debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, the tobacco-growers are being fleeced in the sale of their product. I hope that the matter can be rectified by the holding of a full inquiry into the tobacco industry.

I have received inquiries about the development of irrigated pastures in the region. Some land in the Mareeba-Dimbulah area is unsuitable for tobacco-growing. Irrigated pastures for cattle-fattening would be a success on the rich red soil on the Atherton side. The Government are spending very little money in that area this year. Experienced irrigation men who have worked on the project from the commencement of the Tinaroo Falls scheme are being put off, yet just recently an outside contractor was given a large contract for the construction of channels. I have been informed by employees of the department that had the Irrigation Department undertaken the work the channels could have been built considerably cheaper, and thus provided them with further employment. They have no security of work. Their homes are in Mareeba but I do not know what is going to happen to them. They are key men in the Irrigation Department. When I

asked a question of the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation he could give me no assurance that they would be placed in work on other irrigation schemes in Queensland. Their outlook is not very bright. Recently I brought before the notice of the House the fact that the aerodrome farmers outside Mareeba were willing to finance their own irrigation scheme up to £80,000, linking up with the end of the channels 4½ miles away. I was informed that the scheme would cost £140,000 but the Government were not inclined to help unless the farmers found all the money themselves. To irrigate land two miles from the Barron River the cost of machinery, pipes and everything else necessary exceeds £15,000. Diesel engines have to be renewed and the farmers say that it would be cheaper for them to put in this money than buy new equipment. They cannot see where the Government are going to give them water because it will by-pass them as it goes through to Emerald Creek.

Mareeba and Dimbulah are boom towns, as I have already said, and I cannot see any way in the world in which their future is not assured. I believe that, within the next few years, they will further advance and, with the extension of the channels, the revenue from the area will double. They will be the most prosperous areas, at least in this State.

Further north, in the mining areas, there is a tin boom. The price of tin is at its highest level for some years. I have approached the present Minister for Mines and former Ministers on several occasions, pointing out that it would be of great assistance to miners if at least two diamond drills were available in that area and at their disposal. Several old mines are reproducing. Other old mines in the area will still produce if the miners have the money to develop them. They were left at a depth of 300 to 400 feet, the timber has rotted out and they are full of water. It will cost much money to bail and retimber them. All the old mines to which the companies have returned are producing and will continue to do so.

Much publicity has been given to the development of Weipa bauxite field. The company is spending large sums on dredging the harbour. They believed when they started that they would have to dredge only about 2½ miles but it has now become evident that some further distance will have to be dredged and that it will take a long time and cost a large sum of money. However, there is considerable work being carried out on this field.

It is, as is well known, one of the largest bauxite fields in the world. There are hundreds of years of work ahead and, as time goes on, several thousand men will be employed. I have approached the Minister in relation to the speeding up of the rebuilding of the mission at Weipa. It will be rebuilt on the high banks of the river and I am told it will cost £150,000.

Mr. Hiley: It will cost £200,000.

Mr. ADAIR: At present there is much unemployment in the North and, on present indications, it will increase. If the work of rebuilding this mission is carried out as soon as possible many of these men can be employed. Local sawmills could supply the timber for the construction of the homes, which would employ further men. It would be a considerable advantage if the work could be commenced as soon as possible.

Much is heard here about relief being granted to graziers in all parts of the State by way of freight concessions on the cartage of fodder. In my area, in Cape York Peninsula, there are no railways, consequently, there is no way in which graziers can get such relief unless they cart their own fodder. Fodder cannot be taken overland from Laura to Coen and other places because there are no suitable roads. It has to be sent by boat to Merina Plains or Port Stewart, and then by truck 40 miles to Coen and round the top of Cape York Peninsula. Some graziers are paying up to £36 per ton for fodder transport. It is very costly. Graziers whose properties are near the railway line get some assistance from the Government, and I do not see why the Government should not give some subsidy on the sea transport of fodder and the lorry transport of it from the boat to properties. The graziers would benefit considerably from such a subsidy.

I have spoken in this Chamber in favour of voting rights for Islanders. Whether they come from Murray, Saibai, Badu or other islands, most of them are returned ex-servicemen. They are fine specimens of men. They should be given the right to vote.

It is impossible at present for a Torres Strait Islander to get his freedom under the Torres Strait Islanders Act. An aboriginal can be freed. In the last few months I have taken action on behalf of many of them, and, as long as they have not a police record, it is no trouble to get them freed from the operations of the Act. It is an impossibility for an Islander, yet he is an excellent type of person. The Minister has told me that although an Islander cannot be freed he is regarded by the Minister's department as having this freedom, that he can leave the island and go anywhere in Queensland. Many Islanders work in the West and in Townsville in the railways. Some of them are even gangers on the railway lines, yet under the Act as it stands at present they cannot be freed. It is all very well for the Minister to tell me that Islanders can go to any part of Queensland and get work. I know of Islanders on Thursday Island who cannot get permission to leave, despite the fact that they cannot obtain work there. How can they get work in any other part of Queensland if they are not permitted to leave the island? The only way in which many of them got to the mainland was by deserting their pearling boats

or trocchus boats at Mackay, Rockhampton, or Cairns, where they get employment. When they earn enough money they can bring their families to those districts. During the Address in Reply debate I pointed out to the House that hookworm disease was rife in the missions and the Torres Strait islands. The disease has a strong hold on aboriginals and islanders. I have been informed that nearly half of the inhabitants of some missions are infested with hookworm yet when I asked the Minister if he would have an officer of the Health Department stationed at Thursday Island—which is centrally situated, where he could get free transport in the Department of Native Affairs' boat—visit the islands, and even the mainland, he said that the disease was not as bad as I was led to believe. I am still assured that the disease is very bad in those areas and that if it is not arrested the health of the people will be seriously affected. If an officer of the Health Department is stationed at Thursday Island he could travel to the different islands at no cost to the Government on the department's boat and other boats.

The Minister for Public Works and Local Government is in the chamber now. On Saturday he travelled from Cairns to Mossman, and then to Bailey's Creek. I think he was impressed with his journey. He saw the land that is being slowly developed for cattle fattening. We went over one of the nicest drives in Queensland, through virgin scrub. We went across the Daintree River by barge and then further on, ten miles the other side to Bailey's Creek, towards Tribulation. There are over 40,000 acres of land in that area to be developed for cattle fattening. It is one of the richest cattle-fattening areas in the State. On the Daintree, where cattle fattening has been carried on for years, the Minister saw the type of cattle grazing there, and the rich pastures, even though they are suffering the worst drought that I have seen in the area. There are cattle that are prime mud fat on the property held by Fisher and Cobb; and it will fatten from three to four beasts to the acre. I know several hon. members in the Chamber who will not credit the fact that during one of the worst droughts in the district's history these cattle are on such pastures. The Minister will agree that he has never seen beef cattle as fat as these. They are grazing on guinea grass, paspalum and panicum. With the development of the Bailey Creek area and other areas, there is no doubt that this country will be brought into production for cattle fattening. However, the only way in which the area will progress is by building a road from the Daintree to Bloomfield. I have heard the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity say it will cost £300,000 to build the road. I should like to know what the Mulligan Highway has cost up to the present, and it is still not a road. Furthermore, I should like to know what it would

cost to make the Mulligan Highway an all-weather road. If he classes this road at £300,000 as a first-class road—I am assured by road construction contractors that they can build a road suitable for any type of vehicle for less than £50,000. For that small sum this country could be opened up and the vast area of rich soil developed into one of the richest cattle-fattening areas in the State.

Mr. Walsh: How many thousand acres would be opened up?

Mr. ADAIR: At least 40,000 in the two areas—Bailey's Creek and Tribulation. That is without Bloomfield and Shipton's Flat.

We have a transport problem since the introduction of the new legislation. During the war and after it, carriers operated from Cairns under State Transport Commission licences but, since the introduction of the new legislation, farmers who cut up to 6,000 tons of cane have gone into the transport business, cutting the price and taking business away from the operators who have given years of service to the people of the area and invested a great deal of money in trucks and semi-trailers.

Mr. Walsh: And they depend on it for their living.

Mr. ADAIR: That is so. The cane farmers have entered into competition with them and are taking business away from them.

The only pleasing note in the Financial Statement is the reference to the proposed new liquor laws and the legalising of S.P. betting. We will not know the exact terms until the legislation is introduced so I reserve further comment till then.

Mr. PILBEAM (Rockhampton South) (3.4 p.m.): I rise to speak in support of the Budget so ably presented by the Treasurer and, as a fellow member of the profession, to congratulate him upon the able manner in which it was brought down. As I said of the Budget last year, this is definitely a tight Budget. It is a Budget that allows for a deficit of £643,000. But it is a well known axiom in the accountancy profession that if you budget for surpluses you budget for wastages. The main cause of the deficit this year and in previous years has been the state of the weather. I do not think any Treasurer can gauge what the weather is likely to be. We have had four consecutive years without monsoonal rains, four years in which we have had to do without the regular rainy season. It is true that we have had the benefit of storm rains and freak rains such as we are experiencing at present but I do not think anyone will deny that the State has had bad seasons. In fact, the hon. member who has just resumed his seat drew attention to the fact that the drought in North Queensland was the worst that he could remember. So we can accept that these deficits could not be guarded against.

In looking at the Budget, I think we must admit that there are many things budgeted for, especially in the developmental field, that must result in an improvement in Queensland. In the part of the State that I represent, the planning stages have been reached for the erection of a power station at Callide, and that is very good news for Central Queensland. The only thing that agitates my mind about that project is the timing of its construction. If I could be quite sure and the people of Central Queensland could be quite sure that the construction of the power station at Callide would not begin after the construction of the power station on the Moreton field, we would be quite satisfied. We have already seen the plans of the power station, and we are fully in accord with them in regard to size, capacity, and plans for future expansion. However, we must see evidence that the construction of the power house at Callide is not going to be a secondary consideration.

I think its establishment marks a new phase in Central Queensland's development, because it was brought about by the strongest co-operation between centres that have not previously been noted for co-operating with each other. We had the combined agitation of places such as Biloela, Gladstone and Rockhampton. If we can get that co-operation and representatives on both sides of the House will co-operate in helping to establish desirable projects, I think Queensland will be a better State as a result. I am very happy that his co-operation has been achieved to make possible a most important project, without which Central Queensland's industrial potential could not possibly be developed.

I am happy to say, too, that the development of Port Alma is allowed for in the Budget. Here again, the feuding between the ports of Rockhampton and Gladstone that went on for many years has almost entirely ceased. I think Gladstone would be prepared to concede now that the development of Port Alma will not take business from it. We have never sought to achieve that result. We think that, with the development of Central Queensland, there will be enough trade for both ports, and it is far better that we should work together instead of attacking each other. Nothing is to be gained by sister ports indulging in recriminations when there is great development to be carried out and so much trade to be won. We note with appreciation the building up of the coal trade with Japan through Gladstone, and we sincerely hope that it will be developed to the great advancement of our sister port.

The Budget also makes provision for the construction of beef-roads, and we note a particular item of £650,000 to construct the beef-road in the Gulf country from Normanston to Julia Creek. We note, also, that the Windorah-Quilpie road is being constructed, and that the road from Boulia to Mt. Isa will be constructed shortly. The road we are concerned with in Central Queensland is the Windorah-Yaraka road, the section which

would particularly benefit Central Queensland. We do not mean that that section alone should be constructed. We applaud the decision to construct the overall road system, but there is one section of the overall system, and one only, that will benefit the ports of Central Queensland, Port Alma and Gladstone, and that is the Windorah-Yaraka road. We know that in the past that road was given top priority by the State Government of the day and by the Commonwealth Government, so much so that it is partially constructed now. I should say that it would be the cheapest section of the whole network to complete. On our estimate it would cost approximately £200,000 to complete. It would bring into the ports of Central Queensland cattle which we badly need to keep the meatworks in longer production. It is no use advancing the argument, as some people do who know nothing about it, that because cattle go past Rockhampton that we are not entitled to get more cattle in. The cattle that come from the Channel Country would be available at a time when the coastal cattle have gone off and graziers are no longer making their cattle available in the coastal areas. They are generally available from September on, and that is when the meatworks are starting to drop in cattle killings. That is why we are most concerned to see the Windorah-Yaraka section of the Channel Country road system completed. I commend that suggestion to the Cabinet for consideration as a top priority.

The Budget makes provision for several northern projects. We approve of them. We hope that the Mt. Isa rail project will go on at an accelerated rate; we see that provision has been made for the Barron River hydro-electric project. We see that the Gulf roads are being constructed. I have already dealt with that. We also note a big allocation for the further development of the Townsville University. We agree with that. When the Townsville University was first mooted we agreed with the argument advanced by the Minister for Education that the distance factor put Townsville first in the field. We have no reason to change our views, but in the interests of Central Queensland we urge for the earliest possible budgeting for a university in Central Queensland, also because of the distance factor. Queensland is a very large State, certainly large enough to support three universities. I realise how difficult it is to allow for three overheads and provide the professors to staff three universities as against two, but if a decentralisation policy is to be adopted in this most important phase of Government activity early consideration should be given to the construction of a university in Central Queensland.

Mr. TUCKER: How are you going to support it with your population?

Mr. PILBEAM: Our figures were better than those of North Queensland to whom we gave way because of the distance factor. There are more students in our area than in the hon. member's.

I must applaud the Government for their courage in tackling amending racing and liquor legislation. The racing reforms are very much overdue. I know we cannot discuss such reforms in this debate but at least I can say that we favour them. I notice that the Treasurer has agreed to meet the four head men of the municipal clubs before bringing down the legislation in regard to racing. I have already been approached by the committee of the Rockhampton Jockey Club who have asked me to request that they should be consulted also. I do not think that anyone will doubt that the Rockhampton Jockey Club is the leading provincial club of Queensland. It races for more money than any other club outside Brisbane. It races on more occasions. In Rockhampton they race 60 times a year, on every Saturday and every holiday; they are a very powerful body and they conduct racing of the very highest order.

They consider that if the metropolitan clubs are consulted, consideration should be given to at least the leading club outside the metropolis. I make the request, through you, Mr. Taylor, to the Treasurer that before he brings down his legislation dealing with racing reform he agrees to meet at least the President of the Rockhampton Jockey Club. I do not think there is anything wrong with that.

I consider the liquor reforms to be most realistic and, at the right time, I shall support them. No-one will deny that they are long overdue, particularly in the country centres. It is time we had an Act that can be enforced and not ignored.

I have told hon. members some of the features of the Budget that will benefit the whole of the State; I have told them some of the matters that will benefit North Queensland and a few of those that will benefit Central Queensland, but there is one matter that would benefit the whole of the State that I refer to the Treasurer for consideration. It is the creation of some fund to alleviate unexpected seasonal unemployment. It has been discussed at other times in this Chamber, and at present we are endeavouring in Rockhampton to draw up a scheme that could be implemented in the event of an emergency.

We are endeavouring to get co-operation between the three forms of government in creating this fund and we are told, quite correctly, that the loan moneys have been allocated for this year and that the State Government have no loan moneys available to meet the £50,000 that we have requested on the basis of £25,000 from the State Government and £25,000 from the Rockhampton City Council.

That is so, but I think we should have some sort of scheme on the books by which every year an allocation could be put aside so that the Commonwealth Government, the State Government, and the local authority concerned would have some money to make available provided a certain

emergency occurred. To my mind, a time by which such an emergency would have to occur would have to be fixed—say, up to or before 30 September; areas in which such an emergency might occur would have to be defined, and there would have to be a certain amount of unemployment in such area and a definition of the maximum earnings a person would be permitted before being placed inside the scheme. The proposition could be that if, before the end of September, there was 10 per cent., or some other percentage of unemployment in the area, this scheme could be brought into effect straight away, and every person who had not earned, say, £600 or £700 during the year up till that date could participate. Plans could already be in hand. They could embrace the type of work that would place the emphasis on labour rather than on the utilisation of material.

Mr. Davies: How many days a week would you give each man?

Mr. PILBEAM: I should say 12 weeks' full work for the maximum number that could be employed on the scheme. I do not see anything wrong with the proposal. It is a form of insurance and the Treasurer is interested in insurance. People who take out insurance must have an insurable interest in the proposition, and the people who have an insurable interest in keeping others in work are the Commonwealth and State Governments and the local authorities. I see nothing wrong in including in the loan programme each year an amount that could be borrowed in certain conditions. The contributions of the State Government and the local authority would naturally be supplemented to a great degree by the chief beneficiaries, the Commonwealth Government, who with the employment of men will escape their responsibility for social service payments. I think the proposal is entirely desirable. I submit it again and ask the Treasurer to provide for it in next year's Budget, if the scheme can be ironed out in the meantime. I ask him at that time to consider making an allocation to meet unexpected unemployment in areas subject to seasonal unemployment.

