

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 17 OCTOBER 1961

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

QUESTIONS

SCHEIFELBEIN v. COPE

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

“(1) Did Mrs. June Marie Scheifelbein, Teddington Road, Tinana, via Maryborough, write to him on September 29, 1961, claiming that she had been unjustly dealt with in respect of a motor smash on the Bruce Highway between her vehicle and a truck driven by Kenneth Bruce Cope on 18 August, 1959?”

“(2) If so, is it a fact that Cope pleaded guilty to a charge in respect of this accident and was fined £10 by Mr. H. J. Bradshaw, S.M., in the Maryborough Magistrate's Court and, if so, what was the charge?”

“(3) Is it also a fact that Mrs. Scheifelbein sued Cope for a total of £600 damages in the Maryborough Magistrate's Court in a claim arising out of this accident and that Mr. Bradshaw, S.M., made a finding in favour of Cope, notwithstanding that he had stated in this judgment that

Cope (a) had failed to keep a proper or any look-out, (b) had failed to drive as near as practicable to the left hand side of the roadway, (c) had failed to exercise proper care towards Mrs. Scheifelbein, as a user of the roadway, (d) had failed to take any or proper measure to avoid the collision, (e) had failed to keep his motor truck under proper control, (f) had driven on the wrong side of the roadway and (g) was asleep at the time of the collision?"

"(4) Is it not a fact that despite these conclusions in his judgment the Magistrate found Cope not guilty of negligence and awarded him costs of £46 14s. against the complainant, Mrs. Scheifelbein?"

"(5) If the facts are as stated, will he instruct the Crown Law Office to investigate this accident and its Court sequel with the objective of correcting what appears to be a gross miscarriage of justice?"

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

"(1) Yes."

"(2) On February 16, 1960, Kenneth Bruce Cope was convicted on a plea of guilty by letter on a complaint that on August 18, 1959, at Kanighan in the Petty Sessions District of Tiaro being the driver of a vehicle to wit an International truck and semi-trailer upon a road, namely the Bruce Highway, Kanighan, aforesaid, did fail to keep such vehicle as near as practicable to the left side of the carriage-way at all times. He was fined £10 and ordered to pay 14s. costs of Court and in default of payment he was ordered to be imprisoned for one month."

"(3) Yes."

"(4) The Magistrate further found that the defendant went to sleep without any prior warning of his inability to keep awake and in circumstances in which a reasonably careful driver might not have been aware that he was likely to fall asleep and that in these circumstances personal injuries were caused to the plaintiff and the defendant was not guilty of negligence. The Magistrate gave judgment for the defendant and awarded him costs amounting to £46 14s."

"(5) Mrs. Scheifelbein appealed to the District Court and on December 12, 1960, Judge Carter dismissed the appeal and awarded the defendant costs fixed at £30 together with the costs of all necessary documents at a rate not exceeding 1s. 6d. per folio against the plaintiff. As this matter has been determined according to the proper processes of the law by the proper judicial authorities, the Crown Law Office cannot interfere. As a general comment I may say that I am very concerned at the position which has arisen in this case and I have directed that enquiries be made by the Crown Law Office as to the feasibility of a plan to cover such types of

cases by some form of compensation, whether by way of insurance or otherwise. It would appear that legislation would be required to make any effective provision for cases of this nature and I propose, after completion of the preliminary enquiries, to submit the matter to Cabinet for consideration."

CONVICTION OF DOUGLAS NORMAN O'CONNOR UNDER STATE TRANSPORT FACILITIES ACTS

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

"(1) Was Douglas Norman O'Connor, Rose Street, Kilcoy, convicted on August 31, 1961, of an offence under section 23 of the Transport Acts?"

"(2) Was the offence in relation to a manifest for a truck load of cattle, which manifest should have read Kilcoy-Cannon Hill instead of, as it did, Cannon Hill-Kilcoy?"

"(3) Was the error purely a typographical error made in a Government Department? If so, why was this technical and unfair prosecution launched?"

"(4) If the error was purely one of inverted destinations, what does he intend to do to correct the injustice?"

"(5) Will the accused in this case be given the same treatment as was meted out in the Cavanagh case in which part of the stolen moneys is still missing?"

"(6) Are prosecutions under the Transport Acts launched purely with an eye to revenue rather than to justice?"

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

"(1) On August 31, 1961, Douglas Norman O'Connor, by his Solicitor, Mr. Arnold Hopgood, pleaded guilty before the Court of Petty Sessions, Brisbane, to a charge that on November 3, 1960, on the Bruce Highway at Strathpine he did contravene a provision of Section 23 of 'The State Transport Facilities Acts, 1946 to 1959' in that he did use on the said road a vehicle (Registered Number NAU-419) for the carriage of goods such goods not being at that time carried upon that vehicle under and in accordance with a provision of Part III of the said Acts. He was convicted as for a second offence and fined £25 and ordered to pay 14s. costs of Court and £4 17s. 6d. fees, in default imprisonment for one month, and he was allowed one month in which to pay."

"(2) Just prior to the interception of the vehicle driven by O'Connor and on which was being carried nineteen head of cattle, another vehicle carrying twenty head of cattle and driven by one, Watson, was intercepted. Watson stated that O'Connor had a manifest for both loads. O'Connor, on interception, produced a form which was a manifest written by himself which provided for the carriage of twenty-nine head of cattle from Kilcoy to Cannon Hill

and referred to Permit No. 3690, a condition of which was the carriage of a manifest at any time goods were being carried under the authority of the permit. O'Connor told the intercepting police officer that the form he produced was a manifest for the carriage of the whole thirty-nine head of cattle on the two trucks and that he had made an error in completing it claiming that he meant to write '39' instead of '29' and 'Cannon Hill to Kilcoy' instead of 'Kilcoy to Cannon Hill.' The Crown have evidence that a further manifest came into existence after the interception showing the carriage on vehicle Q654-666 (that driven by Watson) of twenty head of cattle from Cannon Hill to Kilcoy. O'Connor subsequently claimed that he had forgotten to make a manifest in respect of the nineteen head of cattle carried on his own truck from Cannon Hill to Kilcoy. In fact twenty-nine head of cattle were delivered at Cannon Hill on that day and the case for the prosecution was that O'Connor was carrying the nineteen head of cattle from Brisbane to Kilcoy on the return trip without a manifest, after he and Watson had delivered the twenty-nine head carried on the forward journey."

"(3 and 4) The manifests were made by O'Connor and no such documents let alone typographical errors were made by any Government Department, and the case for the prosecution against the defendant was one of the manipulation of manifests for the ultimate purpose of evading the payment of the proper permit fees."

"(5 and 6) The assumptions on which the Honourable the Member bases his questions are wrong and unjust. O'Connor's case is in no way comparable with Cavanagh's case."

JULIA CREEK-NORMANTON BEEF CATTLE ROAD

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) asked the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity—

"(1) Has he seen the disturbing statement by a prominent Julia Creek resident as reported in 'The Courier-Mail' of October 13, 1961, that the Julia Creek-Normanton beef road was a 'laugh' and that it was all right on paper, but that in the monsoonal rain season when the Flinders River north of Julia Creek was thirty miles wide portion of the road would be washed out?"

"(2) Has this surprising remark in fact any substance and, if so, what portion of the road will be annually endangered by the Flinders River?"

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

"(1 and 2) In this question, the Honourable Member for Townsville North displays a deplorable lack of intellect when

he uses the obviously biased, exaggerated and unsupported remarks of a person with an axe to grind in contradiction to the professional and capable opinion of governmental advisers. With the upthrust of northern development, for which this Government mainly is responsible, the Honourable Member for Townsville North could occupy his time gainfully by giving closer attention to the requirements of his own electorate. In this regard, he could take as a pattern and example the zealous manner in which Country and Liberal Party Members apply themselves in the interests of their electorates. The fact is that, prior to any approval being given for expenditure on the Julia Creek-Normanton road, the matter was discussed very fully with the Honourable Member for Flinders, who is a very capable Member and has lived in the West all his life. Investigations were made by the Director of Northern Development and by one of the senior Engineers in the Department of Main Roads, as well as by the Commonwealth Bureau of Agricultural Economics. In addition, agreement was reached with representatives of the Commonwealth Government by the Co-ordinator General of Public Works (Sir James Holt) and the Commissioner of Main Roads (Mr. C. N. Barton). The section of the Julia Creek-Normanton road now being built does not cross the Flinders River. It does, of necessity, cross the channels of the Gilliatt River over a seven-mile section which has been specially designed to resist erosion. Mostly the road is in flood-free country. About 40 miles south of Normanton the road crosses the Flinders River on an existing low-level crossing which gives little trouble. I decline to be drawn into any wrangle on hotel monopolies."

RED BLOODWOOD SLEEPERS FOR RAILWAY DEPARTMENT

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) asked the Minister for Transport—

"(1) Has the Railway Stores Branch, Townsville, always accepted red bloodwood seven-foot sleepers? If so, why have these sleepers been excluded in the Cairns area?"

"(2) Is he aware that in the Cardwell-Kirrama Range area this timber is very prevalent and its exclusion from the list will throw cutters out of work?"

"(3) In view of the foregoing facts, will he review the decision to exclude this timber?"

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

"(1 to 3) Bloodwood has never been regarded as an entirely satisfactory timber for use as railway sleepers and it is desired to eliminate its use as quickly as

possible. With this object in view, instructions have been issued to not accept this species of timber for use as sleepers in areas where it is possible to obtain requirements in other species. It is now considered possible to do this in the Cairns area and, in the circumstances, bloodwood will not in future be accepted in that area."

COMMISSION HOUSES CONSTRUCTED IN TOWNSVILLE BY AYR CONCRETE PRODUCTS

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

"(1) What is the number of houses which Ayr Concrete Products has contracted to build for the Queensland Housing Commission in Townsville?"

"(2) What is the origin of this firm and did previous evidence exist to prove that it was capable of carrying out such a contract in a capable and workmanlike manner?"

"(3) Is there a penalty clause in the contract and is construction proceeding according to schedule?"

"(4) If there is a time lag, will the construction of these homes be strictly supervised during the firm's effort to overcome it?"

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

"(1) Thirteen houses in respect of which a security deposit of £700 is held by the Commission."

"(2) The firm was first registered in 1954 at Ayr. Before the firm's tender was accepted enquiries made at Brisbane and Townsville revealed that (a) financially there was no doubt that the firm could complete the work, (b) it had completed a £30,000 timber building for a Commonwealth laboratory at Millaroo near Ayr and (c) had a current contract for six houses for the Commonwealth at Garbutt, Townsville. The supervising architects for the erection of the laboratory stated that the building was well constructed and the contract satisfactorily completed and that they had accepted the firm's price of £20,000 for a building at Winton. The Commission's Inspector reported that the standard of work under construction on the Commonwealth's houses at Garbutt was satisfactory."

"(3 and 4) Yes, there is a damages clause. Times for completion of the contract were, for eight houses by June 30, 1961, and for five houses by July 21, 1961. At 9th instant six of the houses were completed, three 83 per cent. to 91 per cent., one 74 per cent., one 49 per cent. and two 30 per cent. completed. Payments on the basis of 75 per cent. of the value of work done, less deductions to cover damages to date in respect of the time taken in excess of the specified time, have

been made to the firm. Value of work remaining to be done under the contract approximates £9,000 and the Commission at present is holding slightly more than that sum in retention money on work done, damages and security deposit, i.e. an overall security of £18,000 for the completion of work valued at £9,000. Construction of the houses has been and will be strictly supervised."

FORD FALCON CARS BOUGHT FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"(1) Since they came on the market, how many Ford Falcon cars have been bought for (a) the Police Department and (b) all other Departments under his control?"

"(2) In the same period how many cars of other brands were bought for (a) the Police Department and (b) other Departments under his control?"

"(3) What was the average price paid for the different brands of cars so bought?"

"(4) How many Ford Falcons and other brands of cars have in the same period been sold as used cars and what was the average price received for (a) Ford Falcons and (b) other brands of cars?"

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier), for **Hon. K. J. MORRIS** (Mt. Coot-tha), replied—

"(1) (a) 310, (b) 6."

"(2) (a) 65, (b) 14."

"(3) Police Department—Ford Falcon sedans (with heavy duty generator regulator, battery, suspension and roof wiring), £827 10s.; Ford Falcon sedans (as above but with larger tyres and tubes), £833 9s.; Ford Falcon panel vans, £824 13s.; Ford 300 sedans, £1,500; Ford Thames trucks, £1,205; Morris 850 sedans, £557 10s.; Willys Jeeps, £1,080 12s. 6d.; Willys station wagon, £1,582 14s. Sub-Departments other than Police—Ford Falcon sedans, £818 2s.; Ford Falcon sedans automatic transmission, £958 10s.; Ford 300 sedans, £1,526 13s.; Ford Zephyr utility, £883 12s. 4d.; Ford Thames utility, £908 4s. 9d.; Ford Thames panel van, £949; Willys Jeep utility 4-wheel drive, £1,242 18s.; Holden utilities, £796 10s.; Holden sedans—Standard, £796 10s.; Holden station sedans—Standard, £869 15s."

"(4) Police Department—(a) Ford Falcon sedans, 21 at an average price of £800 each. (b) Seventy Holden sedans at an average price of £597 14s. each; Seventy-seven Holden utilities at an average price of £431 each; Two Ford Zephyr sedans at an average price of £700 each;

Seventeen Ford Custom and 300 sedans at an average price of £710 13s. each; Two Chevrolet sedans at an average price of £530 each; Thirty-three International utilities at an average price of £319 3s. each; Twenty-two Land Rovers at an average price of £296 17s. each; Nine Willys Jeeps at an average price of £400 each; One Holden panel van at a price of £472 10s.; One Ford Thames truck at a price of £205. Other than Police Department—(a) Nil. (b) Three Dodge utilities at an average price of £181 18s. 4d. each; Nine Holden sedans at an average price of £282 each; One Holden panel van at a price of £254 7s. 6d.

REDUCTION OF PASSENGER SERVICES ON PINKENBA LINE

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) asked the Minister for Transport—

“(1) To what extent is it proposed to reduce passenger services on the Pinkenba Line?”

“(2) When is it proposed that the reductions, if any, shall take effect?”

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

“(1 and 2) Passenger services on this line are still under review.”

SEALING OF COOLANGATTA TO MOSSMAN HIGHWAY

Mr. COBURN (Burdekin): I desire to ask the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity whether he has answers to the following questions, which I addressed to him on October 12.—

“(1) What sections of the paved highway from Coolangatta to Mossman are presently under construction and what is the length of each section?”

“(2) When is it anticipated that each section will be completed?”

“(3) What sections will remain unsealed on this highway, when the sections presently under construction or for which approval for construction has been released are completed?”

“(4) What are the widths of the sections of the highway now under construction and to what standard are they being built?”

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

“(1, 2 and 4) All schemes for completion of the Coolangatta-Mossman Highway have now been prepared and approved with the exception of a few minor sections at Railway overbridges, etc. All these schemes provide for pavement widths of 18 feet or more and all allow for bitumen surfacing. Details of the various sections under construction are as follows—

| Section | Length | Pavement Width | Standard of Construction | Anticipated Date of Completion |
|--------------------------------------|--------|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Miles | Feet | | |
| Gin Gin-Miriam Vale— | | | | |
| 14 Miles-18 Miles from Gin Gin | 4 | 18 | Bitumen .. | April, 1962 |
| 23 Miles-25 Miles from Gin Gin | 2 | 18 | Bitumen .. | April, 1962 |
| 25 Miles-30 Miles from Gin Gin | 5 | 18 | Gravel .. | August, 1962 |
| | | | Bitumen .. | December, 1962 |
| Rockhampton-Mackay— | | | | |
| Turkey Creek-Boothill Creek | 8 | 18 | Bitumen .. | June, 1962 |
| Mackay-Bowen— | | | | |
| Mount Ossa-Calen | 5 | 18 | Bitumen .. | December, 1962 |
| Calen-Pindi Pindi | 3 | 18 | Bitumen .. | December, 1962 |
| Wagoora-Yalbaroo | 3½ | 18 | Bitumen .. | December, 1962 |
| Cathu-Mikoolu | 5½ | 18 | Bitumen .. | December, 1962 |
| Bowen-Ayr— | | | | |
| Wilmington-Maiden Creek | 11 | 18 | Bitumen .. | June, 1962 |
| Guthalungra-Gumlu | 10 | 18 | Bitumen .. | June, 1962 |
| Ingham-Cardwell— | | | | |
| Seymour River-Range | 2 | 22 and 18 | Bitumen .. | August, 1962 |
| Total under construction | 59 | | | |

(3) Sections on which works have not yet commenced are—

| Section | Length | Pavement Width | Standard of Construction | Anticipated Date of Completion |
|-------------------------------|--------|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Miles | Feet | | |
| Ayr-Townsville— | | | | |
| Stuart-Cluden | 4 | 24 and 18 | Bitumen .. | September, 1962 |
| Cardwell-Tully— | | | | |
| Euramo-Tully | ½ | 18 | Bitumen .. | August, 1962 |
| Total not yet commenced | 4½ | | | |

Total not surfaced, October, 1961—63½ miles

PAPERS

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

Report of the Under Secretary for Development and Mines for the year 1960.

Report of the Queensland Radium Institute for the year 1960-1961.

Report of the State Children Department for the year 1960-1961.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under The Criminal Code.

Ordinance under The City of Brisbane Acts, 1924 to 1960.

Order in Council under The Co-operative Housing Societies Acts, 1958 to 1961.

Order in Council under The Stamp Acts, 1894 to 1961.

Regulation under The Hospitals Acts, 1936 to 1955.

SUPPLY

COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT—
RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

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

Debate resumed from 12 October (see p. 700) 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."

on which Mr. Duggan had moved the following amendment:—

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

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (11.25 a.m.): I rise to support the Leader of the Opposition. Generally, I believe he has placed before the Committee a substantial case in support of his arguments. However, I intend to elaborate in some detail particularly on the inadequacy and incompetency of the Government, controlled as they are in a spirit of compromise and irresolution, typical of a two-party Government with two irreconcilable policies incapable of implementation and frustrated by mutual personal and political hostilities. If for no other reason, the substantial argument he put in respect of Mt. Isa is sufficient to warrant a vote of no confidence in the Government.

The precipitate hostile action taken by the Minister for Labour and Industry last year in introducing new industrial laws into the State has created industrial unrest which could continue at great cost to the working population of Queensland, to Australia's national economy and also to the budgetary position of the State. It is quite obvious that that action flowed from consultations between mining monopoly interests and the Government. The previous position that

existed under the old industrial law whereby the Court had the power to decide what bonus payments were to be made to employees of the mining company had worked satisfactorily. Generally there was industrial peace and harmony in the area. Although many of the unions were not satisfied that their members were receiving an adequate share of the tremendous profits of Mount Isa Mines Limited, at least there was peace and harmony in the town. We must, then, understand that there had to be some compelling reason for the Government to amend the law and I believe it was only that sufficient pressure was brought to bear upon them by mining interests, not only Mount Isa Mines Limited but also other potential mining companies in the State, insisting that the Government take away from the Court the power to decide what prosperity bonus or lead bonus or other mineral bonus should be paid to the workers.

We must understand that our mineral resources are only temporary, not permanent as soil and water can be. That being the case, the Government must accept responsibility for ensuring that there will not be complete exploitation of them either by international monopolies or by Australian monopolies. The shareholding in many of these mining companies in the State and in Australia is largely in the hands of overseas companies. They are the people who are reaping the rich dividends accruing from the mining development of Queensland and Australia.

If further evidence is needed, the latest balance sheets published by Mount Isa Mines Limited give a clear indication of the justice of the case being made by the industrial unions there at present. When the new industrial legislation was introduced, we were told that it would mean greater peace and harmony in industry, that the companies would tend to conciliate more with the workers and that those workers would receive a fair share of the increased profits made. However, immediately, the company, on the excuse that it intended to undertake large-scale expansion—which, by the way, it had undertaken in years past while bonus payments were being made—refused either to conciliate or to grant further increases, notwithstanding the fact that within a few miles men employed at Mary Kathleen were receiving a greater bonus than those at Mt. Isa. In other places in Australia such as Port Pirie and Broken Hill, a similar practice has grown up and is still in operation. But Mount Isa Mines Limited has steadfastly rejected any approach from the unions or the workers to have this bonus increased. The financial report relating to last year's operations by Mount Isa Mines Limited reveals that production increased by about 200,000 tons and that an additional profit of £570,000 over the preceding year brought the net profit to a record £5.9 million. The shareholders are to receive £2.4 million. The total reserves rose from £15.6 million to £19.45 million, and the profit of £5.9 million was made after reserves of £1.26 million for

taxation and £2 million for depreciation had been taken from gross profits. As the Government are responsible for any industrial dispute that may exist at Mt. Isa, the figures that I have referred to are sufficient indication that the Government must accept their responsibility. I challenge them to accept the fact that they made a mistake in amending the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act and to rectify that mistake by introducing an amendment to their own legislation to give the Court power to decide what bonus payment shall be paid by Mount Isa Mines Limited.

Strangely enough, the Government are completely silent on this question, and have been silent for the last few weeks. There has been no statement from the Premier and no statement from the Minister for Labour and Industry, who has been absent from the House. If he is ill, I extend my sympathy to him in his illness. But if the Premier is acting as Minister for Labour and Industry, surely Parliament should receive from him an assurance that the Government are attacking the problem and that they intend to see that the men working at Mt. Isa receive some form of justice.

If the money made by Mount Isa Mines Limited is repatriated from the country, it will be lost for all time. Many hon. members on the Government benches, have said from time to time that the development of the State requires that we should give every consideration to companies of this type. However, we do not expect the Government, while they are the representatives of the people, to sacrifice every principle of government in endeavouring to entice mining interests to Queensland. They are adopting this practice regardless of the repatriation of capital from Australia, regardless of the fact that the interests of the workers are being sacrificed, and regardless of any cost to the Government. When we compare what is happening in other States with what is happening in Queensland, we find that Queensland is falling farther and farther behind each year that the Government are in office. Alcoa has been prepared to enter into the Kwinana-Geelong project. In 1957 the Government of Queensland signed an agreement with Comalco, an agreement that was hawked overseas, but we are no closer to production under that agreement four years later. This year Alcoa of Australia has been formed, comprising Western Mining Company, Broken Hill South, and the American company of Alcoa. They are embarking upon a project to build an alumina plant at Kwinana to utilise the bauxite deposits of Western Australia, and they will then build an aluminium smelter just outside Geelong. They will be in full production by 1963. In juxtaposition to the smelter will be a plant to handle all the aluminium alloys and other by-products. The project will not utilise hydro-electric power or the fine coal deposits of Australia but will use the brown coal deposits at Anglesea. Already we have lost our opportunity for an aluminium smelter. Let the Government

get down to a stable balance at Mt. Isa. It is obvious that the Conciliation Commissioners are interested in settling the dispute in some manner. Neither Queensland nor the Government themselves can afford to lose the tremendous amount of revenue that will be lost through a prolonged dispute at Mt. Isa. The unions are anxious for some form of settlement. They do not see any reason why they should become mendicants of the company. In the past the company has offered these conditions to the employees for one reason only, to encourage them to remain in permanent employment at the mine. We are not dealing with an isolated company that makes hire-purchase arrangements and sponsors home-building projects for its employees. Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd. and many other large mining concerns throughout the world offer similar conditions to their employees, only because they realise that they must do so if they are to keep a permanent work force within their industries.

It is my intention to elaborate somewhat on the Government's financial details. In doing so, I should like to quote a statement made by John Bright in the House of Commons. I do so with due apologies to the late Jim Larcombe. John Bright said—

“Where was there a bad Government whose finances were in good order: where was there a good Government whose finances were in bad order?”

I read that statement because I believe the disorder and confusion that obviously exist are a result of the failure of the Country-Liberal Government to come to any degree of stable compromise, which has caused complete confusion financially and in every other way in relation to all aspects of government.

I think it is necessary to compare the position at the end of 1957 with the present position. The Auditor-General's report shows that at the end of June 1957 the Government held in cash and investments in Trust and Special Funds £18,406,081, in Loan Fund £278,887, and the consolidated revenue overdraft was £3,697,287, leaving a credit balance of just on £15,000,000. Unfortunately we have not the advantage of having the Auditor-General's report for the last financial year. I just mention that matter at this stage because last year the Treasurer made a valiant attempt to have it made available to the Committee for the Budget debate. From time to time he has said that it is almost impossible to assess the financial affairs of a Government unless the Auditor-General's report is first made available to hon. members. In reply to a question I asked in the House I was told that investments in the Trust and Special Funds available to the Government at the end of June 1961 amounted to £11,857,814, with a cash balance of £2,821,916. Over the year there was an increase in the credit balance of the Loan Fund of some £83,000 to £120,000. It gives a total of £14.7 million, which is not

very much different from the figure at the end of June, 1957. Other matters have to be considered. There is a general deterioration although the difference is less than £1,000,000. The aggregate amount of loan funds for the financing of suspense accounts in all departments at 30 June 1957 was £6.8 million. By 30 June 1960 that figure had been reduced to £4.5 millions, and there is a further reduction this year bringing it down, on a comparative basis, to almost £3.7 million. The Treasurer has kept the people of Queensland in suspense while the Government are destroying our solvency. Although the Treasurer has searched almost every possible avenue for finance it is still not possible for him to provide all the necessary and essential works and, at the same time, give to the people of Queensland a balanced budget.

Let us review the various items of revenue. I believe that the most important of the many statements made by the Treasurer and the Premier in recent years are those in relation to the taxation reimbursement formula. It will be remembered that when this formula was recast a couple of years ago the Premier made his famous statement that the star of Federation was in its ascendancy, that the Commonwealth at last was operating as a united body and could now give to the people the greatest possible satisfaction in relation to the budgetary position of all the States.

At that time I criticised the formula because it ruled out the special assistance grant that had, over a period of years, enabled the States, in times of inflation or heavy unemployment, to receive, as the year progressed, some form of special assistance. That principle was abolished. Now the States, instead of being in a better financial position have to wait, just as the basic wage earner has, for a period of time to catch up with rising costs. That means they have to wait for the full 12 months before being compensated for inflationary rises in prices.

There is only one true method of comparison in this matter. The Treasurer, apparently, is quite satisfied. We have not heard any protests from him in regard to Queensland's share under the taxation reimbursement formula, yet for 1956-1957 this State received 15.6 per cent. of the total grants made from the Commonwealth Government to all the States as taxation reimbursements whilst last financial year Queensland received £29.9 million of a total of £269.9 million distributed, or 14.8 per cent., a reduction in that period of .8 per cent. of the total amount reimbursed to the States by the Commonwealth.

This year the preliminary estimate is a further reduction of .2 per cent. of the whole, to 14.6 per cent. of the total distribution. If the special assistance to the States of Western Australia and Tasmania is included under the heading of special assistance,

Queensland's share is reduced to 14 per cent. I have been generous in that figure by not including those special grants in the 14.6 per cent. of reimbursement made to this State from a total disbursement of £291,000,000.

I accept the Treasurer's statement that the loan allocations made available to this State have increased by 12 per cent. during the last financial year, but they are still inadequate and insufficient. From time to time over the years the Treasurer, endeavouring to score off hon. members on this side, has stated that he and his Government are suffering because of neglect over a number of years, by previous Labour Governments. That argument is not satisfactory to this Committee, because, particularly with housing allocations, our figure has not increased to any extent over the years. Since 1952-1953 there has been a gradual deterioration in the allocation made by the Commonwealth Government to Queensland. The Commonwealth Government at present take the view that, because South Australia and, I believe, Tasmania or Western Australia were not at one time signatories to the Commonwealth-States Housing Agreement, additional funds should be made available to those States for housing requirements. From time to time the Treasurer makes statements to the effect that the housing situation in Queensland has improved to the point when we are able to meet normal requirements, thus giving the impression in other States that Queensland does not need additional allocations for housing. Such statements are dangerous, particularly when we analyse the housing position. People who cannot make tenancy arrangements with the Housing Commission are forced to pay the heavy rentals charged by private landlords. I wish the Treasurer and some other Minister would investigate briefly the level of rentals in Queensland.

Mr. Donald: They are not interested.

Mr. LLOYD: They are certainly not interested. They subscribe to some abstract policy. Irrespective of the cost of the homes or the interest on housing loans, they are satisfied if they are able to build sufficient houses to meet the requirements of the people. The time when housing was a matter for arrangement between landlord and tenant has long since gone. In an enlightened community every person is entitled to a home. Every person on an average wage should be in a position to purchase a home if he requires one, but at the present time it is an impossibility.

In the matter of loan and other requirements I must repeat the statement made over the years that under the renewed formula for Commonwealth aid for roads Queensland has lost £1,500,000 in a period of five years, and for that the Government are at fault. The result has been that Queensland has been unable to undertake major works of great importance and at the same time provide the normal services

for the people. Other States are able to do so, and in addition in some instances balance their budgets and even achieve a budget surplus.

Treasury Information Bulletin No. 23, on page 11, gives a comparison of the budget results of the various States for the financial year 1960-1961. The figures are—

| State | Budget Estimate | Budget Result |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| New South Wales | £22,000 surplus | £140,000 deficit (tentative) |
| Victoria | £45,000 surplus | £170,000 surplus |
| Queensland .. | £216,000 deficit | £618,000 deficit |
| South Australia .. | £312,000 surplus | £1,188,000 surplus |
| Western Australia | £760,000 deficit | £1,205,000 deficit |

The figures for Tasmania are not known at the moment. South Australia is the most remarkable instance, when we remember that it is also a party to the new taxation reimbursement formula and the formula covering Commonwealth aid for roads.

Western Australia, of course, is a claimant State and no doubt its deficit will be taken up to some extent by advances from the Commonwealth Grants Commission.

Those figures give an indication of the true position. We have been told much about the new formula for grants from the Commonwealth Government, but in actual fact the statistics reveal that other States of the Commonwealth have apparently benefited to a far greater extent than Queensland. By these circumstances the Treasurer has been forced to raise additional revenue by way of taxation levied on the people of Queensland. I think it is necessary that I should give to the Committee an idea of the increase that has taken place. Unfortunately the latest figures available at the moment are only up to 1959-1960. They are issued by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics. We find that for 1956-1957 Queensland's State and territory taxation collections amounted to £15,606,000, or, on a per-capita basis, a taxation of £11 7s. Two years later, in 1959-1960, the total collections for State and territory taxation amounted to £22,913,000 and the per-capita figure increased to £15 6s. 6d. That is a tremendous increase in two years, and it has not stopped. In 1960-1961, further forms of increased taxation were imposed by the Treasurer and the Government, and in the present Financial Statement legislation is to come before Parliament to increase the revenue from State and territory taxation substantially. We know that no avenue by which revenue can be increased has been left unexplored by the Government to enable them to get more money. Even fines from prosecutions in court have doubled in the same number of years. In an attempt to cover up their incapacity and inability to undertake a works programme to give the greatest possible satisfaction to the people, and at the same time balance the Budget, the Government have explored every avenue to increase taxation. We do not argue against a deficit in the Budget at any time.

The Budget is dependent, to a great extent, on the employment position, and if unemployment is sufficiently grave we cannot blame any Government who may want to bolster their financial resources, that have been gravely affected by the refusal of the Commonwealth Government to provide the necessary finance, to enable a full programme of employment to be maintained. We say that if it is essential to have a deficit, then the Government should go ahead and make a deficit Budget. I intend to elaborate on this matter in some detail later and I will criticise very strongly some of the methods adopted by the present State Government.

During the last financial year we were unfortunate because the unemployment numbers rose above the figures in the depression years, giving the highest per-capita figure of unemployment in the State since the depression. The position is alarming and we should give it very grave consideration. The Commonwealth Government embarked on deflationary measures that had an impact on every section of the community, and at the same time refused to make available additional loan moneys for the extension of capital works to take up the leeway in the unemployment level. If private industry spends too much in the private sector, and it is necessary to cut back that expenditure, then it should be done, but it must be realised that the only result will be unemployment. It is therefore essential that during that time the Commonwealth Government should immediately advance large sums of money to the State where unemployment is so serious, to allow it to embark on the necessary developmental work to absorb the great number of people forced into unemployment.

We remember what happened in the years 1929-1932. I know it is going back a long way but hon. members opposite do not like to hear any of the statements that have been made about it by members of the Labour Party. It is a sad and sorry history of their predecessors and I remind the Committee particularly that the Government at that time transferred some £100,000 to Consolidated Revenue from the Loan Fund. From the Real Property and Trust Fund they transferred £100,000. Amongst other things they transferred £100,000 from the Government Savings Bank to Consolidated Revenue. In that period the disclosed deficits totalled £6,000,000 and the undisclosed deficits were tremendous. Hon. members should take a little time to draw a comparison between those three years and the four years of the present Government. We have seen a continual budgeting for deficits attended by a rise in unemployment. At the same time the Government are making all sorts of statements about their intentions. They speak of their intention to encourage Comalco to develop Weipa and they talk of iron-ore deposits, but it is all talk; we see very little activity in Queensland.

In contrast we see great activity in the southern States and in Western Australia.

The Government boast about the Commonwealth's grant of £5,000,000 to Queensland for beef roads but the Commonwealth straightway gave Western Australia a further £1,000,000 and a tremendous amount is being expended by them on the Kwinana railway line. Think of the vast sums being expended north of the 21st parallel of latitude in Western Australia! New South Wales is coming in for huge grants for coal-handling facilities at its ports. But the Queensland Government are dithering again and cannot get satisfaction from the Commonwealth Government in regard to Queensland ports. No arrangement can be made.

There is dead silence about the Mt. Isa railway line. In 1957 the reconstruction of the Mt. Isa line was first mooted. In October, 1959, the Premier wrote to the Prime Minister telling him that the Government of Queensland were quite satisfied with the arrangements whereby the Commonwealth would advance to the State a loan of £20,000,000 towards the total cost of £29,000,000. Remember, we were suffering at that time from the impact of expenditure from the Loan Fund on the Mt. Isa railway project whereas in 1957 the matter was first ventilated and it appeared to have been satisfactorily concluded. We were told not to worry about it, that everything was going along smoothly—"For goodness sake don't upset the arrangements." Yet for the first year of the project the Commonwealth Government are to make a contribution. In the meantime, in 1958-1959 we allocated £1.9 million from the Loan Fund and not one penny was spent. In 1959-1960 we allocated £1.4 million and only £700,000 was spent. Last financial year £1.5 million was allocated and we still find in the fund a credit balance of £1.5 million. We do not argue about the expenditure of that money but we say the Government are culpable because they failed to reach a satisfactory conclusion in the matter at a time when it was vital, when unemployment was so bad in Queensland that every available pound from any source—whether Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Fund, or Loan Fund—should have been diverted into employment-making works.

