Queensland

# Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

## Legislative Assembly

**TUESDAY, 6 MARCH 1962**

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## TUESDAY, 6 MARCH, 1962

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

### QUESTIONS

#### RAIL FARE CONCESSION TO PENSIONERS

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

"(1) How many other States grant the half-fare rail concession to pensioners as is now done in Queensland?"

"(2) Will he consider negotiating a reciprocal agreement with those States to enable pensioners to travel at half rates wherever the concession applies?"

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

"(1 and 2) The concessions granted to pensioners by the Governments of New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia are based on the somewhat limited concessions extended to pensioners when the Gair-Duggan Labour Government held office in this State. The present Country-Liberal Government has granted many extended concessions to pensioners residing in Queensland, but there is little hope of achieving reciprocal arrangements between all the States. Negotiations did take place between two Southern States, but they were unsuccessful."

#### RESUMPTION OF LAND OWNED BY MR. L. HUTTON, YANDINA

**Mr. DUGGAN** (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation—

"(1) Is he aware that the Maroochy Shire Council is holding up the proclamation of resumption of two pieces of land owned by Mr. L. Hutton, Falls Road, Yandina, apparently to avoid payment of compensation on five parcels of land?"

"(2) Is he aware that intention to resume notices were issued on these two parcels of land on December 9, 1960, and March 27, 1961, and that Mr. Hutton cannot obtain a hearing before the Land Court on an appeal against the Council's offer for the full 112½ acres until resumptions are proclaimed on these two parcels?"

"(3) Will he take steps to expedite finalisation of this matter in order that Mr. Hutton's appeal against the Maroochy Shire Council's offer may be heard in the Land Court?"

**Hon. A. R. FLETCHER** (Cunningham) replied—

"(1) No."

"(2) Yes."

"(3) Steps have already been taken to correct the defects in the documents lodged by the Maroochy Shire Council. The amended documents and plans of survey having now been received, action will proceed to issue the necessary proclamation, which will appear in the Government Gazette of March 17, 1962. The amicable settlement of compensation payable to Mr. Hutton may be negotiated with the Council, and only where agreement cannot be reached is it necessary to refer it to the Land Court for determination of the quantum of compensation."

#### OPERATIONS OF MARYBOROUGH FISH BOARD

**Mr. DAVIES** (Maryborough) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

"(1) What is the total weight of mullet received by the Maryborough Fish Board this season up to the end of February, 1962?"

"(2) What quantity of mullet received by the Board was graded as 'washed out' mullet from (a) Boonooroo, (b) Hervey Bay and (c) Burrum?"

"(3) What reasons are suggested for the mullet arriving at the Fish Market in this state?"

"(4) (a) Is the competition with imported fish making it impossible for the Board to purchase processed fish at a net price of 8d. per lb. and (b) if so, from which countries is the imported fish being received?"

"(5) What are the reasons for the Maryborough market being run at a loss by the Board?"

"(6) (a) Is the freezing equipment at the Maryborough market working as efficiently as desired for the purpose and (b) if not, is it a fact that the equipment cannot be adjusted to enable a sufficiently low temperature to be registered?"

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

"(1) One hundred and seventy-one thousand, five hundred and seventy-five pounds received from October 1, 1961, to February, 28, 1962."

"(2) In accordance with the specific request of fishermen, fish is sold by auction, and the Board, therefore, does not grade the mullet. Details are not kept of the Maryborough Areas from which the mullet is received."

"(3) As the name implies, "washed out" mullet are carried down our coastal rivers when the streams are running fresh. The fish emerges into the estuary in a sick condition with its gills clogged with fine particles of mud. Fish caught in this condition do not keep as well as those caught in prime condition. The difficulty is accentuated by the fact that the run-off of our coastal streams usually occurs during the summer months so that the fish are not only caught suffering from the effects of dirty water but they are taken from water which is relatively warm. In some cases, the fish are in such a condition as to be unmarketable from the minute of catch. In others, the deterioration is not so advanced. I have repeatedly counselled fishermen who catch quantities of "washed out" mullet to hurry their catch to market as speedily as possible. If this is done and sufficient ice is used immediately, there is little further loss in condition. However, there have been repeated instances of fishermen in such cases waiting to make another haul with the result that their first catch has deteriorated. Certain "washed out" mullet can be reasonable fish food provided it is handled carefully. If there is any delay in handling, the condition deteriorates rapidly."

"(4) (a) Competition with imported fish from overseas, as well as mullet fillets from New South Wales, make it an uneconomic proposition to purchase mullet for processing at Maryborough at more than 6d. per lb. net. The fishermen in New South Wales accept much lower prices for mullet than Queensland fishermen. This enables whole mullet to be exported overseas together with the processing of mullet into fillets for the Australian trade. (b) South Africa, United Kingdom and China."

"(5) Seasonal conditions, the reductions in charges by the Board to fishermen and preponderance of low value fish."

"(6) (a) Yes. The Chief Engineer of The Fish Board has reported the equipment as being most efficient. The plant is capable of satisfactorily freezing all types of seafood. (b) See answer to Question (a)."

NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED AT NAMBOUR

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

"(1) Is he aware of the unemployment figure revealed in the survey made by the Honourable Member for Cooroora, Mr. Low, and reported to the Maroochy Shire Council on Monday, February 26, that, although there were 151 registered for unemployment at Nambour, there were, in addition, over 100 young people who had gone back to school because no work was offering?"

"(2) As these figures do not seem to be revealed in the returns from the Commonwealth Minister for Labour, would it not be true to say that the percentage of unemployed in Queensland is in excess of the stated five per centum?"

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

"(1) I have not seen the statement to which the Honourable Gentleman refers, nor do I know how correctly the word 'survey' is applied, so I can only assume that the Honourable Member for Cooroora has been incorrectly reported, because the figures quoted cannot be substantiated. I am advised by my colleague, The Honourable the Minister for Education that, at Nambour High School, there has been an increased enrolment from 886 in 1961 to 943 in 1962, an increase of 57, which is no more than normal development, and that there is no evidence of any increase due to unemployment. However, in all States, there is evidence of more children deliberately remaining at school to attain higher scholastic qualifications, which indicates an extremely desirable trend. I am sure that the Honourable Gentleman knows that, as a result of an agreement made in 1946 between the then Prime Minister and the Premier of Queensland, the late Right Honourable J. B. Chifley and the late Honourable E. M. Hanlon, Employment Exchanges and records, including the tabulation of statistics, were transferred from the State to the Commonwealth. Realising the importance of having detailed dissections of unemployment figures, I have re-introduced the policy of keeping basic statistics, and also of analysing returns as they come from the Department of Labour and National Service. Latest figures available to me from this source, which include

young people, and which I believe to be correct, thoroughly deny the figures quoted."

"(2) As young people are, in fact, included in returns from Commonwealth sources, I do not for one moment believe that the percentage of unemployed is in excess of 5 per cent. Indeed, all available evidence is to the contrary. I have always stated that the 'Registered for Employment' figure is unrealistic, because there is no reliable check with this, as with those 'Drawing Benefits,' which is, I believe, a more correct assessment. This, for Queensland, is under three per cent."

### Applications to Fair Rents Court for Increased Rents

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

"(1) Is he aware that (a) there has been an unusual flood of applications by landlords for reassessment of rentals by the Fair Rents Court in the last fortnight and (b) the fifteen per centum increase allowed as from March 1 is calculated on rentals in force at that time?"

"(2) If so, does he intend to take steps to prevent unscrupulous landlords obtaining the advantage of the fifteen per centum increase on the amounts previously adjudged by the Court as being fair and reasonable?"

"(3) Are not such increased rentals a negation of his previous claims that the abolition of controls was in the best interests of citizens generally?"

**Hon. A. W. MUNRO** (Toowong) replied—

"(1) (a) It would not be correct to say that there has been an unusual flood of applications. The number of applications within the last fortnight is greater than the average fortnightly number, but this is the quite natural and expected result of the law which provides for a new basis of rental assessment as from March 1, 1962.

(b) The only rentals which are subject to the statutory increase of 15 per cent. are rentals which were fixed prior to March 1, 1962, in respect of premises which existed on July 1, 1948."

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

"(3) As the 15 per cent. statutory increase can apply only to rentals which previously had been determined on the basis of a capital value component as at July 1, 1948, or earlier, it is quite clear that the new rentals, including the 15 per cent. increase, cannot in any case be more than a reasonable rent. Actually, when consideration is given to the increases which have taken place in costs and values since July 1, 1948, it will be realised that the new rentals generally will be materially less than an economic rent."

### Remuneration of Members of Totalisator Administration Board

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

"What salary, allowances, expenses or other payments will be payable to (a) the chairman and (b) the members of the Totalisator Administration Board?"

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

"I refer the Honourable Member to Clause 20 of the Order-in-Council dated February 15, 1962, under the Racing and Betting Acts. No fees or allowances have yet been approved by the Governor-in-Council pursuant to that Clause."

### Number of Extension Scholarship Holders

**Mr. DAVIES** (Maryborough), for **Mr. LLOYD** (Kedron), asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

"(1) How many candidates at the Junior Public Examination held in November, 1961, received extension scholarships?"

"(2) How many of these students have taken advantage of the extension scholarship and returned to secondary schools for further education?"

"(3) Can he provide similar figures following the examination held in 1960?"

"(4) Can he also provide figures indicating the number of students attending their third year secondary education course?"

**Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY** (Isis) replied—

"(1) 12,152 candidates who took the Junior Public Examination in November, 1961, were awarded extension scholarships."

"(2) This information will not be available until returns have been received from all schools."

"(3) 9,243 candidates who presented themselves for the Junior Public Examination in November, 1960, were awarded extension scholarships and 4,286 of these enrolled in secondary schools in 1961."

"(4) There are 3,770 third year secondary students enrolled in State high schools this year but enrolments in denominational secondary schools are not available."

### Junior Public Examination Candidates Appointed to the State Public Service

**Mr. DAVIES** (Maryborough), for **Mr. LLOYD** (Kedron), asked the Premier—

"(1) How many secondary school students qualified for appointment to the State Public Service at the Public Service Examination conducted last year in conjunction with the Junior Examination?"

"(2) Of the 304 new appointments to the State Service following public examinations held last November, how many were permanent appointments directly as a result of the pass secured in the Public Service Examination?"