On behalf of Central Queensland I think I have the right to appeal to the Treasurer to give consideration when submitting future budgets to the three divisions of Queensland. I have said it before and will keep on saying it. In early days the three divisions were recognised, but in recent years the trend has been towards two allocations. I have tendered thanks to the Ministers responsible for certain improvements in Central Queensland, but anyone who studies the Budget must agree that in the developmental field at least Central Queensland has been badly left behind. I do not think that can be denied. I should be parochial if I were the only person to put forward that view. The Central Queensland Local Government Association conference with an attendance

of 21 out of 26 local authorities carried a motion that consideration be given to the three divisions of Queensland in allocations at every Government level. The motion was carried by an overwhelming majority—I think it may have been unanimous—at the Queensland Local Government conference in Brisbane last year. Every local government authority in Queensland was represented and the conference carried the motion that consideration be given to the three divisions of Queensland.

In advancing my argument I am not alone and am not being parochial.

We are fairly modest in our requests, I think the Minister will agree. In submitting the motion I did not ask for equal division of allocations; I should have been parochial in doing so. I asked that consideration be given to the three divisions even if we got only 25 per cent. of the allocations for the other divisions. The motion was carried unanimously by every local authority in Queensland.

We have never made a request of an outrageous nature. I think the Treasurer would admit that no local authority in Queensland has done more to help itself than the Rockhampton local authority. We have paid half the cost of the seaside road between Emu Park or Yeppoon, or I should say we shared the cost on a fifty-fifty basis with the Livingstone Shire Council. We paid 40 per cent. of the cost of the road to Port Alma and we have guaranteed interest and redemption losses on that new port. We paid half the cost of the seaside amenities at Emu Park and Yeppoon, and we have played a leading part in trying to get a fund created to relieve unemployment in the area. We have done our share. I think we are entitled to make submissions to the Treasurer and he should heed our very modest requests for assistance in this part of Queensland. As I have said before the major thing we require in Central Queensland is a good road to the West. I call it the backbone of Central Queensland. I thank the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity for the work he has done for that highway. He has given us an assurance that it will be gazetted very shortly—as soon as the Commissioner completes his report on main roads and highways for the State. He made an allocation last year of £500,000 for work on that road through the office at Rockhampton. Mr. Young, the engineer at Rockhampton, assures me that there will be an equal allocation this year. That is a vast improvement on anything that has ever been done before for that road. If we have it gazetted as a highway for its entire length, and constructed on an all-weather basis, we will not require much development money to be spent in Central Queensland. Once we get the wealth of the West coming down that road we will advance in Central Queensland. I remind the Minister that time is running out. We believe that a greater allocation

should be given for this road. We do not mind the big allocation for the Mt. Isa railway line, the beef cattle roads to Julia Creek, or to the top portion of the Channel Country roads, but we say that if millions are to be spent on them we should have a greater allocation for the one road that concerns us. I believe that it is an economic proposition and I feel sure that it will receive consideration from the Minister for Development, Mines Main Roads and Electricity and the Treasurer.

Mr. Graham: We will consider it when we are the Government.

Mr. PILBEAM: I cannot wait that long, Mr. Taylor.

When we consider this road to the West we must consider the rivalry of the direct road to Brisbane. Anyone who has gone out to the West must have seen all the wealth of the central part of the State that is lost to us because of the direct road, which is an encouragement to border-hoppers.

In Rockhampton we have been trying to establish a wool-selling centre. That is a most desirable and natural object. We grow over one-third of the wool of the State and we believe that we are entitled to have it brought to Central Queensland ports and sold at Rockhampton, Gladstone, or Port Alma, and shipped from Central Queensland ports. We think that is reasonable, but we have no way in the world to get the wool down while it goes direct by road to Brisbane. When it is carted by rail it is subject to concessional freights. We have been attacking them for years. They have a strangle hold round our necks in Rockhampton and we will never progress industrially until they are removed. I ask the Minister again to give serious consideration to scrapping many of the concessional freights and introducing a new system whereby all tapering freights terminate at the nearest port. If that principal was applied we could compete. The concessional freight rates have also prevented us from having what I would term a "natural"—a flour mill in Rockhampton. We grow a tremendous amount of good milling wheat on the central highlands, but freights are mitigating against the establishment of a flour mill.

In next year's Budget I hope to see provision for the construction of a barrage across the Fitzroy River. Here again we have been disadvantaged for years by not having a system capable of supplying water in commercial quantities. The city of Rockhampton is situated on the Fitzroy River, as even the hon. member for Rockhampton North knows. For years we have had to go up to 18 miles upstream to draw our water supply to be sure it is free of salt water and that makes it very uneconomical. We have our filtration plant at Yaamba, about 18 miles from Rockhampton. We filter the water there and bring it the 18 miles to Rockhampton so that we are not able to give Rockhampton industry cheap water. It has

to take filtered water because that is the only water we bring to Rockhampton and it is far too expensive.

Mr. Bennett: They ought to filter that council of yours up there.

Mr. PILBEAM: They have filtered the Brisbane City Council. I see the hon. member is out of it.

Mr. Bennett: I retired.

Mr. PILBEAM: Just tired, not retired. It is very necessary that Rockhampton be given encouragement to construct a barrage across the river. With the consent of the Government we have voted £12,000 to have the University construct a large-scale model of the Fitzroy and they inform us now that the model is one-third completed and that they will be able to give us an answer by December of this year on whether we have a suitable site for the construction of a barrage. I think it is fair to say that the site would be at Splitters Creek about a quarter of a mile above the railway bridge in Rockhampton. So we have a wonderful proposal there. If we could convert the Fitzroy River from a salt-water stream to a fresh-water stream at Rockhampton industry could have water in very large quantities—perhaps from the biggest source of water in Queensland—simply for the cost of pumping it out of the Fitzroy River.

Mr. Graham: Would it be an engineering proposition to put that weir across?

Mr. PILBEAM: Why not leave it to the engineers?

Mr. Bennett: Why don't you ask them? You have an engineer up there, haven't you?

Mr. PILBEAM: Prudent men in the Government have asked that the proposal be proved—even the engineers think that if it can be proved it should be proved—and the large-scale model will prove it. In Rockhampton we have a definite flood hazard and we cannot afford to run any risk that the barrage will increase it. All the developments that have taken place up to now make it almost certain that the barrage is a distinct possibility and therefore consideration must be given to an allocation next year of part of its construction costs.

Mr. Walsh: I think you are wasting your time with the Treasurer. You want to approach the World Bank.

Mr. PILBEAM: The project has been estimated to cost between £1,000,000 and £2,000,000, so it is not a wild-cat scheme. If we can bring to the city an almost unlimited water supply at a cost of between £1,000,000 and £2,000,000, it will still be one of the cheapest systems in Queensland.

Mr. Graham: You will still have to filter it even if you get it to within two miles of the city.

Mr. PILBEAM: The idea is to bring cheap water to industry. Industry does not need filtered water.

Another thing we are very keen on in Central Queensland is the development of the brigalow belt. Here, of course, finance must enter into consideration, and for that reason I have included the subject in my speech today. I think we all know that the brigalow belt constitutes about the largest tract of fertile land that is undeveloped in the world today and as such it should command the attention of every Government. We know, too, that the most economical method of pulling brigalow has been found, but it will require a fairly large capital outlay to settle people in the area. I am thankful to say that the Minister is very keen on the proposal and is giving it every consideration, but the thing that is agitating my mind is that, when we are developing the area, we must ensure that each settler receives an adequate area of land. Perhaps it would be easier to reach some conclusion if the whole area was under brigalow, but it is vital that each person should receive a living area. I have heard a great deal of argument about what constitutes a living area. The people who live in the area think that it should be 10,000 acres. It is a worthwhile development, and I commend it to the Treasurer as a matter on which he should collaborate fully with the Minister for Public Land and Irrigation.

Mr. Thackeray: What do you say about the railway station?

Mr. PILBEAM: I will not deal with the Rockhampton railway station, but I will deal with a legacy given to us by the previous Government. I have made inquiries to see whether any other city in Queensland has been treated as badly as Rockhampton was treated in this instance. If ever there was a part of a State highway it is the bridge across the Fitzroy River, and it will have cost the Rockhampton City Council £1,000,000 in interest and redemption payments by the time they have finished paying for it.

Mr. Donald: Didn't you want the bridge?

Mr. PILBEAM: The State wanted the bridge. I have been watching very closely to see how the other cities in Queensland have been treated, and I am glad to say that no similar action has been taken by this Government. No other city has a millstone of £1,000,000 in interest and redemption round its neck.

I should now like to discuss the question of the establishment of a district abattoir in Rockhampton. We have invited representatives of the graziers and of the District Abattoir Board to debate this question with us, but I have never heard one argument from anybody in favour of the establishment of a district abattoir. I suggest to hon. members on both sides of the Chamber

that they should consider opposing any move to construct a district abattoir in Rockhampton.

Mr. Thackeray: Everybody knows you are on the payroll of Mark Hinchcliffe. You are on the slush account.

Mr. PILBEAM: Mr. Gaven, do I have to accept that remark? As a returned soldier I have proved that I am not very interested in money, but the gentleman who made the slur was a single man who dodged the war.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gaven): Order!

Mr. PILBEAM: I object to remarks of that nature, that I took money from Mr. Hinchcliffe.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gaven): Order! The hon. member for Rockhampton South has said that the remark made by the hon. member for Rockhampton North is objectionable to him. I ask the hon. member to withdraw it.

Mr. THACKERAY: I withdraw it. At the same time, on a point of order, I object to the hon. member's remark that I dodged the war. I was a railwayman employed by the Railway Department, and I was doing a national service. I could not have done more. I tried to enlist in the Air Force but I was rejected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gaven): Order! I am sure the hon. member for Rockhampton South will accept the statement of the hon. member for Rockhampton North.

Mr. PILBEAM: Yes, and I am also prepared to withdraw my remarks. I do not wish to make personal remarks and I will withdraw my statements. I have a job to do and it will not be helped by indulging in personalities. I regret the fact that I did so, but I was provoked.

The hon. member for Rockhampton North produced figures to prove that the cattle numbers of Central Queensland are not increasing. It is much the same as it was ten years ago. We have an abattoir in Rockhampton that is in only half production. If the number of cattle is not increasing and the meatworks is in only half production, why the necessity to provide another killing agency? We have been told that the establishment of a district abattoirs would bring into being more hygienic killing. You know as well as I do, Mr. Gaven, that whether an abattoir is privately owned or not, Commonwealth inspectors control and supervise the hygienic killing. There is absolutely no point in that argument.

Mr. Walsh: What are your grounds for opposing a district abattoir?

Mr. PILBEAM: My main ground is that it would create a great deal of unemployment in Rockhampton. We have the largest

processing meatworks in the Southern Hemisphere, not just an ordinary meatworks but a meatworks that employs 700 people. That is what it did last year.

Mr. Houston: For how long?

Mr. PILBEAM: Throughout the year. It had 700 permanent employees. By the construction of a district abattoir you are going to attack it with a killing agency that will employ only about 40. In that way you will upset the whole economy of a privately-owned works.

Mr. Walsh: If you are opposed to the district abattoirs, would you be opposed to the co-operative meatworks in the Callide?

Mr. PILBEAM: I am not opposed to any meatworks in Rockhampton. We welcome opposition but we oppose restrictive legislation that would make uneconomic the only industry in Rockhampton. We have only one worthwhile industry in Rockhampton and we do not like to see it attacked. The establishment of district abattoirs would be a definite attack on a worthwhile industry in Rockhampton. We have the assurance that Lakes Creek would operate in much the same way as any other export works in Australia. If the district abattoirs were brought in and the right to kill locally were taken away, the local meatworks would close down between export seasons. They would keep merely a caretaker staff at the meatworks. If I thought it would benefit the graziers I might give it consideration but how could two overheads benefit the graziers? It has been said that there would be more competition. In many cases buyers go on the properties and buy the cattle and ship them past Rockhampton. How could that be stopped? How could graziers be prevented from selling to the highest bidder? How could a district abattoirs killing for local butchers only increase the number of cattle killed in the area? How can the number of cattle killed be increased whether the killing is done at Lake's Creek or the district abattoirs? How can the cattle killed for local butchers increase in number because of another killing agency? For the reasons I have given, and many others that I shall give in detail when the subject is brought up at a later stage, I definitely oppose the construction of district abattoirs in Rockhampton. I am very happy to see that there is no allocation in this year's Budget for the construction of that very unnecessary and undesirable project.

As far as local government projects are concerned, we have every reason to be grateful to the Government and the Treasurer for making an allocation year by year to enable us to carry on the very necessary work in the city. If hon. members look at today's "The Morning Bulletin," they will see a letter written by Mr. Yewdale of the Rockhampton Trades and Labour Council, in which he commends the Rockhampton City

Council for the work they are doing, particularly towards the alleviation of unemployment.

We have put as many men as possible in work and, in that respect, we have received every encouragement from the Government. We have been able to increase our sewerage works tremendously; we have been able to carry on our kerbing and channelling work to a major order, to increase our road-building programme, and generally to give employment to the maximum number of men. However, because of the recent reduction in our loan allocations, in two regards we will be slightly up against it early next year and I request the Treasurer to give consideration, as he promised to do, to making a further allocation of loan moneys available early in the New Year so that we can keep in full employment all the men we have engaged on road construction and kerbing and channelling work.

In the last instance, to assist with the unemployment programme we put 50 men on kerbing and channelling work. We are doing 36 miles of kerbing and channelling a year and we have only enough money to keep going until May next year. This is one instance in which I ask for the Treasurer's sympathetic consideration. A similar request will be made in regard to our road-building units.

So far as the other enterprises of the Council are concerned, we have enough money to carry on our work without putting one man out of work. As I have already said, we must be doing all right because we have the commendation, through Mr. Yewdale, of the Trades and Labour Council in Rockhampton.

Mr. Treasurer, I congratulate you for bringing down a very worthwhile budget and I congratulate the Government on their courage in tackling problems that no other Government have been game to tackle—particularly those relating to liquor and racing. I sincerely hope that budgets in future will take into consideration the necessity for the development of the part of Queensland that I represent, Central Queensland.

Mr. INCH (Burke) (3.49 p.m.): I rise to support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, and to support his clear, concise, and factual analysis of the present industrial unrest at Mt. Isa. In this dispute the Government must accept the full responsibility for perpetrating a gross blunder by removing from the jurisdiction of the Industrial Court the question of awarding bonus payments to employees of Mt. Isa Mines and other places where bonus payments are made. I also place the principal blame for the present industrial strife at Mt. Isa on the head of the Minister for Labour and Industry who was responsible for introducing the amended arbitration and conciliation laws into this Parliament for the chief purpose of bludgeoning Queensland

unions into submission on any occasion that they seek to improve their members' working conditions or to gain a greater proportion of the profits of industry by way in increased wages or bonus payments.

When speaking on the Bill to amend the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act the Minister for Labour and Industry endeavoured to mislead us by suggesting that better industrial harmony and unity would be the outcome of the legislation and that employees would receive voluntarily from the employer more than would be granted by the Industrial Court. What has been the result of the amendments of the Act, particularly the section dealing with bonus payments? And where is the industrial peace and harmony in Mt. Isa today? There is none; it has been completely destroyed by taking away the right of the Industrial Commission to award bonus payments. And what has happened to the voluntary increase in bonus payments that the Minister prophesied would be the outcome of employer and employee relationship and negotiations under the Act? Industrial strife and unrest have resulted from the failure of negotiations between Mount Isa Mines Limited and the unions for an increase in the present bonus payment. The company has flatly refused to award any increase despite the fact that production and profits continue to soar and the increase in the number of employees has been negligible.