Were it not for the dilatory attitude of the Government there would have been an earlier allocation by the Commonwealth. At the end of this financial year when £1.62 million is allocated from the Loan Fund to the Mt. Isa project fund, it is to complement the £4.5 million expected—apparently not guaranteed—from the Commonwealth Government and to complement the £1.5 million credit balance existing in the fund, making a total expenditure of some £7,500,000. If the full expenditure is carried out at the end of the financial year the Queensland Government will have spent 73 per cent. of the total of £9,000,000 allocated to this project, whereas the Commonwealth Government have allocated not more than 22½ per cent. The Mt. Isa rail project has had a considerable

impact on the budgetary position of the State. If it had been possible to reach an earlier conclusion to the interminable argument that apparently went on in secrecy between the State and the Commonwealth, the works would have been in operation much earlier. A greater amount of money would have been allocated to them and this would have resulted in some saving to the State.

We must remember, too, that 1962-1963 is the financial year in which the elections will be held. No doubt there will be no need in 1962-1963 for the State Government to augment this fund to the extent that they have augmented it in the past. No doubt they expect that a greater amount will be made available by the Commonwealth for the Mt. Isa rail project and that they will also be able to embark on more irrigation projects and provide educational facilities that have been neglected during the last few years. I think we have now reached the position where we must study our loan expenditure very carefully. Whereas in past years there has been universal boasting by the Government that all school works were being projected and that there was complete satisfaction of the educational requirements of the public, a study of the accounts and of the Government's performance during the past year will show that that is not so on this occasion. Priority was used last year in relation to loans for new school works, and at many schools additional buildings, new classrooms, fencing and other urgently needed improvements had to be by-passed. Because finance was not available, it was impossible to complete many classrooms, and there was a considerable reduction in the allocation for primary school buildings last year compared with the allocation in the previous financial year. Certainly we realise the impact that the greatly increased number of children going to State secondary schools has had on the Government's finances. In 1946 a plan was first evolved to meet this peak enrolment when school construction would be at its maximum.

Mr. Armstrong: What did your Government do?

Mr. LLOYD: We evolved the plan. All this Government did was to continue it. We planned this under the Hanlon scheme of regionalisation of education. We knew when the peak would be reached and when the works would be needed. All the Government did was to place a plaque on these high schools and declare them open. There is no doubt in my mind, and I do not think that there is any doubt in the minds of the Minister for Education or the Treasurer, that we have not yet satisfied all the requirements of education.

Mr. Pizzey: There was loan money unspent.

Mr. LLOYD: There was a credit of £200,000 in the Loan Fund when the

Government took office. Last year they increased the credit balance from £83,000 to £120,000. There was still a credit balance. We had full employment when we were in office, but there are 15,000 people unemployed in Queensland under this Government. They talk very glibly about this matter but let us look at the full requirements of the State. In his Financial Statement the Treasurer told the Universities that they would have to mark time because it is impossible to satisfy the demand that will be made for tertiary education in the next few years. He said that he would not receive £8,243 this year from the Commonwealth Government and that it would not be possible for the State Government to match the grant to the extent of £1 17s. for every £1 received from the Commonwealth Government. This year there is to be a reduction on last year's expenditure on universities.

Mr. Pizzey: Rubbish!

Mr. LLOYD: Let us have a look at the Estimates. There is a reduction from £1,000,000 to £800,000.

Mr. Hiley: You left an unfunded overdraft—

Mr. LLOYD: We have had that from the Treasurer year after year. "You left us with the position of having to go to the Loan Council on our hands and knees"—we have had all of that before. We were able to provide services for the people and full employment which the Government cannot do, and are not doing. While there are 15,000 unemployed all these projects are being let to contract. A contract under the Mareeba-Dimbulah scheme was let to T. J. Watkins for £79,000, when the estimate under day labour construction was no more than £72,000. Why was that contract let when it is realised that the actual cost of construction by day labour is always below the estimate made by the department in the initial stages of the construction? There is no great reduction in the administration staff at Walkamin but the construction staff are to be reduced from 101 to 40. Two more workshops will be closed shortly. Why take this action when the work already is being efficiently undertaken at less cost by day labour? The Minister for Public Works has embarked on a plan to transfer day-labour work to contract work. There is a very strong rumour that 400 men will be put off by the Department of Public Works. In many cases when contracts are let for large developmental works the contractors come from the South and other parts of the State. When the day-labour method is employed on Government projects local labour is employed. Labour is not brought from Brisbane or anywhere outside by the contractor. With local labour the money is kept in the district. It helps to keep a district prosperous. If day labour is doing the work now, as it has been in the past, why interfere with it?

In the loan expenditure we find that although it was not possible to embark on the full scale of works for State primary schools, on "other buildings, works and services" the actual expenditure was £120,000 over the appropriation for the year. In 1954 when the Treasurer was criticising the Financial Statement he said that the then Government were spending money like a mad sailor in their endeavour to exhaust their available appropriation. This year £120,000 more was spent on "other buildings, works and services" than was appropriated. What are they? Government offices around Brisbane that are possibly necessary, but absolute essentials such as school works are lagging. This year the appropriation for State school buildings is £10,000 less than the amount expended last year. For technical colleges, State high and post-primary schools the appropriation is £120,000 less.

Again, Works and Services, particularly buildings, are to be increased by another £100,000. If the construction of school buildings is lagging and requirements are not satisfied, why was not an extra £15,000 allocated for this purpose to enable the State to receive from the Commonwealth the full amount of the grant this year?

Mr. Hiley: Not loan money.

Mr. LLOYD: The Treasurer said in the Financial Statement that the State grant would be sufficient to attract all but £8,243 of the maximum Commonwealth grant. I admit it is rather difficult to follow. Works and Services have an extra £100,000 over last year when £120,000 was spent over and above the appropriation, while the construction of State school and University buildings is lagging.

The Department of Public Works is in a tough position this year, and is very much concerned about its low allocations.

Mr. Pizzey: There has been virtually no increase in high school enrolments for next year.

Mr. LLOYD: Are we getting over the problem? I do not wish to be unduly critical but, taking some of the items in the Loan Fund there are one or two suggestions I should like to make to the Treasurer, that might be of some value. Additional grants were made available to the Queensland Housing Commission which were necessary in view of the employment position. Increases, which were meagre enough, were made available as advances to settlers, but at the same time, the allocation for employment on capital works maintained by local authorities is reduced. Loans and subsidies to local bodies have been reduced from £6,500,000 to £5,700,000 at a time when costs are high. That places the local bodies in a serious position in regard to maintenance and capital works to be carried out by them in various parts of the State.

I should like to question in particular the amount granted under the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Fund. Last year £96,000 was allocated from Loan Fund and £165,000 from the Trust and Special Funds was spent. This year £240,000 is to be allocated from the Loan Fund account to the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Fund.

When that legislation was introduced in 1958 the Development Bank had not been established. It was thought that that scheme would enable many of the primary producers of Queensland to embark on irrigation schemes that would be of immense value not only to themselves but to Queensland by way of increased productivity. I do not know that the figures give a really good idea of the actual result of the three year's operation of the scheme but in 1957-1958 there were 7,286 irrigators in Queensland and in 1960-1961 7,839, an increase of about 600. In the previous period, 1956-1957 to 1957-1958 the increase had been 1,200 when there was no Farm Water Supply Assistance Fund in operation. In 1958-1959 the figure had been reduced by 100, in the first year's operation of the scheme. In the second year of operation of the scheme, when it should have been in full swing, there was a further reduction in the number of irrigators to 6,889. This financial year an increase is shown, so the figures in themselves may not be conclusive proof or an indication of the success or otherwise of the scheme. Whereas in 1957-1958 the percentage of irrigated crops to the total crop area was 5.8 per cent., in 1960-1961 the figure was 5.6 per cent., a reduction of .2 per cent.

The allocation this year from the Loan Fund for farm water supplies assistance is £240,000. That is going to increase from year to year and will be a tremendous drain on loan funds. I want to make it clear that I am not condemning the scheme. I asked in 1958 whether a limit would be set on the money to be made available for this purpose because the Minister at the time had said that the New South Wales Government were embarrassed by the number of applications. "Australia in Facts and Figures" No. 64 issued by the Australian News and Information Bureau, Department of the Interior described Development Bank policy in these words, and this is most important in considering whether Queensland should continue its farm water supplies assistance scheme—

"The main function of the Bank will be to provide finance for purposes of primary production and for the establishment or development of industrial undertakings, particularly small undertakings, in cases where it considers that the provision of finance is desirable and the finance would not otherwise be available on reasonable and suitable terms."

The point is that primary producers who get advances from the Agricultural Bank under the farm water supplies assistance fund are

precluded from getting advances from the Development Bank with which to carry out irrigation projects on their properties. They are precluded from approaching the Development Bank because finance is available to them from State sources.

The Development Bank was created early in 1960, that is, two years after the legislation was passed, and the Treasurer and the Government now have to decide whether they can afford to expand the scheme at the expense of other essential works, if the money for this developmental work can be obtained from the Development Bank. They will have to decide whether to continue to subsidise the Commonwealth Government, particularly when we are continually arguing with them about the extent of their advances to Queensland.

Another important point is that the Federal Aid Rehabilitation Fund at the present time has a credit balance of £723,000, despite the fact that in the last two years expenditure from that fund was only some £10,000. The fund is building up. The Commonwealth Government have made available £770,000 for this fund.

Mr. Hiley interjected.

Mr. LLOYD: An allocation is made to the fund each year, plus interest.

Mr. Hiley: The Government take the whole of the money available.

Mr. LLOYD: But it appears obvious that very few primary producers are able to take advantage of the scheme. The Government may be able to approach the Commonwealth Government to amend the principles of their scheme so that the money now in the Federal Aid Rehabilitation Fund could be used for primary development including development undertaken under the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Act.

Mr. Hiley: Are you speaking of the Federal Roads Aid Grant?

Mr. LLOYD: No, the Federal Aid Rehabilitation Fund created under Commonwealth legislation. Farmers are allowed under that scheme to discount their indebtedness to private institutions. The money now to the credit of that fund could be used for essential primary development such as that now undertaken under the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Act.

A matter of some importance to Central Queensland is the anticipated expenditure next financial year of £107,500 from the Loan Fund to cover advances towards cost of construction, etc., of Callide-Dawson Co-operative Abattoir. As I understand that, it is £87,500 advanced to fixed capital and £20,000 advanced for working capital. We have had similar schemes in the past. There was the one at Roma, where substantial advances were made by the Agricultural Bank. I

understand that in the first place, in this case, the Treasurer was not very happy with the whole of the circumstances. There are 600 farmers in the area who have formed themselves into a co-operative and the finances of the Co-operative were not in a very sound position. It is doubtful whether it is really a good investment for the State and whether the State should be expected to make this advance for an industry in Central Queensland which is now more the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government, and has been accepted by the Commonwealth Government, to a great extent. I do not know sufficient about the scheme to condemn it, but I do say that in times of unemployment, such as at present, we should very carefully consider exactly what money we spend on such schemes. There is a controversy in Rockhampton now. The hon. member for Rockhampton South has stated that he favours private abattoirs in that city. In Central Queensland there is a greater potential for cattle fattening by crop feeding and irrigated pastures than anywhere in the State. On many occasions members of the Government have gone to North Queensland, to the rain forests area, and have by-passed this great potential in Central Queensland. I have a friend at Springsure who tells me that he can fatten 300 head of cattle, every four months, on 10,000 acres. If that can be done at Springsure it can be done right through the Central Highlands.

Mr. Duggan: Mr. Murray, the Federal Liberal member, says the State Government are vacillating on the fattening of cattle up there.

Mr. LLOYD: Many of the Federal members and State members are at loggerheads on this matter. If we are to develop the industry in Central Queensland satisfactorily—and it is crying out for development—we will still be faced with the question of absorbing the additional production from that area. The hon. member for Rockhampton South condemns the construction of district abattoirs at Rockhampton. He would throw upon the tender mercies of the monopoly meat companies the whole of the meat production, distribution, and retail marketing in the town of Rockhampton. We believe public abattoirs should be built there and we claim that if these men were prepared to say we will make it a district abattoir, and let the outside agents or buyers have 20 per cent. of the space for slaughtering their cattle we would agree it would lead to increased absorption of labour in the Rockhampton district. However, the Government are going less than 100 miles west of Rockhampton and granting an advance of £107,500 to a small co-operative. It may be a good thing. Where this tremendous potential exists I believe every effort should be made to encourage it. At present the Government are completely silent about the development of slaughtering facilities in Rockhampton and the cattle industry in Central Queensland because they are hand in glove with Vestys in Rockhampton.

On a comparative basis, we find that Rockhampton and Gladstone process 140,000 head of cattle each year, but 200,000 head of cattle by-pass those two towns. With an extension of the facilities in the two towns, an encouragement of cattle fattening in the Central Highlands by the increased use of irrigated pastures, we would have something of which the Government could be proud, but we see all this money that is being channelled into work that is purely and simply a compromise by the Treasurer and the Liberal Party, to try to make the members of the Country Party a little bit happy by giving them some form of extra finance. What else would it be? The Farm Water Supplies Assistance Fund attracts some £240,000 this year whilst the Agricultural Bank advanced to selectors no more than £880,000. Why should there be an advance of £107,500 to the Callide-Dawson Co-operative Abattoir outside Biloela unless pressure was brought to bear on the Liberal Party by Country Party members. Perhaps some of them were shareholders, and if they were, good luck to them. They are entitled to be shareholders and I hope the venture succeeds. At the same time, the money is there from the Loan Fund. Where is it going to be spent? Is it going to be spent in the interests of providing full employment in the State and ensuring the fullest possible programme of works in the construction of school facilities and buildings for University use?

(Time expired.)

Mr. HERBERT (Sherwood) (12.25 p.m.): I should like to take advantage of this opportunity to give the Committee a report of my attendance at the Seventh Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in London. I realise that it is not normal procedure to make a report to the Assembly of attendance at a conference of this nature. Previous conferences have not been open to the Press. However, this time the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association decided to make their deliberations open and they received a good deal of publicity in the United Kingdom Press, so I intend to make a public report on their deliberations.

For the benefit of those who do not already know it, let me say at the outset that the conference comprises at least one representative of each Parliament in the British Commonwealth. Each of the Australian State Parliaments has one representative, while the Commonwealth Parliament has six. Three of those six come from the Government side and three from the Opposition benches.

Over 100 parliamentarians attended the conference and we lived together for some five weeks without mentioning politics, which is a rather remarkable achievement for that number of members gathered together for any length of time. I am still not aware

of the political affiliations of some of the delegates with whom I spent quite a deal of time.

No report of the conference would be complete without a reference to the hospitality extended by the United Kingdom branch. I realise that any trip overseas by a Member of Parliament is subject to suspicion by the electors that the man concerned is spending a lot of their money on a very enjoyable trip. I am rather fortunate because the expenses were borne by the United Kingdom Government so any complaints would have to come from people who were paying United Kingdom tax. However, the United Kingdom Government spared no effort to make sure that by the time the delegates who attended the conference left for home they had seen as much as possible of the country, how the people lived, how they worked and how their Parliament worked—and of course that is the most important thing of all, particularly to some of the delegates from the new native countries in Africa, who had very little experience of parliamentary government. The newest member of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is Sierra Leone, which only this year was received into the Commonwealth with full independence. Indeed, while the conference was under way it was also received into the United Nations.

It was rather fitting that the fiftieth anniversary of the association should have been held in London at Westminster Palace, the mother of all Commonwealth Parliaments.

The first discussion was on whether or not the deliberations should be open to the Press. Every country in the Commonwealth, with the exception of Ghana, believed that it should be so. Ghana objected to the admission of the Press on the ground that possibly the Press reports would not be a true indication of the proceedings. It was some little time before a representative of one of the native countries stood up and pointed out to Ghana that, with their present system of government, it did not really matter whether the Press were admitted because in Ghana they make quite sure that the Press report only what the Government want them to print. At the moment the parliamentary Opposition are in prison. So Ghana's plea for keeping the conference secret did not gain any support. With the opening of the conference to the Press, there was a good deal of interest in the representations made by a number of the countries taking part.

Before I mention any of the deliberations, I should give a brief outline of the functions that were organised for the delegation. Hon. members can imagine that, with 120 people together in Great Britain in the autumn, there would be considerable problems in transporting them from place to place and providing adequate accommodation. The delegates were divided into two parties of

60. Even then the organisers had a tremendous headache in persuading 60 individualists to give way on some occasions because the accommodation was not always up to the standard that we should have liked. In London we stayed at the Savoy. The standard there is higher than in any hotel in Australia, and higher than anything we would ever require here. The assistant manager of the Savoy Hotel, Mr. Stafford, comes from Brisbane—as a matter of fact, his parents live in my electorate—and he helps control its 1,300 employees.

When we toured the United Kingdom, we moved from place to place by bus. The first move was to the Farnborough air display, which is recognised throughout the world as one of the greatest air displays in any country. Unfortunately for us, the proverbial London fog descended on the day of our visit to the display, so we missed all the high altitude manoeuvrings and were restricted to seeing the ground displays and certain helicopter displays that could be made in the fog. That one day of fog was the only day in seven weeks that we saw bad weather. I spent the whole time in the United Kingdom in a summer suit—the one I have on now—without a waistcoat, without a pullover, and without a raincoat. From the reports that I had heard of United Kingdom weather, that was somewhat of a record. The fact remains that we had exceptionally good weather during our stay. I shall have some comments to make later in the session about air pollution and information that I gained from the officials of the various cities that we visited.

We were taken from London to Stratford-on-Avon to witness the playing of "Hamlet" by the Shakespearean players, and from there we went to Coventry. This is one of the paradoxes of British life. Coventry was completely flattened by the German Air Force 20 years ago, and the centre of the city was pulverised. Today aircraft works at Coventry are producing jet bombers and fighters for the German Air Force, the body that wrecked the town such a short time ago, historically speaking.

Coventry has been completely re-built on modern lines by the Council. The shopping area in the centre of the city is closed to wheeled traffic. The shops are on two levels, with pedestrian ways and garden plots, and there are very large parking areas on top of the shops on the second level. It is an experiment in modern town planning that has been very successful, and Coventry is rightly proud of its new civic centre. They are also proud of their new cathedral, which will be opened later this year. It is the first cathedral built in this century. Some of the money came from Queensland and many other parts of the Commonwealth.

From Coventry we went to Blackpool to witness the switching on of the illuminations. Blackpool is an example of what a centre can do to make itself into a tourist

attraction when it has very few natural advantages. To many people in Lancashire the air at Blackpool is refreshing, but it has very little else. Despite this, they have managed to provide attractions in Blackpool that draw tourists throughout the year. The Blackpool illuminations have to be seen to be believed. Undoubtedly they would require many hours of work by electrical contractors.

From Blackpool we went to Scotland where the Scottish people really turned on the hospitality. Rather than leave us in Glasgow for the week-end the Lord Provost of Glasgow, a position which corresponds roughly with our Lord Mayor, took us into the Highlands. Incidentally, the Lord Provost was a woman, Mrs. J. Roberts. We had a week-end in the Highlands, which included a visit to the various lochs that are now connected to the Glasgow water supply, but they are none the less beautiful for it. We had a couple of days in Edinburgh, with a walk down the Royal Mile from Edinburgh Castle to Holyrood Castle, and a trip to the Border Country. A number of functions associated with the Edinburgh Festival were still on when we visited that city.

From Edinburgh they took us to Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Parliament is a rather remarkable parliament in a number of ways. Although Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom it has a very distinctive political system all of its own. It is only 40 years old but you would have to live in Northern Ireland to understand its politics. I do not think the system there would appeal to hon. members of the Committee. Northern Ireland has tourist attractions that draw people from all over the world. I was fortunate enough to be invited to Baronscourt, the seat of the Duke of Abercorn. Many hon. members will remember his visit here last year. While we were at Baronscourt Princess Alexandra made a visit and she conveyed a number of messages to me for the friends she made on her visit to Queensland in our Centenary year. Lady Moira Hamilton, the daughter of the Duke of Abercorn, was with her on that occasion.

We then returned to London for the work of the conference, which was held in the Royal Gallery at the House of Lords. The formal opening was made by the Queen in Westminster Hall. The one thing the British can do and do well is put on a show with which the Royal family is associated. The opening of the Parliamentary conference by the Queen was the most memorable function I have ever witnessed. Earlier quite a number of people at the conference had made somewhat disparaging remarks about functions of that nature, but they were all completely silent while the opening was taking place. Anyone who could sit through that opening without being impressed would be lacking in any appreciation of any sort of formality or ritual. Parts of Westminster Hall go back over nine centuries. Most of it was finished in the 14th century so it

is a very fitting surround for a function of that kind. It seats over 2,000 people. The State trumpeteers and the body guard of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms were in attendance wearing the uniforms of many years ago. It is a very moving experience to see them surrounding the Sovereign. The Queen made her speech to open the conference in the usual manner, being supported by the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the Chairman of the Parliamentary Association. Afterwards we were entertained at morning tea by Her Majesty at Lancaster House. The conference proper got under way. There were a number of subjects of a parliamentary nature to be discussed. Almost everyone got on to the subject of the European Economic Community. I realise that there is a motion on the business sheet dealing with this subject so I am necessarily restricted in the comments I can make. Unfortunately almost the entire conference revolved around that subject, about which I am precluded from speaking at length by the motion I have referred to. I am sure I will be permitted to say that every delegate from every nation in the British Commonwealth expressed an almost identical view. They were concerned at what the Common Market would do to their economy and to the Commonwealth. The native races, particularly the African ones, had no ties of blood with the United Kingdom and if it in any way affected their trading relations they would have to reconsider their position in the Commonwealth. Naturally, with those statements being made all the other points raised at the conference faded into insignificance.

Mr. Bennett: What view did you express on that matter?

Mr. HERBERT: I supported the Australian delegation whose views were presented by Mr. Berry, its leader, and supported by Senator Sheehan from Victoria. There were not any politics in this and I expressed much the same view as the others, that we would have to wait and see what happened, but Australia had a very important stake in the Common Market. Eventually, in one speech to the conference, the Commonwealth Secretary, Mr. Duncan Sandys, said—

"We have made it clear that, if we are faced with the necessity of choosing between the Commonwealth and Europe, we should unquestionably choose the Commonwealth. If the negotiations fail and we are unable to secure special arrangements to protect vital Commonwealth interests, then Britain will not join the Common Market. That is our declared position and we have no intention of shifting from it."

That is a formal statement of the position made by the Commonwealth Secretary to this conference, with the full approval of his Government. It was the reply given to us by a man who is in a position to make a statement of that nature. Although he made

it, many countries in the Commonwealth are just as much concerned as Australia is at what the negotiations will bring to the Commonwealth. We have to consider the fact that this is a black Commonwealth, that the majority of delegates to the conference were coloured, and that a number of white delegates to the conference were representing countries with a majority of native people.

For instance, the Duke of Montrose was there as a member of the Rhodesian Parliament. He was officially representing them but, of course, the Europeans in Rhodesia are very much outnumbered by the native peoples who in time to come will probably have representatives fully indigenous to the area.

Many of the Parliaments represented at the C.P.A. Conference in Australia in 1959 by white representatives were represented by their own people at this conference, which is a good thing because the day of colonialism is well and truly over, and, to have the ideas of these people presented by their own representatives was an experience that alone made the trip worthwhile.

I had many informal discussions at the various places we visited, at which views were expressed that one could not get from books and that one would probably not get them to express in a public place. These people have a tremendous affection for the Mother Country despite the fact that a number of them have spent periods in British gaols. Quite a few of the delegates, in their own autobiographies admitted to having spent four, five or six years in a British gaol for their political activities.

Whilst at the conference I took the opportunity at my own expense of visiting a number of other countries and I should like to make some special reference to countries within the British Commonwealth in South-East Asia, because I feel it is tremendously important to bring home one or two facts about them. The first is that they know virtually nothing about Australia. Those who do, or who have been here have been to Sydney and Melbourne and that is about the limit of their knowledge. Within very easy reach of this country are the Commonwealth Parliaments in Singapore, Malaya, Sarawak, Brunei, North Borneo, India, Pakistan, Ceylon, and the Legislative Council in Hong Kong. All those institutions have members who in many instances know nothing about Australia other than the fact that somehow or other we keep coloured people beyond our borders and will have nothing to do with them. As those members are responsible for the legislation of their countries, I suggest to the Treasurer and Cabinet that we consider the possibility of inviting some of them to come to Queensland. At the moment they have a wrong impression of Australia. I spoke to a number of them and they were quite surprised to discover

that there was a State called Queensland, let alone that there were people in it. We could get tremendous benefit from a visit of some of those persons. Students from those countries now come here for certain courses. Many of those youngsters are taking courses in science and other subjects, but it will be many years before they are in a position to exercise much influence in the affairs of their own countries. I think it would be a good idea if we as a State invited members of Parliament of those countries to visit us. Tasmania took such action some years ago. If those persons did visit Australia, their visit should not be restricted to Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne. They would in those circumstances leave Australia with a memory only of the big cities. They should be shown how things are done in this tropical State and how we live. The result would be an improvement in our mutual relations with South-East Asia.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in other areas has its area conferences, as we do in Australia among the various States. I think we could extend those area conferences to include representation from the countries of South-East Asia. However, that is a matter for consideration by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association rather than this Committee.

Queensland could independently initiate moves to bring some of these people to Queensland so that they could learn of our way of life. We too can learn much from their Parliamentary procedures. I had the pleasure of visiting the Calcutta Houses of Parliament, the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of West Bengal. Their Parliamentary institutions have names similar to those of our institutions, although the forms of government are slightly different. I was very impressed by their adaptation of modern machinery to their deliberative procedures, one of the most important instances being in the voting on divisions. Their system would appeal to some hon. members who do not like walking very far. Instead of filing through the lobbies into the Chamber, the members there have push-buttons on their desks. If they want to vote "Yes", they push one button, to vote "No" another, and still another if they wish to abstain from voting. Behind the Speaker's table is a huge screen with the desks of members marked on it. When the member pushes a button, his vote is shown on the screen. Photographic machinery has been erected behind the screen, and the voting of members and the result of the division is recorded on a photographic plate. I have a copy here if any hon. member would like to see it. The clock is also photographed, so that the plate shows the time and date of the division. The Clerk of the West Bengal Assembly told me the method of voting had saved 15 sitting days a year. It is a much bigger Assembly than the Queensland Legislative Assembly. The division under their system is over in a minute.

Mr. Bennett: How would the votes be counted if there was a breakdown in the electricity supply?

Mr. HERBERT: The position would be the same as the position here if electric power failed and we had no lights. This interesting development would appeal to a number of hon. members. It is possible to so organise the machinery that votes can be cast without any record being taken of the way in which individual members have voted. The screen then shows only the number of Ayes, Noes and Abstentions. That is used whenever there is a vote before the House that would result in any particular advantage to members. If they are taking a vote on parliamentary salaries they close off the sections that show how members vote. All they show is the final result. The Clerk told me that the members were particularly cunning about how they used the button so that even the member next to them would not be aware how they voted. I do not think that would be tolerated by our constituents. I do not think they would like us to vote with the result of, X for, and, Y against, on a particular motion, but it appeals strongly to the Indians and they use the system quite a bit. It might be interesting on some of the debates we have in the Chamber if we had that system just to see how the numbers would tally compared with an open show of hands.

In the Bengal House their Chamber is not much bigger than our own, and they have twice as many members, but they still manage to have a desk for each. I think we could consider that here. This is the poorest furnished of all the Houses of Parliament that I visited in the Commonwealth and outside the Commonwealth. The House of Commons is certainly no palace for accommodation. It was designed for 400 and has a membership of 600, but at least the seats were a little comfortable, although they are much the same pattern as our own. It is interesting to note that the only seats with arm rests on them are the ones for the Bishops in the House of Lords, and one of the Clerk Assistants told me that centuries ago the Bishops used to be in a semi-inebriated condition whenever they attended and they had to have arms on them to keep them in their seats. He also told me that he was a Presbyterian so he could say that quite safely. The plain truth is that our own seats would be the worst to be seen anywhere in any of the Parliaments in the British Commonwealth. Nearly all have desks and those faced with the problems of space use hinged desks that a member can pull into position when he is sitting there. It drops back into position when he leaves his seat. I think that our Speaker could investigate the introduction of a similar system in this Chamber.

If any hon. member wants to be in a really difficult House he should try the Singapore Parliament which is multi-racial, and uses four official languages. There is English, Tamil from India, Chinese—and

here again there are problems, because there are two main languages, Mandarin and Cantonese, and several variations of them in dialects—and, of course, the native Malay. Any one of the four languages may be used in the House at any time. The majority of the Singapore people speak three languages, but not four, so they have to have a system of interpreters who relay the speeches back to members through a microphone system. English is the main language of the front benches, and both sides use English extensively, but quite a number of backbenchers, depending on their derivation, use the other languages.

Mr. Hiley: How do they record "Hansard"?

Mr. HERBERT: They have "Hansard" in two sections. They have one side in English, and from memory, I think the other side is in Malay. They have the two sides of "Hansard," in the two different languages. The Speaker, Sir George Oehllers, is a Eurasian by extraction, and he is faced with a problem because he cannot speak Chinese. If he gets a couple of somewhat garrulous members, like one or two we have here, letting fly in Chinese, he does not know—

Mr. Bennett: I should like to talk to you in Chinese.

Mr. HERBERT: The hon. member is just about as intelligible when speaking in English.

He has the problem of telling whether or not the member is keeping within the bounds of Parliamentary dignity or whether some of the comments he is making are insulting. It is a tremendous problem for him to keep order in those circumstances because the interpreters are some way behind the delivery of the speech. But to make absolutely certain—and this is something that not very many of our hon. members would appreciate—as well as "Hansard" they have a tape recording of the entire proceedings of the House, which is filed away and at any time you can have the tape recording of any period pulled out of the vaults and played back. If some hon. members could hear their own speeches before "Hansard" had had a chance to correct them they would get some great shocks. In a multi-racial community like that, it is very necessary because if "Hansard" is printed in two languages and the actual speech has been delivered in another language, the member requires the protection of the actual verbatim report of what he said in his own language so that, if there is any change in meaning, as there very often is, particularly with English idioms, he can still prove just exactly what he did say by reference to the tape recording.

Mr. Wallace: Did you hear the tape played back?

Mr. HERBERT: Yes.

Mr. Wallace: How did it come back?

Mr. HERBERT: Perfectly.

Mr. Wallace: Any interjections?

Mr. HERBERT: There was none in the little bit I heard but I should imagine parliamentarians under the British system would be much the same throughout the world; they could not resist interjecting during one another's speeches. It is certainly allowed there.

Another interesting departure in Singapore is that Mr. Speaker is appointed from outside the House. He is not a member. Sir George Oehllers was actually written into the Singapore Constitution as Speaker when they gained their independence a couple of years ago and he has been reappointed by subsequent Governments. Although they have only a majority of one at the moment, the Speaker is the only man who is not greatly concerned about it because, though the Government can sack him, there are very few men in Singapore who are capable of taking on the job and handling it in the way that it has to be handled in a multi-racial community of that type. Though a future Government could appoint anyone they liked, it is extremely probable that he will continue to preside over the Singapore House.

He may be their first and last Speaker because at the moment discussions are taking place on the possible union of Malaya, Singapore and North Borneo and I think some of it is aimed at overcoming the possibility of Singapore's going Communist. At the moment it is in a very difficult position politically. The Government have been gradually losing their majority and I think the idea is to get Singapore into Malaysia before the Communists take over control of the city. Once Malaya comes in with Singapore the "Com's" chances are gone because the Communist cause in Malaya has been completely discredited since the civil war, and the Malay people, particularly those of Mohammedan extraction, would have no truck with Communism, certainly not on the level that certain of the Chinese and other mixed races in Singapore seem prepared to tolerate.

The people from North Borneo are particularly interested in having some sort of fusion of Malaysia because the two countries in Borneo are in an extremely backward position particularly since the war when their oil wells, their only real natural assets, were completely destroyed. It has taken a tremendous amount of rebuilding and they feel that by federating with Malaya they will not only improve their own position but might also forestall any claims in the future that Indonesia may have on their territory, considering that most of the territory is already within the Indonesian borders.

The Hong Kong Parliament has a Legislative Council that is fully nominee. It has a fairly easy job, as the members meet only occasionally for very short periods to put Bills through, but they are still a Parliament in the strict sense of the word.

On one of the short trips that one can make from Hong Kong, I was fortunate

enough to visit the border areas between the new territories that have been ceded to Britain for 99 years and Communist China. I met some of the commanders of the Police Force, who actually have the job of keeping refugees out of Hong Kong, and the Gurkha soldiers, who have the job of enforcing the police commands. I also had the opportunity of speaking to a great many Chinese through the interpreter who was provided by courtesy of the Legislative Council. It is obvious that the position in Hong Kong at the moment is not so much brought about by politics as by living conditions. The people from China who are attempting to flee to Hong Kong in great numbers are no more interested in the political situation than a great number of our own people are interested in the political situation here. The thing that attracts them to Hong Kong is not that it is a free country or that it is under British rule; rather is it that the living conditions there are good. In the words of my Chinese driver, "As long as Hong Kong can provide its people with good food and good accommodation, refugees will still come." However, if at any time Communist China can provide better food or better clothing, then the flow might very well be the other way. Undoubtedly a number of intellectual Chinese are fleeing from Communist China for political reasons; but the vast majority of the peasants who comprise a good proportion of the refugees apparently have no political reason for attempting to get into Hong Kong.

Living conditions in Hong Kong at the moment are very good, on Eastern standards. Singapore and Malaya have the highest standards in the East, and Hong Kong is not very far behind them, in spite of the poverty in the new settlement areas where they have the problem of the people who have come in from Communist China under-nourished and under-fed, with no possessions, and with very little training in any particular calling.

There is one difference that one notices between places such as Singapore and Hong Kong, with their relatively high standards, and Calcutta. It is the entirely different standards adopted by the coolies. In Hong Kong and Singapore the ricksha has already been outlawed. At best, it is a very primitive form of transport, and a particularly cruel one on the individual who does the pulling. In Calcutta, not only have they rickshas but the majority of the beasts of burden pulling the carts are humans. One can see tremendous carts being trundled through the streets of Calcutta by three or four coolies in very high temperatures and very high humidity. Under those working conditions it is no wonder that the average age of death there is in the thirties. In Calcutta at night-time—many of us saw this during the war and it is still perpetuated—in the streets one sees tens of thousands of people sleeping on the footpaths. They have no

possessions and nowhere else to go. One does not see that in Hong Kong or Singapore. Conditions in Calcutta are very much as they were in the war years. Possibly the town is even a little bit more dilapidated than it was in those days.