"(3) Can he indicate the approximate number of successful candidates at the Public Service Examination who will be absorbed into the Service during the year?"

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

"(1) The number of clerical and professional candidates who qualified at the 1961 examinations was 2,556 and Clerk-typists 2,440. To avoid any confusion in the mind of the Honourable Member which could be caused by the answer to this question, may I say that a very large number of the candidates who nominate for the Public Service Examinations do so without any intention of accepting an immediate appointment to the Public Service, but with the objective of securing a pass qualification for future benefit if and when required. The following are particulars of—(i.) The number of candidates who nominated in recent years for the Public Service Examinations; (ii.) The numbers who passed; (iii.) The numbers who accepted appointment to the Public Service.

| Year of Examination | Number of candidates who nominated | | Number of candidates who qualified | | Number of candidates appointed | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Clerical and Professional | Clerk-typist | Clerical and Professional | Clerk-typist | Clerical and Professional | Clerk-typist |
| | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| 1956 .. | 903 | 1,574 | 681 | 1,224 | 194 | 260 |
| 1957 .. | 1,343 | 1,964 | 1,010 | 1,529 | 186 | 316 |
| 1958 .. | 1,620 | 1,965 | 1,271 | 1,537 | 323 | 327 |
| 1959 .. | 1,787 | 2,484 | 1,381 | 1,986 | 288 | 360 |
| 1960 .. | 2,627 | 3,038 | 2,014 | 1,773 | 263 | 322 |

The lesser number of clerk-typist candidates who qualified in 1960 in comparison with the previous year was occasioned by the prescription of higher standards."

"(2) One hundred and seventy-five."

"(3) The number of vacancies declared in respect of the 1961 Public Service Examination was as follows:—Clerical and professional, 250, clerk-typists, 200, total 450. The number of declared vacancies is always upon the conservative side and it is expected that a greater number will be appointed to the Public Service than indicated above."

JUNIOR PUBLIC EXAMINATION CANDIDATES APPOINTED TO THE RAILWAY DEPARTMENT

**Mr. DAVIES** (Maryborough), for **Mr. LLOYD** (Kedron), asked the Minister for Transport—

"(1) How many male and female applicants for appointment have been appointed to the clerical staff of the Railway Department since January 1, 1962?"

"(2) How many of these appointees received the equivalent of an extension scholarship pass at the last Junior Public Examination?"

"(3) How many applicants does the Department anticipate being able to place in clerical employment during the present calendar year from those candidates at the last Junior Public Examination who secured the equivalent of an extension scholarship pass?"

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

"(1) Twenty-three males have been appointed or have been offered employment as junior clerks and fourteen females have been appointed or have been offered employment as steno-typistes."

"(2) All."

"(3) It is not possible at this juncture to say how many of the applicants will be employed during the present calendar year."

FREIGHT RATES ON BEANS FROM MARYBOROUGH AND GYMPIE

**Mr. DAVIES** (Maryborough) asked the Minister for Transport—

"(1) What are the respective rates for transport of beans from Maryborough and Gympie interstate by (a) through rail (b) rail to Roma Street with C.O.D. transport to South Brisbane?"

"(2) If there is a difference in rates between the two methods of transport, what are the reasons?"

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

"(1 and 2) The railage rates per ton for the transport of beans in truckload quantities to C.O.D. Sydney are—(a) If by ordinary rail services—(i.) from Maryborough, £9 2s. 8d., (ii.) from Gympie, £8 17s.; (b) If by ordinary rail service to Roma Street, C.O.D. transport by road to South Brisbane, thence by special fast service to Sydney—(i.) from Maryborough, £16 2s. 8d., (ii.) from Gympie, £15 11s. 6d.;

The higher rates quoted in (b) are due to the superior service rendered and the fast service which was specially arranged at the request of the C.O.D."

### New Maternity Hospital in Maryborough

**Mr. DAVIES** (Maryborough) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

"When does he expect tenders to be called for the building of the new maternity hospital in Maryborough?"

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga) replied—

"An amount was included in the 1961-1962 Works Department Loan Programme for planning of the proposed new Maternity Ward at Maryborough, and working plans are at present being developed by that Department. I am unable to state definitely when tenders will be called but the project is proceeding."

### Statement by Mr. Bolte Concerning Unemployment in Queensland

**Mr. DAVIES** (Maryborough) asked the Premier—

"(1) Does he agree with the statement made by Mr. Bolte, the Liberal-Country Party Premier in Victoria, in which he inferred that Queensland's high unemployment percentage reflected inefficient administration of its affairs by its Government?"

"(2) If so, will he indicate what steps he has taken and is taking to provide efficient administration in this State?"