The throughput of ore has increased from 2,278,579 tons in 1950 to 2,687,586 tons in 1960, an increase of 18 per cent., whereas the number of employees increased by only 83, from 30 June, 1959, to 30 June, 1960, an increase of 2.3 per cent. From 1 August, 1951, to 30 April, 1952, the bonus payment of £17 5s. a week was awarded to mine employees by the Industrial Court. At that time the balance sheet of the company was not nearly as healthy as it is today. In 1959, when the consolidated income of the company was £4,030,722, the Industrial Court awarded a bonus payment of £8 a week. In 1960 the consolidated net income of the company had reached £5,358,239 and for 1961 it will reach just on £6,000,000. Those figures give some idea of the increase in production and company profits, and the bonus payment at present made from increased profits in relation to the bonus payment in 1951-1952 when the profits were not nearly as high. The great increase in production, output and profits with such a small increase in the number of employees clearly indicates, bearing in mind the bonus awarded to employees by the court in 1959, that there is every justification for employees to seek an increased share in the profits they have helped to produce by their labour in the industry. Regardless of what may be said or the opinions expressed by those who are not directly implicated in the present industrial situation at Mt. Isa, I say that there can be no doubt that the unions have acted in accordance with rules laid down by the present Act. A secret ballot on the

question of the overtime ban and stop-work meetings was held and the results of the ballot showed that the men were overwhelmingly in favour of such action, and the result was conveyed to the Industrial Registrar. For the information of hon. members I have listed the result as follows:—

Union	For	Against
A.W.U.	869	310
A.E.U.	191	27
F.I.A.	90	5
B.W.I.U.	38	4
E.T.U.	120	19
Clerks'	93	62
B.S.A.	109	2
F.E.D.F.A.	75	35
Bricklayers'	11	3
Plumbers'	16	6

From those figures hon. members will see that the unions in Mt. Isa were overwhelmingly in favour of taking action to procure an increase, and it can be seen, too, that they were overwhelmingly in favour of the overtime ban and stop-work meetings. The results of the ballot were forwarded to the Registrar and a certificate was issued certifying that he had been informed the ballot had been taken. The company claims the ballot was not legal but they have not proved the claim. The company could have taken action in the Industrial Court to prove their point but they did not take it. Apparently they must have been speaking with their tongues in their cheeks when they said the ballot was not legal. The ballot was taken in the district as required by the Court, and as is shown in the figures, majorities were obtained in the establishment, and in the district in which the ballot was held. The unions have abided by the rules laid down in the Act. But what of the employers, Mount Isa Mines Limited? When advised by the craft unions that members would be absent from their work places on Monday, 25 September, 1961, the company forwarded the following letter to local union officials:—

"Dear Sirs,

Regarding your advice that the members of your union will be absent from their workplaces for 4 hours on Monday, 25 September, 1961, we advise you that we require such members to present themselves for work at their normal workplaces and at the recognised starting time.

"Failure to carry out this lawful instruction will result in the closure of the mine and plant until such time that an undertaking is given by your union that work will proceed regularly in accordance with the conditions of the Mount Isa Mines Limited Award and the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

"Yours faithfully,

"(Signed) J. W. Foots,

"General Manager."

In other words, they would lock the men out, which they promptly proceeded to do when the craft unions carried out the decisions of their members.

The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act defines "lock-out" in the following terms:—

"Lock-out"—The act of an employer in closing his place of business or suspending or discontinuing his business or any branch thereof, or a refusal or failure by an employer to continue to employ any number of his employees, with intent—

"(a) To compel or induce any employees to agree to terms of employment or comply with any demands made upon them by the said or any other employer contrary to the provisions of this Act."

and further down—

"(d) To assist any other employer to compel or induce any employees to agree to terms of employment or comply with any demands made by him".

Yet we have this letter from the general manager of Mount Isa Mines Limited telling the men that if they did not report for work at the usual starting time at the usual place, even though they had taken a ballot in compliance with the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, he would close the mine and the plant. That virtually constitutes a lockout.

Mr. Aikens: Why did Williams of the A.W.U. bitterly oppose the four-hour stoppage?

Mr. INCH: The hon. member will have his chance to speak and he can give his explanation of it.

Mr. Aikens: I thought you might know.

Mr. INCH: What we on this side of the Chamber would like to know and what the unionists at Mt. Isa would like to know is what ballot was taken by Mount Isa Mines Limited. Did they consult with all their shareholders before locking out their employees, or was it only the wealthy few that they conferred with? And what of Evans Deakin's employees who were also made to suffer by the action of the company in this lock-out? Did Evans Deakin participate in a ballot to lock out their employees? I seriously doubt that Mount Isa Mines Limited took any ballot of shareholders or that Evans Deakin or any other contractor of Mt. Isa Mines participated in any ballot to say that they would lock these men out. But unfortunately the management, by closing the plant or locking out the employees, have penalised men who were working for Evans Deakin & Co. Ltd. at the plant because Mount Isa Mines Limited will not allow any further construction work, whatever it may be, to be carried out during the dispute. So Evans Deakin have had to dismiss their men, some of whom have been in their employment for very many years. This is only one result of the action of Mount Isa Mines Limited in closing its plant.

What sort of democratic action is this supposed to be? On the one hand, employees are forced to take a secret ballot in regard

to what they intend doing about overtime bans and stoppages, but, so far as we are aware, the company has made no attempt to hold a secret ballot of its shareholders in regard to its action, nor has the result of any such ballot been conveyed to the Commission. The unions have abided by the Act by taking a ballot of all their members before taking any action, and it is extremely doubtful whether similar action has been taken by Mount Isa Mines Limited and its sub-contractors.

I repeat that the Minister for Labour and Industry and the Government are responsible for the present unrest at Mt. Isa, because when they introduced the amending Bill into this Parliament, especially the section dealing with bonus payments that gave the employer the right to arbitrate in his own favour in any negotiations on bonuses, they must have known what the outcome would be. If they were dense enough not to realise the effect of such legislation, they received ample warning from me and from other hon. members on this side of the Chamber about its effects. They were fully aware of what the result would be, and it was sheer mealy-mouthed hypocrisy on the part of the Minister when he claimed that the Act would ensure peace and harmony in industry and that employers would give more voluntarily than would be granted by the court. He knew full well that he was placing a weapon in the hands of the employers that would be used to good effect in preventing increases in bonus payments.

Again I say that I firmly believe that certain amendments to the Act were introduced at the instigation of powerful and influential mining companies in Queensland. I strongly suspect, also, that somewhere along the line international financial pressure may have been brought to bear upon the Federal Government in order to create what is called "a better atmosphere" for the investment of money in Australia. It could well be that the Federal Government instructed the Minister for Labour and Industry to introduce measures in Queensland that would provide such an atmosphere and enable companies to invest their money here and reap huge profits at the expense of the State of Queensland and the workers generally. These very same powerful and influential mining companies to which I have referred are the ones that are always preaching their faith in the Industrial Commission and the necessity for arbitration and conciliation when any industrial dispute arises. They exhorted their employees to approach the Industrial Court when any argument arose over bonus payments. Their friends, the coalition parties in Opposition at the time, were also preaching the same gospel, knowing full well that if ever they became the Government they intended by the creation of an Industrial Commission to do away with the rights of employees to have applications for increased bonus payments dealt with by the Industrial Court. The power to arbitrate in its own

interests is being used effectively by the company to the detriment of its employees. This is clearly illustrated by the adamant refusal of the company in all negotiations to date on the subject of an increase in bonus payments to employees at Mt. Isa. It has brought about the present industrial unrest, which has culminated in the lockout of thousands of mine employees who have reported for work daily but have been told that there is no employment for them. Quite apart from all the employees who have been locked out at Mount Isa Mines by this action of the company, many hundreds more in various other spheres of employment will be seriously affected by the decision of the company to lock the gates of the plant and mine. I understand that if the dispute continues for any length of time there will be in the vicinity of 400 employees laid off at the Stuart Copper Refinery because of the shortage of copper ore for refining and wire drawing. In addition railway employees from Mt. Isa to Townsville, and even as far as Brisbane, will feel the effect of the lockout. Reduced tonnages will be hauled to and from Mt. Isa, which, in turn, will result in fewer trains being run, with short-time employment for many and in some cases employees will be stood down. Even the shops in Mt. Isa and Townsville will feel the repercussions of the industrial strife. Several shopkeepers in Mt. Isa have put employees on short time; some employees have been advised to take their holidays. It is all the result of the handing over of industrial disputes of this nature to an Industrial Commissioner who has not the power to grant any increase in bonus payments. Not only will this unrest affect the employees and their families; it will also have a very grave effect on both the State and national economics, which will be felt in due course by both State and Federal Governments.

There is a quiet but a very grim determination on the part of employees to see this dispute through to the end and, in the struggle, they are receiving the support of not only their fellow unionists in other areas of Queensland and Australia but also of the business people in Mt. Isa.

I firmly believe that had this Government and the Minister for Labour and Industry allowed this issue to remain under the jurisdiction of the Industrial Court instead of handing it to an Industrial Commissioner, there is every possibility that the trouble would have been satisfactorily settled long ago, for I know that, although decisions handed down by the court may not always meet with the approval of unions, they have had a deep respect for the court at all times and have been prepared to abide by such decisions. The principles of arbitration and conciliation were fought for by the Labour Party, and due to agitation by our forefathers and fathers we were able to enjoy justice at the hands of the Arbitration Court. The same principles have been bred into the workers of Queensland and, as I have said, if this dispute had been allowed

to remain under the jurisdiction of the court, I honestly believe that the Mt. Isa workers would have abided by the court's decision.

Unfortunately, the Minister, in his so-called wisdom, decided that this should not be so, and he went ahead and introduce Clause 12 into the Act. It takes away the right of a Commissioner to deal with bonus payments. I feel that, if the workers of Mt. Isa were given a chance to go to the Industrial Court, everything would be settled within a very short space of time. Again, unfortunately, as at present constituted the law does not allow this. If the Minister for Labour and Industry and the Government are sincere in their desire for peace and harmony in industry they will amend the present Act and provide means by which both parties may approach the Industrial Court for a decision on the matter.

As I see it at present the Mount Isa Company are adamantly refusing to negotiate on bonus payments. No matter what negotiations are entered into—and there have been several conferences in Brisbane and in Mt. Isa—the company's answer is always the same. They refuse to make any increase in bonus payments. The employees, in turn, say that now they have been locked out by the company they are determined to carry on the struggle until such time as the company agrees or some tribunal decides to make some increase in their bonus payments.

Mr. Davies: The company is endeavouring to white-ant the Arbitration Court.

Mr. INCH: That has always been the case.

I suggest that the Minister for Labour and Industry move to introduce an amendment of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act to put these matters back in the hands of the Industrial Commission, and so ensure the industrial peace and harmony in industry in which he professes to believe.

I have nothing more to say at this stage. My colleagues on this side of the Chamber will elaborate the arguments put forward in support of the amendment so capably moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) (4.21 p.m.): The amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition was inescapable, in view of the actions of the Government in connection with certain legislation that they have introduced and certain steps that they have taken. They are not in the best interests of the people of Queensland. The Budget does not provide for the gainful employment of the whole of the work force of Queensland, which is vital and important for the development and progress of the State.

Two Budgets have been presented by the Treasurer since my election to Parliament. They are very different. Last year, the Government having been returned by the people, we would have expected them to endeavour to promote the progress and development of Queensland. The present

Budget contains little, if anything, that is likely to overcome the present serious unemployment. The Government have a responsibility to the people to see that in their Budget they provide for the maximum expenditure by every department on works that will assist primary producers and at the same time give employment. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that something more is required in the Budget to overcome unemployment. In August last year the unemployment position was not as bad as it is at present. At that time I thought the position would improve. In his Budgets the Treasurer has always given himself a let-out on account of the drought.

Mr. Harrison: There have been five years of it.

Mr. NEWTON: Yes, but if the Government had done the right thing by building dams and weirs the farmers and graziers would have been assisted greatly.

Mr. Harrison: Where is the money to come from?

If the hon. member will be patient I will tell him. I have told hon. members on the Government side before, but they never take any notice of us. Every time we line them up and make a contribution to tell them how to get out of a difficulty they just ignore us.

When we of the A.L.P. were confronted with the same situation we did not hesitate to bring down a deficit of millions of pounds if necessary. I remember that on one occasion it was a deficit of approximately £4,000,000. We overcame the problem and wiped out the deficit. To my knowledge that has happened not once, but twice, since the last World War. The main theme that we have heard announced by the Premier and his senior Ministers during the past 12 months has been that they are watching unemployment carefully. We see nothing extra in the Budget brought down by the Treasurer to overcome the problem.

Mr. Bennett: It makes it worse.

Mr. NEWTON: What the hon. member for South Brisbane says is true. There are one or two things that make this Budget worse than the one the Treasurer presented last year and I will deal with them later on. The Budget can be classed as a tightening up and a worsening of the position in Queensland, instead of showing a gleam of light, that I am sure the people of Queensland were expecting on the statements made by the Premier and his senior Cabinet Ministers. The people of Queensland are being used by the Government to make great sacrifices to get new industries to the State and expand present industries. There is much truth in what the hon. member for Burke said about the Mt. Isa mines dispute which I will deal with later on. That is a clear indication of this practice.

We saw a great statement in "The Courier-Mail" this morning, and in the

"Telegraph," emanating from Mt. Isa Mines, putting their case before the general public as to what they have done and what they have not done for the working people, and the development of Mt. Isa. On the other hand, what have the general public done for Mt. Isa Mines and the railway line? Approximately £3,000,000 was spent on this line last year. This was not a loan from the Commonwealth Government, but money from the State Treasury. The Treasurer may come back at me on this, because I admit that it helped to make employment, but it created less employment than if the money had been used in other departments. This is explained simply, because new mechanical techniques are employed today on road building and railway building. They are much more modern than when I left the industry and fewer people are employed on these projects today. It is probable that the money would have been spent more wisely in other Government departments to give greater employment. It is also quite possible that apart from the £3,000,000 that has been spent, people good at figures—at financial wizardry—could cover up certain amounts used for preparatory work for the Mt. Isa line. In my opinion this sum could not have been obtained in any other way than by reducing the allocations of other Government departments. There is an old saying, which I heard even before I became a member of Parliament, that often money is taken from one department and handed over to another to be used for a project. It is a case of robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Mr. Pizzey: You would be prepared to delay the reconstruction of the Mt. Isa line?

Mr. NEWTON: I do not suggest that at all. I am merely saying: could not some of the money be spent more wisely to overcome the unemployment problem? I do not say to curtail the work on the line, but the State has an agreement with the Commonwealth Government; why not get the loan money that has been promised and use it for the building of the line? All of the £3,000,000 or thereabouts that has been used for it in the last 12 months could have been used by some other department to help overcome the unemployment problem, which has come about since December last and which has grown and grown and will be much worse by Christmas, the way things are going. Men have been put off by the Department of Public Works and it is already rumoured that more will go.

The Treasurer's provision for the University in the Budget is not very sound and I can visualise workmen being dismissed from the University day-labour jobs. Why would I not be concerned about where the money is being spent in this State?

The stand at present being adopted by Mount Isa Mines Limited shows quite clearly that they have no concern for Governments or the workers. That has put the mine in a very strong financial position. Today people are

making great sacrifices and they will have to continue to make them to pay for the railway line. But Mount Isa Mines Limited have adopted the role of a great monopoly, refusing workers the right to work, in other words applying a lock-out, as mentioned by the hon. member for Burke.

When the amended Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act was introduced by this Government we debated fully on the floor of the Chamber the effect of the provisions dealing with bonus payments, but our words fell on deaf ears, and the position today is shocking. If the court still had the powers it had under the previous Act introduced by the Australian Labour Party, we should not have the trouble that we have at Mt. Isa today. Under that legislation the men had the right, if they could not succeed in their negotiations with the employer, to apply to the court either to determine the matter or call a compulsory conference. From what appeared in the paper today, Mount Isa Mines Limited have made it quite clear that they intend to be the judge and jury on the dispute on bonus payments.

It is a very serious situation involving 12 unions. We have already heard the names of those unions, the key ones being the Australian Workers' Union and the craft unions of the metal trades group. There is no doubt in my mind that the unions are not unanimous on the stand they are taking on bonus payments. While 12 unions are involved, there are about 3,000 workers affected. Those would be workers directly employed by the mine and workers employed by private contractors who have also been locked out.

Two steps taken during the past 12 months have brought about this serious situation. The blame must be placed entirely on the shoulders of the Government. First, the Government introduced a Conciliation and Arbitration Act that completely abolished the power of the Industrial Commission to fix bonus payments. Secondly, the Industrial Court took action when the Bill to amend the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act was introduced in this Chamber. I am not in the position to say whether the action taken by the Court was correct. However, I should say that, if an Act is in force and a Bill is introduced making provision for a new Act, the Court should continue to function under the existing Act until the provisions of the Bill become law. This was not the first occasion on which Mount Isa Mines Limited and the unions could not agree on a bonus payment. A similar position arose in 1959, when the unions approached Mount Isa Mines Limited for an increase in the bonus payment and were offered 22s. 6d. They were not satisfied with that offer. They applied to the Court and, after hearing the case, the Court granted an increase of £4 2s. 6d., making the bonus £8, which is the same payment that is operating today. The company's profit of over £5,000,000 in 1959-60 showed

quite clearly that the increase in bonus payments did not adversely affect it, and its profits in 1960-61 are about £6,000,000.