There are some random comments that I should like to make in the time remaining, points that I have picked up in various parts of the world and which may be of interest to hon. members. The first one relates to Honolulu. Honolulu is like a mammoth Surfers Paradise many times over. The one thing that was impressed on my mind is that there is very little point in our attempting to attract American tourists to Queensland's South Coast when they have a place like Honolulu so much closer to home, which has very much the same to offer. The beaches there are not near as good as the beaches on the South Coast. As a matter of fact, the sand has to be imported to the famous Waikiki beach every morning—it gets washed away during the night. The hotel-owners are shrewd enough to know that if they keep on pouring the sand in people will think it is a natural beauty. But most of the facilities available on Queensland's South Coast are available many times over in Honolulu—at a price. The prices are very much higher but to be weighed against that is the higher cost of transport from America to Australia. Therefore I think that our tourist advertising should be directed to the Barrier Reef rather than the South Coast. Americans on the South Coast would not feel that they were getting anything novel, but the Barrier Reef is a different story.

Honolulu can teach us a lot about tourist attractions. Nowhere in Honolulu will you see advertising hoardings. They are completely banned. As I made various scenic trips at no stage did I see hoardings exhorting me to drink somebody's drink or to use a certain gasoline. The natural beauty of the island is unimpaired. It is certainly different from what we see on the main coastal road to Southport. Advertising hoardings meet the eye at every corner. The tourist is welcomed to Southport with the sight of a car-wrecking yard at the side of the road. At Honolulu they make sure that nothing like that mars the tourist potential of the island. They realise that their economy is based on the tourist trade. They are very careful to preserve anything that looks like a national monument or that may be an attraction to visitors.

They have parking meters in Honolulu similar to what we have here. I realise the practice could not apply until we changed to decimal currency but they charge 10 cents for an hour's parking and for 1 cent, a car can be parked for six minutes. That is a very desirable spread of time when it is realised that many people put 6d. in a meter to park only a few minutes. An hon. member opposite suggests 1d. That would be too large a coin to use. If machines

were made to take pennies for six-minute periods, problems would be encountered that do not arise with the use of the smaller coins in the United States. When a comparison is made with our penny and the American dime it will be realised that you would need a sugar-bag underneath the meter to hold the coins.

Wherever I went outside of Australia I was struck by the fact that if I ever called for a drink that required a drinking-straw the straw was always supplied inside a hygienic wrapping. Throughout America, Great Britain and on the Continent, if you ask for a fruit drink or milk drink, they bring you your drink and put down two or three straws in wrapping. There is no possibility of contamination of the straw, the way we see it in many of the milk bars here. Even in the more developed countries they take no risk of any kind of contamination of the straw. Of course, it is extremely necessary in the eastern countries where disease is such a problem. Everywhere outside Australia that system of wrapping straws seems to be universally practised.

What really impressed me in America were the road-building programmes of the major cities. I travelled in on the free-way from San Francisco airport to San Francisco by taxi. When it reached 75 miles an hour I suggested to the driver that perhaps we were travelling a little fast for a boy from the bush like me. I said that I should prefer he slowed down and that if I was going to travel at 75 miles an hour I liked to have some say in the driving. He told me that if he slowed down he would have to get out of that lane because he would be fined for travelling in it at less than 65 miles an hour. I was not sure whether he was telling me the truth so I checked it later and it was quite true. In the second fastest lane they travel at 65 miles an hour and risk a fine for travelling slower. I do not care who it is, once one gets over 65 miles an hour in those converted aircraft carriers that they call cars in America one is taking considerable risk and it is no wonder that they have a fairly high accident rate. It is also no wonder that it is almost impossible to insure a car against damage.

I encountered exactly the same thing going from Idlewild Airport to the centre of New York, another 12-lane highway carrying the Long Island traffic. The inside lane on that road has no speed limit and they were travelling at tremendous speed. I think our system of keeping speed down to 60 miles an hour even on the open road is a more sensible one and even if we do develop roads of the type they have, it would still be very wise. I went through one clover-leaf with five levels of roadway without one intersection at which traffic had to cross; they go under and over.

All that work is financed by a tax on gasoline. I think it is up to 17 cents. in California but strangely enough, unlike in

this country where the motorist complains about it, they are very proud of their roads and the work that has been done in using the tax on gasoline.

Their method of changing from one lane to another is exactly the same as in this country. One can change over provided the clearance is there to get over into the next lane. Naturally, if one cuts across someone else he is in trouble but, in order to slow down one must cross lanes.

They have a system on one or two of their freeways whereby of six lanes five are used coming in in the morning and one lane going out and they reverse it at night-time and, instead of having the six lanes with a dividing strip down the middle, in each lane, between the traffic, they have, set in the ground underneath, spikes that can be brought to the surface by operating a button at a control point. The lanes can thus be divided into any number going one way and the balance the other. Coronation Drive is a place where we might possibly experiment with this. We could have four lanes, three coming in in the morning and three going out in the afternoon if we could make a proper division between the third and fourth lane to make sure that traffic kept in the right lane to its destination.

Mr. Houston interjected.

Mr. HERBERT: That is quite normal practice now, in the main, on American highways, and it seems to work. I have a suspicion that we will have to experiment with many of the things that work in America because they may not necessarily work here. Since this trip, I have come very much to the opinion that traffic problems are bound up with national character. The American has to get somewhere in a terrific hurry and he will build tremendous highways to get there. Even if he is not going far he likes to get there quickly.

In Great Britain they have slow-traffic roadways that wriggle in and out of towns with complete respect for freehold property. They never think of acquiring land anywhere as is being exhibited in Brisbane at the moment. They will go right round a small cottage rather than knock it over. On these roads, crowded as they are, one would expect the accident rate to be much higher, but it is not; it is lower than it is in the United States: Possibly because of the narrow roads one tends to be more careful and one has not the chance of getting to the speeds they reach elsewhere. As I say, they are very crowded and one cannot travel at 65 to 75 miles an hour as one can on a freeway. They have a couple of motorways in England on which they have already a much higher accident rate than they experienced before. Of course, they were freeways built to clear the traffic quickly.

Everyone has heard of the Continental drivers in Paris and Rome. All I can say is that I should not like to get out of a bus and drive my own vehicle in either of

those two cities, as the Australian temperament is hardly suited to their conditions. Rome is notorious for the way in which its drivers behave, their blowing of horns and complete disregard for Police instructions.

A facet of overseas development in which I was very interested was the high-school system. Quite definitely we are extremely lucky to have our system, that is, the system throughout Australia, not necessarily only Queensland and not necessarily the system developed only in the last few years. Our high-school system goes back many years. State control has led to uniformity, which means that, if a person whose youngsters are being educated in Brisbane is transferred to the country, he can be sure that they will almost certainly obtain the same sort of education at the same level. A change of address in Australia does not cause concern to parents about the education of their youngsters.

In both America and the United Kingdom there are schools far better than the schools in Australia, but there are also schools infinitely worse than any we would tolerate. I saw schools in New York that we would dearly like to have here; I also saw schools in certain parts of the same city that we would not consider at any price. The educational system built up over generations in Australia is to my mind the best.

Many of the problems in most countries arise because education is developed on a county basis. The standard of education available to youngsters is governed very largely by the relative wealth of the county. Even in suburbs variations can be seen. A wealthy suburb may have a very good school, while the very poor suburb next door will have a poor school.

That does not happen in Australia. We do not measure the facilities for the education of our youngsters by the wealth of the suburb in which they live.

Mr. Bromley: Did you see class consciousness over there?

Mr. HERBERT: Not so much class consciousness, but recognition of class to an extent that would be regarded by us as a problem. We are extremely fortunate in that respect. In the United Kingdom most people seem quite happy about the fact that they are in the type of environment in which they prefer to live, and I would not presume, after a brief visit, to sit in judgment on the matter. The old class barriers are gone. Death duties and such things have taken care of what were once the wealthy families of Great Britain. A tremendous levelling off has been effected, compared with the position perhaps 20 years ago. There is no doubt our classless society in Australia is a vast improvement on the types of society elsewhere in the world.

That brings me to my last point. My visits to the countries I saw during the war and the blanks I filled in on this trip have brought me to the quite definite conclusion

not only that Australia is the best country in which to live but also to the fact that the people are the least appreciative of how well off they are. That arises solely from our insularity. Very few Australians have had the privilege of seeing other nations, what other people have to put up with, the conditions under which they are forced to live. If it was possible to take large groups of Australians to sections of Asia and parts of Europe, in the same way as a European national can travel within the confines of Europe, they might appreciate more the benefits Australia has to bestow. Although I do not claim to have a working knowledge of every country in the world, I have seen enough to convince me that Australia is at the very top of the list for average conditions for the average working man.

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) (2.34 p.m.): I wholeheartedly support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, which in effect is a censure motion or a motion of no confidence in the Government. The Leader of the Opposition has ably expounded in detail the cogent and logical reasons why every conscientious hon. member of this Committee should support the amendment. This Government and the Treasurer have a sorry record in finance. In spite of some of the "precarious" figures quoted here from time to time unemployment is greater now than since the depression. There are ways and means of evading the true figures and telling men that they cannot get unemployment benefits. When they are not getting unemployment benefits they are regarded as being in employment, although they may be starving and in a worse condition than those receiving unemployment and sickness benefits. Over recent years the figures quoted have not presented a true picture of the workless people in the State. I assure the Chamber that in my long years of public life, the last six to eight months have been more difficult than any other period for finding employment for deserving men willing and able to work who are prepared to travel anywhere and take any job in the State. I stress that this has been going on for not just a matter of weeks, but months, and conditions have never been worse.

There is only one thing that can be said to be satisfactory in the Budget, and that is its consistency, referred to by my leader as the fifth annual deficit presented by the present Government.

Mr. Windsor: That is why you want to reduce his wages?

Mr. BENNETT: Quite frankly, in reply to the interjector, if we keep going this way, we may have to reduce the wages of everyone in the State whether we want to or not. The money problem is becoming so difficult that the Government will not be able to find sufficient finance.

Mr. Dewar: Do you believe Parliament should reduce wages?

Mr. BENNETT: I am not saying that Parliament should reduce wages. I am saying a sorry situation has arisen whereby we cannot afford to pay the work force available in the State. The interjector implied that we should have to reduce certain people's wages. If the Treasurer remains in office, and the present Government remain in power the time may come when unemployment will be so bad in the State that they will have to reduce wages to make the funds go further.

Mr. Knox: How many jobs have you got?

Mr. Dewar: Somebody wanted to know how many jobs you have.

Mr. BENNETT: I carry out my parliamentary job with much more diligence, sincerity and application than the hon. member for Chermide who runs around the countryside and spends a great deal of his time on the South Coast. Very often he is inattentive to his electorate. If I had his sorry record concerning parliamentary duties I would be ashamed. I am proud of the work I have done as a parliamentary and public representative for many more years than the hon. member for Chermide.

Mr. Dewar: Tell us who the hon. member for Chermide is.

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. member for Wavell.

Mr. Herbert: You have not been here long enough to know the various members.

Mr. BENNETT: Quite frankly, the hon. member for Wavell is so often absent from Parliament that it is unusual for him to be here to make an interjection. I was not able to place which electorate he represented.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BENNETT: No Government in the last quarter of a century have so severely curtailed the subsidies payable to local governments because of the economy of the State. That has been responsible for the sacking of many thousands of men throughout the State. The Government have failed, or refused, to shoulder their responsibilities on local government subsidies. I do not know whether the paucity of their funds is due to their party political approaches to the new Labour administration of the Brisbane City Council, for this new decision was made immediately Sir Reginald Groom's C.M.O. administration departed from office. I do not know whether they are endeavouring to humiliate the Labour administration, whether they are genuine in their lack of funds or whether they are prepared to take it out of the hides of the workers and to show them that, because they elected a Labour administration to the Brisbane City Council, they are going to virtually cut off their subsidies, which were the life blood of Brisbane's development.

Mr. Hughes: The last Labour council could not take advantage of all the subsidies offered.

Mr. BENNETT: That interjection is completely untrue. Every subsidy that has been offered to a Labour administration has been used up to the fullest extent and that Labour administration has been searching for more subsidies. As a matter of fact, in the Labour administration during the years 1952-1955, in which I happened to be the Vice-Mayor, we used all the subsidies. In those years we had a Labour State Government, who gave us generous subsidies, and we were able to use them to the fullest. Never was water and sewerage reticulation and never was water and sewerage capitalisation work produced or proceeded with with such vigour and ambition as during those three years.

In spite of the fact that the Government have decided to reduce and curtail the subsidies severely, they have not made any corresponding offset in the demands made on local authorities. They are still taxing them for road transport and imposing the other duties payable by the local authorities for the right and privilege to run on their own highways and roadways. Indeed, instead of reducing proportionately the charges and duties and registration fees involved, they have increased them, and this year the Brisbane City Council, with all other local authorities in Queensland, will have to pay more to the Government by way of road registration, taxation, or subsidies for ambulances, fire brigade precepts and the like. In the five successive Budgets since this Government took office they have demanded from the Brisbane City Council a considerable increase in fire brigade precepts and other charges payable to the Government by the local authorities, and, having increased those charges from time to time, they have the audacity now to virtually wipe out the subsidies payable.

Mr. Houghton: Local government does not pay a subsidy to the ambulance.

Mr. BENNETT: They assist the ambulance. They certainly pay their precepts for the fire brigades. I do not intend to go into details of the other charges payable by the council for the use of utilities put there by the council or local authority itself.

This Government are so frustrated in their funds that they have decided to improve their revenue not by way of any high principle but purely from a Shylock attitude and they have decided to take from the people of Queensland, according to their Budget figures, some £700,000, which will amount in actual fact to some £1,000,000, by increasing the people's betting capacity and liquor intake. No doubt it is not particularly apposite to this part of the debate; nevertheless I make passing brief reference to the liquor and betting reforms provided for in the Budget. Although it is indicated that that will bring in some £700,000 in increased revenue, it will end up being at least £1,000,000 because obviously that

revenue has been written down by the Treasurer. So I wonder whether this Government actually are intent upon liquor reform or whether they are merely anxious to obtain liquor and betting revenue. It will be a sorry thing for Queensland if the Government throw overboard the principle formerly espoused by the Treasurer and other leading members of Cabinet in order to obtain revenue to carry on the government of the State, revenue that their colleagues in the Federal Parliament have denied to them. They have embarked upon sectional legislation, and they are irritating various interests in the community. They have not satisfied the conscience of those who are opposed to liquor reform or changes in the law relating to betting, nor have they catered for the welfare of those who are engaged in those enterprises. They are not legislating upon principle; they are merely legislating with their eyes on revenue.

I wish to refer briefly to the speech of the hon. member for Sherwood, who has just resumed his seat. He has been wining and dining at the expense of the British taxpayers in the Savoy Hotel in London, which he claims is the most expensive hotel in the world. I refer particularly to the section of his speech in which it seemed to me that he expressed great admiration for the Government of Singapore, its constitution, and its method of carrying out its parliamentary duties. I do not know why he entertains that admiration for the Government of Singapore. Perhaps it may be because the governing party of Singapore is the People's Action Party, which believes firmly in the integration of Singapore in the Federation of Malaya. The party is uncompromisingly Socialist and has within its ranks extreme Leftist elements. It has 43 seats in the Legislative Council, and it formed the first Government of the independent State of Singapore after it became a self-governing State in 1959. I do not know whether that is why he has admiration for the Government of Singapore or whether it is because of the technique of that Government. There are 51 representatives in the Parliament, and, as I said, the People's Action Party has 43 seats with a vote of 281,891. They obtained 68 per cent. of the votes of the people and 84 per cent. of the seats. I should say that their efforts in gerrymandering were excelled only by the Nicklin-Morris Government, and perhaps that is one of the reasons why the hon. member for Sherwood has so much admiration for them.

Mr. Windsor: He said we had a 50/50 chance here, so there is no gerrymandering.

Mr. BENNETT: The next time you stand, you will have Schumacher's chance.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. BENNETT: I wish now to make some observations relating to certain aspects of

legal arrangements. But before doing so, as we are now approaching not only the end of the calendar year but also the end of the legal year, I should like to take this opportunity of expressing on behalf of all decent members of Parliament and practising members of the legal fraternity our gratitude to one of Queensland's senior judges, Mr. Justice Matthews, on the eve of his retirement. Throughout the many years that he has presided on the Supreme Court bench, he has been a man of integrity and has done much for the welfare of the State. He has always applied himself to his judicial duties with sincerity and honesty, and certainly with a great degree of mercy. As an hon. member opposite interjects, he is a very good man. The State owes much to men of his calibre. I would hope that he enjoys a long and happy retirement. I believe that all members of Parliament who approach their duties with honesty and sincerity would wish it to be placed on record that this Parliament appreciates the efforts he has made, rising as he did in his early life from a blacksmith's striker, with much hard endeavour and a lot of personal privation, to take one of the top legal positions in the State.

Mr. Ramsden interjected.

Mr. BENNETT: If I ever had to sit in judgment on the hon. member for Merthyr I assure him I would deal with him mercifully and also very justly.

The hon. member for Kurilpa made a very long speech about obscene publications. In effect he claimed that because of the conflict of Federal and State laws it was difficult, in fact impossible or impracticable, to deal with any person who published such literature or offered it for sale from a bookstore. He claimed in effect that if this pornographic literature was introduced from outside the country that there was little the Literature Board of Review could do to stop its publication and distribution. I share the hon. member's distaste for such obscene literature. Of course, until he delivered his speech we on this side did not know such literature existed, because we never go looking for it. However, I agree that if it got into the hands of some people it could have an adverse effect on their mental development, but at the same time any person with a healthy mind and love of good literature would have no desire to read such obscene literature, whether it were placed in his hands or not.

Mr. Hughes: School children are presently reading it, and I have evidence of that.

Mr. BENNETT: Most certainly I feel quite confident that no school in the electorate which I have the honour to represent would have children within its ranks who would read the type of literature brought into the Chamber by the hon. member for Kurilpa. I should be interested to know from what school he obtained that

literature. He was going to tell us throughout the course of his speech where he got it, but he concluded without doing so. Now he suggests he obtained it from some school children.

Mr. Hughes: You can obtain it from any bookstore.

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. member mentioned only a bookstore in Annerley. I do not know whether he got them there or not. The hon. member might be prepared to tell us where he got them because in view of the remarks and observations he made his Government may be prepared to deal with the offenders under Section 228 of the Queensland Criminal Code. It is all very well to speak in Parliament about these matters but in dealing with items of that nature actions always speak louder than words.

Mr. Hewitt: Like the cafe you mentioned this morning.

Mr. BENNETT: The cafe I referred to this morning is well known to Government members because without any suggestion or hint from me a Government member said to me in the lobbies outside, "Such-and-such a cafe in Queen Street?" I said, "Yes." Therefore Government members know all about it. I do not need to mention the name. The hon. member knows all about it too. I do not wish to be sidetracked on this issue and at this particular stage, with the audience in the gallery, I do not wish to say anything about the particular cafe. Reverting to Section 228 of the Queensland Criminal Code, it says—

"Any person who knowingly, and without lawful justification or excuse—

(1) Publicly sells or exposes for sale any obscene book or other obscene printed or written matter, or any obscene picture, photograph, drawing, or model, or any other object tending to corrupt morals; or

(2) Exposes to view in any place to which the public are permitted to have access, whether on payment of a charge for admission or not, any obscene picture, photograph, drawing, or model, or any other object tending to corrupt morals; or

(3) Publicly exhibits any indecent show or performance, whether on payment of a charge for admission to see the show or performance or not;

is guilty of a misdemeanour, and is liable to imprisonment with hard labour for two years."

Therefore, according to the Criminal Code, it is a rather serious offence, punishable by imprisonment for a period of two years and I challenge the Government, seeing that they conscientiously supported the claims made by one Government member who must know where he got the books and who is selling them, to take action under Section 228 of the

Code. Furthermore, it is not a defence to say that they are permitted by any other State in the Commonwealth.

The test of obscenity is not whether it has been allowed by a Federal authority or a State Literature Board of Review. Under that section of our Code the test of obscenity is whether the tendency of the matter charged as obscenity is to deprave or corrupt the minds of those who are subjected to it. As the literature has influenced Government members whose minds are more open to immoral influence than those of members of the Opposition, I suggest they take action under the Queensland Criminal Code and do not throw furphies into the ring by claiming that there is no legislation to prevent the circulation of this type of literature.

Mr. Ramsden: We accept your statement as a humorous one so I let it pass.

Mr. BENNETT: In view of the remarks that have been made, if the Government do, in fact, sincerely believe that this is becoming a major problem and that evidence of it is becoming more prevalent in the community, it is a wonder they did not take the opportunity to increase the penalty under this section, that has stood the same for many years, when they were recently increasing various penalties under the Code.

Mr. Hughes: Would you ban these books?

Mr. BENNETT: I certainly would not tolerate them and if I had the evidence the hon. member for Kurilpa has I would take steps through the Minister for Justice who is a member of the hon. member's party, to take suitable action under that section.

So far as moral principles are concerned I agree with many other hon. members on this side of the Chamber who say that the standard of literature that one's children read depends upon the atmosphere provided for them in their own homes. If they have a clean, healthy and Christian atmosphere in their homes they will not be tempted by the type of book read by the hon. member for Kurilpa and other hon. members opposite.

Mr. Ewan: Once the Customs Department has passed a book of this description, would the Literature Board of Review have power to interfere with it?

Mr. BENNETT: Of course they would. The Queensland Code makes no qualification whatever. The section is quite clear and if, in the opinion of the Court it is an obscene publication a person who is claimed to be selling it or bringing it before the notice of the public, can be prosecuted.

Mr. Hughes: That is not the view held by the Queensland Literature Board of Review.

Mr. BENNETT: The Literature Board of Review does not operate under the Criminal Code. It has nothing to do with the Criminal Code; it was constituted by a

different Act altogether. The Criminal Code has been in existence in Queensland since it was drafted by Sir Samuel Griffith in the early part of the century, and the section to which I have drawn attention has existed during all those years. The Literature Board of Review is a modern creation in our community and operates in accordance with the provisions of the Act that created the Board. Its powers are limited according to the provisions of the Act. Quite frankly, although it serves a good purpose in many ways, its attack is negative. I suppose it is entitled in some instances to quash the publication of an objectionable or suspicious book, when the authorities do not know who is responsible for the introduction of the book or its publication. I have always believed in direct action, and, when the author or the person disseminating the book in the community is known, why not take action under the Criminal Code? If the desire is to get rid of it, positive action should be taken.

Mr. Hughes: Would you agree that a book that may not be obscene to an adult, mature mind most certainly could be harmful to an adolescent, yet we have only one law to deal with the two sections of the community?

Mr. BENNETT: Quite frankly I do not believe there should be one moral code for adults and another for children.

Mr. Hughes: They are subject to suggestion.

Mr. BENNETT: Some books may be too mature for children, but they would be the type of book that the average childish mind would not want to read. I cannot conceive of two codes of morals, one for adults and another for children. A thing is either morally right or morally wrong. If it is morally wrong for a child, it is morally wrong for me also.

There is one aspect of the practice of criminal law in Queensland that is crying out for correction—poor prisoner's defence. The fact that an accused person has not the money to pay for his own defence is no reason why he should not be entitled to the self-same satisfaction received by other persons charged with a criminal offence. To some extent he is given certain privileges or rights. The Government provide a Public Defender, and the Public Defender and junior counsel, all of whom are young barristers and well qualified, play a very worthwhile part in defending accused in the criminal courts under the poor prisoner's defence scheme. The accused at times, as a result of their efforts, is acquitted. At times he is convicted, but there are occasions when the barristers in the Public Curator's Office who are known as public defenders, and who do their job very conscientiously, recommend to an accused that he should appeal against a conviction. Every person in the community has the right of appeal against conviction if he thinks it is wrong in law or if he has suffered in his opinion some

injustice that makes him decide to exercise his right of appeal. Every member of the community has the right of appeal against conviction, and that applies also to the unfortunate persons who have not sufficient money to engage private counsel and who are defended by the Public Defender. However, when the Public Defender, following on a conviction, recommends an appeal, the prisoner is not automatically entitled to appeal in the same way as a person with money to pay for his appeal. Normally he is sentenced to some term of imprisonment and is sent to Boggo Road gaol. The qualified counsel provided for him by the State under the poor prisoner's defence scheme is not allowed to put on paper his recommendation that there are grounds for appeal. The Public Defender is not allowed to draw up the grounds of appeal. Those who are forced to accept poor prisoner's defence, and I am not decrying it because those people do a very worthwhile job and are skilled defence lawyers, are forced to draw up in their prison cell their grounds of appeal against conviction and sentence. In some cases it may be a life sentence, and in other cases a sentence for many years. When they draw up their grounds of appeal they are then sent to a governmental authority to decide whether or not they are entitled to proceed with their appeal, the right for which is provided for any other person under our Criminal Code. What happens when they send in their grounds of appeal? One would expect that the grounds would be submitted to the public defender who acted for them at their trial, who would know the law involved, and the merits of the case, and could conscientiously recommend whether an appeal should be launched or not. However, it is not the defending counsel who is consulted about the appeal. When the poor prisoner appeals the person who decides whether he should be allowed to proceed with his appeal is the Crown prosecutor who aimed at and secured his conviction. I submit that is a really iniquitous setup under our criminal law. The poor prisoner's defence scheme is of great advantage to the State, but it is totally improper when the Crown Prosecutor secures a conviction, and can then decide whether or not a defendant may approach the Court of Criminal Appeal to have the conviction set aside, or considered. The Crown Law officers who secure the conviction should not see the grounds of appeal until they are filed in the court and certainly should not have the final say on whether or not a poor prisoner is entitled to proceed to appeal.

Mr. Houghton: How long has that been the law?

Mr. BENNETT: That is not the law. That is the practice at present.

Mr. Houghton: For how long has it been the practice?

Mr. BENNETT: I do not know how long it has been the practice, but it is certainly

improper. Whether it has been the practice for 20 years or 20 months, it is certainly and positively wrong and should be rectified immediately. This matter was brought to my attention, and I was amazed to find that the prosecuting authority should have the right to decide whether a convicted person should have the right to appeal, or whether there are any grounds of appeal, or insufficient grounds to appeal, and can recommend against it. It means that the prosecutor can get the accused to Boggo Road and can then decide whether or not there are sufficient grounds for appeal. I believe that the papers should be sent to the Public Defender, who appeared for the defendant, for him to recommend whether the appeal should proceed. The practice is positively unfair, and the Minister for Justice should rectify it at the earliest possible opportunity. I have been told that this practice has been in existence for some time and is in existence today.

Mr. Sullivan: Do you believe that the former Minister for Justice should have done something about it?

Mr. BENNETT: If the practice was in operation during the period that the former Minister for Justice was in control, and he knew of it, it should have been eradicated by him. I have no hesitation in saying that. Those who knew of its existence should have drawn his attention to it.

Mr. Sullivan: Is it something that has grown up in the department?

Mr. Aikens: It rose.

Mr. BENNETT: Yes, it rose. People may think that because it has been the practice for many years it is all right—because it has been the practice for years it is the proper thing. It certainly is not, and I believe that there should be legislation to prevent this practice from being continued.

My next criticism does not apply to all the officers of the department, many of whom are qualified to conduct their practice. In the Crown Law Office, under the present Government, there has been a growing tendency to prosecute accused persons whether prosecutors think they can make the charges stick, or not. This must be governmental policy because it applies not only to the Crown Law Office but also to the Police Department, which is responsible for launching many prosecutions, particularly under the Traffic Act. There are many instances where evidence is submitted to the prosecuting authority, whether it be the Crown Law Office or the Police Department, and it must be perfectly obvious that a conviction could not possibly be secured on that evidence. As a matter of fact, it happened with me yesterday. There was absolutely no evidence on the depositions put before the prosecuting Crown Law authorities that could lead any able lawyer, or even an ordinary lawyer, to the conclusion that he could possibly get a case to the jury. If you cannot possibly get

a case to the jury you are only wasting the Crown's money in proceeding with the prosecution, but it happens and it happened to me yesterday. My client was prosecuted. Two or three days before the prosecution commenced, I submitted to the Crown Law Office my reasons for their entering a no true bill so that they would not put the Crown to the expense of proceeding with the trial. Incidentally, I am quoting this only as an example; it goes on regularly. I gave my reasons in law under the Bills of Exchange Act. It was a case in relation to cheques. I pointed out to them that they obviously had no evidence that they could get to a jury and asked why should they persist. Obviously because of Government policy, they proceeded with the trial, thereby making the State pay the expense of having a jury assembled, having the judge in attendance and all the Criminal Court orderlies. The accused, on the other hand, had to pay fees, and he had to travel down from Gympie to be here for the trial. The jury was duly sworn in and then asked to retire while we argued this legal point which, to me, seemed so obvious and fundamental. The judge accepted my submissions and said, "No, there is no case to go to the jury. There is no evidence of the fundamental elements of the offence with which the man has been charged. Call the jury back." To the jury he said, "You are discharged," and to the accused in the dock, "You are discharged." So the State was put to considerable expense and the accused was put to some reasonable expense and he wasted a day's work, just for the effort of having him lined up in court. Possibly they sometimes think that if they take them as far as that they will not face the barrier but will plead guilty.

It happens under the Traffic Act, too. Perhaps the over-zealous, over-conscientious policeman—sometimes operating from other motives—books a motorist for a certain offence. The elements of the offence are not there but the prosecuting authority will drag him through the Traffic Court knowing that, whether the man is convicted or not, he will be put to certain expense, to retain his clean name, and that is a penalty on its own.

That policy should be reviewed by the Government. Where it is perfectly and patently obvious on the evidence before the police or the Crown Law authority that a conviction cannot possibly be secured, no prosecution should be launched. I submit it is purely vindictive; it is oppressive and certainly it makes it very hard financially on those unfortunates who are forced to pay out money to defend themselves against a prosecution for which there is no evidence and where there is no chance of making it stick. It is no doubt a hardship on those who can afford to pay for their defence. It is a greater hardship on those who cannot afford to pay for their defence and who, in order to save themselves from financial difficulties, or because they cannot raise the

necessary funds, decide to plead guilty and thereby are fined and have a conviction recorded against their names.

Mr. Ewan: Surely the barrister will cut his fees in those circumstances?

Mr. BENNETT: Any barrister with Labour inclinations would, but there are others who adopt the attitude that a day's work is a day's work and if you miss out on the fees for one job you cannot catch them up tomorrow.

Dealing with what might be termed the Governmental policy or the Crown Law Office attitude, I should like to make one final observation about the remarks made by the Public Service Commissioner in relation to appeals against promotion in the Public Service. I read with some amazement, and certainly with some dismay, the part of the Public Service Commissioner's report in which he said that the right of public servants to appeal against the promotion of another officer should be abolished. It was with some degree of satisfaction that I noted that no Cabinet Minister associated himself with that remark or agreed with it. The Public Service Commissioner claimed that when appeals are conducted before an appeal board, the appellant's counsel very often says some very nasty things about the appointee and, therefore, that the right of appeal should be abolished. This would make the Public Service Commissioner a little dictator because he would then have the final say about who should or should not be promoted. I have appeared in and been present at Public Service appeal board hearings from time to time.

Mr. Ramsden: That would not be the reason for his comments, would it?

Mr. BENNETT: It probably is, because I always upset him when I appear. If he takes away the right of appeal, he will have the final say about who is promoted to the top jobs in the Public Service. Of course, that could easily create an obsequious team of public servants in Queensland, people who know they have to bow to the will of the Public Service Commissioner or get no promotion.

Mr. Ramsden: You could still have appeals without barristers appearing, could you not?

Mr. BENNETT: The Commissioner did not suggest that. He did not call them barristers; he called them "appellants' representatives." Incidentally, the appellant is not compelled to have a barrister to appear for him. He can appear for himself, he can get a fellow public servant to appear for him, or he can get other people quite well fitted to appear for him. No doubt many of the advocates who appear before the Industrial Commission could appear for him. I state quite frankly that in appeals of this type, particularly appeals before the Industrial Commission, industrial advocates are well qualified to appear and they have considerable skill and experience.

Mr. Aikens: Some trade union officials are better than all of them.

Mr. BENNETT: I will concede that, too, in their own particular field. Nobody can hope to be perfect in all aspects of the practice of law, which, like medicine, is becoming a wider and wider field. Those who specialise in a particular field and become skilled in it are better qualified to appear than those who are not specialists in it, and I have no hesitation in conceding them the accolade. The Public Service Commissioner suggested that there should be no appeal, that the grounds of appeal and reasons for the appeal should not be made public by the appellant. I hope that suggestion will not be seriously considered by any member of Cabinet, particularly by the Treasurer. It is invariably the Public Service Commissioner's representative who introduces disquieting tones at these hearings in an endeavour to convince the appeal board that the appellant is a blackguard, is of no consequence, and should be thrown out of the Public Service. The Commissioner's representative always endeavours to satisfy the board along these lines merely because a man is exercising his right of appeal under the Public Service Act. I have noticed that consistently, and it will be a sorry day for Queensland if such appeals are cut out because the Commissioner wants to be the dictator of the Public Service.

You will remember, Mr. Taylor, that last session the Treasurer spoke in defence of the insurance companies of the State. When it was suggested that they should be made to pay claims for insurance by people who had been victims of hit-run motorists, he said that the companies could not afford to pay any additional claims. I said at the time that if they were making a fortune out of one or other of the operations of insurance business they should be required to take the bad with the good. If they are making usurious profits in one field they should be prepared to put up with the burdens and difficulties in another. Since then we have seen the Annual Report of the Insurance Commissioner for the year ended 30 June, 1961, under the Insurance Act of 1960. He says—

"From the statistics published with this Report it will be noted that for the year ended 31 December, 1960, the ratio of claims to premiums was 103.5 per centum for Motor Vehicle Insurance Act business and 71.3 per centum for Motor Vehicle (Comprehensive) insurance, whilst the average expense rate of all licensed insurers (including State Government Insurance Office, Queensland) was 31.5 per centum."

In other words the claims' rate to the premiums' rate for motor vehicle comprehensive insurance was 71.3 per cent., showing a profit margin of 28.7 per cent. in that field.

Mr. Hiley: That is without expenses.

Mr. BENNETT: Yes, that is without expenses, but that 28.7 per cent. would represent a very large sum of money. It would be an abundant indication that the insurance companies are far from going broke.

By way of observation or comment during my speech I said that not only do the insurance companies not want to retire from insurance business but they want to stay in the business, and they would not be staying in the business if they were running themselves into bankruptcy. In his report the Insurance Commissioner says—

"A number of applications for licenses to carry on general and marine insurances were received and licenses were granted to eight insurers."

He does not give the number of applicants. There could have been 50 or 100 who applied to enter this very productive and lucrative field during the year, of which no fewer than eight applications were accepted. Obviously they are making an abundant amount of money from their operations. The Insurance Commissioner continues—

"At 30 June, 1961, there were current licenses for 141 insurers (excluding the State Government Insurance Office, Queensland), 19,414 agents and 16 brokers."