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

"(1 and 2) I am not aware of any such statement made by the Honourable H. E. Bolte, M.L.A., Premier of Victoria. However, for the benefit of those who are grasping at every political straw in an endeavour to unfairly discredit my Government and their own State, I draw the following facts to their attention:—(a) The administration of the present Government compares more than favourably with any other administration in Australia—a fact recognised by the Federal Government. It is infinitely superior to the administration of its immediate predecessors in office. (b) No Government has done more than mine, or acted so swiftly, with the financial resources it possessed, to alleviate unemployment whenever and wherever it has occurred, and none has worked so tirelessly to find both short and long-term solutions to the problem. (c) In less than a week after having obtained £5,786,000 from the recent Premiers' Conference and Loan Council meeting, arrangements had been made for this allocation to provide direct employment for 6,000 Queenslanders, and indirectly, of course, for many more. For the supply of building materials alone, at least another 5,000 or 6,000 men should be absorbed. No other State made such prompt disbursement. We were able to act quickly because we had exact knowledge of the pockets of unemployment, and had planned ahead of the meeting expenditure for every part of the State. In fact, anticipating additional money for housing we authorised expenditure in advance of the Loan Council meeting. Surely, this is evidence of able administration! (d) Another instance is that on March 27, 1961, Senator the Honourable W. H. Spooner, Minister for National Development, called on my colleague, the Treasurer, and advised him that a supplementary Commonwealth loan of £420,000 would be made available by his Department to relieve the unemployment situation in the housing industry. This money was to be allocated to the construction of homes for serving members of the Armed Forces. The following day the Treasurer brought this matter to Cabinet which approved of the loan, plus £105,000 of State funds to be used for this purpose. The Housing Commission immediately called tenders for the construction of these houses, and within three weeks building operations had commenced. This clearly demonstrates there has been no lack of efficiency on the part of my Government."

### Kelvin Grove High School

**Mr. HANLON** (Baroona) asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

"(1) How many students are enrolled for Kelvin Grove High School?"

"(2) What accommodation is currently available at the High School in (a) permanent and (b) temporary classrooms?"

"(3) How many students are at present accommodated mainly at Central Practising School for manual training?"

"(4) Has approval been given for the revised requirements in the proposed manual training block originally approved last year for Kelvin Grove?"

"(5) When is it anticipated that the manual training block and additional classroom block will be ready for occupation and what will be the permanent classroom accommodation available on completion of the latter?"

"(6) In view of anticipations of over 1,000 students next year failing any new high school in the surrounding district, will he give urgent consideration to immediate plans for yet a further classroom block to be ready for next school year which would still be required even for 800 students to be reasonably accommodated?"

"(7) Is he aware of the acute lack of any playing fields which will be accentuated when the proposed additional classrooms are constructed?"

"(8) What plans are in hand for playing field and recreation accommodation and can they be expedited?"

"(9) What sites in the surrounding districts are under consideration for new high schools, and will he ensure that a site which has been reserved at Bardon for many years for the purpose is not overlooked?"

**Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY** (Isis) replied—

"(1) Eight hundred and thirty-four students are enrolled at Kelvin Grove High School."

"(2) The permanent accommodation includes nine General Purpose classrooms, a Science Laboratory, a Science Demonstration Room, a Library, a Lecture Room, a Dressmaking Room and a Cookery Room. There are six temporary classrooms."

"(3) One hundred and seventy-eight boys are temporarily accommodated at Brisbane Central State School. These and an additional 114 boys from the main school are instructed in Industrial subjects at Brisbane Central. The Department regrets the necessity of accommodating temporarily boys away from the High School itself. The enrolments at Kelvin Grove this year are much greater than anticipated. In some States the capital cities are zoned into high school areas and students have to attend the nearest high school. The Government does not desire to have zoning and prefers to allow parents complete freedom of choice of high schools for their children. This, of course, makes it much more difficult to forecast accurately what the enrolments will be for each succeeding year, and will inevitably lead to accommodation problems in some schools. However much we regret the position at Kelvin Grove we believe it preferable to a zoning system. The recent special grant of the Federal Government, beside providing much greater employment opportunity in the building trades, will be of tremendous help in meeting the great demands that exist for accommodation in high schools."

"(4) Yes."

"(5) The Department of Public Works has advised that the new Manual Training Block will be ready for occupation in August, 1962, and the new Classroom Block in September, 1962."

"(6) During the first week of the school year the Honourable Member for Ashgrove, Mr. S. D. Tooth, called at my office and made the strongest representations for work to provide for additional accommodation to be given the highest priority. As a result the maximum number of men who can be gainfully employed are now pushing ahead with the construction. No representations have been made by any other Honourable Member. The Honourable Member for Ashgrove, Mr. Tooth, also urged the early establishment of a new high school at Newmarket to relieve the pressure on Kelvin Grove and to provide for the children in the Newmarket area. It is intended to meet this request and have a new High School established at Newmarket to open at the beginning of the 1963 school year. This should bring considerable relief to Kelvin Grove High School. Furthermore, included in the programme is provision for a third section of Kelvin Grove High School. This is to contain two additional Science Laboratories, two Science Demonstration Rooms and five additional General Purpose classrooms."

"(7 and 8) Yes. The provision of a sports oval and the levelling of ground for two tennis courts and two basketball courts has been included in the draft Works Programme for 1962-1963."

"(9) The Department has high school sites at Bardon, Ithaca and Toowong. The Bardon site will be given due consideration along with the other school sites."

BUILDING ALLOTMENTS IN DIMBULAH

**Mr. GILMORE** (Tablelands) asked the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation—

"As there is an acute shortage of building allotments in the town of Dimbulah both for business and residential purposes, will he have a substantial number made available as early as possible?"