If the company and the unions could not agree by negotiations to an increase in bonus payments, it was open to the unions to apply to the Court. They did this. They lodged their claims in September and October, 1960, each union lodging its own application to the Court, of course, and the hearing was set down for 7 March, 1961. At this time the Government had before Parliament a Bill to amend the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. The Industrial Court adjourned the hearing, and the company refused to negotiate on the matter on the ground that the application was before the Court. What happened then? This is what the Government's Act did. The Court said it could not proceed with the case because Parliament was considering a Bill to amend the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. The unions, as was their right, believed that the only alternative was to endeavour to negotiate with Mount Isa Mines Limited. The company then said, "We cannot negotiate with you because the matter is before the Court." When the Bill received the Royal assent on 11 April, 1961, the Industrial Court announced that, as the Act now prevented the Court from dealing with bonus payments, there would be no further hearing of the application. When this sort of thing goes on, is it any wonder that we have industrial unrest amongst members of the unions at Mt. Isa? Union members were well aware that the decision to make the bonus question not an industrial issue would lead to a dispute. The unions have been treated very shabbily, because they did what they thought was right in the belief that they would have their case heard and receive a decision on their application.

As hon. members on this side of the Chamber endeavoured to show the Government, the minute we let legal wizards interfere with a layman's court we are confronted with a great deal of trouble. There is no doubt that that is what happened in this case. The people who deal with cases in other courts, without having the practical experience of how the Industrial Court works, decided to alter not only the section of the Act covering bonus payments but also a number of others. There is no doubt in my mind that the position confronting us in Mt. Isa will in the future confront us elsewhere because of the alteration to the industrial laws. The Minister for Labour and Industry made several announcements about employer-employee relationships when he spoke about bonus payments. Unfortunately what the Minister and his industrial committee did not take into consideration was that the minute the green light is given to monopoly companies like Mount Isa Mines Limited the first thing they do is to set themselves up as judge and jury, with no concern about anybody but themselves.

An Opposition Member: It is like a put-up job.

Mr. NEWTON: It is more than a put-up job. As my leader said this morning the subject of bonus payments at Mt. Isa was all worked out in consultation with the Government. At the time we said that new industries would come to Queensland at the expense of working people in the State. That is just what is happening.

I refer the Committee to the article that appeared in this morning's "Courier-Mail" and again later in the "Telegraph", authorised by Mr. J. W. Foots, General Manager of Mount Isa Mines Limited. No doubt he paints a very rosy picture of Mount Isa Mines Limited. But let me answer it on behalf of the workers at Mt. Isa. In the first place the employees are fully aware of the position with bonus payments because they have elected representatives who have discussed the matter with Mount Isa Mines Limited. Mr. Foots says in his opening paragraph that the statement is made so that the company's employees and the public generally will know what is going on.

Mr. Lloyd: Do you think a guilty conscience may have prompted that statement?

Mr. NEWTON: More than a guilty conscience. It is clear that since the new Act became law the members on the fields have considered an increase in bonus payments. They met and decided that some action would have to be taken to get Mount Isa Mines Limited to agree to an increase. The way Mr. Foots puts it in his statement, he tries to place the onus back on the union and its representatives. Union representatives went up there only after union members had decided that some action would have to be taken to endeavour to get increased bonus payments, for which they had applied through the Industrial Court before it was abolished. They endeavoured to get an increase by negotiation. The Minister for Labour and Industry said he was sure that employers and employees would be able to get together and decide the matter very easily, but in this instance Mount Isa Mines Limited adopted an entirely different attitude. The unions on the field are unanimous that the bonus should be increased because they have had a report from financial experts as to what the bonus payment should be. Union officials do not go into court unprepared; they consult financial experts who can read balance sheets. Such experts can read balance sheets so they know just what profit was made, that so much was paid back to shareholders by way of free shares and that so much was set aside for expansion of the industry. There is no doubt that the position of Mount Isa Mines is a very healthy one, a profit of approximately £6,000,000 for 1960-1961 and in the vicinity of another £6,000,000 being spent on improvements to the plant and the mine itself. We have not

the exact figures of the undeclared profit to be paid to shareholders. That is our answer to point No. 2 in this advertisement.

In relation to point No. 3, after holding a four-hours' stop-work meeting, the union members reported for work in the normal way and it was the company that applied a lock-out. Members of the union reported back on that occasion, agreeing to work a 40-hour week as laid down by the Mt. Isa Mines Award and the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. It is true that they refused to work overtime until the company discussed an increase in the bonus payments but, if the company can demand the right to allow workers back only if they agree to work overtime then the unionists must also have the right to hold a four-hours' stop-work meeting or any other stop-work meeting they desire. Mount Isa Mines Limited management cannot say on the one hand, "You must abide by our award and the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, but, if we allow you back through the gate you will work a 40-hour week and whatever overtime is offering. At the same time, you must not do anything in the way of holding a stop-work meeting, because if you do we will not allow you inside the gate." The workers cannot afford to give away their rights like that. They have played ball with this company.

Nobody would have any objections to point No. 4 dealing with safety as outlined in this advertisement. In point No. 5, again the company uses the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act to dodge the discussion of bonus payments. There is no doubt about that. Point No. 6 says—

"The current bonus payable by the Company is £8 per week."

As I pointed out previously that was granted by the Industrial Court, not by Mount Isa Mines Limited, after Mount Isa Mines Limited had refused to grant the unions the increase that they felt was necessary. One interesting feature of this advertisement is that Mount Isa Mines Limited claim that they are paying their employees the highest rate in Queensland and Australia. By so doing they are again endeavouring to pull the wool over the eyes of the public. A good many awards operating in Queensland cover conditions similar to those operating at Mt. Isa. In many cases single men, and married men in some cases, leave their normal places of residence to work elsewhere and receive their normal rates of pay plus a living-away-from-home allowance which brings their rates to a level as high as that operating at Mt. Isa.

In point No. 8 the company deals with bonus payments and wages paid but says nothing about profits about which I think the public should know something.

In point No. 9 the company deals with the amenities supplied at the mine. If the company can talk about amenities that it gives to its employees, we on this side of the Chamber can mention the amenities being received by the company. At the present

time, and for a number of years, it has enjoyed freight concessions, and who pays for those concessions—the general public. The same thoughts apply to the Mt. Isa railway reconstruction project. The general public has been paying for that, at least for the last 12 months. In its statement published in the press the company has endeavoured to mislead the public by pointing out what it is doing for its employees and trying to suggest that it receives nothing in return.

Point 11 of the statement deals with the procedure of the dispute at Mt. Isa. The company made it quite clear to the Commissioner who went out there to arbitrate and endeavour to solve the problem that nobody, other than the company, can consider the terms and conditions of bonus payments and the reopening of the mine. The Government, by amending the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, gave great power to the Mt. Isa monopoly. It now has all the power it needs and is using it. It is setting itself up as judge and jury on the question. Are the Government going to take action similar to the action they took in regard to employees of the Commonwealth Engineering Works? They did not hesitate to do then what they considered to be necessary. It will be interesting to see how long it takes them to act against Mt. Isa Mines.

The Treasurer in his Financial Statement again refers to the relationship of the Queensland and Commonwealth Governments in these words—

"Further strong representations were made at the last Loan Council Meeting in June, 1961, relative to what we regard as Queensland's inequitable share of the Government Loan Borrowing Programme and an undertaking was received that the whole basis would be reviewed prior to the allocation of the 1962-1963 borrowing programmes."

I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that this could be rather a tricky statement. The Government are endeavouring to mislead the Queensland public by saying, "Return the present Federal Government in the forthcoming Federal elections and you will receive loan money your Government has been fighting for during the last four years, to enable them to carry out their works programme." The Federal Government have told the Premier and the Treasurer this story, hoping they will not be there to face up to the responsibility next year, and hoping that the Australian Labour Party will have to fulfill the promises they have made to the Queensland Government.

The situation facing the Queensland University is a very serious one. In my first speech in this Chamber last year I pointed out very strongly what I thought should be done. I asked the Government to consider calling together all State education Ministers to go into the position of education generally throughout the Commonwealth, I had in mind that we would be confronted with the present position, and in my opinion it will

get worse. Having regard to the announcements by the Treasurer about housing needs, by the Minister for Education on requirements in his sphere and by the Minister for Public Works on the demand for new primary and high schools, we can realise that a very serious situation is developing. I think that a conference of State education Ministers should have been held in the last 12 months to consider not only how Queensland is affected, but the other States, too, and the Prime Minister should have been informed as to what was expected of him. We have seen certain moves on this in the last 12 months. From a "Courier-Mail" clipping of 11 May, 1961, we see that a deputation waited on the Prime Minister to talk over education problems. The deputation included representatives of the Teachers' Union, the Parents and Citizens' Association, and educational organisations in some of the States. We can see from that that these people, too, are concerned about the future of education in this State, and all the other States of the Commonwealth. We on this side of the House are very concerned because we believe that education should be free, from primary school up to secondary school and, if possible, right through to the University, so that any child with ability may continue with his education and become an asset to the State. We know that the Treasurer has been interested in this because on 23 May he had quite a good deal to say about it. The article reads—

"The Treasurer (Mr. Hiley) last night urged the Education Ministers of all States to get together and prepare a common case for greater Federal aid for education . . .

He said the inadequate assistance for education was 'not right when the surplus in Canberra at the end of this year will be in the order of £100 million.'

Mr. Hiley denied a recent Commonwealth claim that there had never been a proper case for greater aid for State education.

'It must have got lost in the archives or squeezed out,' he said. 'We're going to press for a greater share of revenue for education.'

Mr. Hiley said lack of finance was holding back education improvements which the State Government wanted to implement"

There is no doubt that the Treasurer is concerned about it, but it needs much more than that. This State, or this Government, have to make a move to make sure that the State education Ministers get together to present a case to the Commonwealth Government to overcome the situation we are confronted with. As I pointed out before, any cuts in the allocation to the University will create further unemployment in the State. The building of the Townsville University by this Government and the previous Government's policy towards the University of Queensland have created employment for many people in the State, but I am concerned about what the future holds for the University.

It is interesting to note that there is a vast difference between the two Budgets that I have seen presented. Firstly, in the Budget presented this year we find that there is an increased allocation for health, hospital and charitable purposes and the Education Department. Last year, when the Treasurer brought down his Budget, he mentioned the effect that the increased margins had had on the Budget that he was introducing. We know what has happened so often since this Government abolished price control and other restrictions. With every increase in the wage or in margins, costs rise beforehand; they rise again shortly after the decision, and they rise again a little later. There is no doubt in my mind that some of the increases allowed for in the Budget are to meet those costs that have been passed on to the general public and to the Government.

Very briefly, on the summary of the Budget, as the Leader of the Opposition said, there were many "Hear, hears!" from Government members the other day and it is quite easy to see why because in the main it deals with matters beneficial to the people represented by the Country Party—beef cattle roads, harrisia cactus eradication, water and stock facilities, and so on; but it does not contain what we are most interested in for the provincial cities and towns and for the capital, namely, provision for overcoming the unemployment problem.

It is to be hoped that the Treasurer will get from the Commonwealth Government the extra loan money for the Mt. Isa railway line that he hopes to get for 1961-1962. I should hate to think that we had to find the £4,000,000 from State finances. I do not know whether that is what will have to be spent on the line in the next 12 months but he indicates in the Budget that he expects to get that sum from the Commonwealth Government, and it will be very serious for Queensland if we have to find it ourselves.

Mention is made in the Budget of the oil refinery at Bulwer Island. I do not beat about the bush on this. I fail to see why the Government have to find the money to prepare these sites to set up industries.

Mr. Hughes: Let us call it the best investment Queensland ever made.

Mr. NEWTON: The hon. member can call it what he likes, but the Government obviously do not consider the adverse effect it must have on the State's finances. The reclamation of Bulwer Island is costing the people of Queensland a great deal of money and the latest rumours are that the oil company is beginning to find fault with the site. I do not know whether the Treasurer has heard of it, but I have it from the people working there that work is stopping and starting and they are moving further afield. I hope that will not continue because it will have a serious effect in the next 12 months on the State's share of the cost of setting up the oil refinery. I have no objection to the refinery. If it

does what the Minister for Labour and Industry said it would, and it employs the number of men he gave, it will certainly be of advantage to the State.

Mr. Hiley: In what way is it basically different from the work of the Hamilton Lands Committee, which your Government set up? It has filled the whole of Eagle Farm with a chain of factories employing thousands of people.

Mr. NEWTON: I cannot answer for what my party did as the Government because I was not here, but I know what the Treasurer is talking about. There is a big difference between the reclamation work being carried out at Bulwer Island and the work carried out at Hamilton. All the reclamation work at Bulwer Island is being done for one company, whereas the reclamation work at Hamilton was done for a number of firms. In fact, new firms have started business there since the Government took office. That is my answer to that.

I am not very happy about the Budget as it affects my electorate of Belmont. I have many problems, particularly in relation to new schools. Like the hon. member who represented the electorate of Sherwood before the redistribution of boundaries, I shall have a lot to say if something is not done about them shortly. It is true that the Education Department is now taking action to acquire the necessary sites for new schools, but it takes time. I hope they will be able to acquire them before very long so that schools can be erected to cater for the development that is taking place in the Belmont area.

I am also greatly concerned about housing, which also comes under the jurisdiction of the Treasurer. During the last session of Parliament the Treasurer introduced a Bill enabling certain action to be taken to overcome the problem of arrears of rent. That provision is working well so far, and it is to be hoped that it will not be changed. At present the Government are sympathetic to tenants because of the unemployment in Queensland, and if one visits homes in which the rent is in arrears, one finds that the people are semi-skilled workers or ordinary labourers. When unemployment hits the State in a big way, the ordinary labourer and the semi-skilled worker find it difficult to get work.

I spoke last year about the vacant allotments and gullies in the Housing Commission areas in my electorate. It is interesting to note that the Queensland Housing Commission are now building homes on some of those blocks. If this step is followed up in other parts of my electorate and in the Treasurer's electorate of Chatsworth, which adjoins my electorate, these blocks will be put to good use.

The Government have also established multi-storey flats in my electorate in an endeavour to overcome the housing shortage.

The outside appearance of the flats is good, and a road on which sheds were erected at one time has now been opened. It would have been a good idea to make the ground opposite the flats a playground centre for the children of the families occupying the flats. Already I can see what is going to happen. Apart from the flats that have been allocated to pensioners most of the tenants are young married couples, some of them already with one child and in some instances a second expected. Before very long there will be a group of young children there with nowhere to play. As a family man I would hate to have even two children in those flats. Two are enough to start a fight.

I have not been able to inspect any of the multi-storey units since they have been occupied but when I saw them before I realised that one or two matters had been overlooked. Picture-rails have not been provided. Tenants are required to give an assurance to the Housing Commission that they will not damage the walls in any way. I am making these comments without being critical. They are probably matters that have been merely overlooked. If we are to build bigger and better flats it is necessary to have criticism. No towel-rails were affixed in the bathrooms or kitchens. In a brick building it is necessary to attach them at the time the building is being constructed. There must be a tea-towel rack in the kitchen and a towel-rack in the bathroom. I have heard that the Housing Commission is looking into the matter. I have not raised it in a question nor have I checked with the Commission, because I thought in an open debate this was the time to raise such matters.

From a health point of view the Government introduces various pieces of legislation. We have the Workers' Accommodation Act and the Factories and Shops Act, which state quite clearly that wherever an employer provides accommodation for his workers he shall provide separate accommodation for cooking, dining and sleeping. I am talking now of what I call the one-roomed flat. A rod is provided and if the tenant has enough money he may use it to hang a dividing curtain. It seems wrong to me because under the Workers' Accommodation Act the employer providing accommodation for his employees is required to have a separate tent or other structure for cooking, dining, and sleeping.

Mr. Hiley: I would say that workers' accommodation standards have not been examined for generations. I have no doubt that unions would object to any interference with them. Under modern standards it is an economy measure that helps to keep the rent low.