It is certainly a lucrative field, a very fertile field for funds for insurance companies. It excels even the real estate business and the land subdividing business that has attracted so many leading men to Queensland. They are still dead keen to come to Queensland to get amongst the money.

Earlier in the Session I made reference to the fact that the President of the Police Union, a man of conscience and ability, had said that the Queensland Police Force had insufficient manpower. Of course, I was scoffed at by the Minister for Labour and Industry. In other words he said it was wrong, that the President of the Police Union was giving inaccurate information, that he was untrue in his statements, and all the other things he says as he gyrates and storms around his little pedestal.

An Opposition Member: He is going to London.

Mr. BENNETT: Yes, as the Agent-General! At the moment he is sojourning at Hayman Island. The report of the Commissioner of Police for the 12 months ended 30 June, 1961, states—

"The total number of crimes reported throughout the State during the year ended 30th June, 1961, was 30,412 as compared with 27,487 for the previous year."

In other words in spite of Mr. Morris's protestations and denials there was an increase in the number of crimes to the extent of some 3,000 instances during the year ended 30 June, 1961. That in itself was alarming enough but it goes on further

to say in a rather embarrassing fashion, that the total number of offences cleared up during the year was 12,377 and of this number 4,705 were committed by juveniles. The alarming feature of this advice is that in the year ended 30 June, 1961, 18,035 crimes went unsolved; that is, of the 30,412 crimes committed only 12,377 were cleared up, the record figure of unsolved crimes in Queensland being 18,035 for the year.

That clearly shows that the manpower of the Police Force of Queensland should be stepped up immediately. It is quite obvious that the police have not the facilities, the manpower or the material to adequately cope with the growing incidence of crime throughout the length and breadth of the State, and it is causing concern and alarm to those responsible for its detection.

Mr. Davies: They are sending the Minister to London.

Mr. BENNETT: Yes, it is perfectly obvious why they are sending the Minister for Labour and Industry to London. They want a man who can safeguard Queensland against the attacks of bodgies and criminals. All the criminals from New South Wales, Victoria, and other States know full well that Ken Morris wants them to come to Queensland. He has a very depleted Police Force, he is away all the time himself, he should be going to London shortly, so now is the time to descend on Queensland. Obviously, that is the thought prevailing amongst criminals in other parts of Australia.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. member for Bowen would perhaps know more about Hayman Island than the Minister for Labour and Industry would, although the Minister is certainly endeavouring to improve his local knowledge of that area. The hon. member for Bowen is anxious to supplant the Minister for Health and Home Affairs. As a matter of fact, he says he should be understudy to him now.

For the brief remaining time at my disposal I do not wish to traverse ground that has been travelled by other leading speakers on this side, concerning the industrial position in this State, but I do truthfully say that the whole Mt. Isa dispute has been brought about by the Government's deletion of the bonus clause from the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. This provision for both parties to approach the Court had operated very satisfactorily for quite a number of years.

There is no doubt that the deletion of that clause has been the fundamental cause of the present trouble. I was rather sceptical about what might have been going on in this dispute, but I felt that any Government deleting from an Act a clause that had operated so successfully for the protection of the Government and the State over a long number of years, must have had some reason for so doing. Whether it be a valid and honest one

or a doubtful one, one would think there would be some reason for it. We are reliably informed by a member of the Trades Union Conference that he has definite information to the effect that the clause was deleted as a result of £30,000 to £50,000 changing hands for the purposes of electioneering expenses.

Mr. Ramsden: How reliable would your informant be?

Mr. BENNETT: In the past he has had good information.

Mr. Ramsden: Did he have any information about 1,000 voters not voting on the Mt. Isa issue?

Mr. BENNETT: He knew a lot about the breach of the Posts and Telegraphs Acts, committed by the Minister for Labour and Industry, which proved to be correct. His information in this respect might be accurate. In any case there must be some explanation or reason why the Government abandoned the clause. They have given no reason and the claim made at the Trade Union Congress in Brisbane has not been seriously challenged. It would be interesting to know the reason and whether or not the one advanced at the Trade Union Congress is the accurate one. In the matter of industrial disputes, I consider that good relations between management and men are far more favourable to all parties and to the Country as a whole than disputes and strikes, and good relations in the main did apply between management and men at Mt. Isa until the elimination of the clause. Tempers then became frayed, injustice became manifest, and any worker with ordinary tenacity or intestinal fortitude would not tolerate such grave injustice, hence the strike.

Mr. Ramsden: What was the injustice?

Mr. BENNETT: It is obvious. My friend and colleague the hon. member for Belmont gave the figures. The company made a profit of £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 when the bonus was £8 a week. This morning we read in the newspaper that the profit last year was a record one, yet the company is not prepared to consider an increase in the bonus. The injustice is obvious. Unemployment is rife and the big powers believe they can force men into employment under any conditions. In spite of the profit of millions of pounds the company is prepared to cut out the bonus to which the men are justly entitled, merely because it is protected by a Government amendment of the law and because of the serious unemployment created by the Government.

Mr. Ramsden: The company did not attempt to cut out the bonus.

Mr. BENNETT: The Government cut out the policy of allocation of bonus on a just basis. In spite of the opinions expressed elsewhere, I fully subscribe to the view that the situation amounts to a lock-out by the mine management. In relation to that lock-out I say that we as Parliamentarians should

stand for the individual's right to work and his freedom to work where he will. Men are not made to be slaves. Where a closed shop is instituted, safeguards should be provided to ensure that the rights of the individual are not likely to be jeopardised and that workers are not victimised by some pressure or power group among fellow workers.

I believe in trade unions and I urge all men and all Parliamentarians to do what they can to secure justice for the men employed at the Mt. Isa mine. The trade union movement is regarded and must continue to be regarded as an admirable institution. We should always ensure that it remains truly democratic and truly representative, and we should not ignore or play a part in its intimidation by big management.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (3.34 p.m.): The hon. member for South Brisbane quite rightly in my opinion suggested an alteration in the setup with regard to poor prisoner's defence. That is something that like Topsy has apparently grown up in the Crown Law Office. I think we should be indebted to the hon. member for bringing the matter forward. However, I regret that he with the hon. members for Windsor and Mt. Gravatt, who are members of the legal profession, have not applied themselves to necessary amendments of the law to reduce the awful toll of the road.

I do not propose to spend much time on the subject this afternoon, but the hon. member for South Brisbane made some eulogistic references to Mr. Justice Matthews and his projected retirement. I have nothing to say about it, but I remind the Committee that Mr. Justice Matthews ruled that a person riding or driving inside a double line can cross that double line and thereby commit a very serious traffic breach, and all he has to do is say that he saw or imagined he saw the driver of a car ahead of him give him an unlawful "come-on" signal, even if in response to that unlawful come-on signal that he imagined he saw and having committed the serious traffic breach of crossing a double line, he runs into someone coming in the opposite direction and seriously injures or kills him. It is not necessary for you to identify the car, or give the number of the car, or even identify the driver. The hon. member for South Brisbane like myself and everyone else must have realised the injustice of that particular interpretation of the law of criminal negligence as given by Justice Matthews. He ordered that the case be taken from the jury.

Mr. Bennett: You misunderstood me.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am not going to allow the hon. member to speak of injustice being given by judges. The hon. member has previously made similar remarks in the House, and I ask him to discontinue them immediately.

Mr. AIKENS: We are heavily indebted to the Leader of the Opposition for the question he directed to the Minister for Justice today about the case of a man who fell asleep at the wheel, and as a result of falling asleep at the wheel drove on the wrong side of the road, without due care and attention and crashed into a woman coming in the opposite direction. Yet, because he fell asleep the magistrate, and a District Court judge, on appeal, have ruled that he was neither criminally nor civilly negligent because it is quite natural to fall asleep while you are at the wheel of a car.

Mr. Bennett: That was not the reason—he had no previous knowledge that he was likely to fall asleep.

Mr. AIKENS: Well, I do not want to be argumentative about this, but at least we can say that the case put forward by the Leader of the Opposition has at last stirred the conscience of the Minister for Justice, and I did not think anything could do that.

Mr. Ramsden: Shocking!

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: While the hon. member for South Brisbane is on the job with anomalies that exist in the law, I suggest that he may clear up a few anomalies in the legal profession that he may know something about. He may deal with the rotten practice of some solicitors when dealing with an unfortunate client who comes to them for a defence, mainly on criminal matters. The solicitor says it will be necessary to brief one of the best barristers in the State in order to get him off the legal hook, and then tells the unfortunate client that such-and-such a barrister can be briefed only for 150 guineas and the client pays over the 150 guineas. Hon. members must bear in mind that the client rarely sees the barrister. The client pays the 150 guineas over to the solicitor and the solicitor hangs onto 100 guineas of it and pays over only 50 guineas to the barrister. Neither the barrister nor the client knows that the solicitor is hanging onto the other 100 guineas. Only the other day I was reading a book from the Parliamentary Library in which a case of that kind was proven to the hilt to the High Court in England. The Law Society did nothing about it. The first the barrister knew about it was when the case was thrown out of court and the unfortunate defendant happened to say, "Well, I could have come along and defended this case myself without employing a fellow in a wig and gown and I would have saved myself 150 guineas." That was the first time the barrister knew that the unfortunate prisoner had paid the solicitor 150 guineas. The barrister got 30 guineas from the solicitor and the solicitor stuck the 120 guineas in his pocket. The law society did nothing about it. The unfortunate client then had to take

a civil action for the recovery of the 120 guineas from the solicitor and the solicitor is still blooming like the green bay tree.

I understand that is a very common practice in Queensland. Of course, it is very difficult to detect, but if the hon. member for South Brisbane, the hon. member for Windsor, and the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt, want to do something about cleaning up the legal profession, let them start right in their own profession and do a bit of cleaning up there.

I wish to deal with local government, which is very close to the people. I am dealing now with government of shire council or city council areas in which residents live. We know that in many instances valuations today are fantastic. They are based on special prices that are being paid for special allotments for a special reason. I cannot do better than cite my own street. In my own street in Townsville there were a couple of allotments up towards Charters Towers Road that were a tea-tree swamp. The old owner frequently said to me that no-one would ever be mug enough to buy them. But along came a building speculator. He paid £400 each for them. He spent a fair amount of money on filling them in, because they took a lot of filling, and then he built a house on each of them. Because the people are house-hungry, they rushed in and paid him such a price for the house that he had built on each allotment that he was able to recoup the expense not only of the house but also of the allotment and of the filling-in. Woolworths-B.C.C. came in and bought four or five houses at the end of our street and the other day they opened a big supermarket. They paid, I would say, very high prices for those houses and for the land on which they stood. When the Valuer-General comes along he will assess the value of every allotment in that area on the basis of those fictitious and fantastic prices that were paid for a particular purpose.

Mr. Hiley: I can assure you that you are quite wrong about the Woolworths-B.C.C. land. If you look at the Valuation of Land Act you will see that the prices for commercial purposes are expressly excluded from having any application to valuations for domestic purposes. In any case, I am sure those people will appeal.

Mr. Gaven: They will appeal all right.

Mr. AIKENS: I am glad to hear that. As usual, I intend to speak with the utmost tranquility. I should like this hour that I have to spend in talking to develop, if possible, into a tranquil debate because I am going to deal with matters that I think are of vital interest to the people.

As a man who has been 19 years in local authority work I know that valuations, in so far as local authority charges are concerned, do not matter a roasted peanut because the local authority each year sets out and determines the amount of money it will require

to conduct its activities for the coming 12 months. If the valuations are low it strikes a high rate; if the valuations are high it strikes a low rate. It will strike a rate that will bring in the required amount of money from the valuation that has been determined. If people are paying high council rates, let them not blame the high valuations. It is a very convenient excuse for some aldermen and some councillors to say, "We have to hit you with a high council rate and take a lot of money from you because valuations are high." That is untrue; it is false and it is cheap because, as I said, if the valuations are high there is no reason why the rate struck should not be low.

However, there are other matters that I want to deal with and one is that I suppose that, with the increased amount of work that is placed on the shoulders of local authorities, the rate burden that has to be borne by the average citizen in the average town in Queensland is becoming almost too heavy to bear. Again I am going to cite my own town, and I am going to cite it quite calmly and quite truthfully. No-one can accuse me of indulging in political propaganda, because I have deliberately left this speech until now when there will not be a council election in Townsville for the next two years. If I had wanted to make political propaganda out of it I would have made this speech last year or I would leave it for another two years and make it then because I am certain to be here in two years' time after the 1963 election, and that is more than many hon. members who are listening to me can say. We have reached the stage in Townsville—and I know that accusations of extravagance have been levelled against the council up there with considerable justification but I am not going to deal with that angle of it—we have reached the stage in Townsville where the ordinary worker right out in the suburbs on an ordinary allotment is paying over £1 a week to live in his own home. We know that there are many workers who lived for years, reared their families on the Strand and in the North Ward area of Townsville who, in recent years, have had to sell their homes on the Strand and in North Ward simply because they could not afford to live in the homes that their families had occupied, for generations in some cases, and they have had to go right out into the outer suburbs where they could afford to live in their own homes and pay the staggering council rates. As the hon. member for Redcliffe interjects, it will not be long before the Council will chase them out of there.

Here is a case that was put to me recently by the President of the Old Age Pensioners' Association in Townsville. The Federal Government increased the age pension by 5s. a week, or £13 a year. The Townsville City Council took £10 of that £13 in extra rates, and the Townsville Regional Electricity Board will take the other £3 in increased electric light and power charges. Pensioners in

Townsville who own their own homes are therefore no better off as a result of that £13 a year increase in the age pension.

Mr. Smith: Is it only pensioners' homes that would be affected?

Mr. AIKENS: No, all homes are affected, but I was quoting the case of pensioners, people in whom the hon. member for Windsor is not the least bit interested, of course. I merely quoted them as a case in point.

Mr. Smith: You are quite wrong in saying that I am not interested in them.

Mr. AIKENS: It affects the workers; it affects business people. One business manager in Flinders Street told me that the increased rate struck by the Townsville City Council will mean that he will have to pay £600 extra on his business premises. We know how businesses are conducted. He will not pay that out of his own pocket. The workers will eventually have to pay it in the form of increased charges for the goods sold by that particular man.

I have expressed this view in public before, so no-one can claim that I am trying to big-note myself in putting it forward here. As a matter of fact, I think I expressed this view when I was a very illustrious member of the Townsville City Council many years ago. We must get away from the system operating today of raising local authority revenue on the valuation of the land, because it is unfair and unjust. Take my own position. What I say of myself can be said of other men in other streets of Townsville, in other provincial cities, or in other local authority areas of the State who have good jobs. My salary is £2,501 10s. a year. It should be twice that if I were paid on the basis of merit. In my street there are pensioners; in my street there are casual workers; in my street there are people who earn the basic wage or a little over the basic wage. Yet because the valuation of their land is the same as the valuation of my land, they pay exactly the same local authority rates and charges as I do. That is unfair, and until we can devise some system—I put this to the Treasurer because I admit that the problem is an intricate one—of making people pay their local authority rates on the basis of their income, just as they contribute to the State Government and the Federal Government on the basis of their income, this injustice and inequity will remain.

Mr. Richter: Can you tell us how we can do that?

Mr. AIKENS: I said that the problem is an intricate one.

Mr. Bennett: It is impossible.

Mr. AIKENS: It may not be impossible. I can remember years ago a State Government—it was a Labour Government—imposing a deduction of 1s. a week on each worker to provide one day's work a week for those

who were unemployed. It was put forward at that time that the burden of assisting workers who were unemployed should not fall upon their fellow workers to the extent of 1s. a week and that some means should be devised to make the wealthy as well as the poor assist those who were unemployed. Again I think it was a Labour Government that introduced the unemployment social service deduction that comes out of our income tax. The rich now pay more than the poor to provide money for those who are unemployed and those who cannot go to work because of illness. When that proposal was first put forward men like the hon. member for South Brisbane—I do not question his honesty in that regard—and the Minister for Public Works said it could not be done. They say that it is impossible, but until a solution to the problem is found the injustice is going to continue.

Mr. Richter: I am asking you for a suggestion.

Mr. AIKENS: There should be some means of getting agreement between the State Government and the local authority about the total tax revenue received in a local authority area. I know that we have to work in with the Federal Government because of the uniform tax provisions.

Mr. Mann: Don't you think that it is the Federal Government's responsibility to find work?

Mr. AIKENS: I am not going to enter into that now. I am talking about contributions that should be made by people in a local authority area to the work done by the local authority. The contribution should be on the basis of income, not on the basis of land valuation.

Mr. Bennett: That is independent of the size and value of the land?

Mr. AIKENS: I do not think it would matter. I think that the man on £3,000 a year, who pays more now to the State Government and more to the Federal Government than the man on £1,000 a year, should also pay more to the local authority than the man on £1,000 a year. It would not matter if I were a wealthy man, which I am not, and I lived in a little shack; it would not matter if Jim Jones were a poor man and lived in a mansion. Both of us pay to the State Government and the Commonwealth Government only on the basis of our income.

Mr. Richter: How would you control large aggregations of land?

Mr. AIKENS: That is something the Minister could put some of his officers to work on. As far as I know there are top-ranking, big brass shiny pants that could be very well occupied in grappling with that problem. Let me be quite honest about it. I have not been able to work out in detail

how the scheme could operate. At least I have put the general proposal forward. All I have got from some hon. members are sniggers and sneers of disbelief. I remind them that if they care to read the history of parliamentary government over the centuries they will find that greater problems than this one have arisen from time to time, but that they have been grappled with, solved and overcome.

Mr. Gaven: If we don't solve this one there will be complete chaos.

Mr. AIKENS: Absolutely. We must get away from the principle of making contributions to local authorities on the basis of land valuations. I see no reason why wealthy people should not pay more for the upkeep of their local authority, just as they pay more for the upkeep of their State Government and Federal Government, than do poor people.

Mr. Hughes: Does not that apply now in that business people pay more?

Mr. AIKENS: No. If a shop is built on an allotment that is valued at £2,000 and an unfortunate battler happens to inherit a house on an allotment valued at £2,000, they both pay the same amount to the local authority, but they do not pay the same amount in taxation to the State Government or the Federal Government. That is the point I am trying to make. Anyway, I leave the thought with the Committee. I shall give the matter further consideration and if I come up with a proposal, or anything that looks at all like a proposal, I will put it forward. Without trying to be facetious or flippant, I really believe that they are many top ranking, competent public servants in Queensland who should be put on the job to see if they can work out a suitable system or formula.

Mr. Ewan: Don't the pensioners in Townsville get a 50 per cent. remission of rates?

Mr. AIKENS: They do not get any remission of rates in Townsville. Pensioners do not get one brass farthing in remissions. They do not get anything and, I will be quite honest and say that there are arguments for it and against it because, with the graduated scale of pensions, again you strike a lot of involvement when you try to do justice to the pensioner. That is a matter perhaps on which the legal men might help.

Mr. Smith: I have given you advice before and you have refused it.

Mr. AIKENS: I would be certain to lose if I acted on any advice the hon. member gave me at anytime. Do not let us indulge in wise-cracking or bon mots or anything like that. Let us try to be sensible because these are matters agitating the minds of the people, particularly the ordinary people, and they are the only people about whom I am concerned.

There is the question of a Council and the application of their own by-laws. As I said, I was 19 years on Councils and I was probably guilty of some of these things myself, although I honestly cannot remember them. If a person makes application to a Council for a subdivision of land, to alter his building, to erect a building, to do anything at all, the Council has the right to refuse him the permission he seeks if the permission is contrary to the by-laws of the Council. If such a man feels aggrieved and is foolish enough to go to law then, of course, he fights with his own money, the Council fights with the ratepayers' money, the aldermen do not jeopardise one penny of their own money in the matter, and the man is certain to lose because the case will be decided on a point of law.

Then we get the case, far too frequently, of a man who applies for something from the Council and the permission is refused, and he then finds that another fellow has applied for the same thing, probably next door, or just up the street, or just around the corner, and the Council have given him permission to do what they refused the first man. What redress has the first man against the Council or, to put it bluntly, who can prosecute the Council for breaking their own by-laws? Certainly not the Council. The Council will not prosecute themselves. The man who is aggrieved cannot go to law and say, "Look, I wanted to put up a building on my allotment. It was not in conformity with the by-laws and the Council refused me permission to erect it and consequently I have no case against the Council, but they gave Jim Jones permission to erect a building in exactly the same circumstances four or five doors up the street." What can that man do against the Council? He can do absolutely nothing at all.

Mr. Bennett: In Brisbane he could appeal to the Minister for Local Government against the decision to refuse.

Mr. AIKENS: No. I am glad the hon. member for South Brisbane made that interjection because only last week a man in my electorate made application to the Townsville City Council to sell an area of his land that was to be used for a poultry farm.

Mr. Bennett: I am talking only about Brisbane. I said, "In Brisbane."

Mr. AIKENS: I am sorry. At any rate, the Council refused this man permission and that refusal was in accordance with their by-laws. The man came to me and I said, "I do not think there is anything you can do." He said, "I am going to Brisbane next week." I said, "In that case, I will arrange for you to see the Director of Local Government or his deputy. Perhaps he may be able to explain the circumstances to you."

That man saw the deputy to the Director of Local Government who was very courteous and helpful but said, "What can you do? You cannot take action against

the Council because the Council will beat you. What they refused you was not in accordance with their by-laws."

That area had been declared by the Council as a residential area and they said they could not have a poultry farm in a residential area, which is within the province of their by-laws, but blind Freddie knows that there are many poultry farms in residential areas all over Townsville. If that man goes to court and says, "I will show you where there is a poultry farm in a residential area," that argument will not stand in a court for five minutes. And so the man has to swallow his frustrations, as the saying goes and do absolutely nothing about it.

Mr. Richter: Surely you would not take that right from the council?

Mr. AIKENS: I am going to make a suggestion later. When I was in the council I believe there was a provision, particularly in the building by-laws, the final clause, which read as a similar clause reads in many Acts of Parliament, "Notwithstanding anything herein contained the Council may do something in contravention of these by-laws." Again, speaking from memory, I believe that had to be done by resolution of the council. If the council was doing something in contravention of its by-laws, it could do so only by resolution of the council.

Mr. Mann: I will give you a case that happened in Brisbane.

Mr. AIKENS: I thank the hon. member very much for his offer to help, but I have many cases in Townsville and I have only 60 minutes in which to make my speech.

Unfortunately, as a result of the council's not doing these things by resolution, as a result of their being done by officers of the council, no-one knows about them till they are done. If they were done only by resolution of the council and those resolutions were published in the Press, some protest could be made, but because of the way they are now done no-one knows anything about them till they are done.

Mr. Bennett: Since there is the right of appeal in Brisbane and not in Townsville, do you say this Government has been guilty of sectional legislation in that respect also?

Mr. AIKENS: One of the things that should be done, if there is to be a court case, is to make the aldermen personally and severally liable for any costs that might be awarded to the particular applicant or person who takes action. That will stop much of what I refer to loosely as the hanky-panky that goes on.

I suggest, in reply to the interjection by the Minister for Public Works, that some board or authority should be set up to which an aggrieved citizen can appeal or apply if he thinks a council has discriminated

against him. He could go to the board and say, "I made application to the council to allow me to do something and I was refused permission and that refusal was in accordance with its by-law, but a fellow up the road made an application to do the same thing and permission was granted." There should be an authority or board to which he could state his case and the board should have power to deal with the matter.

Mr. Bennett: That can be done in Brisbane.

Mr. Hiley: If you carried that suggestion far enough, you would completely destroy the concept of local authority. With all its faults, authority rests in the local body. That is the whole concept of local government.

Mr. Bennett interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: I am not dealing with the Brisbane City Council. As the hon. member for South Brisbane knows there are two separate Acts, the City of Brisbane Act and the Local Government Act.

Mr. Bennett: According to the Treasurer such a proposal would destroy local government but apparently the Government did not think so when they introduced the right of appeal against decisions of the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. AIKENS: It would not destroy it; it would cleanse it, because the only cases that would come before the board would be those in which it could be proved that the local authority did something it should not have done.

I am not suggesting interference. I have said time and time again in the Chamber that except in extraordinary circumstances there should be no interference with the work of a local authority. But extraordinary circumstances are arising and there is no court of appeal. There is no board or person to whom an aggrieved citizen can go. He cannot go to the Minister for Public Works, the Director of Local Government, or anyone else. I am not suggesting for a moment that a person should be able to go to a board and say, "Mr. Minister, I do not agree with the resolution carried by the Council at last Thursday night's meeting. I do not think they should have decided to put bitumen in Bill Jones's street and not in my street", or something like that, but, when a citizen can show that a council has discriminated against him in favour of someone else, I think the board should have some authority to deal with the matter. I will give a couple of instances to drive home my point. No-one who knows anything about me in Townsville can accuse me of holding a brief for young John Bartlett. Some time ago he applied to the Townsville City Council for permission to demolish a building in Flinders Street and erect an arcade of shops, with a basement

arcade of shops as well. He was given permission to do this, the plans were approved, and he went ahead and spent several thousands of pounds on it. However, the Townsville City Council by-laws provide that there shall be 8 feet clearance from floor to ceiling. His contractor allowed the 8 feet clearance from floor to ceiling and then put terrazzo tiles on top of the concrete to a depth of 1½ inches. That meant that the distance from the floor to the ceiling was only 7 feet 10½ inches and the Council refused to allow him to occupy, let or lease any shop in the basement.

Mr. Hiley: I expect they would be technically right.

Mr. AIKENS: Yes, I am glad of that—technically right.

Bartlett had no case against them at all. He sought legal advice and was told that he had no case against the council because of this by-law. But listen to this: just down and across Stokes Street is the City Building owned by the Townsville City Council which extends from the Central Hotel, right down to the Commonwealth Bank. One of those shops is leased by T.A.A. T.A.A. decided to reconstruct their office premises and the plans were approved. They erected a ceiling only 7 ft. 6 in. from the floor, which was 4½ inches less than the ceiling in Bartlett's arcade. Alderman George Roberts came along, as Deputy Mayor of Townsville, with a big fanfare of trumpets, banging of drums, drinking of wine and nibbling of hors d'oeuvres and officially opened the T.A.A. establishment with a 7 ft. 6 in. ceiling. Bartlett saw everyone about it and asked what action could he take, and he came to me and I gave him some advice. When anyone wants to provoke someone to do something, I can give some good advice. These basement shops were untenanted for months and months, until finally something happened and recently one of the tenants moved in.

I have cited the case of the Council allowing and, indeed, officially opening in its own building an office with a 7 ft. 6 in. ceiling and preventing another man just along the street from leasing or renting premises with a 7 ft. 10½ in. ceiling. Under the present setup Bartlett could not appeal to the Minister for Public Works and Local Government or to the Director of Local Government, or anyone else. He had to grin and bear it. That is a bit of a misstatement, because he did not grin. He just had to bear this shocking victimisation by the Townsville City Council.

If anyone wants to erect a house in Townsville the by-laws say that it must be erected 15 feet from the front fence, unless it is to be on a corner, when it must be 15 feet from the front fence, 15 feet from the corner fence, and 6 feet from the other fence. In an ordinary allotment the house has to be 15 feet from the front fence and 6 feet from each side fence. Time and time again,

people who want to build their homes are told that unless they build in accordance with the council by-laws their building will be pulled down or they will be prosecuted. I can take you for a drive around Townsville, Mr. Taylor, and even double you on my bike, if you care to take the risk, and I can show you scores of houses that have been erected less than 15 feet from the front fence and less than 6 feet from the side fence. On a block just down in Ackers Street there is a big bungalow home which was recently cut up into two flats and they allowed the builder to put extensions on each side, like pimples on a pumpkin, which brought it well within the 6 feet from each side fence.

The other day I quoted the case of Alf Hay, who has done a great deal for the workers in the Mundingburra area. He bought a house for demolition and took it out to one of his allotments in the Mundingburra area. He rebuilt it to make it available for cheap rental for the workers. Along came the Council and they said, "You have got to shift that house back 18 inches because it is only 13 feet 6 inches from the front fence." You know how much trouble and worry and expense is caused by shifting a whole house. Alf Hay said, "What about the fellow just up there who is building a house only 8 feet from the front fence?" They said, "Never mind about him. You shift your house back 18 inches." He did not shift it back 18 inches. He had to cut 18 inches off his front veranda and shift his front veranda stumps back the 18 inches. That goes on all over the place.

Recently the Townsville City Council passed a by-law providing that every flat had to have a garage for the car presumably to be owned by the occupant of the flat. That is honoured more in the breach than in the observance.

Mr. Duggan: Are you against the minimum regulations or against discriminatory treatment.

Mr. AIKENS: I am against discriminatory treatment and I am suggesting that some board or authority be set up to which aggrieved citizens can go. As the Minister pointed out, the regulations are the law. If the Council refuses permission you can do nothing about it because you have not got a case. If they refuse you permission and give permission to the man up the road, you can do nothing about it either because there is no board or authority to which you can appeal. You have no case in law if you go to law.

Mr. Hughes: Surely the remedy is in the hands of the local authority.

Mr. Sherrington: It is a Tory Council in Townsville.

Mr. AIKENS: It would not matter whether it was a Tory Council or a Labour Council. The political complexion of the Council does not matter. I understand this discrimination

goes on with many local authorities and the person discriminated against has no right of appeal to any authority.

I can take you to places in Townsville where the Council has insisted on double walls between flats. If you have an old chamfer timber wall with 3" x 2" studs, you must put a timber wall on the other side of those 3" x 2" studs. Then I can take you to places even in the heart of the city and show you walls that have been built with 2" x 1" pine studs and with sheets of Swedish hardboard on each side. So the people who are compelled to put timber walls on each side of the 3" x 2" studs have no cause for complaint. Rather, they have cause for complaint but they have no possible chance of securing redress.

The most remarkable case is that of the Mansfield Hotel in Townsville, owned by a man named George Palmos. He decided to close in the end of his side veranda on the second storey and make living quarters out of it. Honestly believing, I think, that the hotel building was controlled by the Licensing Commission, he walled in the side veranda with casements and wooden louvres. The Council told him that it was not the Licensing Commission but the Council that had control over the building. He argued the point with them for a while. They took him to court and had him fined and ordered to pull down the wooden louvres and the casements from his side veranda, which he did. A few months later he apparently made the right approach to the Council through the right person because he got permission and the casements and louvres are back again—after the Council took him to law and compelled him to pull them down!

Mr. Bennett: Was there any change in administration between the time when he was told to pull them down and the time when he was given permission to put them back?

Mr. AIKENS: He had to pull them down. The Court ordered him to pull them down and then later on, for some reason that has not yet been disclosed, the Council let him put them up.

Mr. Ramsden: He has the permission of the Council?

Mr. AIKENS: Definitely, but how did he get it on the second occasion when he could not get it on the first? Mind you, it is a contravention of the Townsville City Council by-laws for those wooden casements and louvres to be there. He could not get permission to put them up in the first place; he was taken to law and compelled to take them down but since then he has got permission to break the by-laws.

Then we have the case of the Chun Tie family. I am sorry that the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation is not in the Chamber as I am going to deal with him. On Charters Towers Road members of the Chun Tie family own three valuable allotments facing Charters Towers Road. Many approaches have been made to them to sell them and they will not sell. I suppose they are waiting for a better price. It is their right to do that. Behind their allotments is a huge swamp. It is part of the drainage area of Townsville. But when we have a dry year such as this, or at the tail end of the ordinary year, the Council puts the mowers in, cuts the grass, and that huge swamp is used as a playing area on which junior Rugby League football is played, provided no rain falls.

The Council wanted to buy these allotments from the Chun Ties and the Chun Ties said, "No, we won't sell." The Council then made an application to the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation to resume the three Chun Tie allotments. The reason it gave was that it wanted them for the purpose of providing additional access to Mindham Park. As I said, it is not a park. I wrote to the Minister for Public Lands about it and had a good strong talk to him about it. I sent him—I challenge him to produce it in the House—a photograph of Mindham Park in the wet season, showing it as a huge swamp seven feet deep in water. I also sent him a Press cutting from "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" in which Alderman Molloy, the Chairman of the Parks and Reserves Committee of the Townsville City Council, in excusing the Council's failure to provide toilet facilities at Mindham Park for the junior Rugby League players said, "This is not a park. It is part of the town drainage scheme. But in dry weather it can be used, and in fact it is used, as a recreational area." Mindham Park is bounded on its four sides by Charters Towers Road, Townsend Street, Mears Street, and Balls Lane. At Clayfield that would be spelt "Borlz". There is abundant access from the four sides of this swamp, and there is no reason at all why the Council should want these three extra allotments for access. We all know what is going to happen. After the land has been resumed—and the Chun Ties are apparently tied up by the manner in which it is to be resumed, under the Public Works Land Resumption Act—the Council will then decide that it does not need the allotments any longer for access to Mindham Park, and will sell them to some of their business or personal friends who may be interested in buying them as business sites or for residential purposes.

Mr. Bennett: Is it leasehold or freehold land?

Mr. AIKENS: I think it is freehold. Most of the land in the area is freehold, and I would have a little bet that it was freehold.

I shall read the letter from the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation dated 6 April, 1961. It reads—

"Dear Mr. Aikens,

"With further reference to your letter of 23rd January last in which you register a strong protest against the resumption by the Townsville City Council from Harry Chun Tie and others of three allotments fronting Charters Towers Road for the purpose of providing additional access to Mindham Park, I desire to inform you that the Council's Memorial to His Excellency, the Governor in Council seeking the issue of a Proclamation taking the land for Park purposes has been received.

"After careful consideration of all the factors in this case, it has been decided to seek Executive Authority for the issue of a Proclamation taking the land in question, subdivisions 5 to 7 of resubdivision 2 of subdivision 9 of section 8 of portion 2A, parish of Coonambelah, for Public Park purposes under the provisions of The Local Government Acts and The Public Works Land Resumption Acts and action in this regard is now being taken.

"Yours faithfully,

"Alan Fletcher,

"Minister for Public Lands
and Irrigation."

They are taking the three allotments for access to a park that the chairman of the Parks and Reserves Committee has publicly said is not a park but is part of the town drainage scheme. I really believe that in this matter the Minister for Public Lands has been a rogue or a fool, and I could not be any blunter than that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I will not allow the hon. member to describe the Minister for Public Lands as a rogue. It is an unparliamentary expression, and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. AIKENS: Very well, I shall withdraw it. But I repeat that I sent him the Press statement made by Alderman Molloy; I sent him a photograph of the park showing it seven feet under water; I sent him a long letter explaining the whole of the circumstances—that it was not a park, and that there was abundant access to the swamp as it is. Despite all that, for some reason known only to himself, the Minister agreed to resume the three allotments in Charters Towers Road for access to a park that does not exist.

Mr. Hiley: Quite clearly from that letter that land is to be resumed for park purposes. If it is resumed for park purposes and dedicated as such the local authority has no power of sale.

Mr. AIKENS: It says here, "For the purpose of providing additional access to Mindham Park."