**Hon. A. R. FLETCHER** (Cunningham) replied—

"It has been approved to offer for sale, after survey, 45 residential allotments, comprising two sections fronting Stephens Street (Dimbulah-Wolfram Road) and a number of allotments fronting Hambling Street. In addition, 12 business sites at the northern end of Raleigh Street will be offered immediately after survey is effected. Instructions for survey will be issued to the first available surveyor, and I am assured that survey action will be expedited by the Surveyor-General. The Honourable Member can rest assured that there will be no undue delay in submitting the allotments for sale immediately the necessary survey is effected."

OVERTIME WORKED BY NURSING STAFF AT IPSWICH MENTAL HOSPITAL

**Mr. DONALD** (Ipswich East) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

"In order to prevent the working of overtime at the Ipswich Mental Hospital, will he make the necessary appointments to the nursing staff to bring it to the required strength?"

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga) replied—

"There is a shortage in both the Male and the Female Nursing Staffs at the Ipswich Mental Hospital, but the Department is making every effort to secure suitable appointees to bring both Staffs to the required strength. Some difficulty is being encountered in obtaining suitable applicants but it is expected that a number of new appointments will be made in the near future."

### Hospital Centre and Dental Clinic in Inala Area

**Mr. SHERRINGTON** (Salisbury) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

"Further to my personal representations to him that because of the high cost of transport from Inala to Brisbane Hospitals adequate pre-natal care was not experienced by expectant mothers of this area, necessitating the establishment of a pre-natal clinic, a view which has been subsequently confirmed by his advisers, and because these same factors would apply to persons requiring dental treatment, will he indicate what steps he is taking to provide a hospital centre and a dental clinic in the area?"

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga) replied—

"The establishment of an ante-natal clinic to meet the needs of Inala has been under consideration and I expect to make an announcement regarding this in the near future. I am unable to indicate when a dental clinic will be made available at Inala by the South Brisbane Hospitals Board, but I have no doubt that the project will receive due consideration by the Board whenever practicable."

### Cost of Rail Fares, Darra and Sandgate Lines

**Mr. SHERRINGTON** (Salisbury) asked the Minister for Transport—

"(1) As a 10-mile journey on the Sandgate line costs the passenger 1s. 9d. or 1¾d. per mile and a 12-mile journey on the Darra line costs 2s. 3d. or 2¼d. per mile, will he indicate on what basis is it calculated that passengers on the Darra line are charged a greater amount per mile?"

"(2) What is the number of passengers carried yearly between Brisbane and Darra and Brisbane and Sandgate?"

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

"(1) Variations as existing in certain suburban rail fares are the aftermath of rail fare juggling by the previous Labour Government, the party to which the Honourable Member swears allegiance. During the last eight years that Labour held office in this State rail freights were increased eight times and fares five times. During the five years of office of this Government there has only been one general increase in freights and fares. When this Government did increase freights and fares in 1960 an endeavour was made to adopt as far as practicable a set mileage scale in relation to suburban fares. The scale mile rate used was that which was then in operation in New South Wales suburban areas. However, if the standard rate had been fully applied to the Sandgate line, and a small number of other stations, the new fares would have exceeded competitive bus fares, and would have diverted rail passengers to that means of travel. However, I now assume that the Honourable Member for Salisbury has discussed the text of his Question with his colleague, the Honourable Member for Sandgate, and that he believes that fares on the Sandgate line and the other minor stations should be increased to the standard scale rate. I will therefore have his proposal examined, but I would warn the Honourable Member and also the Honourable Member for Sandgate, that an increase to the standard fare on the Sandgate line could mean loss of rail patronage from that area as well as from Redcliffe, and also jeopardise the employment of Railway employees in the locality."

"(2) Details of passenger journeys from all stations appear in the Annual Reports of the Commissioner for Railways."

### Construction of Mulligan Main Road to Laura

**Mr. ADAIR** (Cook) asked the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity—

"As the decision of the Government to close the Cooktown-Laura Railway has caused extreme hardship to graziers and residents of the Laura district due to the fact that the Mulligan main road is not capable of carrying road transport during the wet season, will he have the necessary work carried out on this road immediately with a view to constructing an all-weather road?"

**Hon. E. EVANS** (Mirani) replied—

"Work on the road is already authorised. It cannot be carried out immediately owing to the weather conditions. Further works on this road will be carried out as funds become available."

### Relief of Unemployment at Thursday Island

**Mr. ADAIR** (Cook) asked the Minister for Public Works and Local Government—

"(1) Owing to the large number of unemployed at Thursday Island and the urgent necessity for the early commencement of road construction on the island, will he advise what amount has been allocated for local authority works on Thursday Island from funds recently made available by the Commonwealth Government?"

"(2) Is he aware that Thursday Island on the population basis has more unemployed than any other town or city in Queensland and is entitled to a generous hand-out of funds recently made available?"

**Hon. H. RICHTER** (Somerset) replied—

"(1 and 2) The matter of allocation of funds for Local Authority works does not come within my administration."

ADDITIONAL SPORTING AREAS AT MAREEBA STATE SCHOOL

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

"What are the latest developments concerning the provision of extra—sporting area for students at the State School, Mareeba, and when can it be expected that work will be commenced on preparing the area?"

**Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY** (Isis) replied—

"Negotiations are at present proceeding for the acquisition of additional land for the Mareeba State School and correspondence has been addressed to the Mareeba Shire Council in connection with a quotation for the grading and levelling of the area in question."

ORDERS FOR SHIPBUILDING YARDS IN QUEENSLAND

**Mr. NEWTON** (Belmont) asked the Premier—

"Following his discussion with a deputation from the Metal Trade Group of Unions in January of this year has any representation been made to the Federal Minister for Shipping and Transport to see that orders are obtained for the ship building yards in Queensland to relieve unemployment amongst ship building workers in this State?"

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

"Following on my Brisbane meeting with the Right Honourable the Prime Minister, arrangements have been made for the Honourable H. Opperman, O.B.E., M.P., Minister for Shipping and Transport, to visit Queensland this week to personally discuss the shipbuilding situation with me."

SILTING OF ENTRANCE TO CAIRNCROSS DOCK

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

"(1) Is he aware that 'Iron Dampier,' a steel-carrying ship on a trial run empty, had trouble entering and leaving Cairncross Dock because of the bad silting up of the river at this junction?"

"(2) Is it a fact that the ship left the port of Brisbane with much work undone that it intended having done in the dock which would have helped to relieve the unemployment in January of this year?"

"(3) As steel-carrying ships are very important to the port of Brisbane and as there is a shortage of steel here, what is being done by his Department to overcome this serious problem confronting the larger ships carrying steel and other industrial materials, so that they will not bypass the port of Brisbane?"

"(4) Why could not the six river dredges tied up at this point be made workable to keep the river clear of silt until they are replaced?"

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

"(1) 'Iron Dampier' had no such difficulty."

"(2) No. All of the work which the Company intended to have carried out was, in fact, carried out."

"(3 and 4) The Honourable Member's facts are astray. 'Iron Dampier' is not a steel carrier and does not trade to the Port of Brisbane. It is engaged in the carriage of iron ore from Yampi Sound to Port Kembla and was brought into Brisbane solely for docking purposes. I would assure the Honourable Member that vessels with a greater draught than 'Iron Dampier' regularly use the Port of Brisbane without difficulty. As a matter of interest, 'Iron Dampier' was drawing 18 feet 5 inches when it entered the dock. The port regularly handles vessels drawing between 30 and 31 feet. The Department's working plant is sufficient to handle any present siltation problems in the port, and it is not necessary to avail ourselves of the use of supernumerary and uneconomic plant."

HOUSING COMMISSION HOME SITES, MOUNT GRAVATT EAST

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

"Has the Queensland Housing Commission purchased land for further home building in an area bounded by Wecker, Newham and Ham Roads, Mount Gravatt East? If so, what is the area and the number of homes it will contain?"

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

"The Commission has purchased 59 acres 2 roods 15.5 perches in Wecker Road and 17 acres 16 perches in Wishart and Ham Roads. These areas will provide 345 building sites."

USE OF SAFETY BELTS IN MOTOR CARS

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

"In view of the world-wide contention supported by comprehensive tests in England and America that safety belts in cars are a means of decreasing serious injury to persons involved in motor vehicle accidents, will he give consideration to the introduction of legislation to make fitting of such belts compulsory to all motor vehicles? If not, what is the objection to such a measure?"

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

"In the first place, this question is based on an incorrect assumption, because the contention is not world-wide. Regulations in Queensland governing equipment and design of motor vehicles are based on standards proposed by the Australian Motor Vehicle Standards Committee, and any requirement for the fitting of safety

belts in motor vehicles would need to be on a Commonwealth-wide basis, otherwise vehicles from other States could operate in another State without safety belts. Furthermore, it is not good policy to introduce a law which cannot be enforced. Even if the law required cars to be fitted with safety belts, it would be practically impossible to enforce a law compelling persons driving or riding in a car to wear the belts. Opinion is as yet by no means unanimous in relation to the most suitable type of safety belt, and, indeed, there is in some authoritative quarters violent disagreement on this aspect. I personally strongly favour the fitting and use of safety belts, but I realise that people will have to be educated to their use, rather than that they should be compelled, by law, to do so."

### Appointment of Superintendent, Westbrook Farm Home

**Mr. BROMLEY** (Norman) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

"(1) In view of the fact that it is a month since applications for the position of Superintendent of Westbrook Farm Home for Boys closed, when will the new superintendent be selected and when will he commence duties?"

"(2) Have applications been received from other States for the position as well as Queensland and, if so, will preference be given to a Queenslander with the necessary qualifications?"

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga) replied—

"(1) I am unable to state definitely when the new Superintendent of Westbrook Farm Home for Boys will be appointed, but I expect that this will be in the very near future."

"(2) Applications have been received from other States for the position, as well as Queensland, and I am awaiting the Public Service Commissioner's recommendation following consideration of the application by a Committee of Officers from the Public Service Commissioner's Office and my Department. I have no doubt that the Committee and the Commissioner will very carefully consider the application of any Queenslander with the necessary qualifications."