Mr. NEWTON: I agree with the Treasurer, but the additional cost of partitions would be minimised if they were constructed in wood instead of brick. Fibrous plaster, of course, is dearer. The provision of a masonite partition would serve the purpose and, in my opinion, complete a good job. I hope that the Treasurer does not mind my raising

these points about what I think is necessary in the multi-storey units being built by the Government. In conclusion, I should like to leave the rest of what I have to say for when we are dealing with the Estimates of the various departments.

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) (5.15 p.m.): I rise to support the amendment moved by my Leader this morning. We in North Queensland see nothing to enthuse about in the Budget brought down just over a week ago. There appears to be nothing there designed to alleviate the unemployment position which is still a great curse in the Townsville area and which will be further aggravated by the industrial dispute at Mt. Isa. I, like my colleagues, give my unqualified support to the unions and workers who are presently locked out at Mt. Isa.

On a number of occasions previously we have heard the cries from the Government side of the Chamber, "Why don't you go to arbitration?" "Why don't you abide by arbitration?" On this occasion the workers and the unions were quite prepared to abide by arbitration.

In the last session of this Parliament we were amazed by the Minister's taking the determination of bonus payments away from the Arbitration Court and placing it in the hands of the employers. On many occasions previously charges of attempting to wreck the Arbitration Court have been levelled at us from the other side, so I now ask the Government, "Who now is endeavouring to wreck the Arbitration Court?" As I see it, the answer is the Government themselves.

As I mentioned previously, the workers are quite prepared to go to the Arbitration Court for a determination of their bonus payments but, on this occasion, the Government are not. They stand indicted today by their own legislation.

Because I am unable to bring it up at any other time, I wish to speak today about the fishing industry in North Queensland and in Townsville in particular. There has been a steady decline in production in the fishing industry in Townsville over the past eight or 10 years. At one stage there were 93 boats based on Townsville. In the last mackerel season there were 22 and for the other six months of the year there are 10 or 15, yet Townsville has a large modern depot and a very capable manager, if I might say so, in Mr. Jack Stevenson to whom I wish to pay tribute. I have known Mr. Stevenson and his family for 20 years and I know that no-one would know every facet of the fishing industry better than he would. He lives for his work and has the confidence of all Townsville fishermen. He is doing a mighty job, but is continually frustrated by the Brisbane management, the Fish Board, the Brisbane officials or whatever we wish to call them.

I give one example of the unreal approach of the Brisbane officials to the northern industry. It deals with storage charges at Townsville. The old rates were weekly,

3s. per 100 lb. for the first 500 lb., 2s. per 100 lb. for the next 500 lb. and 1s. 3d. per 100 lb. for everything over 1,000 lb. The new rates, recently applied, are 4s. 2d. per week for every 100 lb. To express that savage increase in terms that can be understood generally, I shall give an example. Last year one fisherman's storage charges under the old rates amounted to £56 16s. If the charges had been assessed on the rates now obtaining, the total would have been £197 5s. In other words, storage charges in Townsville for the average fisherman have been increased by just under four times. Even if hon. members opposite are thunderstruck by that information, I can assure them that it is perfectly true. Imagine what such charges will do to an industry that is now struggling to survive.

Large quantities of frozen fish are already being imported, and importers are now guaranteeing continuity of supply of frozen fish. They are posing a real threat to the Australian fishing industry. What has been the Government's reply to this threat from imported fish—increased storage charges, so savagely increased that in the case of some fish the Board will own them after three weeks' storage and the fishermen will get nothing.

This is the kind of unreal approach Brisbane authorities are making to the northern fishing industry—not, "How can we foster it and make it grow?" but rather, "How can we ruthlessly and stupidly balance our books?" That appears to be their first and only consideration.

One would not have to be a Solomon to envisage the result of this approach. Further producers are being driven out of the industry to a point when it must inevitably collapse if we are to continue in that manner. No real attempt seems to have been made to look at the matter from the viewpoint of the fishermen, nor does any attempt seem to have been made to ascertain the crushing weight of charges that have to be borne by a fisherman before he receives any profit.

The cost of setting up a freezer boat that can stay out indefinitely is between £4,000 and £5,000, while the cost of setting up an ice boat with a 10-day limit, from port to port, is between £2,500 and £3,000, and in the fishing industry from a marketing viewpoint it is necessary to have both types of boats. Buyers generally prefer iced fish for day-to-day buying. However, frozen fish are necessary to provide continuity of supply during the off-season, and December to April is considered to be the off-season in the North.

As I have said, buyers prefer iced fish. Consequently there is always a greater demand for it than for frozen fish. There is no breaking down of the cell structure due to faulty refrigeration gear when fish are kept on ice. Therefore when iced fish are available buyers will take it and exclude the frozen fish.

One of the real problems of management is to market the frozen fish during the flush

of the season when iced fish are available. Consequently, the master fisherman who markets frozen fish during that period can obtain no money for his product unless he is very fortunate. Cases have been brought to my notice of delays of up to four months before some fish is sold, and in that period the fisherman has to maintain himself and family, load up his boat every so often, maintain his gear, without getting one red cent from his product. During this period the savage charges I have mentioned are regularly and quickly reducing the value of his catch. The longer it stays at the Fish Board the less value it has for him, because storage charges mount up very quickly indeed.

Mr. Ewan: Would it be four months in the freezing room?

Mr. TUCKER: I will answer that question in a moment. The main fault lies in the Fish Supply Management Acts. These men who are all master fishermen are compelled to sell through the Board, yet on occasions their product lies unsold for months without any return. The longer it continues, the worse off they are. This applies particularly to estuary fishermen. During the mackerel season, unless the estuary fishermen have a good class of fish, such as barramundi, their fish are bypassed by the buyers. If the fish is passed it must inevitably go into cold storage and then it slowly becomes dehydrated and unattractive, to such a stage that it has to be reduced to a ridiculous price to market it. These men are mainly trap fishermen and they just cannot win either way with their products. Under the Act they are forced to bring their fish to the Board, and then they are at the whim of the buyers, while the storage charges on their fish, imposed by the Board, slowly reduce them to penury. For those reasons I ask if we are going to stand idly by and watch this great industry in the North disintegrate? Will we watch these charges inevitably reduce these people to the stage where they must decide if they will stay in the industry or get out of it? I think every hon. member will understand what I am saying this afternoon. If the industry could be properly organised it could be worth £1,000,000 to the North. Is it any wonder that the fishermen are driven to the black market? I have given instances of this previously and they apply particularly to the estuary fishermen.

There is also a peculiar arrangement whereby amateur fishermen are allowed to use nets to catch fish but cannot deal through the Fish Board. When they make big catches—under the latest legislation they are allowed to use big mesh nets—they cannot put the catch through the Board, and because of the restrictions imposed by the Act, of necessity, the fish find their way to the market in other ways.

Mr. Ewan: Did you say they were not allowed to put their fish through the Board?

Mr. TUCKER: That is so.

I am referring particularly to amateur fishermen who are allowed to use a net, without any right of selling through the Board when they make a big catch. Instead of putting it through the Board they must get rid of it in some other way, and they do. As many of us know, this fish finds its way into the black market.

Mr. Armstrong: What is the reason for that?

Mr. TUCKER: I do not know. The hon. member had better ask the Treasurer about that one.

Mr. Windsor: Would that be one of the reasons that they have to hold the fish for so long?

Mr. TUCKER: That is true. When big catches are made the fish find their way to the market by other means, and when that happens some buyers at the Fish Board often do not turn up for many days or up to a week. The master fisherman's product lies in the freezing room during this period attracting these iniquitous charges, while the black-market fish saturates the market.

To try to overcome this waiting for money until the fish is sold, the Townsville fishermen established amongst themselves a pool of mackerel sales only which takes 90 per cent. of the production from June until the end of November.

That was purely unofficial. It has worked on a pro-rata basis of weekly production of both ice- and frozen-fish. It allows some initial return from the catch while the fishermen are waiting. If they were to work strictly in accordance with the Act they would have to wait until the fish were sold before receiving any return; but they have unofficially banded together and formed a pool and certain moneys are paid to them under it. It works very satisfactorily in Townsville. However, the Fish Board takes no notice of the pool. Indeed it denies all knowledge of its existence. How silly can you be? Why ignore something that is working so satisfactorily when the only alternative is to force fishermen to wait months for a return from their product? It seems very peculiar to me. How fortunate we are to have a manager like Mr. Jack Stevenson with enough intestinal fortitude to stand up to the people in Brisbane who say, "You shan't do this" and "You shan't do that." He realises that he has to look after his men and he allows the pool to go on because he knows it is necessary in spite of the people here who would wreck the industry. They would not do it deliberately, perhaps, but they have no real knowledge of the problems in the North.

Mr. Ewan: If they did not have the pool, they would be broke, would they?

Mr. TUCKER: Yes, they would be out of the industry. Here we have something working successfully but unacknowledged. It does exist and it is the only way that our fishermen survive.

I know that I have been critical but what is to be done about these problems? How are we to halt the drift from the industry? Firstly, we should lift the strangling hands of the Brisbane officials from the northern industries. We should set up a northern fishing authority comprising representatives of the Department of Harbours and Marine, the Fish Board and the fishermen themselves to develop the northern fishing industry. It should be set up in Townsville, for Townsville is the hub of the industry, and it has a University for research work. More licences to buy should be issued to hotels, cafes, schools, colleges and the like. The situation where producers are at the mercy of the buyers should be changed. If a buyer does not buy up to a certain amount he should first be warned as it is obvious he is dealing on the black market. Quite often the market is saturated with fish not moving through the Board. When a buyer fails to buy through the Board for a week or more it is apparent that he is dealing through the black market and he should be warned. If he continues to fail to buy a fair amount of fish from the Board, his licence should be revoked.

Mr. Smith: He may have gone fishing himself that week.

Mr. TUCKER: I wish the hon. member would go fishing sometimes.

A retail section should be established at the Fish Board to sell estuary fish rather than let it deteriorate as it does at present when it is frozen. In this way the Board could grapple with the problem of the imported fish, which can be stored in our cold stores for many months and still be put on the market to compete with our own fish because of the charges being levied on our fishermen. In this way estuary fishermen could be assured of sales and that part of the industry would expand. The Board would then receive additional revenue from commissions for fish that now finds its way onto the black market. Everybody would benefit from this approach and the industry would be put on a sound basis. At present there is no fishermen's representative from the North on the Board, and my information is that the consumers' representative is also appointed from the South. However, I cannot vouch for the correctness of the last statement. It is easy to understand why there are no fishermen's representatives from the North. No-one in that particular area has nominated. I say that in all fairness. But the real reason is that meetings in Brisbane often coincide with good tides in the North. I should like hon. members to understand that there are only two major fishing tides in the North each month. The meetings in Brisbane are usually tied to the wants of Brisbane, not to the wants of the North, and no representative will leave the major tides in the North to spend three days attending a meeting in Brisbane for which he receives £5 a day. He could lose hundreds of pounds if he did, and in fact that

has happened. Representatives from the North could be very much out of pocket if they attended meetings in Brisbane coinciding with those major tides, so it is very difficult, and understandably so, to get anyone to leave his boat and attend the meetings.

Mr. Ewan: You could have a representative here who was properly briefed.

Mr. TUCKER: We do not think that anybody down here can properly present our problems.

Overseas statistics show that 70 to 80 per cent. of the investment in the fishing industry should be in the fishing craft and that the remainder should be in the shore installation. The opposite applies in Townsville, where 70 to 80 per cent. of the investment is in the shore installation and the remainder is in the fishing craft. It is obvious that something must be done about this quickly before all the fishermen in the North lose the battle that they are presently waging to stay in the industry. In reality, a shore installation worth £70,000 should maintain a fishing fleet worth £300,000, not £30,000 as at Townsville.

The overhead is very high, and it is noticeable that fishermen are leaving the industry because of the high overhead, high costs of maintenance, and high charges. No-one from Brisbane has seen fit to come up and find out the real trouble. Whenever the Fish Board in Townsville is losing money, the answer of the people in Brisbane is to increase charges instead of coming up to find out why. The charges are eventually passed on to the fishermen, who cannot pass them on and who are forced out of the industry.

At present fishing grounds off Townsville are cursed by sharks. On some reefs fishermen lose to sharks eight out of 10 mackerel that they hook. The claim is made that fishermen bring this on themselves by cleaning fish on the grounds. However, they usually trail until nightfall, and they cannot steam out through the reefs at night. If the industry was properly organised, a type of mother ship could pick up the day's catch and bring it back to Townsville each night. This would save fish roes, and so on, which are presently thrown away and which could be marketed as fish paste. The head and the gut and other parts that are now thrown into the water outside the reef could well be used if the mother ship could bring them back to Townsville each day. The head and the gut could be turned into fish meal which is essential in the poultry industry. A large number of fish caught are immediately thrown away. Possibly it will bring a smile to the face of the average hon. member when I say that some of them go by the name of "bludgers". It is the local name of a trevally-shaped fish weighing about 15 lb. which it does not pay to bring in under the present organisation. But these fish could be processed and filleted with the object of turning them into fish cakes or sausages or any of the other foodstuffs liked by the Continental people.

The shark menace to the industry definitely has to be reduced when one realises that eight out of every 10 mackerel caught are lost to sharks. If we could reduce that menace the mackerel catch would be sharply lifted.

From the commercial point of view a shark could be worth between £5 and £10 if the required facilities were available. Oil is obtainable from the liver, the skin and fins could be exported to Singapore and Hong Kong, and the body could be turned into fish meal. Investigations show that the best way to catch sharks is by net. Depth recorders on boats show deep water and sandy bottoms beside the Reef where sharks could be recovered, even if they sank the net.

The Gulf of Carpentaria is teeming with sharks at the present time. Perhaps dried flesh could be sold. The meal could find a ready market. The local men are prepared to clean the grounds, but they do not want to do it for the benefit of southern men who treat the area like an alluvial gold mine, scoop up the spoils and then off for the season.

Mr. Ewan: Are not some sharks edible?

Mr. TUCKER: I believe they are sold under another name on occasions.

Some stability should be given the industry. It should be developed, and men should not be destroyed. The way we are going up there at the present time the men certainly are going to be destroyed. We urge that proper care should be taken by the industry itself of those who work in it. We consider that any man going up there should serve two years as a crewman before he be allowed to become a skipper of a boat. In that way we would ensure that the product would be of the highest quality. We would be sure that refrigerator temperatures were kept at a proper level, that the bleeding of fish was properly carried out, and that all in all the product was of the highest quality, not as sometimes happens with those who do not know very much about the industry who bring in a below-standard product, and in that way help to wreck the industry. I am informed that Western Australia has some very good rules covering the fishing industry. We should do well to find out about them and in many cases copy them. I said previously that there could be a £1,000,000 industry in Townsville. We have it at our fingertips at the moment but we are frustrated by men in Brisbane who do not understand the industry in the North. So far as the tuna industry is concerned, there is a tuna called the Northern Blue Fin tuna, mainly found around the estuaries on the Queensland coast. It runs for six to eight weeks between February and June and that run depends on the wet season. Our fishermen feel that 600 to 800 tons could quite easily be taken during that six weeks' run past Townsville. We have all the facilities in Townsville to compete in tuna canning.

We have a can-making plant. Northern Manufacturers are the people at present turning out cans in Townsville. We have all the secondary industries necessary to support this industry, together with the technical know-how. There is readily available peanut oil from the Tableland, salt from the Bowen works, and, as I say, all the know-how to have a tuna canning industry established in Townsville.

More refrigeration is available in Townsville than in any other place on the coast. There is the Aitkenvale Cold Stores, two meatworks which remain empty for quite a period during the year, and our own Fish Board which itself can handle 200 tons. We have available the University staff for advice in relation to ocean currents, water masses and nutritional matters, and all the things necessary to find out the favourable areas for different types of fish. We have all the know-how required for the research work necessary. The University staff in Townsville could handle research into the various samples and other things it is necessary for us to know to establish the favourability of the ocean around Townsville for different types of fish.

Townsville is the centre of the reef and the coral seas.

Mr. Smith: Why don't you get the tuna industry going up there?

Mr. TUCKER: One of the things that stopped us from doing anything up there was the Government's attitude towards North Queensland in general. It is quite possible that the hon. member for Windsor does not even know where Townsville is, and he would possibly go in the wrong direction.

As I was saying, Townsville is the centre of the Barrier Reef and the coral sea. Two hundred miles to our east are the Flinders and Lihou Cays, which have never been fished by fishermen from Townsville, but from which the Japanese take a big haul of fish every year. They have taken a big haul this season. Therefore, we need much more technical know-how, which could develop through the University at Townsville.

Tuna feeds on all the young fish on the Queensland coast and once we know how the Blue Fin tuna can be caught and what it feeds on we can certainly obtain it in Townsville.