Mr. Hiley: Carry on. It is to be resumed for park purposes.

Mr. AIKENS: "Taking the land for park purposes."

Mr. Hiley: It cannot be sold. It is all a furphy!

Mr. AIKENS: How can they resume land for access to a park that is not a park?

Mr. Hiley: That does not matter. The three allotments are resumed for park purposes, and they will be dedicated as such.

Mr. AIKENS: Will that tie it up in perpetuity?

Mr. Hiley: Yes.

Mr. AIKENS: If the Treasurer is right in that I am quite happy about it. I am sure that the Chun Ties will not mind letting their land be resumed for park purposes.

An Opposition Member: You have been wasting our time.

Mr. AIKENS: I have not wasted the Committee's time. The hon. member has been in the House long enough to know—I do not want to embarrass you, Mr. Taylor, so I will content myself by saying that time has always vindicated me. Never once have I been proved to be wrong.

Although what I am about to tell the Committee does not exist at the present time what can we do about matters like this? Not long ago the Townsville City Council employed a city architect about whom they said, "This chap is not getting a salary sufficient to maintain him in the comfort and splendour to which he has been accustomed, so we will grant him the right of private practice as an architect." At that time he was getting about £1,700 a year. It was not long before the wise boys woke up to the fact that if they wanted to get their building approvals through quickly the easiest way was to employ the city architect in his private capacity. When they employed the city architect in his private capacity as an architect he would draw up plans for them. His own plans would be submitted to himself as city architect. He would charge the prospective builder or the owner the prescribed fee for himself, as the city architect, to examine them. He would pass his own plans and, of course, the plans would go through quick smart. They had to pay a Council inspection fee to the city architect to inspect and pass his own plans that he had drawn up as a private architect. Many people were forced to go to the city architect in his capacity as an architect in private practice in order to get their jobs passed quickly. I want to be fair and say that it does not go on today. There was such a public howl about it in Townsville that even the Townsville City Council were not game to perpetuate it.

Mr. Duggan: Apparently the relations between yourself and the City Council are not particularly cordial.

Mr. AIKENS: Personally they are nice fellows! I am not criticising them or condemning them. As a matter of fact I am merely pointing out what can be done by a Council with no right of redress given to the citizen. That is the point I am trying to make. If the citizen feels he has been aggrieved in not getting something for which he applied, and somebody else gets it, there is no body or authority to whom he can go. He must grin and bear it, if it is possible for him to grin.

I am sure there is a big file in the Government offices about the matter I am going to mention, because I have a big file on it myself. Two houses at the corner of Blackwood Street and Walker Street in Townsville were to be resumed by the Townsville City Council for the purpose of cutting a corner from Blackwood Street into Walker Street, just at the commencement of Castle Hill. They said it would be cheaper to resume the two allotments and sell the houses for removal and to put the road round that way than it would be to cut a small cutting on the other side of the road. I appealed several times against the resumption but the Council were adamant that they were going to resume the two allotments and pull down the two houses. One of the houses was owned by a man named Hodlofs—I can still remember the name. Then a whisper got around that only part of the two allotments would be used for the purpose of road-widening and that the rest would be used for a service-station site. When that hit the headlines—and I would not like to say I played any part in the dissemination of it—the Council withdrew the resumption and cut into the side of the hill to widen Walker Street, something we had been suggesting right from the start. The Minister suggested, "That has been resumed for road-widening purposes; we cannot do anything." But it did not take the Council long to cancel that resumption when the heat was applied to them.

Mr. Bennett: What has this to do with the Budget?

Mr. AIKENS: It has quite a lot to do with the Budget, because the Budget, by tradition, quite rightly provides an opportunity for every member to deal with matters that vitally affect the people he represents. It has to do with the Budget, because in the Budget provision is made for the Department of Public Works. The Minister for Public Works and Local Government has done me the courtesy of coming into the Chamber deliberately to listen to my remarks. It is a matter with which he will have to deal. It is a matter with which everyone will have to deal.

However, that is not a sore point. I am not a legal man and I pray God I never will be. I am a layman and my knowledge of the law is naturally a layman's knowledge of the law—and that does not mean that I do not know more about the law than some men who earn a very good living from it—but, as I read the judgment given by Mr. Justice

Townley in the Foley land case, to put it in simple terms, it means that Justice Townley—I can be put right on this because I do not wish to misquote anybody or to be in any way under a misapprehension—ruled that Tom Foley was guilty of corrupt practices because he did something for some Crown lessees that he would not do for other Crown lessees. There was no question of money being passed or any consideration being given. But, just because, in Justice Townley's opinion, Tom Foley as Minister for Lands discriminated between one Crown lessee and another, he was adjudged to be guilty of corrupt practices.

Mr. Hughes: I think you are wrong there.

Mr. AIKENS: If the hon. member for South Brisbane had said that I was wrong I would pay some attention to it.

Mr. Bennett: I have said that you are not right.

Mr. AIKENS: If I am not I will be happy to hear a simple version of it. I have read that judgment and I have placed my own simple layman's legal interpretation on it. I have cited cases and I think I have proved enough. I am sure that every hon. member of this Assembly could stand up and cite cases in his own local authority area in which aldermen or the council have been guilty of discriminating between one ratepayer and another and between one citizen and another.

Mr. Hughes: Errors of judgment.

Mr. AIKENS: The hon. member for Kurilpa has now adopted medical phraseology. When they bury their patients it is just an error of judgment. I speak just as an ordinary citizen representing ordinary people and I believe—and I recommend to the Minister for Public Works and Local Government and to the very astute Treasurer—that we should give consideration to the establishment of some board or authority to which the average person can go provided he can prove discrimination.

I agree with the Treasurer that only in the most extraordinary circumstances should there be any interference by the Government with the operations of the local authority. Here I have presented cases to show that citizens are being discriminated against and there is not any organisation, body or person to whom they can go. If they apply for something that is not in accordance with the by-laws, then they should be rejected. But, they have no redress at law or through any other source, if they find that someone else has been granted something that they have been refused. There is still no redress for them because they cannot go to law unless they themselves have been victimised by the Council within the law.

Mr. Hughes: It is in their own hands to set up their own appeal committee.

Mr. AIKENS: In their own hands?

Mr. Hughes: Yes. We did it in Brisbane.

Mr. AIKENS: Even if it was done in Brisbane, it is very problematical that it will be done by other local authorities or the Townsville City Council. It should be prescribed by statute law that the local authority will do that, and, as the Minister for Public Works is present, I suggest that he should remove that little bit of legislative smart Alecism contained in the Local Government Act, which we were told would give local authorities the right to be divided on a State electoral basis, that big provincial towns, for instance, would be divided for municipal voting purposes on the State electoral basis. But when we applied for it we were told it could not possibly be done except by some little bit of legislative legerdemain. I think Townsville should be divided into Townsville North and Townsville South, that Toowoomba should be divided into Toowoomba East and Toowoomba West, Rockhampton into Rockhampton North and Rockhampton South and Ipswich in the same way, that is, according to the State electoral basis.

Mr. Richter: Why?

Mr. AIKENS: Tell me why not. When the legislation was introduced Government members came to me and said, "This is a good thing, Tom. We are going to divide the big provincial cities in the same way as we have divided Brisbane, according to the State electoral boundaries. We are going to divide big provincial cities into two wards." When I asked the Minister a question about it, he replied in a long rigmarole telling me it could not be done.

Mr. Richter: It could be done, but why do you want to do it?

Mr. AIKENS: Because we want the same treatment as Brisbane. We live in the country, the part of Queensland that produces its wealth. Why should Brisbane be divided on a State electoral basis for voting purposes and not Townsville, Rockhampton, Ipswich and Toowoomba? What argument is there against it?

Mr. Richter: I have no argument for it.

Mr. AIKENS: Then why does not the Minister bring it in?

Mr. Richter: I have no argument for it.

Mr. AIKENS: The Minister has no thought about it. He did not even know about it until I brought it to his notice. He says there is no argument for it. Then why make provision for it in a Bill amending the Local Government Act? Having made provision for it, the Government hedge it round with all the restrictions in the world, to make it impossible.

Mr. Richter: Has the Townsville City Council asked for it?

Mr. AIKENS: The Ipswich City Council asked for it and was told it could not be done.

Mr. Richter: I do not say it could not be done.

Mr. AIKENS: I was told it could not be done. I ask the Minister to have a look at it. I know he is only a fledgeling in ministerial duties, but this is something he could look at. Why cannot big provincial cities enjoy at least the same democratic processes enjoyed in Brisbane?

Mr. Richter: The Ipswich City Council did not ask that the city be divided according to electoral boundaries.

Mr. AIKENS: Then why was it not done?

Mr. Richter: They did not ask for it.

Mr. AIKENS: They did not ask for it! I was informed they did, when I asked a question in the House. If the Minister likes to have a talk to me about it, I feel sure I could enlarge considerably his knowledge of local government procedure and local government law. I would be very happy to tell him why it should be done.

Mr. Richter: They did not ask for it. You are talking through your hat.

Mr. AIKENS: Who can ask for it?

Mr. Richter: The Council can ask for it but it did not.

Mr. HEWITT (Mackenzie) (4.34 p.m.): Once again the hon. member for Townsville South has maintained his reputation as a political orator. He reminds me very much of a political centipede. He has a leg in everything and when pinned down he runs to his burrow.

The Budget is very different from many presented by the previous Administration. The Government are facing up to many problems that have caused concern over the years. I refer in particular to the betting and liquor legislation to be considered this session. The Government, in that legislation, are merely legalising something that has been done for many years. Therefore I have no hesitation in saying where I stand on these matters because I know from practical experience, having travelled Queensland, that it is a necessity, and the Government should get their reward for introducing it. It would afford better facilities for the people in the country areas.

Mr. Bennett interjected.

Mr. HEWITT: I am here today deeply concerned with things that concern the Government and not be sidetracked by irrelevant arguments. I am here to speak particularly about the development of the brigalow lands of the State. As hon. members know, ever since I have been in this Assembly, I have been a keen advocate of closer settlement, particularly in the brigalow belt. This is

an area of country stretching from Collinsville in the north to the New South Wales border, with a total area of about 23,000,000 acres. No more than 7,000,000 to 8,000,000 acres have been touched; the balance, virtually in its virgin state, represents the greatest potential for land development in the State. I am not frightened to take the Commonwealth Government to task on this matter because I believe that the development of this area is in the national interest as well as in the interest of the State. This scheme is worthwhile. I know that the Government and the Minister for Public Lands are fully conscious of the needs of the area. New settlers must be given every opportunity in the early stages to settle in the brigalow belt. It is therefore my considered opinion that we must have either a pre-developmental scheme, or money made readily available for brigalow land to be opened up in living areas. The matter of taxation must be closely watched in any scheme. Where a settler uses his own money to develop a property it is allowed as a taxable deduction, whereas, if it is developed under a pre-developmental scheme and repaid over a number of years he may find himself in a very difficult position. I appeal to the Commonwealth Government to look at this side of the problem should they decide to make any money available to the State for pre-developmental work. It is very important to the settler. I have had some experience on the land, plus financial experience gained through my years of employment with a wool-broking firm and I know that in the early years a settler either makes good or fails. This is a very important phase of any pre-developmental scheme. If the finance can be made available through the Development Bank perhaps that is the answer, but it would have to be readily available to that the settler could get his land into production. It will cost a large sum of money to develop the brigalow belt so as to ensure an early income. Sir William Payne stated in his report that at least 5,000 acres of brigalow land is required for a living area where markets are readily available. It should embrace at least 500 acres of good agricultural land capable of being worked economically so that the settler will not be compelled to buy expensive machinery and so find himself in difficulties later on. In other words, if you are going to spend money on machinery you must have readily available agricultural land.

Let me give the Committee some idea of what to my mind it would take to develop a 5,000-acre block, taking it on the basis of 3,000 acres of scrub land and 2,000 acres of forest country. The 3,000 acres of scrub land would cost approximately £3 an acre to pull and grass, a total of £9,000. To ringbark 1,500 acres of the 2,000 at 12s. an acre would cost a further £900. To put under cultivation 500 acres would cost a further £3 an acre and would mean therefore a further expenditure of £1,500. Take house and outbuildings at £3,500, yards and

dip, &c., £1,800 and, say, two surface water improvements of 8,000 and 6,000 yards, costing about £2,500. In all that would mean an expenditure of £19,200. That is roughly what would be required by a young settler or anyone fortunate enough to win a brigalow block in one of the most favoured parts of the State. Not many people around the country today have that amount of money in their pockets. To put such a scheme into operation it is very important that the Commonwealth Government should come into it. When all is said and done, the Commonwealth have not played a big part in any rural land development in Queensland since World War II. as shown by the following figures taken from the 1960 Commonwealth Year Book of a dissection of Commonwealth expenditure on land settlement from World War II. up to 30 June, 1960. Advances to the States have been as follows:—

| | £ |
|----------------------|------------|
| New South Wales .. | 6,729,712 |
| Victoria .. | 10,985,014 |
| South Australia .. | 22,048,177 |
| Tasmania .. | 16,375,961 |
| Western Australia .. | 34,747,246 |
| Queensland .. | 376,614 |

So of a total expenditure of about £91,000,000 Queensland has received less than £380,000 or less than .4 per cent. Although perhaps the Commonwealth Government are not entirely to blame in the matter, it is up to them now to realise that Queensland has lagged far behind through lack of funds. We all realise that Queensland is the envy of our northern neighbours and the Commonwealth should keep always in the back of their mind the very great need to develop the State.

This Government are fully conscious of the importance of the matter. They have put up the scheme and I am here today urging it only because I know it is vital. It disheartens me to read in the paper, as I did the other day, that a Federal hon. member had a great deal to say about new States. The very same hon. member not so long ago at Longreach said he believed that the Fitzroy basin was capable of supporting 10,000,000 people. If he feels that way—and all this brigalow land, or a good deal of it, is in the Fitzroy basin—he should get up in the Federal House on all occasions and be outspoken on our behalf. I have also discussed the matter with the Postmaster-General, Mr. Davidson, who represents some of this area. Although these men have been sympathetic, I believe that they must be forceful in their representations in the Federal House if Queensland is to get what she is entitled to. In "The Courier-Mail" yesterday we read that more money was being made available for the Snowy River scheme, which will be of great benefit to New South Wales and Victoria. We do not begrudge those States that money, but Queensland is lagging far behind them in development and it is our

duty at all times to bring home to members of the Federal Parliament, irrespective of their political colour, the very great need for development in Queensland.

In relation to land settlement, I have always supported, and always will support, the policy of closer settlement. However, it must always be undertaken on a common-sense basis of what will provide a good living in an average season, plus a margin of 20 to 25 per cent. as a buffer against dry years or a recession in prices. We know that both these things occur, and they should always be kept in mind by persons in authority.

Only recently I had the opportunity of travelling through the brigalow area with the Agriculture and Food Committee, which is composed of many Federal Parliamentarians. I believe that they left the district agreeably surprised with its potential, and I hope that members of the Committee will keep pressing for its development. They stated at a public meeting that I attended in Biloela that they had seen no area with greater potential and no area that was as suitable for more or safer closer settlement. That was their view at that time. I hope they will remember it when they return to Canberra and that they will expound it at every opportunity. On this trip I gave them the opportunity of having with them John Letchford, who was the best junior farmer in Queensland in one year and who has been most successful as a farmer in the Dawson Valley. He gave members of the Committee his considered views and no doubt enlightened them on many questions.

When the Minister visited the district recently, the Grain Growers' Committee met him and expressed views about land settlement in the Dawson Valley area. I am not going to say that my considered opinion is that they are absolutely correct, because, no matter what committee is appointed, one finds that there is usually a divergence of opinion and that someone wants to get down to areas that are too small and someone wants areas that are far too large. It is essential that we have the very best men in the Department of Public Lands and we should be prepared to pay them well. We must realise that an error in the stroke of a pen could take away the livelihood of a settler who perhaps has given a lifetime of service to the community and contributed to the wealth and prosperity of the community within which he lives. Therefore it is very important that we consider that aspect at all times. We have seen over the years of Labour Governments, and perhaps in our own time, inconsistencies that are not in the best interests of Queensland. Each and every settler in the State is entitled to complete justice. In some districts the areas have been far too large, which will be borne out by local residents. Again other districts have been cut up into areas far

too small. This has been followed by a hue and cry for additional areas. The demand for additional areas has been one of the biggest bugbears of the Government over recent years, a problem that has been caused by incompetency within the department. Problems have been caused by the creation of large aggregations of freehold land in various districts. The area becomes far too large to be repurchased by the Government, and the development of the district is held back.

I have already said that there is plenty of room in Queensland for both the big and small man. Common sense must be used in all land settlement. Any large firm or person big enough to own and develop property in the far distant parts of the State should be given the opportunity to purchase a reasonable area of brigalow land or country suitable for fattening within the closer areas, so that he can market his cattle as fats at a later stage. We must realise that we cannot develop a State without both the big and small settler. Both have played their part in the past. We must realise that only the large firms and the people who command a great amount of capital can develop the remote portions of the State. Therefore I urge the Government to continue to press their claims for recognition of their desire for closer settlement. Closer settlement can only be brought about should enough money be made available for development within the areas that lend themselves to development. We cannot afford to let Queensland continue the way it is going now. We either must make money available from our own resources or give the opportunity to private enterprise, but I urge the latter policy only in a case of more or less desperation. We must at all times look for development.

Mr. Davies: Don't you think the best thing to do would be to change the Commonwealth Government and give the Labour Party a chance?

Mr. HEWITT: The hon. member can rest assured that the present Commonwealth Government will be back after 9 December. I am sure that they will be sympathetic to the scheme I have expounded this afternoon. Labour's record over the years in the Federal sphere has not shown their actions to be altogether advantageous to Queensland.

The hon. member for Rockhampton South spoke about the establishment of district abattoirs in the city of Rockhampton. I am not going to expound at length my views about it. I should like to correct one statement in which he said that the cattle numbers of Central Queensland had not increased. Let us look at the position. I spent many years in the agency calling and I have probably contributed more than the average person to the development of this area. I do not want to pat myself on the back but I think most people in the area

will concede that I played my part in opening up auction-selling centres in the Dawson Valley and Blackwater districts. The hon. member has been somewhat misled in making his statement. Although there may not be a great many more cattle there now, nevertheless it is true to say that the cattle that used to be sold in Eidsvold and other places for fattening on the Brisbane River are now retained in the Rockhampton district and are available to the meatworks within that area.

Mr. Bromley interjected.

Mr. HEWITT: I think every hon. member of this House knows where I stand. I have never been one to go back on my ground. If the hon. member will only go through "Hansard" he will see where I stand. We have within 150 miles of Rockhampton two-fifths of the cattle in Queensland with the greatest potential for an abattoir of any district in this State. I will not take the matter any further than that.

Mr. Bromley: You are not game.

Mr. HEWITT: The hon. member says I am not game, but my reply is that the contributions by hon. members opposite over the years have been very poor. I have drawn attention on many occasions to their actions as a Government. They should keep out of anything that has to do with land matters. On numerous occasions I have cited what happened at Croydon, of course, before the hon. member's time, when over 360 square miles of country was granted on a new lease without any resumption rights during the first 15 years of the lease.

The Labour Government did a great disservice to the people of Central Queensland and Rockhampton. All I am doing today is trying to right some of these things. I am even prepared to attack the Commonwealth Government on the score that they have not played their part and I will not be sidetracked by interjections by the hon. member for Norman.

Mr. Bromley: You are trying to cover up the defects of your own Government.

Mr. HEWITT: Our record surpasses anything that the Labour Government ever did. The establishment of an abattoirs in Rockhampton has been an important matter for years but the Labour Government did nothing about it.

I did not intend at this stage to touch on the previous Government's record but as I have been drawn into it I shall do so now. After our election to office in 1957 I inspected a property owned by this Government and controlled by the Department of Native Affairs for the benefit of the aboriginals of this State. It had been Government property ever since 1946 but even the boundaries were not fenced.

There were 6,000 acres of scrub still standing on the property and no developmental work had been undertaken. The farming area was completely flooded. In one year the total crop was washed away on three occasions. After I made an inspection with the Minister for Health and Home Affairs, Mr. McCormack, the Under Secretary, Department of Health and Home Affairs, and Mr. O'Leary the Director of Native Affairs, we decided that something had to be done. On 29 August I was requested to make an inspection of the property and found it in the deplorable condition I have mentioned. Cabinet appointed me to the position of Cattle Adviser to Foleyvale and Woorabinda, and I shall give some figures to show what has been done. Mr. Shanahan was appointed Superintendent of Foleyvale in May, 1959, and in the 2½ years since his appointment—my first inspection was made only three years ago—a great number of improvements have been carried out.

Dr. Noble: It is one of the show places of the State.

Mr. HEWITT: It is not all I should like it to be, but I am determined it will eventually be one of the show places of the State. We have erected the boundary fences and have pulled all the scrub on this property of 27,000 acres, of which approximately 7,000 acres is scrub land, the balance being forest land with an area of good coolibah flats, which tend to a sucker regrowth menace. By November, 1959, the scrub areas of Foleyvale had been surveyed and by January, 1960, 5,548 acres of scrub had been pulled and certified by a Main Roads supervisor as a satisfactory job, and had been burnt and planted by aerial seeding with Rhodes grass and green panic. A further 500 acres of cultivation which had been previously in the McKenzie River flood area was abandoned and planted with similar grasses. Prior to and following the abandonment of the old cultivation area, an area of approximately 300 acres free from flooding has been put under crop for peanuts, sorghum and cotton. We set out to make sure that the property had adequate water. Today we have 30,000 cubic yards of surface water and one of the dams in the house and dip-yards area has a depth of 16 feet, backing up 600 yards. We have taken care of the water position and no longer have any cause for worry in that respect.

Further, we looked at the employment side. Although many natives were employed there, little, if any, useful work was being done. Even with the great labour force at Woorabinda, the previous Government could not fence the boundary. The property was purchased in 1946 and that was the position 12 years later, in 1958. What a great effort by people who now attack the Government on their land policy. They could not even set an example. They had an opportunity to do it but did not take

advantage of the opportunity. If anyone should be a good tenant of the land, it should be the Government, especially when they have the labour resources and expanse of land they had at Woorabinda. There were 40 men working on Foleyvale and today we have an average of 20 to 30 men doing the same amount of work. We have been able to reduce the working staff.

Mr. Dufficy: Reducing the working staff is an every-day experience with this Government.

Mr. HEWITT: The hon. member for Warrego does not care whether they work or not. Whether they work or not the State will carry them. That is his attitude.

Let us look at the revenue. We must remember that the State is responsible for the aboriginals at Woorabinda and Foleyvale in all circumstances. With the assistance of the department we have been able to change a pretty dismal picture into something fairly worthwhile. The revenue during the year prior to my taking an interest in Foleyvale was £9,104. During the first year that I was interested in it the revenue increased to £31,595, in the next year it was £30,451, and even after the very bad year we have just experienced it is in the vicinity of £26,000. Surely that gives some sound indication of what has taken place. We have many bullocks now ready for market. We have held them over so as to get a better price for them; our only concern is to get the best possible price. Cabinet has agreed to a new re-stocking programme for this property; we have done away with much of the red tape which, I believe, was a menace to the previous administration. We cannot altogether blame the people on the property. Mr. Naggs managed both Foleyvale and Woorabinda and he was also responsible for the native settlements. We have put Mr. Shanahan in charge of Foleyvale and the Director of Native Affairs has called applications for a cattle manager at Woorabinda to ensure the same sort of development there. Mr. Naggs will now become the superintendent of Woorabinda mission settlement only. Although we have been charged with not being interested in employment we are now employing two additional men who are directly responsible for running their own properties. The purchasing system has been changed too. Eighty-five head of cattle have been procured at a cost of £3,425 10s. for Foleyvale. The net return today is £4,029 which gives approximately £620 profit. We have a further 12 head to sell which should net another £540. All in all, I believe that the Government are doing a great deal to show the people of Queensland that these State enterprises can be run well.

The hon. member for Maryborough has interjected again. I do not wish to keep shooting him down, but now that he has come into the argument, let us have a further look at these properties. When I stirred up the laxity on the properties it was decided

that we would have a bangtail muster. After police checks, what did we find? At Woorabinda we found an unaccounted stock loss of 384 head and at Foleyvale 114 head. The first year under new management at Foleyvale the unaccounted losses were seven head and the second year 17. Woorabinda has now come back from 384 to 59 head. Surely that is an indictment of previous Governments whose members have been so vocal in charging us with not being interested in developing the State.

I further suggest that we as a Government should keep in mind the very great need to acquire another property within that area for the growing of young cattle from Woorabinda. To my mind Foleyvale today has become far too valuable a property for the growing of young stock. Therefore, if the settlement could have made available to it a further property that would run somewhere about 1,500 young cattle, its problems would be solved. Moreover, that would do much to increase the figures we have been able to show this afternoon.

Brian Shanahan as manager of Foleyvale has taken the same interest in it as anyone else would in the running of a private property. That is something we as a Government should always encourage. We should give every possible assistance to these men who are prepared to give of their time willingly. What is more, we can see from results that it is well worth while in the long run. To all who have been concerned in the improvement and development of these properties I say, "Thank you." It has been a pleasure to me to work with them because I derive a good deal of personal satisfaction from doing it and, although at times it has been a great inconvenience, nevertheless I assure the Minister and other hon. members that I will always work to the very best of my ability. I will be able to look back and remember the assistance that has been given to me by the Minister in the first place, by Kev. McCormack, Con O'Leary and Lloyd McDonald. They have all played their part and without their assistance the job would have been much more difficult.

I have spoken about aboriginals and shown my particular interest in them but I am forced now to talk on another aspect that concerns me. We have heard it said in the Chamber that there is no difficulty about assimilating aboriginals in the community. Those who say that cannot be fully conversant with the facts. I have lived amongst aboriginals and I believe I have a very good knowledge of their outlook. I can tell at first hand some of my experiences in dealing with them. It has been the very definite policy of this Government to help wherever possible. The heads of the mission settlements, too, have endeavoured to get aboriginals out into the community immediately they think they are fitted for it. I have tried to help them when they have left the settlements, but I think I am duty bound

to say that on most occasions I have been very disappointed. I believe that they are, with few exceptions, not yet really fitted to leave the settlements, unless they go to an area where people are particularly keen to look after their interests and to try to help them along the right road.

Dr. Noble: That is why we need all the extra money from the Commonwealth to assist us in that field.

Mr. HEWITT: That is true. We all realise that these people are very susceptible to drink, which is usually readily available to them.

Mr. Davies: And will be more readily available after the Liquor Acts Amendment Bill goes through.

Mr. HEWITT: If the hon. member for Maryborough knew anything about it, he would realise that they can get liquor now. There are always people willing to supply it. As the Minister for Health and Home Affairs says, the hon. member for Maryborough voted for the introduction of the Bill.

Mr. Davies: I only voted for its introduction so that it could be printed and we could read it.

Mr. HEWITT: I have a genuine regard for the aboriginal people and have done everything possible to assist them. If hon. members went amongst them, they would tell them that I have played my part in endeavouring to give them a better understanding of their responsibilities. As I said earlier, when they are with their many friends they are susceptible to drink, and the next thing one finds is that they are in trouble and in the lock-up. This is a serious problem for members of all political parties, and it always will be a problem until we can get more people to take an interest in the affairs of aborigines.

In Eidsvold, where I lived for nine years, there was a Pastor Frost, who spent most of his time endeavouring to help these people. He gave religious instruction every Sunday to their children, and he also tried to instill into them the need to be more stable. He is a man for whom I have the highest regard who has given his time unselfishly. Eidsvold is one town in Queensland where I believe that the Government could perhaps establish a small housing scheme for aborigines. Such a scheme would be recommended by me only if it were under the careful supervision of a local committee. I realise that there is no possibility of having a housing scheme for our aboriginal population other than the few who are very stable. There are a few in my electorate for whom I have the highest regard, who have many good qualities, and who are as stable as any of us, but unfortunately their numbers are limited. The housing scheme must be supervised by a local committee, and I am sure that these

people would meet their responsibilities and do the right thing by the people who gave them such conditions. I do not say this idly, because when three families were released from the aboriginal settlement at Woorabinda I made it my business to obtain three Housing Commission homes for them. In a few weeks virtually every window in the homes was broken and the houses were in a disgusting condition. It is a most difficult position for any Government to face up to, but it is our responsibility. Whenever any scheme can be initiated for the advantage of these people the Committee can rest assured that my fullest support will be forthcoming. Money seems to mean nothing to most of the coloured people. Even though various members of a family might be earning big money I have seen them living in bits of shacks without even a decent table or bed. Inadequate sanitation is a real menace that is posing problems for many shire councils. The Banana Shire is faced with that problem near the township of Theodore. It is not easy for any member of Parliament to have to speak along these lines, but they are facts that we cannot be blind to.

Mr. Tucker: How do you think we should tackle the problem?

Mr. HEWITT: I have made one suggestion about housing. If any hon. member on either side has any constructive suggestions to offer I shall be right behind him. It is not a matter to be used as a political football but one that should be the concern of all political parties. It is an urgent problem facing the State, one that is getting worse every day. I am sure that many hon. members are faced with a similar position in their electorates.

In conclusion I again congratulate the Treasurer on his initiative and courage in facing up to the many difficult problems that have been dodged for so long by Labour Governments.

Mr. WALLACE (Cairns) (5.22 p.m.): I commend the hon. member for Mackenzie for his effort to expose the Federal Government's gross neglect of Queensland. I know that many hon. members opposite think as the hon. member for Mackenzie thinks, that the Federal Government have given and are giving Queensland a rotten spin, but they have not got the courage to stand on their feet and say so. Although the hon. member for Mackenzie has done his best to expose the Federal Government he has indicated that he would not be prepared, as the rest of the hon. members on the Government side would not be prepared, to go on the stump at election time and urge the defeat of the Menzies Government in the best interests of Queensland. That is very much to be regretted because despite what hon. members opposite might say here, they know full well that the best days of Australia and Australian citizens were under Labour Governments. They cannot deny that.

Had the Minister for Health and Home Affairs desired to have his Estimates debated this session we should have been glad of the opportunity to discuss the aboriginal question at length. In the course of the present debate there are many other important phases of government to be discussed by hon. members on this side. Had the Estimates of the Department of Health and Home Affairs been debated we could have left any reference to the aboriginal question to a later date when we would have had the opportunity to speak for 45 minutes or an hour on the subject. The work of the Department of Native Affairs is much too valuable to be disposed of in just a few minutes. I think it could not be properly dealt with in anything under 45 minutes to one hour. In view of what has been happening to aboriginal people in various parts of the State it is to be regretted that the Estimates are not to be debated this year.

Dr. Noble: My Estimates were debated last year and they will be debated again next year.

Mr. WALLACE: Much has happened since last year and the Minister, in his own interest, and that of the aboriginal people, would have been well advised to have his Estimates debated again this year while things are hot and while we can deal with them. We would, perhaps, have gone a long way towards solving many of the existing serious problems. I have very strong views on the matter, but I am not prepared at any time to speak on it for only 10 or 15 minutes.

By moving his amendment the Leader of the Opposition has again quite rightly directed the spotlight of public opinion on to the failure of the Government to indicate in the Financial Statement any strong or positive measures for the rehabilitation of the State and particularly as affects the far northern part of the State, the most valuable and most vulnerable part of it.

I strongly support my leader. Indeed, I congratulate him and my colleagues who have come into the debate so far. They have made excellent contributions. As a matter of fact, there is not any doubt that the Government and the Treasurer have been sorely embarrassed by some of the matters put up by members on this side.

The Leader of the Opposition very aptly described the Budget as a booze and betting budget. It appears to me that, having dissipated the finances of the State, the Government were at their wits' end to get a few extra pounds and so they decided that it would be wise, in the face of very strong pressure brought to bear on them by their monopolistic supporters, to further tax the people of Queensland least able to bear it. They have indicated in no uncertain manner that their policy is to take from the already depleted wage packet of the worker the additional funds necessary to enable the State to survive without any progress.

There are very strong indications that the Government are deeply conscious of their failure. There is every reason to believe that both this and the national Government are preparing the people of Australia, and particularly of Queensland, for a set of conditions such as obtained earlier this century—in the years from 1929 onwards. The conditions at that time were brought about deliberately by Tory Governments, acting on the advice of their financial advisers, as a cure-all for the ills of the State and the nation. It is very glaringly demonstrated at the moment that the policy now being followed by this Government and their counterpart in the national sphere will most assuredly add to the army of unemployed, especially in this State, which, in the long run, will bring the State to economic chaos. I challenge the Premier and his Government to prove to the people of Queensland, particularly those in the Far North, that the Budget gives any indication of a return to the prosperity that obtained under the wise and prudent administration of the Labour Government. Much has been said by Federal members and hon. members of the Queensland Government about the stupendous potential of Far North Queensland, but to date we have not heard of or seen any move to harness that potential. We of the Australian Labour Party with the people of Far North Queensland are and have been fully seized of the tremendous potential, and we are fed to the teeth with the snivelling drivel emanating from the Queensland and Federal Governments about what is to be done to improve conditions and harness the potential of Far North Queensland.

We desire strong and positive action by the Government to rehabilitate Queensland to the prosperous and progressive stage it had reached under Labour administrations. Since the advent of the Government we have witnessed a slow but sure deterioration both in population and in industry, and it is evident that the Government's policy for Far North Queensland is one of complete destruction.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. WALLACE: For the information of the hon. member who has just mentioned "The Cairns Post" I point out that unlike the hon. members for Mulgrave and Tablelands, I very seldom get my name in "The Cairns Post," although I claim that my contributions are as important and as good as theirs. "The Cairns Post," at least in the last 18 months, has published very little of what I have said in this Chamber, although my remarks about the policy of the Government as it affects Far North Queensland are absolutely correct. I have been a resident of the area for very many years. Conditions there at the present time are closer to the conditions that obtained in the depression than they have been at any time in the last 30 years. They are getting quickly to

the stage that obtained then, when people had to camp on the banks of rivers and on the foreshores of Cairns. During the week before last I went to Mareeba to interview some tobacco growers. On my return trip I called on a farmer who has his house on the banks of the river. The wife of the tobacco grower said to me, "Look over the bank." To my amazement I saw not one but a considerable number of persons who were living on the bank of the river without any shelter. Many people are camping on the foreshores of Cairns.

Mr. Armstrong: Would you believe me if I told you that the Chairman of the Herberton Shire told me only a few days ago that he could not get men?

Mr. WALLACE: I would not believe the hon. member when he makes statements like that, because hundreds of men are available for work in North Queensland. It could well mean that the same thing is happening now as occurred during the depression when, under another Tory Government, the men were asked to move 20, 30, or 40 miles from their place of residence to get perhaps two days work. The Shire Council in Herberton may want one or two men for one or two days, but who will spend all that money going to Herberton for one or two day's work? The hon. member knows that it is true that there are hundreds of unemployed in Far Northern Queensland, and he has done nothing to date about getting behind me to try to alleviate the position.