### Professional Fishermen's League and Cairns Fish Board

**Mr. WALLACE** (Cairns) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

"In view of the unrest and dissatisfaction prevailing among members of the Cairns Branch of the Queensland Professional Fishermen's League at the activities and attitude of the Fish Board towards branch members, and in view of the importance and value of the industry, will he consider proceeding to Cairns at an early date accompanied by the manager of the Fish Board for the purpose of meeting branch members with a view to hearing at first hand the many anomalies alleged to be existing and in order to reach a basis of operations acceptable to both sides?"

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

"My commitments are not likely to permit my making an early visit to Cairns but I am taking steps to have the matter examined."

### Shelters at State Schools for Students' Bicycles

**Mr. WALLACE** (Cairns) asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

"In view of the great number of bicycles used as a means of transport by school children at Cairns, the value of which amounts to many thousands of pounds, a fair example of which being Trinity Bay State High School, where, of the 532 children enrolled, 506 use bicycles, a conservative value of which is £25 each, and in view of the repeated requests of Parents and Citizens' Committees for an allocation of funds to provide shelters, will he arrange for shelters to be provided similar to those at Rockhampton North State High School and under the same conditions, i.e., at no cost to Parents and Citizens' Committees?"

**Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY** (Isis) replied—

"Present practice for the time being is not to provide bicycle sheds at State Primary or High Schools as available finance is being utilised for projects of a higher priority."

### Closure of Cooktown-Laura Railway

**Mr. WALLACE** (Cairns) asked the Minister for Transport—

"In view of the statement appearing in 'The Courier Mail' of March 1, 1962, that a rail motor is to be used to relieve the plight of residents of the Laura area and in view of the fact that weather conditions obtaining at the moment are an annual event, was the decision to close and sell the Cooktown-Laura Railway taken with the full knowledge that the privations under which residents of the area are labouring would continue and become worse when they were completely dependent on road transport?"

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

"The decision to close the Cooktown Railway was made after careful consideration of all the circumstances involved and on the assumption that the residents of Laura, like those of many other towns in Queensland where communications are likely to be affected by floods, would take the precaution of maintaining adequate supplies of essential foodstuffs to guard against such a contingency."

### SWIMMING ENCLOSURES AND ROCK-POOLS FOR NORTHERN SEA BATHERS

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

"In view of the many thousands of pounds apparently to be spent on shark-meshing to keep southern beaches clear for bathers, is he prepared to spend a similar amount in the North to provide enclosures and rock-pools for the safety of northern sea bathers? If so, would he give favourable consideration to an application by the Townsville City Council for help in constructing a rock-pool in Townsville?"

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

"The work is experimental and, in the light of results obtained, decisions will be made in respect of the whole coast."

### BRISBANE TOWN PLAN

**Mr. DEAN** (Sandgate) asked the Minister for Public Works and Local Government—

"In view of the severe criticisms and unpleasant rumours circulating in the community concerning the Brisbane Town Plan, will he request the Brisbane City Council to have the period of time for viewing the plan extended for a further period of six months so that the fears now being expressed by householders and certain business interests can be investigated?"

**Hon. H. RICHTER** (Somerset) replied—

"I would refer the Honourable Member to my answer to a question on the Brisbane Town Plan furnished on the 28th ultimo wherein I advised among other things that any extension of the minimum period of time of ninety days was a matter entirely in the hands of the Brisbane City Council."

## FORM OF QUESTION

**Mr. O'DONNELL** (Barcoo) having given notice of a question—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The hon. member's question appears to contain quite an amount of padding. I will need to have a very good look at it.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY; MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS

**Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN** (Landsborough—Premier) (11.34 a.m.): I desire to inform the House that, in connection with the forthcoming visit overseas of the Minister for Health and Home Affairs, His Excellency the Governor, in pursuance of the provisions of Section 8 of the Officials in Parliament Acts, 1896 to 1959, has authorised and empowered the Hon. Gordon William Wesley Chalk, Minister for Transport, to perform and exercise all or any of the duties, powers, and authorities, imposed or conferred upon the hon. the Minister for Health and Home Affairs by any Act, rule, practice, or ordinance, on and from March 15, 1962, and untill the return to Queensland of the Hon. Dr. Henry Winston Noble.

I lay upon the table of the House a copy of the Queensland Government Gazette Extraordinary of March 2, 1962, notifying these arrangements.

Whereupon the hon. gentleman laid the Government Gazette Extraordinary upon the table.

## PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Regulations under the Health Acts, 1937 to 1960.

Order in Council under the State Transport Act of 1960.

By-laws Nos. 887 to 889 inclusive under the Railways Acts, 1914 to 1961.

## LAND ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

### INITIATION

**Hon. A. R. FLETCHER** (Cunningham—Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Land Acts, 1910 to 1961, the Land Acts and Other Acts Amendment Act of 1957, and the Land Acts and Other Acts Amendment Act of 1959, each in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

## STOCK ROUTES AND RURAL LANDS PROTECTION ACTS AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### INITIATION

**Hon. A. R. FLETCHER** (Cunningham—Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Acts, 1944 to 1961, and the Barrier Fences Act of 1954, each in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

## SWINE COMPENSATION FUND BILL

### THIRD READING

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

## GRAMMAR SCHOOLS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

### Third Reading

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

## GOVERNMENT LOAN BILL

### Second Reading

**Hon. T. A. HILEY** (Chatsworth—Treasurer and Minister for Housing) (11.56 a.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

This is a purely formal measure. Its purpose was explained to the House in the Committee stage and I took the opportunity of presenting a history of the past two occasions on which a similar Bill was brought down so that hon. members could compare the amount sought on this occasion with the amounts sought on the two previous occasions. I have nothing to add to what I said then.