I close my remarks by reiterating that it is very necessary that something be done quickly to aid the fishermen of Townsville and the whole of North Queensland. A very definite approach must be taken in this direction to allow this industry to survive.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba) (5.49 p.m.): I also wish to take part in this debate by lending my support to the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. It seems rather strange to me that, so far, only one member of the Government Party has taken part

in this debate. I believe that indicates the very sound case that the Leader of the Opposition put up on our behalf. Not one Government member has seen fit to answer the charges made by him. They try to get their names in "Hansard" by interjecting and calling out. That is the method adopted by those incapable of making a speech. Government members know that the charges made by the Leader of the Opposition were truthful, factual and to the point. They cannot answer his case.

Mr. Duggan: While we are making speeches they are decorating their homes with flags from Parliament House.

Mr. HOUSTON: The Leader of the Opposition has supplied one reason. They may be delving through records or having committee meetings in an effort to answer the charges.

Government members have treated the debate with contempt. They have shown mass contempt for parliamentary procedure by not taking the opportunity to speak. It seems a crying shame that the Treasurer is not in the Chamber to hear the contributions of hon. members who speak. On many occasions we find that a Minister is absent from the Chamber during the debate on his Estimates or a Bill introduced by him. The Treasurer should be aware of his responsibility. He is the direct representative of the Government and the people in this debate, and I say most emphatically that he should be present while it is proceeding. We hear a great deal about the need for workers to work full time. Surely it is not asking too much of a Minister to expect him to be in attendance from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. I do not care about the reason for his absence. There should be no excuse for not being in the Chamber. The ordinary worker in industry has to work from 8 a.m. to 12 noon and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., and Lord help him if he decides to leave his bench for more than a few minutes.

Mr. Ewan: You will be working a bit of overtime tonight.

Mr. HOUSTON: The hon. member for Roma is not capable of making a speech.

The hon. member for Townsville North has just completed one of the best speeches on the fishing industry I have heard in the chamber. He explained very clearly and definitely the problems of the industry in North Queensland, and he concluded by saying that he hoped someone would take notice of his points. How can the Treasurer take notice of them when he is not present to hear them? The Treasurer, in addition to being Treasurer, is also the Minister in charge of the fishing industry.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. HOUSTON: Government members are prepared to call out and yell out, but,

strangely enough, they are not prepared to speak. I challenge them to use the time at their disposal and let us hear their views.

Mr. Duggan: They spend all their time squabbling in Caucus.

Mr. HOUSTON: When we come to the Dorothy Dix part of the Estimates debate, they will be getting up and asking all the questions they can think of.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member has made his point. I ask him now to get on with his speech.

Mr. HOUSTON: After listening to the Treasurer, I realise how strange are the ways of government. At one time we find they condemn a certain situation, and on another we find they are grateful for the existence of the same situation. If we think more deeply we realise how strange are the ways of men, and that leads to the strange ways of government.

The Leader of the Opposition gave many examples of a change of mind and opinion by the Treasurer, comparing his views when in Opposition and when carrying out his duties as Treasurer of the State. I think all these things should be read and digested by members of the Government because they would then see very clearly the problems associated with governing this great State of ours. I am sure that the Treasurer now realises that when he makes a statement he must be sure that it is factual. As I proceed I will show that even in this Budget, either deliberately, or accidentally, he has made some statements about the finances of Queensland that can certainly be misleading.

When we consider mankind, it is peculiar to find that there are people appearing to work against themselves. Dentists advertise certain toothpastes to stop tooth decay and doctors advertise certain health foods to keep people healthy so that they will not have to visit the doctor, and we find Governments spending thousands of pounds on cancer research, yet on the other hand they are spending thousands of pounds to produce tobacco, and doctors are telling us that if we smoke too much we will get lung cancer. So we have one faction suggesting that we do not do something and the other faction suggesting that we do it. However, this Government are peculiar because they have the same people contradicting themselves over a period. We find that while in Opposition the present Government professed to be opponents of strong drink and opponents of gambling, but now we find in the Budget brought down by the Treasurer that they are hoping that people will drink more and gamble more because if they do not, their Budget will certainly show a bigger deficit this year than in previous years. If any member of the Government does not believe that let him rise in his place when the time comes and deny it, because it is true as the Leader of the Opposition said, that this is a drinking and gambling Budget.

That is what it depends on. It is the only source of new income. Of course, the Loan Fund will give us just over an extra £1,000,000, but I will show later that that will be more than absorbed in the Mt. Isa line. From the increase in drinking and gambling, against which they may give lip service, they will get an extra £200,000 in licensed drinking fees. That means they are hoping for a 50 per cent. increase in the amount of liquor consumed in the State. They will carry through their proposed legislation because they have the weight of numbers. We hear all this talk about sane drinking, but the Government are not interested in it. They are interested only in getting more money. They are not interested in the fellow in the country having his S.P. bet. He is having that now. They are not interested in making it legal.

Mr. Pizzey: Were you interested?

Mr. HOUSTON: It is not a case of whether I was interested or not. I suggest to the hon. gentleman that when we are the Government we will show him how to handle this delicate situation and it will not be used solely to obtain money for the Budget. When we talk about £500,000 in tax we must remember that it is a large amount of money.

Mr. Windsor: Peanuts.

Mr. HOUSTON: It may be peanuts for those who talk in hundreds and thousands and millions as if they were peanuts.

I have expressed concern at the fact that for the Budget to be successful there must be a big increase in the consumption of liquor. Naturally, the more liquor that is consumed the more money will pour into the Government coffers.

Mr. Hiley: We have not assumed any increase.

Mr. HOUSTON: The Treasurer may not have assumed it but I am sure he is hoping for it; otherwise he would not have gone to so much trouble about it. The same applies to betting. He definitely said he expected £500,000 from the new betting tax. At this stage I do not know what the tax will be but, assuming it to be the same as on-the-course or paddock betting, say, 6d. a ticket, 20,000,000 bets will have to be registered in the 12 months to bring in £500,000. That is a tremendous number of bets to be handled by bookmakers and virtually means a completely gambling population. Considering the average value of a bet, 20,000,000 will mean a colossal amount of money changing hands in gambling. I do not know whether the Treasurer in hoping to get £500,000 had that in mind.

Mr. Hiley: Did you hear the Budget speech on that?

Mr. HOUSTON: Yes, I heard it.

Mr. Hiley: Does not the turn-over tax weigh in your mind at all?

Mr. HOUSTON: Yes, but even so, even at 6d. on 5s. it is still 10 per cent. I do not care what turn-over tax the Treasurer introduces—and he has not indicated what it will be—if it is above 10 per cent. he will get more complaints from those associated with S.P. betting, or whatever he proposes to call it.

The Budget makes provision for an estimated increase in expenditure this year in round figures from the Consolidated Revenue Fund from £110,000,000 to £115,000,000, from the Trust and Special Funds an increase from £79,500,000 to £87,000,000 and from the Loan Fund an increase from £29,000,000 to £30,000,000. To investigate these various funds would take more time than hon. members have. I realise we have had a week to go through the Budget and the various Estimates and I think I have devoted as much time to them as the average hon. member could be expected to do with all the other duties he has to perform. It is quite a task to dissect the Budget to the extent necessary to form considered opinions on all aspects of it so naturally I will confine my remarks to some of the factors as I see them, and at this stage I will leave out of consideration those departments that we hope will be debated later when the Estimates are before us.

I have referred to the large sums in the Trust and Special Funds and in the Loan Fund. It is obvious that there is a certain amount of overlapping in those two funds—moneys going from the Loan Fund to the Special Funds, particularly for the Mt. Isa railway line, as mentioned earlier, approximately £1,600,000 and for the Irrigation and Water Supply Construction Fund another £1,820,000. Even with an increase in the money allocated, the Treasurer sounded a very gloomy note in his Budget speech, and I think that is reflected in the opening paragraph. I shall read it again to emphasise my point. He said—

"During the past financial year both the economy of the State and the Government's finances were affected by a combination of adverse factors. Another dry year continued to depress primary output and exports, while the national counter inflationary measures caused a decline in activity in industry generally which has continued into the current year."

I will say quite frankly that the Treasurer had a thankless task under all the circumstances, but that was a gloomy approach. I think he could have given the people of Queensland and members of this Chamber a more hopeful opening paragraph. When I heard it I thought, "It is not very bright." That is certainly borne out when one reads it through.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. HOUSTON: Hon. members opposite have a great deal to say now, but they did not say it when they had the opportunity. I hope we will hear from them at a later stage.

It is about time that the Government woke up to the fact that Queensland, because of its situation and its climatic conditions, will always suffer periodically from the effects of drought. I can remember long periods of drought when former Governments were in office and they tackled the problem. Certainly there is still a great deal to be done, and if we attempted to overcome our natural shortcomings, we should be doing a lot towards the further development of Queensland. Various speakers on the Government benches have referred on other occasions to the great potential of the State. I believe that Queensland has great potential, but I also believe that to realise it we must understand our shortcomings and do all we can to overcome them.

We should spend as much money as possible on irrigation and water conservation. I know that the Treasurer has allowed for an increase of about £150,000 for farm water conservation schemes. That is all very well for individual farmers, or perhaps a combination of two or three farmers, but it is only putting off the day when major schemes will have to be undertaken. It cannot be denied that we have unemployment in Queensland, and I believe that we should now look ahead to larger and more national projects for irrigation and water conservation.

Mr. Ewan: Would that be economically sound?

Mr. HOUSTON: As a matter of fact, in this Chamber last year the hon. member for Gympie, the hon. member for Fassifern and other supporters of the Government openly criticised the Government for reducing the vote for irrigation and water conservation. Despite the smallness of the allocation and the complaints that were made about it, approximately £35,000 of it remained unspent. In other words, although the money was there, the administration saw fit not to push ahead with these developmental schemes. The Government should make sure that the allocations are spent. Of course, we know that the Treasurer is not in favour of big dams and large schemes for the conservation of water. I shall refer to statements that have been attributed to the Treasurer. As the hon. gentleman is in the Chamber he can deny them if they are not true. He said that nearly £20,000,000 had been spent on irrigation in Queensland since World War II. in pursuit of a dream. If that was said with any idea of scoring off the previous Government he is on the wrong track because if the dream of the previous Administration was to turn Queensland into the State we all want it to be, a State with an abundance of water so that crops and beasts can thrive, it is a dream worth fostering and trying to bring to fruition. Later on the Treasurer said that with their irrigation schemes the administrators had been carried away with the dream of making the

Sahara blossom like a rose. It indicates quite clearly the Treasurer is not in favour of large irrigation projects.

Mr. Hiley: Not the ones you choose. We have built one a year.

Mr. HOUSTON: I will deal with some we chose in a moment to show how wrong the Treasurer was in his summing up of the position. It is a fact that the Treasurer said that the Burdekin River scheme was a white elephant. I shall not take up the time of the Committee by going into that, but during the debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply several hon. members gave the complete answer to the Treasurer's opinion of the Burdekin River scheme. As time goes on that project will have to be completed or that part of Queensland will develop into a Sahara desert. The hon. member for Burdekin referred to the Authorities' reports on that scheme, which all substantiated the views of the previous Labour Government.

It is a fact that the Government have gone ahead with one dam a year. I am not denying that. They are necessary and I am all in favour of them. I am not condemning the Government for going ahead in that fashion, but I do condemn them when they do not make more money available for that type of work. We know that £5,000,000 eventually will be spent on beef roads, but it is no use having roads in the outback, in the channel country, or anywhere else, unless there is something to transport over them. We could have the greatest roads in Australia but without water we cannot have livestock. Without water we cannot have closer settlement. The development of the whole of the State depends on two factors, closer settlement and the availability of food for the settlers. It is all tied up with water conservation.

The Tinaroo Falls Dam was a project of the previous Labour Government, which, in years to come, will be considered to be one of the greatest milestones in Queensland's development. Recently we heard of 5,000 head of cattle being saved by water from that dam. No-one can deny that; it was openly stated by those who should know and never denied by anyone. Five thousand head of cattle is only a start; if conditions got worse, more would be saved. As the scheme progresses greater areas will be covered. The whole point is that the development of North Queensland, particularly around the Tinaroo Falls area, depends on closer settlement and the availability of primary production to feed the people. I should like to see further dams built in various areas and I suggest to the Government that the allocation this year, small as it is, be fully spent.

Last year, also when the Estimates were being discussed, the Minister for Lands and Irrigation told the Committee that he was preparing a case for presentation to the Federal Government for more money for this

type of work. I hope that the Minister can tell us later on whether that case has been presented, and if so, what was the result of it. To my knowledge, no statement has been made through the Press or in this Chamber as to what happened to that case or if it was ever completed or presented.

I believe it is the responsibility of the Federal Government to, in the initial stages, provide the money for these projects. I do not think it should come straight out of loan funds, because, as I will explain later, coming out of loan funds it is also a drain on Consolidated Revenue. However, grants from the Federal Government out of money that is actually taken from this State by way of taxation, pay the State back for some of the effort put into development. If we look at development as a broad issue every penny spent by the State Government on irrigation and water conservation—in fact, on any developmental work at all—does not benefit the State Government to any great extent. The State might benefit, as the Treasurer hopes, by people using their spare money for betting and drinking but that is an incidental return. The big return goes to the Federal Government by way of income tax, export duties and all the other levies on production.

The Federal Government should recognise the need for these things and I hope that, in the coming weeks when the Federal election campaign is well under way we do not see State Government members of the Liberal and Country Parties endeavouring to persuade the people to return the present Federal Government for another term.

Mr. Ewan: Why not?

Mr. HOUSTON: "Why not?" the hon. member asks. It will make complete idiots of many Ministers considering their recent statements. On many occasions in this Chamber Ministers are heard using the phrase, "Had it not been for the Federal Government!" Even the Treasurer, remarking on the effects of the credit squeeze, blamed it on the Federal Government.

If hon. members wish to develop this State they had better forget the Liberal-Country Party in the Federal sphere and work very hard for the benefit of Queensland by supporting the A.L.P. candidates at the coming election.

We shall very soon have to look at other methods of obtaining fresh water for our developmental projects. It is true that our underground water supplies, in some cases, are drying up, much to the horror of the people living in those areas. Some are hopeful that constant rains and perhaps flooding in some of our inland rivers will once again recoup these resources but, in that regard, we are only living in hopes.

It is true that, over the years, our artesian system has provided the water necessary in outback areas. It is also true that we are using more and more of it and none is

going back. Just what the reserves are I do not know. On investigation I have not been able to find accurate estimates of known reserves of artesian water in our basins.

Mr. Hiley: There is an excellent study of that in the Parliamentary Library, in a report on a survey of the artesian water resources of the State.

Mr. HOUSTON: I have not read it, but I will certainly be interested to do so. I think the Treasurer will agree with me that in that survey they too were worried about the future of our artesian system. That is the general opinion and therefore we must look elsewhere for supplies. Two methods appeal to me, the first being the damming of coastal creeks or rivers by a barrier in the stream or creek to stop tidal salt water from mixing with fresh water and making it brackish. In some places that method would be impracticable, but in many others it could be employed effectively. After a period of time those areas would have a ready local supply of fresh water for irrigation and local consumption. The only problem as I see it is the silting of the mouths of the rivers and creeks. That problem, however, could be overcome. A dam to some extent prevents flooding of a stream and therefore increases the problem of siltation.

I understand such a scheme was investigated years ago. However, in those days many of our rivers and streams were used by boats that carried goods. With modern air and road transport the need for water-carriage of goods is not now the same. That aspect should not cause much worry.

A further method of obtaining additional supplies has been tried in America. I refer to a water purification scheme that has been put into operation in Freeport, Texas. The water is boiled and after condensation the fresh water is collected. Although the system is as old as science, this instance is a classic example of its application. This town of 14,000 residents has been able to produce 1,000,000 gallons of water a day from salt-water supplies, the cost in Australian currency being 2s. 9d. per 1,000 gallons. The cost is getting close to a figure that could be considered worthwhile from a development viewpoint.

Difficulty would be experienced in many areas because of their flat nature in providing for the requirements of the population by damming waterways. If the Government have not already got information about the water purification project I have mentioned, I think it would pay them to get it.

That brings me to another point, the use of natural gas as a fuel. Natural gas was not used for commercial purposes in Queensland until recently, although many schemes have been put forward for its more extensive use. Those two matters, the use of natural gas and the conversion of salt water to fresh water, would be worth investigation.