Mr. Armstrong: Can you take your mind back a few years?

Mr. WALLACE: I can take my mind back many years, and I repeat that unemployment conditions in Far Northern Queensland are as bad now as they were in 1936, 1937 and 1938.

Mr. Armstrong: Do you remember that in those days—

Mr. Windsor: You will make conditions bad.

Mr. WALLACE: The hon. members who are interjecting are just wasting time because they have nothing constructive to put forward.

I said previously that I believe the policy of this Government towards Far Northern Queensland is completely destructive, and I again say that I believe that to be completely true. Going back over the years that this Government have been in power, we find the destruction of the town of Mt. Mulligan, the virtual destruction of the town of Port Douglas, the closing of the Mt. Garnet railway section, the threatened closing of certain sections of the Chillagoe system, and we must not forget the Collinsville set-up. We come now to a state of affairs that will bring added misery and discontent to the people of Far Northern Queensland. An interim report by the American consultants to the Government on railways, Messrs. Ford,

Bacon & Davies, recently advised the Minister for Transport to close the railway workshops at Cairns. It was no surprise to me, because every time I spoke from the public platform during the last election campaign I told the people of Cairns and district that it was the intention of the Government to close the workshops at Cairns. A senior Minister of the Government intimated very strongly in Townsville that his Government would wrap up the railway workshops in very small parcels, that it was not their policy to have the railway workshops brought to a standard to handle dieselisation 100 per cent. It would be their policy to farm out the repair work on diesels, and other rolling stock, to private factories. The moment they came into power they set out to destroy the workshops and its work forces; they sold some of the finest machinery in the State to private enterprise. I will have something further to say about that later on. To say that the people of Cairns and the hinterland are incensed at the proposal is a gross misrepresentation of the truth. Every section of the community, irrespective of political colour, is affected. Public meetings have been held, and protests have been sent to the Premier, and they will continue to come from all organisations within the area. The people of far-northern Queensland find it very hard to reconcile the suggestion that the workshops in Cairns should be closed, with the proposals emanating from the Government benches about an expansion of the economy of the area. They view it, as I do, as a retrograde step from which Cairns and the hinterland may possibly never recover. It has happened before. There are hon. members on this side of the Committee who, with myself, have seen the complete disintegration of sections of far-northern Queensland. We are very much afraid that through the actions of this Government it could happen again.

How does the Government's proposed action fit in with the much-talked-of policy of decentralisation of industry? How does it fit in with the obligation of the nation to the railwaymen of Queensland for the outstanding part they played in the prosecution of the war effort, when they were compelled to toil very long hours to keep the wheels of industry turning, in many cases with very detrimental effects on their health? Many railwaymen have had to retire early and many have died through the exertions of that period. Where is the Government's appreciation of the part played by our people in the development of Far North Queensland?

Mr. Duggan: I think they hope to see the ranks of Labour reduced in those areas so that they might win seats from them.

Mr. WALLACE: They never will. Without doubt the five seats in Far North Queensland will return to the Australian Labour Party at the next election.

What compensation is likely to be paid to railway people who, through the Government's vicious action, are forced to leave the

area and set up home in other parts of the State? Do Government members imagine that any compensation, if given, would be adequate for the lifelong battle many of those people have put up to obtain their homes and rear their families? I assure them that no compensation would be. Surely those of our people who have been born and bred in the area, or who have elected to reside there and rear their families, happy in the knowledge that under Labour administration they had some security, are entitled to remain there until death, with security, in the same congenial surroundings as those that existed under Labour.

Were the Government conscious of the knowledge and ability of their own employees they would certainly not have gone to the length of importing an advisory body from overseas. There are in the Railway Department men of outstanding ability fully competent to advise and with the courage and local know-how to put the railways in a sound position. I remind the Premier and his Government that Australia's greatest son to date was a railway man. I remind them, too, that the deficits of the railways as a public utility mean nothing. With the wise marshalling of the brains of Railway Department officials the deficits could reach many times the record they have reached to date and the State could still be saved money and prestige. I honestly believe there are within the ranks of railway employees people who would put the railways back on a sound footing and save us money. Queensland, and indeed Australia, was developed by its railways. Despite the efforts of this or any other Government to destroy the people's assets I believe we will in the not far distant future return to the railroads as our main means of transport in every sphere. Despite what people may say about the failures of the railways I am convinced that, if the right brains are used, we will see the return of the days when railways were the main means of transport, and particularly heavy transport. It is futile for anybody to try to tell me that that will not be so. One has only to look at what has happened to many of the railways in Australia and overseas to realise that they are again coming into their own.

I remind the Premier, too, that Far Northern Queensland is a very vital portion of the nation, not to be tampered with and dissipated at the whim of some of the people who are directing and in the process of destroying his Government. I can assure him, as I have done already, that at the next election the government of Queensland will of necessity return to the Australian Labour Party. History has repeated itself on many occasions, and it is repeating itself now. In Queensland we have reached a state of grave crisis, and on every occasion when a crisis has arisen in the history of Australia it has fallen to the lot of the Australian Labour Party to lift the nation and the States from the morass into which they invariably sink under Tory government.

Notwithstanding my feelings about this matter, I further remind the Premier and the Government that many thousands of people in Far Northern Queensland fought and a great many died in what they believed was a fight to retain their heritage—the right to remain free and untrammelled. But we are getting away from that ideal. Despite the dictatorship under which the Government are functioning, I put it to the Premier that he and his Government should be strong enough to repudiate the recommendation of these overseas advisers, which I believe was not of their own choosing. I think the recommendation was put to Ford, Bacon & Davis by some member of the Government or supporters of the Government.

Mr. Mann: It was put up by the Minister for Transport or the Deputy Premier.

Mr. WALLACE: I am not going to say the Deputy Premier is to blame, but I am certainly going to blame him for something in a few minutes. I have spoken about what is happening in Cairns, and it is far from good. Despite what some hon. members from the Far North might say, and despite the fact that the sugar and meat seasons have been at their peak, hundreds are unemployed in the Cairns district. One would not expect that to be so with those seasons at their peak, but the Government have done nothing to relieve the unemployment in the area.

I wish now to say something about the position at Mt. Isa. Before giving my own opinion, I should like to read from the October Bulletin of the Printing Industry Employees' Union of Australia. This article, which I think sets out the position at Mt. Isa very clearly, says—

“The Mt. Isa Lock-Out

“Why are workers locked out at Mt. Isa Mines? Well may one ask such a question, as it appears from Press reports that their working conditions are good and that they receive hefty wage packets each week.

“Concerning the claim that working conditions are good and wages in the near-millionaire class, forget it! We do not think the working conditions of our members are good, but believe me they are far superior to those of the workers at Mt. Isa.”

“For instance, our newspaper boys receive 4 weeks annual leave and 3 statutory holidays during the year (the four weeks is to compensate for working on statutory holidays without any penalty rate). The mine workers do the same and they receive two weeks' leave.

“When the mine workers return from annual leave they have to re-apply for their job—we walk straight to our machine, bench, or frame (depending on our trade calling).

"Newspaper reports would have you believe that weekly payments of £40 and over are regular; bunkum! The truth is that the tradesman out there is on a margin of £5 2s. 6d. a week, plus the State Basic Wage of £14 4s., plus the area allowance of £1 12s. 6d., plus the production bonus of £8. They are the ingredients of his total wage.

"Thus, the only difference between the worker's wage in Brisbane and the Mt. Isa wage is the area allowance of £1 12s. 6d. and the production bonus of £8. The firstmentioned is an Award of the Court and is added to the wage of all State Award workers in Western Queensland. The production bonus of £8 is restricted to Mt. Isa mine workers. But don't forget this: not one penny over the award is paid to any mine worker in Mt. Isa. And, believe me the high cost of living at Mt. Isa soon swallows up the bonus payment."

Mr. Ramsden: How does the man get on who is working in Mt. Isa but not employed at the mine?

Mr. WALLACE: I am making a speech; the hon. member can make one later. This bulletin makes a comparison between prices in Brisbane and Mt. Isa. It states—

"For instance, our glass of beer costs roughly 1s.; the price at the Isa is 1s. 3d. A cauliflower capable of fitting into 'father's' cup is worth 6s., beans are 3s. 6d. a lb. Craven A cigarettes retail at 2d. a packet more than Brisbane. The hotel tariff is £3 15s. a day (an extra 5s. a day if your room is air-conditioned). Beer is 5s. 2d. a bottle as against the local price of less than 3s. 6d. Potatoes in Brisbane at 9d. as against 11½d. in Mt. Isa. Butter is 5s. 2½d. lb. and sugar at 1s. 1d. a lb. Many other prices could be compared but the aforementioned serve to illustrate the high Mt. Isa cost of living."

I read that for the purpose of putting on record the information contained therein as it would appear to me that the public of Queensland are being misled day by day by many of the items that appear in the Press, which invariably favour the company at Mt. Isa. For that reason I want to place on record just what is happening there.

My impression of the Mt. Isa dispute is that the action of Mount Isa Mines Limited in refusing to negotiate with union officials over the bonus issue is another glaring instance of the arrogant and irresponsible action of the Deputy Leader of the Government. I say that very definitely. Had he not been so dogmatic in his approach to the amending of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act much unnecessary industrial turmoil and hardship could have been averted. There is no doubt about that at all. Had the Minister been prepared to be advised by officers competent to advise,

had he been prepared to accept just a fraction of the very sound advice tendered to him by members of the Opposition during the debate on the Bill, we most certainly would not be in the position we are in today of the tail wagging the dog. I believe that the Parliament of Queensland is, and should be, the supreme legislative body in the State. It can remain so only as long as Ministers of the Crown have the political capacity to take advice from experts. It is safe to say that in this instance no such capacity was shown, but, true to form the Minister for Labour and Industry rushed legislation through the chamber which necessitated 29 amendments before it reached the final stages. I do not suppose that anything like that would have been seen in the history of Parliaments in the British Commonwealth.

Mr. Bennett: He broke his own record.

Mr. WALLACE: That is so. I never would have believed that that stage would be reached. I thought the Government would have restrained the Minister from bringing in a Bill that required so much amendment.

It is glaringly apparent that the section of the Act dealing with bonus payments will again have to come before the Parliament for further amendment. No matter how the Minister and his colleagues try to evade the issue, common sense demands that the authority of the Court or the Commission that was so blatantly usurped by the amending legislation must be returned to the Court.

Since its inception it has been the responsibility of the Industrial Court to function on all matters coming within the ambit of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, and for anyone to suggest that bonus payments, after having been recognised and accepted by all and sundry as an industrial matter over a period of almost 30 years, by the stroke of a pen cease to be industrial matters, is just too stupid for words. It shocks me to think that such a state of affairs was allowed to occur. It is the sort of thing that could only emanate from the mind of an individual obsessed with a fanatical desire to destroy the workers of the State completely.

There could be no doubt even in the minds of the most biased that the issues at stake up to the present time are the failure of the Mt. Isa Mining Company to further negotiate with union officials on bonus payments, in accordance with its increased profits, and secondly, the right of union members to take strike action after having faithfully carried out the terms and conditions of the recently amended Act as they affect secret ballots. The union claims to have been locked out, and in my opinion these claims are very well founded.

Mr. Windsor: Mr. Harvey said it was not a lock-out.

Mr. WALLACE: Section 98 of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act of 1961 provides for an authorised strike. Those unions with members employed at Mt. Isa have, as far as is humanly possible, fully carried out the constitutional requirements.

Mr. Ramsden: One thousand did not vote.

Mr. WALLACE: The hon. member would not know anything about that. Paragraph 4 of Section 98 provides that a certificate from the Registrar is sufficient proof until it is proved to the contrary, and they having in their possession such a certificate, it must be assumed that the unions have acted in accordance with the section and that their members are not acting in an illegal or unauthorised fashion. Contrary to this is the action of the Mt. Isa Mining Company which, because of the full compliance with the terms and conditions of the Act by the unions appears to be acting completely illegally. It has indicated a strong desire to force the workers into a complete and abject surrender of their recognised and inherent right to strike.

I repeat that the action of the Mt. Isa company was illegal and controversial. The desire of this company and its associates in industry is to force workers to agree to an abject surrender of their recognised right to strike. Thinking people will conclude, therefore, that the Mt. Isa company, again with its associates in big business, had a considerable say in the framing of the Bill to amend the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. The company's action proves conclusively the accuracy of statements made during the debate on that Bill that any interference with the Act, because of the hostile attitude towards unions and union officials, would bring about a state of chaos in industry, particularly at Mt. Isa. Those statements were well-founded. The Minister for Labour and Industry was quite adamant that the emasculatation of the Act by removing a section that for approximately 30 years had been completely acceptable to employer and employee and gave the Court an unfettered right to award bonus payments to Mt. Isa employees, would enable industry to function more smoothly and that the company would be anxious to continue the practice of awarding bonus payments more or less on the long accepted principle of a payment in proportion to its profits. On the contrary, and this was expected by Opposition members, the Mt. Isa company has welched on its obligation and has taken the unprecedented step of completely defying the terms and conditions of the Act and its agreement with the Minister. It is quite apparent that there was an agreement between the Minister and the Mt. Isa company on the framing of the amending Bill. Because of the assurances that had been given to the Minister, he accepted it, but it is quite evident now that the Mt. Isa company are completely defying the terms and conditions of it.

Court members made it abundantly clear prior to the amending legislation being passed by Parliament that the powers of the court were being savagely attacked and that the Act was being heavily loaded against the workers. Because of the amending legislation the court decided not to hear the unions' application for an increase in the Mt. Isa bonus payment. In that action and in its statements we think the court indicated very strongly that its powers were being savagely attacked and whittled away. In my opinion the amending Act is a complete negation of British justice. The truth of that statement is borne out particularly by Section 12 giving the power to reduce or abrogate a bonus. The Act clearly and distinctly takes from the Commission the right to grant such a payment. Although it is given the right to reduce a bonus payment, it has no power to grant one.

The Act provides that the President of the Commission shall, if the parties so desire, make available a Commissioner for the purpose of mediation. Just how useless and futile is the provision has been amply demonstrated. Commissioner Harvey conferred with the parties in Brisbane and Mt. Isa, with negative results. It is evident, and he agreed, that the position at Mt. Isa is chaotic and hopeless. He indicated very strongly that the law of the jungle is operating there. There is no chance of effective control until the Act is further amended. He has given a clear indication of that. It would appear that at the moment Commissioner Harvey has made up his mind that there is no possible chance of agreement being reached. He has also added that the company has not committed any breach of the Act and he has expressed the opinion that the unions are at fault. He has indicated too that after the expiration of two or three weeks he, in his capacity as Commissioner, will proceed to direct the unions back to work. That is the interpretation we put on his actions. I want to see fair play. Section 12 of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act stipulates that the President of the Court shall, if the parties so request, make available a Commissioner for the purpose of mediation. I feel very strongly about any statements made by the Commissioner, acting as mediator, especially as neither the Commission nor the Commissioner have any power to direct Mount Isa Mines Ltd.

Any statement emanating from him in his capacity as mediator is completely unwarranted and unfair to the Commissioner himself and the party against whom the Act is so heavily loaded—the union. Commissioner Harvey knows that he has no jurisdiction and he also knows that because of the unparalleled stupidity of the Minister for Labour and Industry, until such time as the Act comes back to Parliament for further amendment to again clothe the Commission with the proper and necessary authority to

assess and award bonus payments, the Mt. Isa Mines Co. will continue to thumb its nose at the Commissioner and the Government. If the Premier and his Government desire industrial peace it is up to them to do a spot of nose-thumbing themselves and make the necessary amendments to the Act without delay in the best interests of all concerned in the State of Queensland.

I now wish to turn to another subject again relating to Far North Queensland. While the Treasurer has very expertly and cunningly avoided mentioning one of the projects that is of major importance to Far Northern Queensland and that is the Mareeba-Dimbulah irrigation scheme, about which he merely says that the construction of the Barron River hydro-electric project will proceed at an increased tempo, I wish to draw the attention of the Committee to a most anomalous feature of the administration affecting the water supply from the irrigation channels to consumers and to make a plea on behalf of those farmers operating in the aerodrome area near Mareeba who desire to draw their water supplies from the irrigation channel. This area has been producing tobacco for approximately 31 years and the producers in the area believe that they are entitled to favourable consideration of their application to have the channels brought to their area. Applications were lodged first in November, 1959, and again in 1951, immediately after they had received a reply from the department in reply to their first application. The answer to both applications was identical, being a blunt refusal of the request, on both occasions, and advising that there was no possibility of irrigation channels being brought to the area until such time as all other areas are serviced which could mean upwards of six years. It appears to me that an anomalous situation exists and that these farmers are labouring under a great disability and that their plight is not generally known to the public or members of Parliament.

Mr. Davies: Can you tell us what the tobacco-growers think of the Tobacco Marketing Board?

Mr. WALLACE: Yes, I can and I will. The growers in the area are responsible for delivering their own water from the Barron River to their crops. Nearly all of them at the moment are faced with the complete replacement of their irrigation equipment. Some of them have told me that, with heavy maintenance costs, they might be able to stagger along for a further 18 months or so but every one of them in the area tells me he is faced with the almost immediate replacement of his irrigation equipment. I am told that the estimated average life of irrigation equipment on a conservative basis is about 20 years and the estimated average cost of fully renewing it is about £10,000 a farm. In view of this and in view of the fact that the average excess irrigation costs per acre in the Aerodrome area is £56 as

against those people who are classed as channel farmers, the producers of the area feel they have good and sufficient reason for requesting a prompt review of their applications.

I am advised that the £56 excess cost of delivering water to their crops is made up as follows:—

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Average acreage grown | 25 acres |
| Depreciation on plant | £20 an acre |
| Pumping cost | £15 an acre |
| Maintenance cost | £10 an acre |
| Water fee to Irrigation Department | £4 an acre |
| Labour positioning of piping | £16 an acre |

That comes to £65, less £9 an acre paid by the channel farmers, leaving £56 an acre.

I understand there are some 600 acres under tobacco in the area at present with approximately 100 acres of small crops. With the advent of the channel through the area the land under small crops can be brought into tobacco production. It is estimated that with the advent of irrigation channels the present production of tobacco could be doubled. The growers are smart and they realise that doubling the production in the area would double the amount of money the department would get from them and that would represent an interest rate of approximately 8 per cent. on the departmental outlay. They think that compares more than favourably with channelling water to any other area in the North. For a number of reasons they are very much concerned at the department's refusal to consider their applications favourably. Firstly, the area is part of the original tobacco production area and proved without doubt to be eminently suitable for the production of good-quality leaf. Secondly, they believe that the area was intended to be serviced by channel in the original scheme. Thirdly, they believe the servicing of the area by Commission channel was considered by the Irrigation Department to be an economic proposition. Fourthly, the estimated cost of bringing the channel to the area, of £140,000, compared more than favourably with the estimated cost of taking the channel to the Emerald Creek area, of £1,000,000, and where the acreage available for production would not be more than double that of the Aerodrome area, with the Aerodrome area soil considered to be the better for tobacco production. Fifthly, they believe that politics had a very strong bearing on the department's refusal to agree to their application.

Having reached this stage of my plea on behalf of these producers, and having been asked by the hon. member for Maryborough what they think of the hon. member for Tablelands, let me say I am glad the hon. member for Tablelands is in the Chamber because I should have been reluctant to say it had he not been present. What I am going to say will affect him very materially. I put it to the Premier that tobacco-growers in the Far North are not at all happy with

the activities of the hon. member for Tablelands in his capacity as chairman of the Tobacco Leaf Marketing Board. They told me that they resent very strongly his long absence overseas while the growers were labouring under these very adverse conditions. There appears to be a strong hostility to the hon. member's holding the two positions of Chairman of the Tobacco Leaf Marketing Board and Member for Tablelands in this Chamber. These people would be very happy if the Premier came to Mareeba and convened a mass meeting of tobacco growers to hear their opinion publicly. But if the Premier is not prepared to do that, they suggest that he might advise the hon. member for Tablelands to resign his position of Chairman of the Tobacco Leaf Marketing Board because the consensus of opinion among tobacco producers in the Far North is that the industry has become a political football as a result of his holding two positions. They go so far as saying that the hon. member for Tablelands has been the chief beneficiary. Those are the words of the people concerned. I have been amongst them for some considerable time and talked to them, and they have asked me to put this case very strongly in their favour. I believe that they have a very genuine grievance because the area was amongst the first to be approved as economically suitable to have the channels brought through it and it will be the last of all the tobacco areas to receive the channelled waters. I say very distinctly that they are carrying a heavy burden. They have asked the hon. member for Tablelands on several occasions to do something for them, and they vehemently agree now that he has done nothing for them. I am reluctant to bring this case before the Committee, but I am capable of doing so and willing to do so if I am asked.

There are many other reasons why the people in the tobacco areas are concerned about the Government's action in not bringing the channels to the area. I draw the attention of the Committee to this statement in "The Courier-Mail" of Monday, 16 October —

"More Millions on Snowy: Now
£200 Mil.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Menzies), yesterday announced that an immediate start would be made on works costing £20,887,000 which will divert Snowy Mountains water into the Murray River."

That indicates very strongly to me that the members of the Federal Government, including the Prime Minister, are fully in agreement with the contention of hon. members on this side of the Chamber that major conservation of water is of paramount importance in the development of Australia. But it also indicates that the Prime Minister and his Government have no further interest in Far Northern Queensland, or in Queensland, for that matter. From the statements

made about the potential of Far Northern Queensland and of Queensland generally, it would have been reasonable to assume that the Prime Minister and his Cabinet would have decided, in view of the importance of Queensland to the nation, to divert some of the millions that are being pumped into the Snowy Mountains scheme to the most valuable and vulnerable part of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Duggan: And £2,000,000 on an ornamental lake at Canberra.

Mr. WALLACE: That is right. It also indicates to me, as I have said in the Chamber previously, that the Premier and his colleagues who go to Canberra to approach the Prime Minister for more money have not the pugnacity needed to stand up to the Prime Minister. I believe—indeed, I know—that the very big deterioration in both population and industry in Far Northern Queensland is strongly indicative of the truth of the statements appearing in the Press that Far Northern Queensland will be given away completely. There is no doubt it has been given away by the Queensland Government because ever since they came into power there has been a constant deterioration. It has now been given away by their cohorts in the Federal sphere. It was interesting to read the statement made by the Leader of the Opposition and to realise that he agrees entirely with me. According to this newspaper article, Mr. Duggan said—

"It is obvious from this latest appropriation that Mr. Menzies is not genuinely interested in Northern Australia."

I believe that to be completely true. That hon. members opposite are interjecting so much is proof positive that they know nothing of the affairs of Far Northern Queensland, nor are they interested. If the hon. members for Tablelands and Mulgrave were interested in their electorates, every time I condemn the Federal Government for their inactivity towards the development of Far Northern Queensland, they should stand behind me in demanding strong and positive action to alleviate the distressing position obtaining at the moment in that part of the State.

Mr. Davies: Instead they only sneer and ridicule.

Mr. WALLACE: They can sneer but they cannot ridicule because when I speak I put before Parliament facts as they obtain. I like to put the facts forward for the benefit of the people of Far Northern Queensland who are glad to know that they have somebody willing and able to put their case. We do not willingly hurt anybody by putting a case. If we are asked to do something on behalf of the people of Queensland we should not be here if we have not the courage to do so. The hon. member for McKenzie indicated that he had the courage to get up and fight. I want the Government to know that on this side we are willing and able

to take Government members on at any time. From this side we have given a lesson to Government members. We have very seriously embarrassed the Premier and his Ministers on more than one occasion.

I repeat that it would have been wise had the Minister for Health and Home Affairs brought down his Estimates for detailed debate this year.

(Time expired.)

Dr. DELAMOTHE (Bowen) (7.38 p.m.): An examination of the Estimates of the Probable Ways and Means of Expenditure of the Government discloses many interesting points. There is none more interesting, I believe, than the figures I now propose to give. Under the heading of Trust and Special Funds appears an item for Salaries, Wages and Working Expenses on account of Collinsville and Omore mines, and the figure shown as expended in 1960-1961 is £684,173. The appropriation for the current year is £295,000, a difference of almost £400,000. Under the heading of Consolidated Revenue the provision for losses in 1960-1961 was £128,777, for the current year the estimate is nil. From the Loan Fund the expenditure in 1960-1961 was £112,000 and the projected expenditure for the current year is £30,000. Taken together those figures represent a tremendous saving in this year of grace as a result of the action taken by the Government in disposing of the coal mine at Collinsville.

We are discussing a censure motion and I propose to meet censure with censure and to lay the blame, because I believe that the necessity to dispose of this State instrumentality is traceable directly to at least 20 years of failure to face up to responsibility, by the people, blood brothers of the present Opposition, who preceded them, and right down to the present day by the present members of the Opposition. I say that deliberately because one would have expected rather different conduct, although the majority of residents of Collinsville practise the same cult as do hon. members sitting on the Opposition benches.

I should like to tell hon. members something of the history of Collinsville down the years. Operations commenced there in one tunnel in March, 1919, and in 1935 a second dip was constructed. The first coal, amounting to 3,914 tons, was produced in 1920. On 24 August, 1922, the Bowen-to-Collinsville railway was opened for traffic and in 1923-1924 80,000 tons came out of Collinsville, the peak production being, of course, during the war, when many extra miners were transferred there in 1942-1943 and production reached the peak of 304,702 tons.

It is from that period that the sad and sorry story of Collinsville commences with a gradual slipping away of coal production. It started in that year and, by 1950-1951,

production was down to 116,385 tons. That was caused partly by a decline in the number of contract miners and partly by the imposition of dargs and, as the Government was to discover, the necessity for mechanisation.

Between 10 January, 1951, and 24 March, 1952, the complete installation of power borers was carried out at Collinsville, after quite a fight with the miners, and it eventually resulted after much expense of installation, in a production of one extra skip per coal-face miner per day.

It was found, of course, that that was quite insufficient to turn a losing proposition into an industry that would at least break even, so mechanisation of the mine was set in train and was completed in November, 1953, at a cost in the vicinity of £500,000.

Hon. members at present in the Chamber and those who were in the Government and who are now in Opposition, will recall the tremendous opposition to the introduction of mechanisation. In spite of the expenditure of such an amount of money the immediate result was an increase of the average overall coal production per shift from 1.51 tons to only 1.68 tons. Production at the coal face, which is different from overall average production, increased from 8.66 tons to 12.13 tons. That should have indicated, and I am certain that it did, that the army behind the men at the coal face was just too big for the miners to carry.

On 13 October, 1954, there occurred an explosion in which unfortunately seven people were killed and the mine was closed for some time, reopening in January, 1955. From then until the second half of 1960 hand-mining in No. 2 tunnel was carried out. Towards the end of 1960 one unit of mechanisation had been put in order and production by means of partial mechanisation was begun. By the beginning of this year the second unit of mechanisation was completed, No. 2 tunnel was shut down and production was by mechanisation until the mine was finally closed on 19 April.

Let us for a moment make a brief study of production on the Collinsville field. I go back to 1950 when the average production per man employed at Collinsville was 1.83 tons. At the same time at a neighbouring mine, Scottville, which is not nearly as good a mine, the overall average production was 2.52 tons per man shift and for underground mines in the whole of Queensland the average was 2.53 tons. In the July-December quarter of 1951 production at Collinsville was 1.84 tons compared with 2.58 tons at Scottville and 2.62 tons for the underground mines in the whole of Queensland.

We then come to 1960 when partial mechanisation was back in Collinsville. The overall average was 2.35 tons from a coal-face production of 23 tons. At Scottville

the overall average was 2.43 from coal-face production of 9.91 tons. For Queensland the overall average was 3.3 tons from coal-face production of 8.72 tons.

Those are very interesting figures because it will be realised from a study of them, despite all the changes in the method of winning coal, that very little change took place in overall average coal production. A Royal Commission was constituted and reported on the explosion on 8 February, 1956. Two significant paragraphs appear in their findings, the first being—

“If there is not a reasonable profit by the 30th June, 1958, the question of continuance or discontinuance at the mine should be carefully considered.”

and the second reading—

“The union would be wise to remember that while it is justified in its contention that its first duty is to look after its members it is not doing so if it pushes control to the stage where a mine becomes unprofitable.”

Let us consider the profitability or unprofitability of the mine. Losses from 1943-1944 to March, 1961, amounted to almost £1,000,000. During that period there was only one year when profitable operations were carried out, and that was 1952-1953 when a profit of £10,017 was made. Up to 30 June, 1960, which is the latest figure I have available, outstanding Treasury loans for installation of machinery, &c., over the years, amounted to £690,000. In addition to that, from its inception, until 30 June, 1960, grants from Consolidated Revenue to cover losses amounted to £842,000. I have the latest figures for the accumulated losses for Collinsville to 30 June, 1961, and in terms of what I said earlier the accumulated loss is £1,003,745. Of course, Labour was the Government from 1943 to 1957, but it is only fair to examine what the Governments did to meet these continuing losses. In 1943 the Minister for Mines of the day visited Collinsville, and he was very brave indeed because he called it “a war-time funk-hole.”

Mr. Ewan: Who was that?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: That was the Minister for Mines in 1943.

In the mid-forties, Mr. Martens, who was then a Federal member, referred to the Communist disruptionists at Collinsville as mostly migrants, who had never had a decent feed until they came to this country. As a result of his statements, which were published in the Press of the day, he lost his selection and was replaced by Mr. Edmonds as member for Herbert. In 1954 as many hon. members will remember, Mr. Riordan, who was then Minister for Mines, circulated this document to every member of the Parliamentary Labour Party. It got into the hands of “The Courier-Mail” and was published in full. What did Mr. Riordan

say? I will not worry hon. members by reading all of it but I will confine my quotations to the headlines in black print—

“Minister names some miners saboteurs.

“Darg reduced the output.

“Threat over mechanisation.

“Darg imposed by timber men.

“Took extra in rest periods.

“Assault on an official.

“Smoking underground.”

All hon. members may look at this document afterwards. It was not public at the time, but was a private document prepared and circulated by the then Minister for Mines. What did the Labour Government of the day do to meet the situation? They did nothing at all. Shortly afterwards the explosion came, and instead of taking advantage of the opportunity of the interval when no work took place, to put their house in order, what did they do? They put every miner in No. 2 tunnel. They had two men for every one-man job and carried on like that. It is no wonder that their average production per man-shift was infinitesimally low.

Mr. Hughes: You are suggesting Labour sold them out?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I am suggesting, and I make no mistake about it, that every Minister for Mines in the Labour Government wished to close the mine. This can be confirmed by the older members of the Labour Party. I know at least four Labour Ministers for Mines who wished to end the whole sorry business and close down the mines. Of course, when Labour is faced with occasions like that it never seems to be able to find the courage to do what is right.

That brings us to the position in 1957 when the Country Party-Liberal Government took office. What did they do? That is a fair question to ask. They found this mechanised equipment, which had cost about £500,000, buried under tons of stone. It was cleared at their direction and extra equipment in the form of new shuttle cars was bought so that mechanisation was completed and coal-winning by mechanisation was resumed in the second half of last year with the huge increase in production that I mentioned before—from 8 tons to 24 or 25 tons per coal-face miner.

What else did the Government do when they took over? I mentioned the tragedy of the seven men being killed. As some hon. members will know, there is a form of contributory subsidised pension for miners and their wives and widows and children. Normally, when a breadwinner is killed at work his wife becomes eligible for workers' compensation, but the widows of the men killed in the mine explosion of 1954 were excluded from the benefits of pensions and were told that when their lump sum under workers' compensation was cut out at the rate

of £4 15s. 0d. a week they would become eligible for the miners' pension. That would have taken them more than a lifetime.

Mr. Donald: We never denied compensation.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Denied pensions. I thank the hon. member for the correction. They were denied pensions until such time as their workers' compensation lump sum was cut out at the rate of £4 15s. 0d. a week. Of course this Government, realising the injustice of that, very smartly made those widows and all others eligible for pensions as well as workers' compensation. In other ways they have been very careful and very thoughtful with pensions. They have arranged reciprocity with New South Wales. They have arranged automatic rises of pensions as the age pension rises but for it never to come down if it falls, and they have arranged that, instead of an actuary deciding miners' contributions they shall be decided entirely by the Pensions Tribunal, on which, of course, miners are represented.

In October, 1957, mining operations ceased at Mt. Mulligan, and what did the Government do about that? Early in 1958 they transported free of cost to Collinsville all who wished to go there from Mt. Mulligan, not only their persons, wives and families to the number of approximately 200, but also their homes free of cost. They gave them a guarantee of a job for two years at least and a cash payment of £50 to meet the incidentals consequent upon their moving. The Government did all that to try to create an atmosphere in which men would produce more coal. But early in 1961, in spite of mechanised production being available, the overall man-shift production was little different from that of hand-mining and well below the figure given in the New South Wales Joint Coal Board's Report for 1960, in which it said—

"Generally it can be said that the outlook is bleak for any colliery that cannot raise its output per man-shift well above three tons."

I ask hon. members not to forget that the figure I gave them was something like 1.93 tons.

Because of the grave fall in orders and the continuing loss of 9s. 6d. a ton on coal produced and sold, it became obvious early in the new year that retrenchments would be necessary. Mr. Millar, State President of the Queensland Colliery Employees' Union, had consultations with the Minister and asked for a period to endeavour to find work for single men elsewhere and in which miners who were due for long service leave could take it. This was granted to cushion the effect of retrenchments. Following my visit to Collinsville early in January, a meeting was arranged with the Minister for Mines and the Directors of Mount Isa Mines Limited at which it was decided to search vigorously for new markets and to defer retrenchments for the period

during which that was being done. The news of that was given in a Press statement of 8 February, 1961, that statement having been shown to Mr. Millar and its contents agreed to by him the day before it was published.

On 1 February there was a 24-hour protest stoppage at Collinsville against the possibility of retrenchments, and on 2 February a public meeting was held in Collinsville, which was attended by the State Secretary, Mr. Vickers, at which the question of retrenchments was discussed and when the men were told by me that no retrenchments would take place until all avenues had been explored. They were told by the Shire Chairman that those who were retrenched would be found jobs by the shire. Nothing could be fairer than that, surely.

On 23 February, a three-weeks' strike commenced at Collinsville over the question of hot work. The Government tried to bring this dispute before the Coal Reference Board, but all their efforts and the efforts of the Coal Reference Board were treated with contempt by Mr. Millar. When I challenged him at a meeting in Collinsville he said, "We don't care about Coal Reference Boards and things like that." However, eventually the strike terminated on Mr. Millar's orders, the men going back and working in accordance with the directions of the manager.

On 31 March retrenchment notices were issued to 34, five of whom were going on long-service leave. The day before their week's notice expired, Messrs. Millar, Nisbet and Petersen called on me at Bowen and gave me a list of the retrenched men, 29 of whom were to be found jobs. Mr. Millar told me that jobs would be found for 10 single men at Ipswich and Maryborough, but to my knowledge those single men are still waiting for jobs at Ipswich and Maryborough. However, every man was subsequently found a job very quickly by the shire. Through various departments money was made available to provide work for all who desired work and from the day when dismissals took place on 7 April those who wished to work were found work. There was some criticism that they were merely jobs around the place and not permanent jobs. But at the same time the Government released something like £400,000 for the completion of the Bruce Highway in the Bowen shire. The stopgap jobs were purely and simply to tide them over until the Bruce Highway job commenced. When it did start many of the Collinsville miners worked on the Bruce Highway. On 8 April the miners refused to provide men for the usual week-end maintenance work on the conveyor belt, in spite of the fact that the award provides for it so that maintenance can be carried out when the mine is not working. So we come to 10 April when the famous propaganda miners' march took place in Bowen. Events moved very quickly. I should like to tell the Committee something about that march because of an interesting series of events that took place. Cabinet was due to meet in

Bowen on 10 April. Something like 29 deputations had been arranged. On the night before, the Sunday night, I had a ring from Mr. Nisbet, the secretary of the Collinsville State Mine branch, who said that they were coming down in a trainload to put on a march the next day, and asked if they could hold a deputation to the Premier. I said that it was impossible for me to say as I believed that the number of deputations already arranged would take up all the available time. However, they decided to come and asked me to meet them at the train. I said that I would. When I went to the train, instead of meeting only Collinsville people, as well as Mr. Millar, the State President, I met Mr. Macdonald, Secretary of the Trades and Labour Council, who, I believe, has nothing to do with the Colliery Employees' Union, and Mr. Fred Thompson of the A.E.U. I do not know why he was there because there were no members of the A.E.U. among the retrenched men. The Premier will recall how Messrs. Macdonald and Thompson tried to force their way into the deputation that was eventually arranged through his good offices, and how hard Messrs. Thompson and Macdonald tried to get in, right up to the moment when the Collinsville members, Mr. Millar and Mr. Mahon, the Federal Secretary of the Collieries Union, passed through the door into the Cabinet room. The deputation consisted of members of the Collinsville union, Mr. Millar and Mr. Mahon. Strangely enough Mr. Mahon was the chief spokesman of the miners' deputation.

Mr. Donald: What was strange about that?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: It was strange in that after the deputation had been told by the Premier that the Government were willing to hand the mine over to the miners to work free of cost, Mr. Mahon departed for New South Wales, never to be seen again nor ever to be heard from again. At that deputation, Mr. Millar made a statement, increasing the number of jobs in Ipswich and Maryborough to 18, of which we thought one or two would be for married men, and the Premier stated that he would give consideration, if those married men eventually went to Ipswich and Maryborough, to moving their furniture for them.

The next day a further stoppage was ordered and carried out, and resulted in the issue of dismissal notices. A week afterwards the Government called tenders for the sale of the mine and, since then, there has been continuous propaganda that one of the conditions of sale should be that the new owners would reopen the mine as soon as possible.

On 20 April there was a very large public meeting in Collinsville attended, amongst others, by the hon. member for Ipswich East and myself. The hon. member for Ipswich East caused much amusement up there.

Mr. Donald: You caused the amusement.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I do not know if he appreciated how funny they considered he was because the gist of his speech was criticism of the tremendous waste in spending £500,000 on mechanisation in 1954 and thinly disguised, not entirely accusations, but innuendoes that somebody somewhere had got a cut out of it.

Mr. DONALD: I rise to a point of order. I certainly object to a statement that I said or implied that anybody got a cut out of anything. I want to be quite fair and I want decency. The hon. member said he would fight attack with counter-attack. I am not going to fight indecency with indecency. All I ask is that he tell the truth.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member for Bowen to accept the statement of the hon. member for Ipswich East.

Dr DELAMOTHE: Very well. It caused a tremendous amount of amusement. Of course it had to be pointed out to the hon. member for Ipswich East that he apparently did not know or had forgotten that the expenditure of £500,000 had taken place during the life of the Government of which he was a prominent member.

Mr. Donald: I had not forgotten nor had I to be prompted. The hon. member knows that.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Immediately the dismissals took effect the usual Communist technique was put into operation. The first event was the formation of an area committee consisting of representatives of the Scottville Miners' Union, two from the F.E.D.F.A., two from the A.E.U., two from E.T.U., and representatives of the miners at Collinsville, but soon and up until today, there was, strange to say, only the representatives of the Scottville Miners' Union and those who at some time were the executive of the now defunct Collinsville branch who even today fail to realise that their days of membership of that branch are over as, with the effluxion of time the union branch has died.

Now we come to the famous convoy. This is a very interesting story. It was the brainchild entirely of Mr. Millar and I well remember it. I have been in and out of Collinsville more than 20 times since the mine was closed so I do know something about what occurs in the place. I might mention that the hon. member for Ipswich East, after the famous night meeting to which I have referred, like Mr. Mahon, departed and was seen no more at Collinsville, nor were any Opposition members who profess to represent most of the people of Collinsville seen there. I would have thought that some at least of them would have gone to see how their people were getting on in Collinsville.

The convoy, the brainchild of Mr. Millar, departed on 11 May in nine cars with nine women and 21 men. In that convoy it is

interesting to note—and the hon. member for Rockhampton North would know this—there was only one member of the A.L.P.

Mr. Thackeray: They asked me to billet a miner. I said, "I will billet any A.L.P. man," and I billeted an A.L.P. man. I would not know how many there were.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: He was the only one.

Mr. Thackeray: Thanks for the information.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: The interesting thing is that that man was a Scottville miner and, in company with another Scottville miner, he accompanied the convoy as a representative of the neighbouring branch. Between them for the week or so of the convoy journey I understand they received in cash or kind an amount of nearly £250. In fact, they were paid £6 a day from the time they left Collinsville until they returned. All their expenses were paid and four new tyres were fitted. Between them, I understand, they received of the order of £250 to accompany the convoy.

Mr. Windsor: Did that come out of petty cash?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I leave to hon. members' imagination where that came from.

Mr. Davies: Why don't you say where it came from?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I can tell the hon. member where I think it may have come from. When the Collinsville sub-branch closed down I understand approximately £2,000 was in the various funds. Since the mine closed between £2,000 and £3,000 has been subscribed by various organisations throughout Queensland and by the Miners' Union Branches of New South Wales. I do not cavill at that but plenty of money was available for payment of these people. The comment I make is that this convoy was to test reaction or show the flag or show solidarity and it seems strange that men had to be paid to take part.

Mr. Donald: Union accounts are audited every six months.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: There is more than a complaint in Collinsville at present that no audited figures have been produced since the closure of the mine.

This famous convoy of nine cars was reduced to eight when it arrived in the South, owing to the seizure by one of the time-payment companies of the car belonging to the brother of the State president, for an amount of £72. I should have thought that £72 could have been found without great difficulty when £250 had been found for other purposes.

Mr. Donald: You growl about their getting £6 a day and now you say an extra £72 should have been found.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I am just growling because they did not find the extra £72. I have here the "Common Cause" of 20 May, 1961, which, as the hon. member for Ipswich East is aware, is a miners' paper, in which this is reported—

"Speaking from Brisbane on Tuesday morning, Queensland District President, Mr. T. Millar, said everything was ready to give a great welcome at Ipswich to the Collinsville convoy."

But very little interest was displayed in the convoy as is demonstrated by this report from "The Courier-Mail" of 18 May, 1961—

"About 150 people assembled at Bremer Park and on nearby footpaths to welcome the five women and 27 men in the convoy.

Many present were pensioners and people not connected with the mining industry."

As a matter of fact I understand that the only miners present were the Collinsville miners. Mr. Parkinson, the Federal President, was there and he said,

"I want to say I cannot be happy about the attendance at this meeting. I place full responsibility on members of the Miners' Federation on the Ipswich and Rosewood coalfields."

Eventually the convoy arrived in Brisbane on 19 May, and it was welcomed at the Trades Hall. There were various speakers, amongst whom was Mr. Arnell who, although he is an A.L.P. senate candidate and although only one member of the convoy was a member of the A.L.P., was very proud to be associated with those non-A.L.P. members from Collinsville.

An A.L.P. Member: Many of them that came were not Communists. They were union officials.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I am not claiming they were Communists.

Mr. Davies: You are trying to create the impression that they were.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I will tell the hon. member about his Deputy Leader now because I have the "Common Cause" here of 27 May. I should like to read this to hon. members opposite because I think they are all worried because their Deputy Leader was so misguided as to entertain the members of the convoy here at Parliament House, and the one member of the A.L.P. was carefully excluded from that entertainment.

Mr. Hodges: Didn't they bring him along?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: He was not allowed in.

As a result of his action the Deputy Leader was praised very highly, and I should like to read what "Common Cause" has to say about him. It says—

"Members of the Central and District Executives and Collinsville officials met Mr. Lloyd, Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, and sought his assistance in reaching the Government.

Reference was made to rumours circulating in Collinsville to the effect that the Central Executive of the A.L.P. had directed the Party not to assist the convoy.

Mr. Lloyd and also Mr. J. Donald, M.L.A., hotly repudiated any suggestion that the party was not one hundred per cent. behind the move to bring about a reopening of the Collinsville mine."

Mr. Donald: What's wrong with that?

Dr. DELAOMTHE: That's right. The article continued—

"Mr. Lloyd agreed to issue a Press statement indicating the party's support for the Collinsville campaign, and to send a letter to Collinsville to that effect."

Mr. Donald: What's wrong with that?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: The hon. member for Ipswich East probably gets a copy of this, "Area News," because I do.

Mr. Donald: They treat you better than they treat me. You are dearer to the Communists than I am.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I am there every second week. It comes every Wednesday, hot from the Press, and there is usually a paragraph devoted to me, although I have not had one lately. This issue of 24 May has this to say—

"A very heartening and outstanding feature of the visit of the convoy to Brisbane was its reception, and the assistance given it, by the Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party, the Hon. E. Lloyd.

"The hon. Jim Donald came all the way from Brisbane to address the rally held in Collinsville, taking the platform with the Miners' Leaders.

"All through there has been this solid unity of the workers of Queensland, both politically and industrially;" and this will amuse the Premier—

"And it is this that has thrown a near panic into the ranks of the Nicklin Government."

Mr. Houston: You were not game to go there.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I have been there often since the mine closed and I have castigated hon. members opposite about not going up there.

I must apologise for this but I think I should say it. The Leader of the Opposition has been much wiser than the Deputy Leader because he has done the Pontius Pilate act and stood aside and washed his hands of the whole affair.

Mr. LLOYD: I rise to a point of order. I understand that the hon. member for Bowen said that I entertained the convoy and excluded the only A.L.P. member from it. On a point of explanation, I point out to

the Committee that I met a union deputation when the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity and the Acting Premier, refused to see a deputation from the Colliery Employees' Union, who asked me to make the approaches to the Government and to the Premier, in his absence the Acting Premier, and the Minister for Mines. I saw that deputation and I think, in making this explanation, I did something that any Labour member of this Assembly, or in Queensland, would do against a precipitate, dastardly action on the part of the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Bowen.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Do we get time off for these interruptions, Mr. Taylor?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Dr. DELAMOTHE: The convoy returned via Bowen to Collinsville a week later, on the 26th, and where there had been a very large crowd to see them off there was not a single soul to see them back, even though they had sent wires. In fact at a meeting held shortly after their return quite some plain speaking took place.

Shortly after that, Mr. Millar, State President, approached the manager of Scottville colliery and asked if there was any way that Scottville could employ some of the dismissed Collinsville miners. (I suggest that the hon. member for Ipswich East will be able to follow this and explain it to his fellow hon. members perhaps better than most of them.) He was told that Scottville could pick up 70 to 80 men the next day by putting on a third production shift. Mr. Millar said this was completely against the award, even though these men had been out of work for some time. Because of that only nine men were picked up. Thanks to vacancies caused by people leaving Scottville since then, an extra 20 have been picked up. I can tell the Committee without any boasting that, in addition, work has been found for well over 100 people in the area around Collinsville. I am very proud of that and I think hon. members opposite should be proud of it too.

Mr. Donald: Ninety men are still waiting for jobs.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: In answer to that, 260 men were dismissed. What has any member of the Opposition done to find work for any one of those men?

Opposition Members interjected.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: They are supporters of the party to which hon. members who are interjecting belong, not to my party. Seventy-four men out of the 93 presently registered in Collinsville who have been out of work so long and others have not been permitted to take work with Davis Contractors. The new owners very rightly expect to be able to hire their own labour, especially

as the manager at the neighbouring mine has always had the right to choose his own labour.

As late as Wednesday of last week—six days ago—a meeting was held in Brisbane between the new owners and Mr. Nisbet, Mr. Millar, and Mr. Parkinson, the Federal President, and all except Mr. Parkinson agreed that the mine should reopen on the new owner's terms. Mr. Parkinson, who comes from New South Wales and is a well-known and self-acknowledged Communist, was the only one who stood out. I wonder why? Is it because he is a Communist, and Communism breeds on trouble and misery and he wants to cause trouble and misery in Collinsville? Or is it because he is a New South Welshman and Queensland's coal exports are offering a real threat to the export trade of New South Wales and he is trying to protect that trade?

Now I am going to ask the hon. members for Norman, Bulimba, Salisbury and Belmont, who, according to the Press, are the present-day darlings of the Trades and Labour Council—

Mr. Sullivan: Instead of using the term "darlings," couldn't you use the term "stooges"?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: They are described here as the darlings of the Trades and Labour Council. I cannot ask the Leader of the Opposition to do this because, according to the Press, he is at odds with the President of the Council, Mr. Egerton; but I ask these members who are persona grata with the Trades and Labour Council at the moment on behalf of the people at Collinsville to take some action to get these men back to work under the new owners of the Collinsville mine.

There has been an atmosphere of fear in Collinsville. Anyone who stepped out of line or who got at odds with the Communist union officials found himself abused and verbally intimidated, but strange to say there has never been any physical intimidation, only intimidation by brain-washing. I went there in 1932. At that time a man named Henderson, now an interpreter for the Communist forces in Vietnam, used to run a Sunday morning school for young Communists. Most of the Communists in Collinsville today were trained in that school. At the present time there is a leadership school for Communists in Collinsville. These are things hon. members opposite ought to know. They are facts they should have found out for themselves, and influences they should have protected themselves against. I have received many letters from people in Collinsville, many of them portraying the same state of affairs. The following is not what one person has written but it amounts to a composite letter—

"If a woman dares whisper an opinion contrary to that set down by the union

executives—Comms—her husband hushes her and looks furtively round to see who might have heard."

The background to that has been disclosed by the State President who as recently as the 12th of the month said, "We can drag our members out at any time."

An Opposition Member: Who said that?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Mr. Millar. To illustrate the fear of verbal intimidation and to show what goes on I shall tell the Committee what occurred at the meeting when the convoy came back. One man pointed out the faults of the leadership. He said that Millar and Nisbet should retire and make room for others. The Communists and their followers gave him hell, they booed and yelled and tried to sit him down, labelling him as a splitter and a stooge. That was the last public meeting that was called in Collinsville.

(Time expired.)

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) (8.38 p.m.): I was very interested to hear the travelogue of the hon. member for Bowen. I am sure that his compatriots on the back benches would enjoy the story of the convoy from Bowen after the miners' trouble at Collinsville. I do not intend to waste the time of the Committee in replying to any statements he made about the attitude of my Deputy Leader or the hon. member for Ipswich East towards that matter. I rise to support the amendment moved by my Leader that the item be reduced by £1. The amendment was moved to draw the attention of the Queensland public to the deplorable finances of the Nicklin-Morris Government. I am particularly glad that the Premier is here to hear what I have to say about him, his Government and their financial position. Every year when the Nicklin-Morris Government have brought down their Budget they have budgeted for a deficit, yet, when we were the Government and they were over here, they chided us at every possible opportunity about the way in which we handled the finances of the State. In case hon. members have forgotten, let me remind them that the deficits for the years this Government have been in office are substantial. In the first year, 1957-1958, as my Leader pointed out, there was a deficit of £1,500,000, in the second year 1958-1959, a deficit of £1,190,000 and in 1959-1960, a deficit of £164,675. This year, the Statement says, there is a deficit of £618,243, making a total deficit since the election of this Government of £3,488,000.

Last year when the Treasurer presented his Financial Statement he blamed the drought and the margins—margins for skill granted by the Court to the workers, particularly those in the railways and the Public Service. The Treasurer said that only for the margins and the drought we might have had something near a balanced Budget.

This year he is blaming the drought again and the economic squeeze inflicted upon the country by the Menzies-McEwen Government at Canberra. He goes on in his Statement to point out that—

"Favourable factors in primary industry were record values of production in mining, sugar and tobacco and substantially increased value of mutton and lamb produced."

My colleague, the hon. member for Cairns particularly, mentioned the plight of the tobacco-growers in the North and the matter was also mentioned by the hon. members for Carnarvon and Cook. I ask the Premier what have his Government or the Menzies Government done to protect the tobacco-growers of this State? Although the Treasurer has pointed out that they have grown considerable quantities of tobacco and that there has been a great improvement in production, I ask him what has been done to protect them financially?

Mr. Ewan: You do not even smoke. What have you done to help?

Mr. MANN: I expect an interjection like that from the hon. member for Roma who is not interested in the tobacco-growers, the finances of the State or the unemployed in the State. All he wants is to make some inane interjection to draw a red herring across the trail and draw me away from the real problems confronting the Government.

Mr. Duggan: He is the man who coughs every time the Minister has a cold.

Mr. MANN: I am not surprised at that. There has been an increase in the production of tobacco despite the fact that I do not smoke. There has also been an increase in the profits of the companies that buy the tobacco and those that distribute tobacco and cigarettes imported into Australia. Immense profits are being made by those companies.

Mr. Ewan: The Commonwealth Government insists on the use of 40 per cent. of Australian leaf.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member for Cairns knows and the hon. members for Carnarvon and Cook know, and most likely the hon. member for Tablelands but, because he belongs to the Government he is not at liberty to get up and say the things he would like to say about monopolies and cartels and the attitude of the Government when dealing with the tobacco-growers of this State.

I say that the Premier has not done anything to assist the tobacco-growers or to protest to the Menzies Government about the raw deal they have been getting from the cartels and combines handling tobacco in this country. So much for the Treasurer's saying that on the credit side there is a substantial increase in the production of

tobacco. There is a substantial increase in production, at the cost of some unfortunate tobacco-growers.

On page 2 of the Financial Statement the Treasurer points out that—

"For the first six months of 1960-1961 receipts were so buoyant that there was every indication that the estimated deficit would be overtaken and a comfortable surplus recorded. It was not until the second half of the year that the combined effects of credit controls and drought made it apparent that the Budget estimate would not be realised. The effect of credit controls had its greatest impact on revenues derived from Stamp, Succession and Probate Duties and Titles Office fees. The combined collections of these headings were £769,591 less than anticipated."

Last year, in an effort to make up the leeway, the Treasurer took out of the special trust fund for stamp and succession duties more than £1,000,000. Hon. members on this side of the Chamber warned him of the possibility that he would not be able to replace the money and that he was scraping the bottom of the tin. Now the Treasurer points out that collections last year were £769,000 less than anticipated.

The Minister for Justice is an accountant and has some appreciation of the Financial Statement. We could say that he is an offsider to the Treasurer in matters of accountancy. We heard statements on the hustings that the Nicklin-Morris Government were a Government of business men, that all Government members were business men. I have looked at them now for four years and the only Cabinet members in my opinion who have displayed business acumen at all in the portfolios they hold are the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry, the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity, and the Treasurer. They are the only ones to whom I give any credit. I do not even include the Premier, although personally he is not a bad old chap and I get along well with him.

The Minister for Justice, who has some knowledge of accountancy, would agree that these two sources of revenue are very sensitive barometers of economic change. The revenue is related to the financial transactions throughout the State. The duties give an indication of the extent of transactions in shares, hire purchase, insurance and many other forms of business. Receipts fluctuate according to the number of transactions in stocks and shares. I admit that the economic squeeze of the Menzies Government may have had something to do with the decline in revenue from stamp, succession and probate duties.

Mr. Ewan: You do not agree that the drought has had anything to do with the decline?

Mr. MANN: I am sick and tired of the cry of Government members about the drought. I know as much about it as the

hon. member. I have seen more of the State of Queensland than he has ever seen and I realise a drought exists in the far western area of the State.

Mr. Sullivan: You do not have to go to the far western part of the State. Have a look at the Darling Downs and you will know there is a drought.

Mr. MANN: I do not have to go to the Darling Downs to know about the drought. I visit Toowoomba every now and again. It is a pleasant town. I do not have to go to Dalby to attend a meeting on transport matters to find out about the drought or dissension in the ranks of the Government parties. The hon. member's having charged me with not knowing there is a drought on, I am entitled to reply in the way in which I have replied. I am sorry if I appear to be offensive. I could say of him that he would sack all railway men, that he thinks all of them are loafers.

The Treasurer today is telling a different story from the story he gave in the past. "The Courier-Mail" in December, 1957, reported the Treasurer as saying—

"Sweeping revision of the whole Queensland taxation field, which may lead to abolition of some taxes, is being undertaken by the State Treasurer (Mr. Hiley)."

A new set of tax laws, in simple terms, so that the average man can work out his liabilities, is expected to be ready next year.

Mr. Hiley said yesterday he was 'horrified' to find that some State taxes were costing more to collect than they yielded.

These were 'bad taxes' at a time when Australia was 'perilously close' to the back-breaking point in taxation.

In a 40-minute address to the Queensland Taxpayers' Association annual meeting in Brisbane he said that any Government which thought it could put taxes up and up and so tax the country into prosperity was heading for disaster. It was a wrong concept."

That statement was not made by me but by the Treasurer of the day. Let us look at his record and see what we can find: deficit, year after year; increased taxation every year; higher freights and fares in the railways; higher stamp duty; higher tax on bookmakers' betting tickets, and now this year there is to be a higher tax on licensed victuallers and a higher tax on the racing fraternity in general. How does the Premier rationalise that record with the statement made by the Treasurer in 1957? I feel sure that my leader was quite in order and his action was quite proper when he moved the amendment so that we could draw the attention of the public of Queensland to the salient points of maladministration of the State by this Government. At the same time as they are increasing taxation the unemployment figures are getting

worse and worse. It is essential in the policy of any Government for a plan to be evolved, and the Government should be able to tell the people of Queensland that they have a plan and they should be in a position to put it into operation. I challenge the Premier and the Government to tell us what plans they have that will find work for the 15,000 unemployed in the State. They have no plan and they are standing idly by waiting for something to turn up, hoping the drought will break or that oil will be found, or something else will happen to extract them from the plight they are in.

Mr. Low: We have a secret weapon.

Mr. MANN: There is no need for the hon. member to talk about secret weapons. His secret weapon is silence. He believes, as I have said before, that if you keep your mouth shut you cannot get into trouble.

The Government have failed to deal with the problem and have not taken adequate steps to make any provision for any State work to meet the unemployment problem in the community. In this morning's paper, the Premier said that he could see no future, and no outlook. If the Government were strong they would attack their friends in Canberra and make sure they got some special relief money, or a special loan.

Mr. Ewan: Tell us about Mt. Isa.

Mr. MANN: I will tell the hon. member about Mt. Isa. I am glad he said that because I have something to say about it. I will tell him something about it all right.

I believe the main purpose behind the economic squeeze imposed by the Menzies Government was to help the monopoly cartels place the burden of the economy on the backs of the workers in the community.

I draw the attention of hon. members to the youth unemployment figures. The Minister for Education and Migration is confronted with serious educational problems involving the youth in the community. What is the good of sending youths to school and getting them to seventh grade, sub-Junior, or Junior standard, if, after passing Junior, the Government cannot find any work for them? The Government formed a Committee of which you, Mr. Dewar, were the chairman. I do not want to embarrass you because you are now in the Chair, but they formed the Committee to deal with juvenile delinquency. It is no good the Government, with all honesty and all good intent, appointing you and five or six of your fellows to go into the matter of juvenile delinquency when they cannot find work for the juveniles to do. I have the figures in front of me and I will tell the Committee how many young people are out of work, but I want to point out first that no matter what the Government do, no matter what the hon. member for Kurilpa says about the books that are being read, Satan finds mischief for idle hands to do.

The Minister for Education and Migration, as an ex-school teacher knows that. He was a good teacher too; I give him credit for that. He knows that what I am saying is true. Young people are full of life and fun and vigour and if you cannot find work for them to do, if they are not in employment, they will find mischief.

Dr. Noble: Some of the old boys will, too.

Mr. MANN: Let the Minister speak for himself. I am pointing out to the Minister for Education and Migration that it is estimated that this year 173,000 young people will reach 15 years of age, that in 1962 211,000 will turn 15 and that it is estimated that 143,000 school-leavers will come on the labour market by the end of 1961. Most of those will face an uncertain future through unemployment. There are fewer apprentices at school and fewer in jobs. Because of unemployment some have joined the army. It is estimated that 20 per cent. of the persons registered as unemployed today are under 21 years of age. I want to drive it home to the Premier and his Government that this Government and the Menzies Government have shown a callous disregard for the plight of boys and girls by refusing to extend the unemployment benefit to those between 16 years of age and 21 years. There should be some benefits for them.

In the report of the Commissioner of Police tabled the other day it is pointed out that one-third of the crime committed in Queensland has been committed by juveniles. What have the Government to say about that? Nothing! They are silent.

Mr. Low: You are making the speech—for the knockers.

Mr. MANN: I am knocking the hon member's government on behalf of the unemployed. Unless his Government do something to look after the unemployed and to balance the Budget I will keep knocking and I make no apology to the hon. member for Cooroora for doing so. I say the Government today have not the interests of the workers at heart. Monopolies are making greater profits than ever and I am greatly concerned about the unemployment position. I do not say the Premier is not concerned about but I want to know what he is going to do about it. He is in charge of the affairs of the State. Surely he and his Cabinet, men of business acumen, can devise some means to afford a measure of relief for the 15,000 people who are out of work in this State.

Mr. Hughes: We have not had any constructive suggestions from that side.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member for Kurilpa made a suggestion and it was the silliest suggestion I ever heard. He wanted those in employment to pay some dues into a pool to provide work for the unemployed. The trade union movement is

definitely against that. It is the responsibility of the Government to find work for the people who have neither work nor wages.

Mr. Hughes: You are singing the same song of your band of knockers.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member is lucky he represents the electorate he does. If he had an industrial electorate he would not hit the ground. It is only because of the Government's gerrymandering that he has been able to get into Parliament. It is no good the hon. member denying these facts. The facts are that in August last year there were 2,034 unemployed, and in August this year there were 7,800 unemployed. I say to the Premier through you, Mr. Dewar, that I believe this Government have created the greatest hardship and suffering for many thousands of citizens since the depression days of the Moore Government. This is no idle story.

Mr. Ewan: What about the days of the Scullin Government?

Mr. MANN: I am talking about this Government. The hon. member is talking about 20 or 30 years ago.

Mr. Ewan: I am asking you about the Scullin Government.

Mr. Donald interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dewar): Order!

Mr. MANN: I am not concerned about what happened in the time of the Scullin Government nor about what happened in the time of the Curtin Government, because I know they were the best two Labour Governments ever elected in Australia. The people trusted them in perilous times. If they had trusted them in ordinary times the country would not be in the bad economic position that it is in today.

The Treasurer said on the second page of his Financial Statement—

"A big decrease in grain and livestock traffic, due to drought conditions, combined to a lesser degree with credit controls and increased competition from motor transport, were the major factors in revenue collected by the Railway Department being £1,602,613 less than estimated."

Having read that statement by the Treasurer, I want to say that in my opinion the railways are badly managed. The statement is an indictment of the Minister for Transport, and it is also an indictment of the Railway Commissioner. I believe that the railways are now in the most chaotic condition that they have ever been in. Because of the mismanagement of the Minister, 2,000 fewer men are employed in the railways today than there were four years ago. Non-paying lines have been torn up in an endeavour to stem the tide of losses and balance the Budget. Last year or the year before the Treasurer had a stocktaking of all the spare

scrap-iron in the railways and called tenders for it. The highest tenderer got it. It is no good trying to convey innuendoes to me about scrap-iron. The Minister is responsible for the chaotic conditions that prevail in the railways today.

Mr. Sullivan: You know that the Minister for Transport inherited stock-yards that were falling down and he did something about putting them in order. Tell us something about that.

Honourable Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dewar): Order! There are far too many hon. members trying to make this speech. I ask them to allow me to hear the hon. member for Brisbane.

Mr. MANN: If the hon. member for Condamine has any advice to offer about the railways, let him offer it to the Minister for Transport.

I have read many statements in the Press condemning the Railway Department. Here is one under the name of Eric McCallum of Stafford, who said that the position in the railway goods yards was the worst ever, but that even on a normal day three hours is the usual waiting time for trucks at Roma Street. Can hon. members imagine any private firm running the railways and being short of checkers and allowing trucks to be held up for three hours or more?

A Government Member: It happened when your party were in government.

Mr. MANN: It will not absolve them by saying what happened under my Government. It has happened under their Government and the deficit is getting bigger every year. To try to stem the tide the Treasurer has cut down on the stores in the Stores Department; he has gathered up all the scrap iron; he has got them tearing up all the railway lines. He has got them to start to do away with the workshops at Cairns, Warwick, Maryborough, in the hope that he might be able to balance the Budget. If these things continue the only line left will be from Brisbane to Cairns. I put it to the Premier seriously that a man will not use the railways if he has to wait three or four hours to get his produce on the train. Another man said, "Give us a road from here to Cairns and we will carry our produce by road transport." Of course he would if he were allowed to, but I would not be in favour of that. If the Government want the public to patronise the railways you have to give them service. You cannot have them wait at Roma Street three or four hours or perhaps having to come back the next day to load produce on to trains. That is the Commissioner's job and the general manager's job.

Mr. Chalk: That is what we said in 1956.

Mr. MANN: I am saying it now. Last year the Treasurer blamed the border-hoppers. He

said he did not know whether to increase railway fares and freights or to fight a war to the finish with border-hopping transport operators. What has he done? He has increased rail freights and fares by 10 per cent., but done nothing at all about the transport position. The railways are in a worse position than they have ever been in the history of the State. The Government are going to close lines and workshops, but such measures will not get them one more ton on the railways. They should do something about getting work for the railwaymen to do, and seeing that it is done.

Next to full employment the most urgent social problem confronting the Government is housing. I am sorry that the Treasurer is not here because I have something to say about the housing position. It is tragic that Queensland still has a housing shortage. Hon. members opposite will say that it is better than when we were the Government, but I am not going to come in. They would not know that thousands of young people are forced to share accommodation with relatives while others live in substandard houses and flats, paying exorbitant rents because of the action of the Minister for Justice in doing away with rent control.

Mr. Hughes: There are no slum Victoria Park housing settlements.

Mr. MANN: If the hon. member can get any satisfaction out of talking about slums at Holland Park or Gregory Terrace I will give him all the satisfaction he wants. There are thousands of people in Queensland, hundreds in Brisbane alone, who cannot obtain reasonable accommodation. Many are living in overcrowded conditions because the Government have no homes to offer. I want to say something about the officer in charge because I think he is the most cold-blooded public servant I have ever had anything to do with.

People looking for homes are told that they are not being ejected therefore they cannot be helped because they have not got a high enough points priority. The mother may be living with in-laws and the kids sleeping on the floor. It is an awful position to be in. The Treasurer has attempted to transfer to private enterprise the responsibility of housing the people. I claim that the people who, because of economic circumstances are unable to find a home to live in, are the responsibility of the State which should find them accommodation, and not at the exorbitant charges they are forced to pay because of the policy of the Minister for Justice and the Government to which he belongs.

I said a moment ago that I wished to say something about the gentleman in charge of the Housing Commission letting section, Mr. Cummings. If I ring up to find out the position of a tenant I am told in a few minutes his points of priority. This gentleman asks me to put it in writing to the Treasurer.

On doing that I get a letter back from the Treasurer saying, "Owing to the points of priority and because of more urgent cases we cannot do anything about it." That is the policy on which this Government rest. They are leaving it to the officers of the department and there is not any doubt in my mind that there is some suggestion from the Government that the officers do nothing beyond suggesting writing to the Minister. When the Minister is asked what priority John Mann has, he has none, "I am sorry, I cannot give him a house."

Mr. Ewan: Talk about Mt. Isa.

Mr. MANN: If I had to deal with the hon. member I would get my own priority. I do wish to talk about the policy of the Government in relation to industrial affairs. The hon. member challenges me to talk about Mt. Isa. I say through you, Mr. Dewar, that no-one can say that the Australian worker does not on the average give equal service when compared with any other worker in the world.

The Minister for Labour and Industry is often heard fussing over losses of production and he introduces heavy penalties for men who go on strike. He talks of loss of production of man hours and accuses the workers when they defend their conditions. The Minister for Labour and Industry is the most provoking Minister who has ever occupied the position of Minister for Labour and Industry. He has less understanding than any Minister I have known in my 25 years in this Parliament and through a study of other Ministers in other Governments.

I will not use my own words to prove that. I will quote what he says. He says—

"It was imperative that greater punitive powers be given to the Industrial Court to 'deal more strongly with the law-breaking elements in our community.'"

He wants to give more punitive powers to the Court. He goes on and states that—

"he proposed to investigate immediately ways and means to give greater punitive powers to the Industrial Court to deal with such people. Despite Queensland's just and fair industrial machinery industrial sabotage and gross irresponsibility were still found."

That is, of course, amongst the unions.

Mr. Pizzey interjected.

Mr. MANN: That is his idea. Let me make it quite plain to the Minister for Education and Migration that any Government or any Minister who thinks that laws restricting Labour from using its industrial strength can be enacted, is due for a rude awakening. No Government can introduce laws that will stop the workers from striking if they have a just case. We hear the Minister for Labour and Industry using

phrases such as, "The law of the jungle", "Holding the community to ransom", and other stupid statements, but let me remind the Minister for Education and Migration of the words of President Abraham Lincoln when he said—

"I know the trials and woes of the working man and I have always felt for them. I know that in almost every case of strikes the men have just cause to complain."

That is the statement of Abraham Lincoln, the greatest President the American Republic has ever had, whilst here are members of this Government criticising—

Mr. Smith interjected.

Mr. MANN: I can assure the hon. member that the Q.C.E. can look after itself. I draw hon. members' attention to a statement made by Mr. Justice Higgins in 1915. He was a member of the Arbitration Court. In 1915 when dealing with unemployment and strikes he had this to say—

"What is to be done to protect men in the exercise of their rights as free men to combine for their mutual benefits, seeing that the employing class has the tremendous power of giving or withholding work."