On page 2 of the Financial Statement the Treasurer had something hopeful to say. He

changed from gloom to hope and I hope it is hope, and not wishful thinking. He said—

“It is pleasing to be able to report continued growth in our basic development despite the temporary setbacks. I refer to the continued expansion in mineral production, the encouragement given to oil exploration by Cabawin, discoveries of iron ore in Central Queensland, a start on the development of bauxite deposits at Weipa, the prospect of significant coal exports from Central Queensland, the conclusion of an agreement for the construction of an oil refinery, the planning of two new super power stations . . .”

If all those things eventuate he has something to be very happy about, but they are all projects not for this year, or next year, but many years hence. That is what worries me about the Financial Statement. To get an element of happiness to offset the gloom he had to refer to projects that are still quite a few years away at the earliest. He referred to mineral development. I take it that naturally he means uranium and Mt. Isa in particular. It is true that the Federal Government are concerned about the future of uranium exports and uranium used in Australia. I read the other day that the number of prospectors looking for uranium in Australia has dropped to three companies and the Federal Government are worried about it and have good reason to be. Mary Kathleen is one of our main uranium mining centres and we must watch it carefully.

I do not intend to deal with Mt. Isa as the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. members for Burke and Belmont have covered the problems fully.

Mr. Davies: They have silenced the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the hon. member for Maryborough that if he persists in interrupting his colleague he will return to his proper place to make his interruptions.

Mr. HOUSTON: Then, we come to something else that we are hopeful about. What has happened at Cabawin? The Premier may have more information than the general public but at present there is hope. I think that is as far as he or anyone else may go. It is true that the other well nearby has not yet shown the prospects that Cabawin showed. Naturally enough everyone in Queensland, particularly hon. members, would rejoice greatly if oil could be discovered in payable quantities.

Mr. Hiley: The latest bore has gone to a lower level in the most hopeful area and it looks a bit depressing at the moment.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is right. We are all agreed about the benefits that would accrue from a payable oil discovery. However, I should not like to hope that the future of the State relies entirely on its oil resources.

Weipa has wonderful deposits of bauxite but it will be 1966 before any good return is shown. We must look very closely at Weipa to make sure that the return to the State from the bauxite is worthwhile.

Mr. Hiley: You understand that before production takes place over £30,000,000 has to be spent there.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am worried whether they will spend it or not. I know how much has to be spent, but I am a little concerned about the bauxite deposits in Western Australia and I am wondering whether international politics may play a part and hold up the development of Weipa. I think the Treasurer will agree that much of his thinking in the last two years has been based on Weipa's becoming the main source of income and prosperity for North Queensland. So we must look ahead.

I could go on to deal with coal exports and other matters but time does not permit and, in any event, there will be further opportunities to discuss them in subsequent debates.

However, I should like to refer to the powerhouses that the Treasurer is hoping for. I trust that the Government will plan not merely for two powerhouses but for a complete ring to provide what we in the electrical industry call a ring feed throughout the State so that our natural coal resources can be converted to electrical power. Despite all the talk about the value of tourism and the rest of it, the two most important needs for development are water and cheap power. Given those the rest will naturally follow.

I was struck by this small sentence in the Treasurer's Budget speech—

“Despite the effects of credit restriction the number of dwellings constructed during the year was the highest since the early 1950's.”

On hearing it I thought, “Why did not the Minister have more to say about housing, particularly as he is the Minister in charge of housing and particularly as in previous Budget speeches he has taken a great deal of credit for the number of houses built?” Upon investigation I found that 10,640 homes were completed in 1960-1961 and that is the largest number completed since the early 1950's so I do not dispute his statement.

Mr. Hiley: The second highest in history.

Mr. HOUSTON: That would be right, too—I do not dispute it—but I should like to give the complete picture. No doubt the Treasurer decided it would be wiser for the Government not to give the full picture but just to claim the credit for the part that looked good. Politically I do not suppose we can quarrel with that. But, although 10,640 homes were completed, nearly 6,000 of them were completed in the first half of the year, before the Federal

Government introduced their credit restrictions. For a house to be completed in that period the financial arrangements and the paper work were started well before the credit restrictions came. I think 4,742 were completed in the second half of the financial year. There were 3,730 under construction at 30 June, 1960, but at 30 June, 1961, there were only 3,467, or 263 fewer. This year so far has not been nearly as good as the same period last year for the number of completed houses. We are still feeling the effects of the credit restrictions. Moreover, approvals are down by 620 over the same period.

Bad and all as the shortage of homes is, the immediate problem is the great decrease in the number of people employed in the building industry during those 12 months. Following are the figures of employees in the building industry for the years 1960 and 1961:—

—	As at 30 June, 1960	As at 30 June, 1961	De- crease
Carpenters	10,730	9,322	1,408
Bricklayers	1,548	1,121	427
Painters	2,130	1,581	549
Electricians	1,341	886	455
Plumbers	2,268	1,693	575
Builders' Labourers ..	3,753	2,843	910
Clerical Staff and others associated with building	2,544	2,121	423

The total drop in the number of employees over that period of 12 months was 4,747. If those people could have been kept in work—this is where we condemn the Federal Government and those who support them, which is the important thing in Queensland—just imagine how many houses those 4,747 tradesmen and their assistants could have built. If that had happened, I am sure the Treasurer would have used not two lines of print but a whole page in telling us of the Government's activities during the year.

Although 10,640 houses were built last year, we must bear in mind that approximately 10,500 marriages take place each year and that we are only keeping pace with the marriage rate, not allowing for any replacements. As Brisbane and other cities and towns in the State develop industrially, many houses will become useless for residential purposes. In Brisbane in my own electorate of Bulimba I know of streets that either have been or will be rezoned as industrial areas. The people living there have to leave their homes because, with the coming of industries, the homes lose their value. Those houses must be replaced. Immigrants also must be housed, and we must make a determined effort to push forward with home building.

Mr. Pizzey: You have to allow for those who have passed on.

Mr. HOUSTON: People are dying, of course, and if the Government stay in office they will kill more with the paltry wages and poor conditions they are giving them.

There is one part of his Budget speech that I think the Treasurer should explain to the House in more detail. He said on page 3—

"With the exception of 'Executive and Legislative' and 'Treasurer and Housing,' all headings expended less than the Budget provision, with the following summarised variations:—

	£
Salaries	Excess 234,368
Wages	Saving 549,800
Overtime and Allowances	Saving 553,398
Other Expenditure	Excess 164,258

"The excess under the heading of 'Salaries' was caused mainly by the cost of paying marginal increases granted after the 1960-1961 Budget had been presented to Parliament.

"The savings in 'Wages,' 'Overtime and Allowances' payments were due mainly to a decline in available traffic requiring less running time by the Railway Department, coupled with savings effected through dieselisation."

Those figures bear investigation. It is true that in some departments extra salaries have been paid but it is not owing to the fact that marginal increases had been granted after the presentation of the Budget—not in all cases by a long way. If we go through the Estimates for 1960-1961 we find the same position with almost every department. Opening the document at random I find under "Chief Office, Department of Justice" the entry, "Increases under Awards £22,719." Under "Stipendiary Magistrates, Clerks of Petty Sessions, &c.," I find "Increases under Awards £52,825"; under "Commissioner of Prices", "Increases under Awards £2,491." In the Estimates of the Departments of Agriculture and Stock and Forestry under the heading of "Administration" we find "Increases under Awards £9,900." Therefore the Minister's statement that the increase in salaries was owing to the cost of paying marginal increases is not factual when we investigate the position. It is true that £80,000 extra was paid in retiring allowances and the cash equivalent of undrawn leave in the Department of Railways. That is brought about by the fact that a number of men have been put off. When they are put off, naturally they are entitled to draw the cash equivalent of annual leave and long service leave due to them. That increase of £80,000 was brought about in that way, not by increases in margins. The wages staff of the Department of Health and Home Affairs were not covered by the increase in the salary range. They took another £60,000. The police were not covered and they took £10,000. All in all, the Treasurer's statement is not true when it is analysed.

He referred to the saving of wages and overtime and allowance payments in the Railways Department. Here we find that the only figures worth mentioning are £26,000

on maintenance in the South-eastern District and £10,000 in wages in the South-western District.

I should like the Treasurer to reply to what I am about to say about the Estimates of the Railway Department before we get on to the detailed debate of the Estimates of that Department. As I go through the Estimates I notice the remarkable number of times that the appropriation for 1960-1961 and the expended amount in 1960-1961 are identical, except perhaps for £1. I could understand isolated cases, particularly in small amounts, when officers in charge of a department might be able to run their departments to such fine budgeting that they could work it out within £1. Considering the locomotive section in the South-eastern District—I am not selecting this to have a go at any particular person—£103,397 was appropriated for salaries and £103,397 spent on salaries; for wages £2,793,206 was appropriated and £2,793,205 spent—in other words only £1 less than the amount appropriated. And, so it goes right through. In some cases it will be seen that stores, contingencies, etc., are identical in the amounts appropriated and spent. I feel that the Treasurer should give hon. members an explanation of these matters because the Railway Department is the only trading department that has shown a loss of any account over the years, yet it is the only department that has shown this consistency of identity between appropriations and expenditure of funds.

Another factor that is apparent in the statement and which worries me, is the amount of money being used for administration as against that being used for actual productive work. I shall use the Department of Public Works as an example but it is not the only department. From Consolidated Revenue fund £55,000 less will be spent on construction work and out of loan funds £93,000 less—in other words, £148,000 less—will be spent this year than last on the actual productive side of the department and at the same time there are less staff—that is tradesmen wage-earners—in the department now than there were last year. Yet, since June, 1960, there have been 150 more clerical and architectural and other administrative staff put into the department. I cannot see why, if the amount of construction work is being cut down, more architects and clerks are required to administer the department.

Mr. Richter: You realise that we do architectural work for other departments, do you not?

Mr. HOUSTON: I realise that but there is nothing in the Budget to indicate it. The Minister's department is not being reimbursed by other departments for the effort they are putting in or, if they are, it is not clearly indicated.

Mr. Pizzey: Planning is a bottleneck and always has been for 10 years.

Mr. HOUSTON: Yes. In fairness to the Minister I will deal with that later. The Minister for Education and Migration will have a bit of explaining to do later on. See if he can explain how the technical correspondence school has 90 personnel! It is the first time in history it has had 90.

Mr. Pizzey: There are many children using it.

Mr. HOUSTON: Perhaps the Minister can explain later on when I ask him where the 90 are on the payroll at the correspondence school. I shall be glad to hear his explanation.

Getting back to the Department of Public Works and Local Government, what worries me—and it became apparent early in the year when I asked a question about the number of people paid off—is the overhead of some of our Government departments. It is a fact that today quite an amount of work is going out on contract and, although it is quite legitimate from the department's point of view, when they bring an estimate in for a particular job and then get the contract price, the contract price is often found to be less than the estimate. I believe it is brought about by the high overhead cost of the department, they having more or less estimated themselves out of the job. Every penny that is spent in administrative cost has to be met as overhead charges.

(Time expired.)

Mr. KNOX (Nundah) (8.5 p.m.): I should like to congratulate the Treasurer on the way in which he presented the Budget and on the material that he provided for us. As usual he went to great trouble to see that the Committee was extremely well informed about the details and the background of the proposals he was putting forward for consideration. We are always indebted to the Treasurer for his efforts to make these things as clear as possible for all hon. members.

Today those of us who were in the Chamber heard the reply of the Leader of the Opposition. It must have been disappointing to him to notice that all hon. members of his own party did not see fit to remain in the Chamber until he finished. Only eight were present at that stage. It is a pity that the Leader of the Opposition when making an important speech does not command the respect and support he should receive on those occasions. Unfortunately he was in a very difficult position this morning, as it was obvious to us that he was not making the speech he had originally prepared. Quite obviously he had been given some indication that it would be wiser to make an attack on Mount Isa Mines Limited and what was going on at Mt. Isa than to devote some or all of his time to an attack on the Budget introduced by the Treasurer.

This subject seems to have been the theme of hon. members opposite, and it is a pity that the Leader of the Opposition was so ill-prepared on the subject that he had to be

contradicted by the hon. member for Belmont. That hon. member saw fit to correct his Leader, quite nicely and without being obvious, on a number of points. It was interesting also to note that the hon. member for Belmont who today was defending those who are seeking a bonus was the hon. member who not so long ago in this Chamber described any union or union leader who sought a bonus as not being worth his salt. This is the very same hon. member who attacked all union leaders who sought a bonus. Today he was trying to save face by defending the very people he originally attacked. Probably when he attacked them they were not sitting on the Q.C.E. of his party, although they are now sitting on it. It is somewhat significant that he has found it necessary to change his tune.

I now want to refer particularly to the three main points made by the Leader of the Opposition. He accused the Government of producing five deficits in a row, he attacked them for not doing anything about unemployment, as he alleges, and he attacked them for taxing the people in order to try to make ends meet. Those were the three points of his speech or that part of it which referred to the Budget. In considering these points let us have a look at some of the factors or items that contribute to a deficit. For instance, in State coal mines, which are very expensive to run and maintain, the position is that at Collinsville the accumulated loss to 30 June last year was £868,000; the loss in 1960-1961 was £126,500; stock adjustment and sales came to £9,300, bringing the total loss to a little over £1,000,000. Deducting Treasury grants made to 30 June this year of £952,000, we still have to find £51,700 for Collinsville. At Ogmoo, to 30 June last year, the accumulated loss was £356,500. There was an additional amount of £20,696 for this recent financial year and an adjustment for stocks and assets and sale of plant, £20,000, leaving a total of £397,000. The Treasury grant met £373,000 of that, leaving £23,600 to find. At Mt. Mulligan, on 30 June of this year, the accumulated loss was £528,000. The adjustments of assets and loss on sales was £4,600 and the total accumulated loss was £532,900. The Treasury grant was £400,000, leaving a balance to be found of £141,624. The total accumulated loss amounts to £1,933,962 as at 30 June this year. Hon. members can well realise why it is so difficult to make ends meet when such huge amounts of money are being paid out.

Mr. Pizzey: They didn't offer to share the costs.

Mr. KNOX: No, they made no attempt to share the losses.

Let us now look at something else that can contribute to a deficit. The Treasury office is also responsible for the Government Printing Office. In 10 years of Labour Government £112,526 was spent on the Printing Office. In the five years that we have been in office £309,689 has been spent.

This work was long overdue. When we took office we found some of the worst conditions in the State existed in the Government Printing Office. We had the task of bringing the machinery up to date and providing the employees with proper conditions.

In ten years of Labour administration £90,362 was spent on marine works. In the five years of Country-Liberal Party Government £691,000 has been spent. The State Government Insurance Office buildings are magnificent edifices. We were attacked by the Leader of the Opposition for building beautiful buildings. The conditions of State Government employees do not seem to worry him.

I deal now with a statement made by the hon. member for Belmont who proclaimed that the work we are undertaking at Bulwer Island is valueless in his eyes because it will help only one organisation. He said that the work on the Hamilton lands was all right because it assisted many companies. That seems to be his philosophy of life. I have here a map of the Hamilton lands district. It covers a huge territory, from Hamilton, right down to Pinkenba. This is a continuous project that has been going on for many years. It started under a Labour Government, was continued by us, and no doubt will be finished by us, because we will be in power for many years. The number of factories that have been established on that land has increased each year. Most of the land that was unoccupied only a year or two ago is now filled in and completed. The land near the river is very far advanced in filling and of course the work of drainage behind the Royal Queensland golf course is going on very rapidly indeed. It is one big project of filling and draining. It cannot be done in little bits. As the land is completed it becomes available to the individual factories that want to establish themselves on it.

Bulwer Island cannot be tied in with this because it is separated from it by the township of Pinkenba, which is adjacent to land that can easily be reclaimed and that in the course of time would be reclaimed. The Government are to be congratulated on seeing to its reclamation. The fact that part of Bulwer Island will be made available to an oil refinery will be of great value to the State and to the area. As hon. members will remember from the debate on the Bill, half of Bulwer Island, as outlined by the red line on the map that I have here, will receive attention. As the Treasurer announced, there will be some adjustments to give some of the solid land on the eastern tongue of Bulwer Island. This land should be reclaimed. It is being done to the great benefit of the State. When the refinery is completed and in full production, no doubt many other industries will be attracted to the area and will be able to occupy land in the Hamilton lands district as well, because they will be mainly those associated with the oil industry.

Turning to the record of marine works and ports, it is hardly necessary for me to mention Gladstone and the work on Scarborough Jetty in 1957-1958; in 1958-1959 the work on the Bribie Island reconstruction, the Manly boat harbour and the Scarborough Jetty additions; in 1959-1960 work on the Manly boat harbour, the Magnetic Island Jetty and the Cooktown Wharf; in 1960-1961 more work on the Manly boat harbour and work on the Shute Bay Jetty, the Green Island Jetty, the Yeppoon boat harbour and the Urangan boat harbour, and in 1961-1962—the year under consideration—yet more work on the Manly boat harbour and the Shute Bay Jetty, the Green Island Jetty, Clump Point Jetty, Urangan boat harbour and the Redcliffe Jetty repairs. Those alone accounted for many thousand of pounds, not to mention the following major works:—

Mourilyan—harbour and bulk sugar terminal.

Lucinda—part of which was under Labour and part under our Government—the bulk sugar terminal.

Townsville—bulk sugar terminal and harbour improvements.

The deepening of Bowen Harbour.

Bundaberg—port and bulk sugar terminal.

Improvements to Gladstone Harbour, and the work being currently carried out at Port Alma.

These works in total involved a tremendous amount of expenditure.

I have mentioned State Government Insurance Office Buildings, but let us look at where they have been erected in our term of office.

Ipswich was commenced under Labour and finished in June, 1958.

The Roma offices were started in 1958 and finished in January, 1960.

Townsville was started in 1959 and finished in April of this year.

Toowoomba was started in 1960 and finished in July, 1961.

Maryborough is under way and buildings have been purchased at Warwick, Bundaberg and Mackay. This is a big advance in expenditure on the State Government Insurance Office, and I am sure that the figures showing the money involved will impress hon. members.

In Labour's last 10 years of office, £43,800 was spent on State Government Insurance Office buildings. In 1957-1958, £86,000 was spent on S.G.I.O. buildings, or twice the amount spent during Labour's last 10 years of office. In 1958-1959, £47,000 was spent on S.G.I.O. buildings, in 1959-1960, £151,000, and in 1960-1961, £348,000. In the Country-Liberal Government's four years in office,

we have spent £631,500 on State Government Insurance Office buildings, compared with £43,800 in Labour's last 10 years of office.

Mr. Hanlon: What 10 years was that?

Mr. KNOX: Labour's last 10 years of office. We have provided in those offices excellent working conditions of which the Government are proud, and we will see that they are continued. No member of the Opposition can criticise us for providing fine public buildings, for providing good working conditions for our employees, and for giving a lead to the community by providing staff amenities such as air conditioning and other desirable features in modern buildings. Surely when an enterprise has been as successful as the State Government Insurance Office has been we are entitled to use the funds for developmental works of this type.

Hon. members opposite, one in particular, criticised us for the lack of development in North Queensland. If there is any name that this budget could attract, surely it would be a name associated with North Queensland. It specifically mentions a particular area of North Queensland in which probate benefits will apply. When that legislation is prepared and presented to the House, it will be one of the most important pieces of legislation to assist North Queensland that the Chamber has seen.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. KNOX: It is no wonder that members of the Opposition attempt to interject, because their record in the North is shameful. Our record is one of which we can be justly proud.

Work on the Mt. Isa railway line takes a considerable part of our funds. The expenditure on that line this year is £7,475,000. For work on beef roads in North Queensland this year, £1,000,000 has been allocated, and probably more will be spent. The Tinaroo scheme will have £501,000 spent on it, the Barron area £1,796,000, and the Tully Falls scheme £155,500.

Mr. Donald: They were initiated by the Labour Party.

Mr. KNOX: I am not denying that, but I am pointing out that our expenditure in these areas is huge and that nobody can criticise this Budget and say that it neglects North Queensland. The use and development of Weipa this year and in the future will be a big stride forward in that part of the State, of course. I do not intend to mention all the similar schemes in North Queensland that have received assistance from this Government, but those that I have mentioned will indicate the immense sums of money that we are spending in the North.

Census figures reveal that Townsville is now the second biggest city in the State, and it is developing rapidly. Townsville has

been generously assisted in its development and the development of its hinterland by this Government.

The second point taken by the Leader of the Opposition was that we are doing nothing about unemployment. We do not deny that there is unemployment. We do not deny that the employment figures are not as good as we would like them to be. But what are the facts? The latest published figures show that in Queensland there is a 24 per cent. decrease in the number of people receiving unemployment benefits in March, which was the highest figure this year. The August figures are 24 per cent. lower than the March figures. Not only are we going down in the number of unemployed but for the first time in two years we are equal to the Australian average. While we are going down New South Wales, under Labour administration, is going up. The New South Wales Government are straining every effort in their budgeting to try to alleviate unemployment. We are not ashamed in budgeting for deficits to prevent unemployment. If we are successful, if we can claim any success at all, we shall be very proud that our Budget has assisted. We are the only State on the eastern seaboard of Australia whose unemployment figures are improving. The number of people receiving unemployment benefits is decreasing.

Mr. Donald: You have still got the biggest percentage out of work.

Mr. KNOX: We have not. Those are the latest figures. I did not intend to go into all the figures but in view of the hon. member's interjection I point out that the biggest percentage is in Tasmania with 3 per cent. New South Wales and Victoria come next with 2.7 per cent. Queensland is next at 2.6 per cent. The only States with lower percentages than ours are South Australia with 2.5 and Western Australia with 2.1. On a percentage comparison our record is one of which we can be proud. We have nothing to be ashamed of in Queensland. Mr. Haylen, a prominent member of the A.L.P., said that 2 per cent. of unemployment was full employment. We do not have a record in difficult times, for instance, during a period of drought, of sacking people in the Queensland Housing Commission. Just before we assumed office 700 employees of the Housing Commission faced the sack.

Mr. Newton: You are wrong, it was only 500.

Mr. KNOX: I am corrected by an hon. member opposite who says that it was not 700 but 500. Shame on his party that there were any facing the sack. Our record is not like that. We have made every effort to keep people in employment. We have absolutely nothing to be ashamed of in our record of keeping people in employment.

As his third point the Leader of the Opposition attacked us for taxing. I know that taxes are unpopular. I do not particularly like having to pay taxes, any more than

anybody else, but I realise it is a responsibility of the citizen to pay taxes. I feel that that is a little bit of double talk by the Leader of the Opposition, trying to suggest that we are not being fair in taxing people in order to make ends meet. It is not a new device. It is the proper way in which Governments should look at the problem. We require this money to give us the financial strength to retain a high level of employment. That is most important.

What are the facts regarding taxes in this State? The two taxes that are specifically mentioned by the Treasurer about which he intends to bring legislation into the House in order to raise more money are those relating to betting and liquor.

I have the Commonwealth Grants Commission report for 1960, which is the latest one available to me, outlining the various points of all State taxes on a comparative basis. The amounts of money collected in taxes in regard to racing and liquor are very interesting. In New South Wales bookmakers on the course pay a racing tax of 2d. in the paddock and 1d. elsewhere. They pay 1 per cent. turnover tax; the totalisator pays 12½ per cent.

In Victoria, in the metropolitan area the tax is 2d. in the enclosure, 1d. on the hill and ½d. elsewhere. I do not know where "the elsewhere" is at the moment, but I presume it is on country courses. The taxes on country courses at the moment are 1d. in the enclosure and ½d. elsewhere. There is a 2 per cent. turnover tax in the metropolitan area and 1½ per cent. in the country areas. There is a 12 per cent. tax on the totalisator.

In South Australia there is ½d. stamp duty on betting tickets; there is a 1 per cent. turnover tax, and an impost of 3d. for every 10s. or part of the stake plus winnings, known as a winning bet's tax. For bookmakers off the course there is ½d. stamp duty on betting tickets, a 2 per cent. turnover tax, and 3d. for every 10s. or part of the stake plus winnings as a winning bet's tax, and a tax on the totalisator of 12½ per cent.

In Western Australia there is a stamp duty on betting tickets of 3d. in the enclosure and 1d. elsewhere, and a turnover tax of 1½ per cent. For off-the-course there is 1d. for stamp duty on betting tickets, a 2 per cent. turnover tax, and a tax on the totalisator of 13½ per cent.

In Tasmania the stamp duty on betting tickets is 2d., and the tax on turnover is 2½ per cent. For off-the-course betting it is 2d. for stamp duty, 2½ per cent. for turnover tax on all Tasmanian racing, and 2 per cent. on races outside the State, and the tax on totalisator turnover is 15 per cent.

The figure in Queensland is quite an important one which hon. members can use to compare with other States. The stamp duty on betting tickets in Queensland is 6d. in the paddock in the metropolitan area and main centres, and 2d. elsewhere. There is

no turnover tax, and no winning bet's tax. Of course, there is no off-the-course tax at all, and the tax on the turnover of the totalisator is 13½ per cent. We have the lowest racing and betting tax per head of population, or nearly the lowest in amount—not quite—in Australia.

Mr. Hanlon: Tasmania's amount is lower than ours.

Mr. KNOX: The fact that there is no turnover tax, no tax on off-the-course betting and no winning bet's tax as in South Australia, means that the whole of our revenue from tax on racing at the moment comes from on-the-course bookmakers and the 13½ per cent. tax on metropolitan area totalisators. That is fairly low.

Now let me take liquor tax. The figures appear on page 84 of the same document. In New South Wales it is 5 per cent. on publicans, 5 per cent. on clubs and 2 per cent. on sales of all spirits by spirits merchants and others; in Victoria it is a flat 6 per cent. on all retail sales; in South Australia it is £25 where the annual value of premises does not exceed £100, rising to a maximum of £450 where the annual value is £1,550 or over, and a minimum fee for the metropolitan area of £260; in Western Australia the tax is 8½ per cent.; in Tasmania 4½ per cent. and in Queensland, the lowest liquor tax in Australia, it is 4 per cent.

Queenslanders are paying a very low rate in betting and liquor taxes, the lowest in Australia per capita, and we are not frightened to face up to the job of increasing taxes if it is necessary to create employment and promote the development of the State. If betting and liquor are capable of carrying a tax, as they appear to be on the figures from other States, no great hardship will result. We do not apologise for taxing when the capacity to pay is evident.

What are the general conditions in the State? It is in a fairly healthy condition, in spite of a prolonged drought and in spite of the difficulties to be faced by some primary industries. We have managed to do fairly well. Opposition members say that the Government, when they do anything, are representing some special interests, but accuse the Government of neglecting the development of the State if something is not done. The people of Queensland have shown their confidence in the State and their willingness to make the State healthy financially. In the last five years the increase in savings bank deposit balances in Queensland has been 41.3 per cent., the second highest in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Newton: When was that figure up to?

Mr. KNOX: August, 1961. I repeat that in the five years the increase in Queensland is the second highest in the Commonwealth, second only to New South Wales with an increase in savings bank deposits of 46.9 per

cent. Queensland's figure is well above the Australian average of 38.4 per cent. That figure alone gives a fairly good indication of the healthy state in which most of the people of Queensland live, compared with the position in other States where conditions may have been declining instead of improving.

The percentage increase in retail sales in Queensland for March, 1961, the latest figure available, compared with March, 1960, is 3.9 per cent., and that is 0.4 per cent. above the Australian average. We are not doing too badly.

Now to deal with buildings completed. Many figures were given by the hon. member for Bulimba, but let us consider the official figures taken from Quarterly Bulletin of Building Statistics for the June quarter of 1961, a bulletin produced by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics. These figures are up to date. The number of flats completed as at June, 1961, was 1,212, which is 300 more than at the same time last year. In the last year of Labour administration the figure was 174. The number of new houses completed in the year ended 30 June, 1961, was 9,391, which has been beaten only by the number completed in the 1953 financial year when 10,500 houses were completed. We have produced a record figure for completed homes over a period of eight years.

The hon. member for Bulimba very successfully picked out certain trade classifications to try to give us a general indication of employment in the building industry. I was very busy making notes at the time, but I was awake to what he was doing. He referred to only certain classifications in which there has been a considerable reduction. Let us look at the total figures because I have no time to go through them all as there are about 15 altogether. The hon. member quoted only certain classifications. As at June of this year the total number employed on buildings was 18,192 which, in spite of the terrible things the Opposition say are happening in the State, is only 70 fewer than the number for the previous quarter, but in all other States there are hundreds less. In South Australia, which would be comparable, there are 500 less, and in Tasmania 300 less. Of course, we could expect an even greater drop in Victoria, and there are 2,000 less, and in New South Wales there are nearly 3,000 less. Queensland is the only State that has shown a drop in the cost of living despite all the claims by the Opposition that the lifting of price control would contribute to an increase in the cost of living.

On many occasions we have been accused of putting bright lights about the city. The Leader of the Opposition complained that the lights were on at odd hours and several members of the Opposition have complained about traffic control. These figures from Canberra published on 4 October this year are the official figures for last year of persons killed on the roads in Queensland. The number was 346, and shows that Queensland

was the only State in the Commonwealth with a decrease in the number of people killed on the roads. We have nothing to be ashamed of in the way we spend our money. It is spent intelligently and for the benefit of the State, to assist in its development. The figures I have quoted indicate clearly how successful we have been. When the Labour Party was in office it had the reputation of being a bad employer. Labour's administration was one of persecution and scalp-hunting, of transferring people who managed to cross some top Labour politicians. That was the picture when we took office. It was the Liberal Party Government who introduced a respectable superannuation scheme for public servants, one they are very happy to belong to. We were the ones who provided a new classification for the public service in consultation with the unions concerned. We earned the reputation of being a good employer and a fair employer and one who wanted to provide for our employees the very best conditions in strong contrast with what Labour had provided.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. KNOX: Members of the Opposition always attack us with the charge that we are only looking after the white-collar workers. It must be recognised that most public servants are necessarily white-collar workers. We do our share and play our part in providing amenities for them whether they are white-collar workers or work without ties.

The cost of the superannuation scheme this year was £924,500 over and above the amount Labour provided in their last year of office—nearly £1,000,000 more! We provided very much increased and better benefits. We felt this was the responsibility of a good employer. We have never hesitated to say that is why we do it. It is not true, as some members of the Opposition allege, that those funds are then not available for use in the State. They are invested in local authorities and semi-governmental bodies to encourage developmental works. They in turn provide a good deal of employment in remote parts of the State as well as in more thickly populated areas. So our record on superannuation is an excellent one.

Under Labour, public servants were underpaid and under-privileged. When we took office we had many consultations with the trade unions concerned. I remember reading in the State Service Journal that over 90 meetings were held between officers of the Public Service Commissioner's Department and the unions. From those consultations a very satisfactory arrangement for reclassification of public service appointments was arrived at. In the first year the cost to the State of the new classification system was over £1,000,000—money well spent in keeping our very fine employees and particularly in making sure that we kept in the State many technical men whom we would otherwise have lost.

The Opposition claim that if they were in office today there would be no deficits. That has been the claim of many hon. members. They say there would be bright surpluses. If they had carried out that intention there would have been record unemployment in the State and developmental works would not have been undertaken. You could be assured that harbour development would not have been carried out, and you could certainly be assured, from statements made by the Leader of the Opposition, that the very fine buildings and additions provided for branches of the State Government Insurance Office would not have been made available; they would not have built them. Although we like to balance budgets, in budgeting for deficits we indicate that we are straining every possible resource to see that the money is used wisely. In five years we have provided more irrigation dams and more harbour and waterfront development than have been seen in the history of Queensland. We have given more attention to the future needs of giant new enterprises associated with oil, coal export, copper, and aluminium. We have given an impetus to land clearing. We have given great assistance to the man on the land with water conservation. We have provided new hospital services, particularly in mental homes and homes for the aged. We have made great strides in education, particularly in secondary schools and primary schools and at the University College at Townsville. We are spending to the limit of our capacity this financial year.

Mr. Bromley: And will finish up with a deficit.

Mr. KNOX: If this is the defence of a deficit, I am not ashamed to defend it. We are trying to get on with the job of development. We will spend every penny that we can lay our hands on. We are spending to bursting point. We will do this rather than conserve funds and provide a balanced budget.

The budget spells development for North Queensland in particular, and we are very proud of it. We are not frightened to see that the State goes ahead. Today we have heard the cries of members of the Opposition. They do not like to see us making so much progress. The only fault they can find is not with what we are doing but with the fact that the marks on the little pieces of paper are not as tidy as they would like them to be. Let me assure hon. members that any budget that the Treasurer brings down, although it may provide for a deficit and although we may be overspending, will stand up to the closest possible scrutiny. Hon. members opposite will find it extremely difficult to discover any point on which they can offer any worthwhile criticism of the Budget that the Treasurer has presented to the Committee.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 8.54 p.m.