How true is that statement! That is the point in the Mt. Isa dispute. The company has no right to give or withhold work. The employing class still tries to exercise the right to say who shall work and who shall starve. The unions are justified in trying to combat that state of affairs. The system of arbitration was obtained after years and years of struggle. It is one of the foremost planks of the Labour Party policy and I make no apology for it. Although workers are at times dissatisfied with some decision given by the court, in most instances they accept it and go back to work. The Minister for Labour and Industry and the Government stand indicted. They have gone out of their way deliberately to wreck the arbitration system that was in operation when we left the Treasury benches and they took over. When it suits them they say they believe in arbitration. I ask the Premier to say what prompted the Minister for Labour and Industry to take out of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act the right of the Court to award bonus payments. Some consideration or some motive must have prompted him to do that.

For the information of hon. members who do not know it I read the following passage from a report on the judgment of the Court in 1951—

"In September, 1951, the company made application to the court, to vary the award to raise the starting point of the lead bonus to £95 per ton because the price of lead had risen to £227 per ton and the bonus worked out at £21 5s. per week. The Company case did not disclose any details of the quantity of increased operating costs but seemed mainly concerned with

the great harm the increased bonus was having on the employees in the way of betting and drinking."

I will not read the whole of it. The Court in its wisdom decided to peg the bonus at £17 5s. Even if the price of lead went to £247 a ton, the bonus would not exceed £17 5s. It was pegged by the Court at that level, so the company got a very fair deal from the Court—an exceptional deal with the price of lead at more than £200 a ton. The unions did not complain. They accepted the judgment of the Court. The bonus of £17 5s. in effect meant a reduction of £4 a week. Today the company is making a profit equivalent to £6,000,000 a year. There is something wrong somewhere. No-one can tell me the basis of the dispute is the argument about the bonus payment. I should like the hon. member for Roma to listen to this further information. It has come to my notice that an American company known as American Smelting and Refining Company holds 51 per cent. of the Mt. Isa shares. The company is engaged in the refining of lead and zinc in America. This American company and the American Government have placed a restriction on the imports of lead and zinc from Australia into the United States. That is the cause of the hold-up at Mt. Isa. That is why Mr. Foots said, "We will allow the mine to remain closed and let the miners starve." The controlling interest of the American Smelting and Refining Company is the cause of the dispute, and I challenge anyone to deny it. I challenge Mr. Foots to refute my statement that American Smelting and Refining Company holds 51 per cent. of the Mt. Isa shares and that this company engaged in America in the smelting and refining of lead and zinc wishes to place a prohibition on the imports of lead and zinc from Mt. Isa. I challenge the Premier on the Mt. Isa dispute to tell us what the Government have to say about it. Will they allow the mine to be closed to suit the wishes of an American company? Will they let the town rot and workers starve? What is the motive behind it? There is always a motive behind these things. The other day Mr. Waters mentioned a large sum of money being paid into the Government's "slush fund."

A Government member: That is not worthy of you.

Mr. MANN: Mr. Foots said that it was too silly to talk about. Why did he not come out and say, "It is too silly to talk about, and Waters is a liar."

A Government Member: He knows it.

Mr. MANN: If he knows it, he is not game to say it or repudiate it. Let him repudiate my suggestion that the American Smelting and Refining Company has a controlling interest in Mt. Isa and has ordered the mine to stay closed. It will suit them because they will be able to sell their product in America.

Mr. Richter interjected.

Mr. MANN: It ties up this way, that the union are not satisfied with the £8 bonus and they asked to negotiate. The Minister for Labour and Industry in his naiveness said that the company would be glad to negotiate with the workers. They are not glad to negotiate and they will not budge. I ask the Government to give back this power to the Commission. They may put it back either by Order in Council or in any other way that suits them. That would let the unions go to the Commission to ask the Commission to assess the bonus. If that was done I guarantee that the unions would accept the decision. I have no authority from anyone to say that, it is only my personal opinion, but I feel certain of it. A member of the Government asked me to talk about Mt. Isa, and I will talk about it. This Government stand condemned in the eyes of every decent Queenslander for their attitude and their silence in the dispute.

A Government Member: You endorse the strikers' action?

Mr. MANN: Yes, I do, and I make no apology for that.

I now wish to refer to some very nasty insinuations made by the Minister for Mines, Development, Main Roads and Electricity in reply to a question asked by the hon. member for Townsville North. The hon. member asked the Minister a question referring to a statement made by a man at Julia Creek. It was not a suggestion made by the hon. member because he does not know the country, but he asked a reasonable question about this beef-cattle road from Normanton to Julia Creek and the Minister spent five minutes ridiculing the hon. member. I know that area and I am sure this road will not bring one more fat bullock out of the Gulf than is being brought out now. The only difference will be that they are brought out by cattle-trains instead of by the drovers and they will get to the railhead quicker. I do not say that it will not bring them out fatter or that they will not lose as much weight, but I am confident that it will not bring out one more fat beast.

Mr. Sullivan: Don't you think that is a good idea?

Mr. MANN: Yes, but the Government are spending £6,000,000 to build the road. I will let the Minister for Mines, Development, Main Roads and Electricity have a "go" at me when he makes his contribution to this debate, but there is a very serious whispered story that this road is to meet the wishes of some of the owners of the stations through which it will run and that Mr. Menzies is a beneficiary under the Angliss estate. That is the story circulating in the Gulf.

Mr. Pizzey: Does the Labour Party oppose this road?

Mr. MANN: No, but we say that at this stage the £6,000,000 could be better spent

on public works to relieve the unemployment situation. How many men does the Minister think will be employed on that road?

Mr. Smith interjected.

Mr. MANN: The road goes from Normanston up through Canobie, Dalgona, Eddington, to Julia Creek. I have been over every yard of it so it is no good the hon. member for Windsor talking about the Gulf country. He would very smartly get lost in that area. However, statements have been made by people there.

Mr. Pizzev: You are making a great deal of noise.

Mr. MANN: The Minister kicked up a whole lot of noise this morning when my colleague asked him a simple question. He could not give a simple answer and say whether it does or does not go through the flooding Flinders area. I simply say that is another thing that has been said. Whether it is true or not I do not know. These statements are made and hon. gentlemen opposite get very stirred up and very hurt because we seek information on the subject. We ask a simple question and for our pains we get insulted.

Mr. Pizzev: Provocative questions.

Mr. MANN: The Minister can say what he likes but he cannot stop me. I can assure him of that. William Angliss & Co. can say what they like about it, too, but that is the story I have been told. The £6,000,000 could well be spent in providing work for the unemployed at this time when the Government have no money for them. They could delay the building of the beef-road. It is all ballyhoo about the urgent need for it. There will be not one more fat bullock brought from the Gulf than is being brought off today.

I notice in the Financial Statement that the Treasurer asked the Ministers to endeavour to cut expenditure of their departments to the bone and to try and balance their budget in every possible way. I suppose he has a right to do that because it is his responsibility to balance the Budget and look after the affairs of the Government.

So I want to refer now to the situation at the public hospitals.

Mr. Bennett: It is a shocking condition, too.

Mr. MANN: Here is a statement by Arthur Richards—"Two big hospitals under-staffed. Overwork lowers nurses' morale." It says they work up to 15 hours a day at a stretch.

Dr. Noble: How can you work 15 hours a day at a stretch?

Mr. MANN: I am not saying it. It is Arthur Richard's story. It is there in "The Courier-Mail" and the Minister cannot deny it.

Dr. Noble: Oh, can't I deny it? That is all you know.

Mr. MANN: The Minister can deny it here but I say he cannot deny that it is there in the newspaper.

Dr. Noble: It is quite wrong.

Mr. MANN: I challenge the Minister to bring on his department's Estimates and give us an opportunity to discuss them.

Dr. Noble: You will have your chance in due course.

Mr. MANN: Another report by Arthur Richards is headed—"Ward 16 is a disgrace to Queensland. It's like a 19th century madhouse."

A Government Member: You should know.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member says I should know. If he has not been there he ought to go and have a look at it because it is deplorable. I want to give the Minister some credit for what he is doing in the psychiatric field—I do not want to condemn him altogether—but I know the Treasurer is cracking the whip on him to cut down his department's expenses just as he is cracking the whip on the Minister for Transport and making him close these branch lines and pull out these workshops. The Government are starving for money. I hope that the Ministers will be able to please the Treasurer and allow the Government to live within their income, as he puts it.

Honourable Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dewar): Order!

Mr. MANN: I know that it upset hon. members opposite to hear the Leader of the Opposition expose to the people of Queensland the horrible mess that the Government have made of the administration of Queensland, the terrible mess that they have made of the State's finances, and the deplorable condition that the railways are in.

I now draw the attention of the Committee to a statement by Arthur Richards, a reporter for "The Courier-Mail," in which he states quite definitely that public hospitals are in serious financial difficulties.

Mr. Hughes: There would not now be any free public hospitals if Labour were in power.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member is too busy selling fruit in his fruit stall to know that a Labour Government were the only Government who held out against the Commonwealth.

Mr. Ramsden: That was your friend Bill Moore.

Mr. MANN: Yes, it was Bill Moore who held out. The hon. member would not understand that.

Dr. Noble: As a matter of fact, I have a file in my office in which it is stated that the Labour Party wanted to do away with free hospitals.

Mr. MANN: I do not want to say that the Minister is a liar because I know you will stop me, Mr. Dewar. I know I could not do it. However, I do not want the Minister to get out of character and indulge in propaganda of that type. It makes me think that he is whistling in the dark to keep his courage up.

Mr. Richards goes on to say—

"The public has been obliged to rely upon statements from Government sources and from the hospital board.

"And these, almost without exception, have been optimistic in tone and have told of plans for new hospitals and new equipment in Brisbane and country centres.

"Within the hospitals however, I have encountered an entirely different story.

"Here is the view of the medical staffs and doctors, issued on their behalf by the president of the Queensland Branch of the British Medical Association (Dr. P. A. Earnshaw):

"The Queensland Branch of the B.M.A. feels that the time has come when it must address the people of Queensland and tell them of the serious defects that exist now in Queensland hospitals.

"These deficiencies are well known within the profession. They have caused our members great concern and our members feel that unless urgent corrective measures are undertaken they must become progressively worse on account of the continuing advances in and the increasing costs of the medical services."

I think all hon. members will agree that Dr. Earnshaw is a very reputable doctor.

Dr. Noble: In spite of your efforts, we will keep the free hospitals system going.

Mr. MANN: I am glad to know that the Minister will do that, because it is part of Labour's policy, but I challenge him and other members of the Government to get up in the Chamber and deny these allegations made publicly and published in "The Courier-Mail" about the administration of the hospitals by the Government. I believe I have supported very fully the case put forward by my Leader.

Mr. Chalk: Whose side are you on—Egerton's, or Williams's?

Mr. MANN: That is why the railways cannot pay. The Minister wants to be facetious about everything. He wants to

play the clown instead of being a statesman. Instead of looking after the affairs of the State, he wants to clown his way out of the difficulties. He will not reduce the deficit in the Railway Department by playing the fool, and sacking railway men will not solve the problem but will only make it worse.

I am delighted to support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. He told hon. members of the mismanagement and misdeeds of the Government. Is it any wonder they cannot balance their budgets? When they came into power they rushed in spending huge sums of money. Indeed, they wasted money. We all know about the suite at Parliament House that was repainted. They wanted to build a wing on Parliament House that would cost £30,000. In my area they wasted £80,000 to resume land for a new Main Roads building. They could have built many houses with that amount of money. I asked the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity a question about the plans and specifications for that building. He tried to ridicule me by saying that you do not get plans and specifications until you have the ground ready. They have got it. It has cost them £80,000 but they are not going to put a shed on it. God knows where else they have wasted more money. If we had a Public Accounts Committee I am sure we would find more ways. They are not a business man's Government at all, but a wasteful Government. The only Ministers on the Treasury benches capable of doing the job are the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry, the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity and the Treasurer. The Government should sack the rest of them and try some of the back benchers.

Mr. HARRISON (Logan) (9.37 p.m.): I am sure hon. members will feel exhausted after the vigorous presentation of his speech by the hon. member for Brisbane. In speaking to the Financial Statement presented by the Treasurer in his customary, clear and lucid style I should say that in the present financial circumstances the Budget represents an approach by the Government to their financial responsibilities that shows common sense and good judgment. Confronted as they were with a record, yet insufficient, revenue to meet fully the ever-increasing demands from all directions, every effort has been made to ensure an equitable sharing of the available funds by all sections. It seems that the Budget must always be, to some extent, the victim of circumstances. For example, here in Queensland we are experiencing the effects of a long run of unfavourable seasons. I should say that we are experiencing their effects much more than we have felt the temporary restraints imposed by the Commonwealth Government in an effort to bring the national economy back to a sounder

level. In their criticism I feel that hon. members opposite appear to be overlooking the fact that you cannot have a £20,000,000 reduction in the income from five of our main primary industries without the effect of that loss of spending power being spread throughout the whole community. Not only that, while drought conditions prevail there is always a natural tendency on the part of the primary producer to curtail or postpone his expenditure on new improvements, and even on normal maintenance. Naturally that has made the position worse. I should say that because of the erratic incidence of rainfall in Queensland, primary producers have become accustomed to expect years when they have ups and downs. Very often the effect of that isolated year scarcely has time to seep through to the general public before we are back to normal and there is not a proper recognition of the difficulties of primary producers when a drought is of limited duration.

We are facing a very different story now. For five years we have missed out on our usual monsoonal rains, and the effect of such a long stretch of under-average rainfall has not only depleted the income of our primary producers but is now being felt by the whole community.

Unfortunately, this disturbance caused by the seasons to our general economy has come at a time when there has been a very serious decline in world prices for many of our rural exports. On top of that too it has come at a time when many of our exporting industries are finding their costs of production too high to permit them to compete profitably on the markets of the world.

For some years, primary industries' organisations have been trying in vain to draw attention to the inevitable consequences of continuing the dangerously high cost structure that we so very proudly, and I would say very foolishly, regard as a sign of Australia's prosperity. Surely as a young country, we must recognise that we are still heavily dependent upon our rural industries for our survival. We should be making every effort to preserve a cost structure more in line with that of the countries with which we trade.

The maintenance of that type of policy is so obviously in the interests of everybody, whether it be capital or Labour, that it is hard to understand how, as a nation, we have drifted into this position. Even long before we faced this new threat of loss of markets through the projected entry of Great Britain into the Common Market, we were headed for trouble. I fail to understand why we have been so thoughtless in our approach to our own future security, both internally and externally. Our relationship between the primary industries and the general community has got out of balance. Only the other day I quoted figures in this Chamber to show this imbalance in the ratio

of prices received to prices paid for our primary products. I will briefly mention them again. For the year 1959-1960 the figure for the general average of all our primary industries had fallen to 82 as compared with a basis of 100 during the five-year period ending June, 1930. I expect that the figures for 1960-1961 will show an even worse relationship between the prices we receive for our products and the cost of producing them. So, it seems that, as a people, we have allowed a greater share of our reserves of capital to be used in building up this ever-increasing standard of living with a complete disregard for preserving our capacity to trade with the rest of the world. Up to the present the responsibility for producing export goods capable of competing on the world markets has been left entirely to our primary industries. We can ask ourselves, "Why have not our secondary industries shared this responsibility?" The answer, of course, is that with few exceptions our high cost structure has made it impossible for them to compete with other countries. Our secondary industries seem to be content to supply the home market where they have the opportunity to pass on their high costs, and in many cases those high costs are the result of tariff protection granted against competitors from outside Australia. It is true that we should develop sound secondary industries as quickly as possible, just as it is true that to the extent that they provide employment for an increasing population, primary producers get the advantage of an enlarged home market. However, it seems to me that too many people think that, as long as we have what we call full employment, we are achieving the maximum in the rate of progress and prosperity.

Mr. Houston: Does not one follow the other?

Mr. HARRISON: The mere provision of jobs for everybody does not mean that we are correcting the imbalance so apparent in our economy today. They must be the right sort of jobs. They merely accentuate the cost factor unless they are jobs that contribute something to national development.

Mr. Houston: That would be right, but you must have the work to start with.

Mr. HARRISON: Hon. members opposite get alarmed at the first sign of unemployment. None of us likes to see it, but we never seem to pay sufficient attention to the fact that with proper national planning there should never be a shortage of constructive work in Australia. I shall give one or two instances. Take the failure to provide an adequate water conservation programme in Queensland.

An A.L.P. Member: By this Government.

Mr. HARRISON: That is not so. Such a programme should have top priority, on a basis of Commonwealth and State

co-operation. Commonwealth and State co-operation in constructive work would absorb labour in that type of work and at the same time ensure that we get regular production rather than production endangered by the erratic seasonal influences that apply in Queensland.

Mr. Houston: You must admit that the Commonwealth Government are not co-operating with the State.

Mr. HARRISON: I agree that we could do with more of it. It may in the end be a good thing if the recent credit squeeze coupled with the looming threat of the European Common Market to our export industries awaken our people to the fact that as a nation we may be in for some pretty rude shocks. I hope enough people will realise that unless we put our house in order there will be an end to the old belief that everything must continue to go on smoothly for Australia. Another popular belief we have to discard is that the job of overcoming economic difficulties is regarded as one solely for the Government. It is true that the Government must take the lead and must lay down proper and appropriate plans for action, but the success of all those plans to a great extent always depends on the co-operation of capital and labour. It seems odd to me that we should find it necessary to point out again and again to fellow Australians the dependence of our economy on the continued prosperity of our primary industries. Similarly, one would think it would be unnecessary to emphasise that the reckless game we have played for so many years now with prices chasing wages, and wages chasing prices, must end in disaster for the very industries on whose exports we depend. We should be asking ourselves how much longer will it take before these obvious facts sink into our national thinking. To the credit of primary industry, we can point out that in spite of the difficulties I have referred to, there continues to be a steady rise in the general level of efficiency. If it were not so, I doubt if they would have been able to withstand the pressures put on them over recent years. I want it to be understood that this general improvement in technique and quality is due not only to the efforts and initiative of primary producers themselves, but also in large measure to the valuable assistance that has been made available to primary producers by the Department of Agriculture and Stock. The work of the department is held in such high regard by the man on the land that there is an ever-growing demand for additional services from all over the State. There is unquestionably a real need for further expansion of the work carried out by the department and the cost involved would be repaid by handsome dividends in the form of increased production, better quality and lower cost of the product of the land. Unfortunately for this year the restricted

amount of money available to the department will preclude any expansion over and above the work already undertaken. I shall tell hon. members something about this work. It falls into three main fields. First there is extension work that involves carrying into the field the knowledge and information gained from the second field, which is research. That research is into the endless problems associated with agriculture and animal production. The third field covers the department's other responsibility to carry out the many regulatory provisions contained in the various Acts dealing with primary industries.

The whole scope of the activities of the Department of Agriculture and Stock is very well set out in the annual report. It tells a story of absorbing interest to all who have an understanding of the importance of our land industries to Queensland. I am sure that includes all hon. members. There would not be time tonight to recount the story in detail but I want to mention a few matters that I regard as being of particular interest. For example, I regard as extremely important the work the department has done, and is still doing, to establish better crops and especially better pastures that will contain grasses and legumes suited to the varying climatic conditions that prevail in the State. To illustrate my point and to illustrate the department's approach to the matter I do not think I could do better than quote a paragraph from the Division of Plant Industry section of the Report which reads—

"Conserving surplus growth of crops and pastures for feeding to stock when pasture growth is poor and of low quality, the sowing of crops on land in which subsoil moisture reserves have been built up by fallowing, the use of water for irrigation from streams, underground sources and farm storages constructed to hold water which would otherwise run off properties, and the planting of the best available strains of crops and pastures species to suit our climatic hazards are all avenues which can be exploited much further in strengthening the resistance of our primary industries against the irregular and erratic distribution of the rainfall.

Queensland's need for more drought-resistant strains of crops and pastures is a ceaseless challenge to agricultural scientists. It has been said that bad times have a scientific value. These are occasions a good learner would not miss. The weather pattern in 1960 and 1961 has provided ample opportunity for lessons to be learnt by farmers, graziers and scientists."

I think that gives a very good idea of the objective of the department and of the type and extent of research and experiment being conducted into a great variety of problems in the fields of general agriculture, horticulture and animal industries.

Mr. Davies: Will you admit that the Australian Labour Party had a good record in this department, too?

Mr. HARRISON: I admit that quite freely. It was one of the previous Government's best departments.

Research stations and regional experimental stations are now widely dispersed throughout Queensland, thus enabling on-the-spot investigation of particular problems created by the wide variation of Queensland's soils and climate.

I should like to give the Committee in a little more detail, some idea of the work of the department. It is not generally realised to what extent the Department of Agriculture and Stock has been responsible for the advances in pasture management and production in the State. This applies not only to extension work but also to the more fundamental aspects of research. In extension work it is necessary to mention only Townsville lucerne, green panic and buffel grass as illustrations of important pasture species for Queensland whose rapid spread and use have been due in large part to departmental extension and demonstration work.

In research I would say it holds a unique place. It was work by its officers in North Queensland which first broke the tropical pasture legume barrier with the discovery of proof that the legumes centro and stylo could be used with grass in pasture mixtures. This work has won recognition overseas and has resulted in many research workers from other tropical countries visiting Queensland in order to examine these highly productive pastures in the area in which they were first proven.

It was the State Department that proved for the first time in Australia the potential value of the subtropical legume Glycine, and the legume is now in commercial use in pastures on the Atherton Tableland and in other coastal areas.

The Department of Agriculture and Stock also pioneered irrigated pastures in the State and has shown that high-yielding, high-quality pastures can be grown anywhere in Queensland where water can be made available in sufficient quantity at the right price. In co-operation with the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, this valuable work is proceeding in areas as far away as the Mareeba-Dimbulah region in north-east Queensland and Quilpie in South-west Queensland.

Departmental research at "Brian Pastures" Research Station near Gayndah has given the State a method of controlling bloodwood and box regrowth without the use of poisons toxic to grazing animals. It seems possible that some other eucalypts may be controlled in the same way.

It has been proved on "Brian Pastures" that sown pastures, with suitable soil conditions, can double the carrying capacity and treble the live-weight gains of native pastures. What is more important is that departmental research work has demonstrated

that small areas of lucerne used in conjunction with large areas of native pastures will overcome the winter and spring live-weight loss in normal years and increase the live-weight gains in good years.

During the summer-winter-spring periods of November, 1959, to September, 1960, five animals with five acres of supplementary lucerne and 25 acres of native pastures gained 301 lb. a head, compared with a gain of 54 lb. a head for five animals on 30 acres of native pastures. This work alone points to the economic practicability of producing chiller quality beef, with the assurance of a much extended killing season, which is of paramount importance to the beef industry.

These results are based on large numbers of experiments throughout the State, on private co-operators' properties as well as on research stations. During 1960-1961 there have been more than 500 pasture trials and demonstrations in progress on 14 experiment stations and on private properties throughout the State. Of this number, nearly 300 were financed by funds from the Australian Dairy Produce Board, the Australian Meat Board, the Wool Research Trust Fund, and Shell Chemicals (Aust.) Pty. Ltd. Without this outside help this valuable work would be greatly reduced.

In talking about pastures, although my purpose tonight is to deal primarily with the work being carried out by the Department of Agriculture and Stock, I wish to put on record the fact that the C.S.I.R.O. are also doing very valuable work in pasture research in Queensland. Full recognition of the need for and importance of this work was marked by the establishment of the extensive Cunningham Laboratory in Queensland under the noted agrostologist Dr. Griffiths Davies. As a result a great deal of valuable work has been carried out in recent years to test and adapt types of grasses and legumes suited to Queensland conditions. Of particular interest to Queensland farmers and graziers is the work of Dr. Mark Hutton, the officer in charge of plant breeding at Cunningham Laboratory. As a result of his work a promising new legume, Siratro, has recently been released. It appears to have a very wide adaptability in the main pasture areas of the State. Also of interest is his work on improving the browse bush, "Leucaena Glauca," which also gives promise of becoming an important legume addition to Queensland's pastures. Co-operation between the work of the Department of Agriculture and Stock and the C.S.I.R.O. is maintained by means of a pasture liaison committee, which meets regularly. We can feel quite encouraged that by the splendid work that has been done over the years by the Department of Agriculture and Stock, and the additional work that the C.S.I.R.O. is doing in Queensland, we have great promise at last of overcoming the very serious deficiency we have always been up

against in Queensland in not having grasses and legumes, particularly legumes, suited to our climate. It has been a matter of considerable loss to our livestock industries that we have not succeeded before in getting something in the nature of what they have, say, in Victoria, where subterranean clover is the mainstay that provides the basis for all their wonderful pastures. Quite obviously it is the effect of quite different climatic conditions. We have tried all these things in Queensland that have proved to be successful in temperate climates, but they will not thrive in Queensland unless grown under irrigation conditions. At last I think we are finding a number of good grasses that show signs of resistance to drought conditions, and of sufficient aggressiveness to be able to persist. I feel sure that as this work spreads throughout Queensland sufficiently we can look forward to the stage where we can double our production from the land. Perhaps it would not be exaggerating too much to say that we may be capable of doing even better than that. However, I regard it as one of the very important works that the Department of Agriculture and Stock are doing in the pasture research and experiment field. That is by no means the end of the work carried out by the department that I should like to refer to. You would need to read the annual report, Mr. Dewar, to understand the wide range of work undertaken on behalf of Queensland's land industries. Now, turning away from pasture research I have some notes here that indicate the work that has been done to control contagious pleuropneumonia which is one of the very serious stock diseases with which we have to contend in Queensland. It is interesting to put on record the very good work that has been done in that direction.

The department has had a long-term scheme to rid the State of pleuro-pneumonia and has made a promising start during the cattle season just ended. Bovine contagious pleuro-pneumonia, known to the cattlemen as "pleuro" is the most serious infectious disease of cattle yet to gain a footing in Australia. The estimated annual cost of this disease to Queensland is now £750,000.

Although it was first introduced in Victoria, it spread north to the Northern Territory and North Queensland in six years decimating herds in its path. Control of pleuro depends ultimately on the degree of animal control so that it has now been eradicated from the southern States and south-east Queensland. It still smoulders in the northern parts of the State where it represents a threat not only to the southern parts of Queensland but also to New South Wales and Victoria because the economy of the industry is essentially based on the movement south of stores from the breeding to the fattening areas.

In the present state of development of the industry in the Queensland endemic area, widespread vaccination is regarded as the most valuable protection.

Intensification of the department's measures of control of this disease was commenced in 1954 with the appointment of two, and later four, specially trained officers to supervise the vaccination of travelling cattle and assist owners with special advice on property control problems. So successful was this approach that the number was this year increased to 11 under an experienced veterinary officer. The proof of their efforts was in the fact that no outbreak occurred in travelling stock during the year. Of 165,000 travelling stock, more than 131,000 head were vaccinated by these officers and the remaining 34,000 head by the owners.

Information derived from the examination of lungs of slaughtered cattle at meatworks was channelled back to field officers to assist them in control measures. Some resolved lesions were found but only three active cases were detected at the meatworks and confirmed by laboratory examinations.

Protection on the property was not neglected and with the assistance of these special officers owners undertook vaccination of paddock cattle on an unprecedented scale.

Part of the plan is to roll back the marginally infected areas. All lungs from cattle slaughtered from these areas were examined and some 3,000 blood samples tested in a progressive eradication scheme. Only one of these specimens was positive.

A new policy of releasing infected properties only after blood-testing of the whole herd has shown that no carriers remain, is being put into force wherever the practical difficulties can be overcome and this should afford much greater protection to clean areas.

The main portion of the plan has been suspended with the closing of the cattle season, although the investigations of the marginal areas are still continuing. But it is being mothballed so that it can go into operation again without delay at the commencement of the next cattle season next year.

I wish to quote another instance showing the tremendous value of the work undertaken by the Department of Agriculture and Stock and again I think it is worthwhile to say a word or two about another development that is much newer—the use of artificial breeding—A.I. as the stock-breeders call it. It is a new technique that is coming into prominence in Queensland much later than in other countries of the world. This matter has interested stock-breeders probably for centuries but it was only around 1900 that extensive use was made of the method and the potential for herd-improvement was understood. The demand for greater output of high-quality livestock products, particularly in the post-war period, has focused

increasing attention on the procedures, especially in the dairy industry. To illustrate the extent of development in some overseas countries I point out that the number of cows artificially bred each year in the United States is 7,000,000, in the United Kingdom about 1,500,000 and in New Zealand 500,000. It can be realised therefore that we are starting a long way behind other countries. Nevertheless, the advantages of artificial insemination are considerable and have been exploited overseas and in the State in disease-control, improvement of general stock standards, and in lifting of production levels.

The first attempt at a planned programme of A.I. in Queensland commenced in 1951 when an outbreak of trichomoniasis—that is a venereal disease of cattle—was controlled in the Brisbane region by the officers of the Department of Agriculture and Stock. Many diseases causing infertility and abortion respond well to control by A.I. and in fact artificial insemination at present is regarded as the most valuable means available to improve the fertility of dairy herds.

To indicate the seriousness of infertility in our herds in Queensland I point out that in 127 dairy herds of the State over several years it was found that 30 per cent. of cows showed one form or another of infertility and 40 per cent. of the cows culled from herds and 28 per cent. of herds retained had infertility trouble. Although the cost to the industry is difficult to assess, it has been estimated as being about £3,000,000 a year. It is plain therefore that the effects of overlooking the problem or not taking steps to control infertility can cause economic ruin.

It is interesting to note that artificial insemination has improved the conception rate over natural service by 15 per cent. It has been said that with artificial insemination bulls can be subjected early in life to a very exacting testing of their capacity to improve production. It is very important in the use of artificial insemination that we secure bulls that are what we call proven for their performance and their ability to transfer to their progeny those characteristics we are looking for, milk production plus constitution in dairy herds and in beef herds the ability to make rapid gains in weight. In 1955 the Department of Agriculture and Stock drew up plans for such exact testing of young bulls for use in artificial insemination services. Jersey bulls have been under performance tests in the Nambour-Maleny region since 1955 and A.I.S. bulls in a similar programme in the Kingaroy-Nanango region since 1958. Following the success of the Nambour project, and in view of the future developments of artificial insemination in this State, the department undertook to investigate the problems which commercial artificial insemination organisations might encounter in Queensland. A field service was commenced on the Atherton Tableland in November,

1956, using semen air-freighted from the animal research farm at Rocklea. That work proceeded until April, 1957, and amply demonstrated that artificial insemination was a practical proposition.

A small bull-stud was established at the regional experiment station at Kairi, in North Queensland, in September, 1957, and from that time the Atherton pilot unit became self-contained. The service was experimental and restricted to that particular area at that stage. In the meantime, farmers in other parts of the Tableland became interested and aware of the advantages which artificial insemination held for them, and by May, 1958, the Tablelands farmers formed their own co-operative artificial breeding association and this became the first commercial undertaking of that nature. Since then, three more centres have been established. One has been established by Nestles at Gympie, and another, has been established in my own district at Beaudesert. We have established a co-operative artificial breeding association, and the third centre has been established at Dayboro. We must regard these centres as pilot groups, for they are undertaking very important work and it is most important that they should not fail. The initial stages of these groups is very interesting because all farmers do not believe in it straight-away and some of them would sooner keep their bulls. Some farmers regard the charge made for artificial insemination as a deterrent, but more and more are coming to understand the benefits to be derived from the scheme, such as freedom from infertility diseases, and a good opportunity for obtaining better production, plus the fact that they do not have to keep a bull, and therefore do not have to bear the cost involved. Charges now are being recognised as reasonable.

Mr. O'Donnell: What are the charges?

Mr. HARRISON: I am just going to tell the Committee. In Atherton they get their semen free and charge 30s. but the group I am associated with charge 35s. for the first insemination and 10s. for each subsequent service—limited to the second and third services. So far as we know, that just about covers expenses at present. By the time we get to the stage where the department, under my good friend the Minister, establishes the bull centre at Wacol, we should be in a position to get semen made available much more cheaply. At present it is imported from New South Wales at a cost of 10s. The work in New South Wales is undertaken by the Milk Board at Berry and Aberdeen.

The development of the artificial breeding centre at Wacol is the key to extension of artificial insemination in the denser dairy communities of South-east Queensland at least. The department, realising the important role that artificial insemination can play in assisting the dairying industry, has commenced the construction of this large-scale artificial insemination centre for cattle at Wacol.

Mr. Davies: Those charges would be very cheap, wouldn't they?

Mr. HARRISON: We think they are reasonable. We hope to get some assistance for this type of work from the Commonwealth Government just as they provide some assistance to encourage herd recording. This will be just as valuable to the industry as the practice of herd recording.

The centre at Wacol, which is being established on a 70-acre site, makes provision for a laboratory, feed shed, isolation facilities for introduced bulls and accommodation for 48 bulls. Allowance has been made for increasing the bull housing to provide for 64 bulls when the demand warrants it.

The building was begun in April this year. The site has been prepared; water, power, and telephone facilities have been provided; a residence has been built and the construction of the bull pens is well advanced.

In preparation for this development the department commenced bull proving, using artificial insemination in 1955. This will mean that at least three adequately proven bulls will be available when the centre commences operations. The work of the department in bull proving will also mean that a nucleus of well-trained staff will be available to operate the centre and to train inseminators.

With the completion of this ambitious project, the Department of Agriculture and Stock will be able to provide yet another worthwhile service to the primary producers of the State.

I was glad to be able to give this information because it is a new development of great importance. I will not keep the Committee at this hour of the night to tell them a great deal more about the department's work because I am going to recommend to hon. members that they read the report. They will find it a very interesting document. The work of the department has a very important bearing on the success of all our land interests. From the brief account I have been able to give tonight I am sure all hon. members will have gained an indication of the value that the landowners themselves place on the work of the department.

Mr. Davies: It is not known enough. The public generally do not appreciate it.

Mr. HARRISON: That is what I am trying to point out. I hope no hon. member finds it boring but it is rather late in the night to go into much more detail so I will let it go at that. I think hon. members who are interested will look these matters up for themselves. There may be an opportunity to add some information during the debate on the Estimates.

In conclusion, I say that there is a very understandable feeling of confidence in the Minister in charge of the department, Hon. O. O. Madsen, because of his own life-long

association with the land and his common-sense approach to all its problems. Men in rural areas have the same feeling of confidence in and regard for the Director-General of Agriculture, Dr. Summerville, the Deputy Director, Mr. Webster, and all senior officers. It is a fact that under their administration and guidance the whole staff has been encouraged to work as a team, with the objective of lifting and improving the output from the rural industries of Queensland. The department is rendering a very valuable service to Queensland, and I want the Minister and the Government to know that the land-owners of Queensland appreciate the work being done by the department and the assistance they are getting from it perhaps more than the assistance they get from any other department.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 10.33 p.m.