**Mr. HANLON** (Baroona) (11.57 a.m.): The opportunity for any possible debate on this Bill was exhausted during the introductory stage, as the Treasurer pointed out, and the Opposition do not propose to offer any further comment now.

Motion (Mr. Hiley) agreed to.

### Committee

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

Clauses 1 to 11, both inclusive, and preamble, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

## LAND ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

### Initiation in Committee

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

**Hon. A. R. FLETCHER** (Cunningham—Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation) (11.58 a.m.): I move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Land Acts, 1910 to 1961, the Land Acts and Other Acts Amendment Act of 1957, and the Land Acts and Other Acts Amendment Act of 1959, each in certain particulars."

This is a very short Bill, containing five simple amendments.

Firstly it provides for the right of appeal to the Land Appeal Court against the Land Court's determination of the unimproved value for purposes of conversion of leases to freehold or perpetual lease tenure.

When freeholding legislation was first introduced, this provision was not incorporated because it was thought that, in view of the large number of applications envisaged, the judicial process would become unnecessarily cluttered up and hampered if a right of appeal were given against determinations made by the Court. The idea was to hurry them up and to get them through. The object of the legislation at the time was to ensure a speedy but just solution to the question of the price to be charged for the fee simple of an applicant's land. The applicant was given every opportunity to put his case to the Land Court and the Land Court's determination was made final and binding upon both the Crown and the lessee. Moreover, a lessee was not compelled to proceed with his application if he thought the determination of the valuation by the Court was too high. He could allow his application to lapse and make a second application at a later stage.

Representations have been made to me that as these determinations are the only valuations by the Land Court which are not subject to appeal, the right of appeal might similarly be applied.

**Mr. Hanlon:** We pointed that out to you when you introduced the Bill but apparently you overlooked it at that time.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** That could be. I am not here to excuse.

**Mr. Hilton:** And for other reasons, too.

**Mr FLETCHER:** In any case, in view of the many representations that have been made and in view of the fact that we are very keen to allay any suspicion in the minds of lessees as to the correctness of the method that is used to arrive at the valuation, we have decided to give them every opportunity to test a decision.

It will follow, of course, that both the Crown and the lessee will be able to approach the Land Appeal Court if either party feels aggrieved by the Land Court's decision. It will not be a one-sided right of appeal.

**Mr. Hilton:** Will that mean that if an appeal is made to the Land Appeal Court and the court reduces the amount, the Crown will have a further right of appeal to the Land Court?

**Mr. FLETCHER:** Naturally if you have a right of appeal either party can appeal. It would be a funny right of appeal if it meant that only one party could appeal.

**Mr. Hilton:** I do not think you understand my point. Obviously the Crown fix the valuation in the first place. They are not going to appeal. The appeal must come from the people who want to freehold.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** The court fixes it in the first place.

**Mr. Hilton:** Obviously the Crown will not appeal there and then.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** I expect if they thought that the determination was completely unreasonable they would have the right to

appeal. If we are writing in a right of appeal, surely both parties to the proceedings will have the right.

Secondly, it is considered that an amendment is desirable with respect to the commencing date of a converted tenure.

The law at present provides that the converted tenure shall commence on the quarter day following receipt by the Minister of the lessee's application to convert to freeholding or perpetual lease tenure. Rent paid on the current lease after this date is credited against the purchasing price in freeholding.

A period of up to 12 to 18 months often unavoidably occurs between receipt of an application and determination by the court. A valuation must be obtained by the department and referred to the Land Court. The matter is then listed for hearing at a town in the district where the land is situated, but the actual date of the hearing is dependent upon the date of the next Court sittings at the particular town. By virtue of this lapse of time, applicants often have to find, within three months of the court's determination, a substantial sum of money representing the difference between the annual rent on their current lease and up to two annual instalments of the purchasing price or rent based on the new capital value as determined by the court. To give relief to such lessees, the Bill provides a right to elect as to whether the converted tenure shall commence on the quarter day following receipt of an application by the Minister or the quarter day following the court's determination. The lessee has the right to decide when the first payment shall be made.

I mention that the provision will not affect Crown revenues, as the Crown is entitled to receive only the unimproved value of the land determined by the court and the new provision merely affects the time from which the annual instalments commence.

We have also written into the Bill a small amendment to clarify the meaning of the term "unimproved value" as used in the Valuation of Land Acts and the Land Acts. It has become desirable administratively to clarify the meaning of the term "unimproved value" as appearing in those Acts. Section 25 of the Valuation of Land Acts contains a dragnet provision that if any Act contains reference to the term "unimproved value," then if there is a subsisting valuation by the Valuer-General such valuation shall automatically be the unimproved value of the land concerned.

In 1957, when the Government introduced its freeholding legislation, it charged the Land Court to ascertain the unimproved value of selections the lessees of which had applied to freehold. Such unimproved value became the purchasing price of the fee simple of the land concerned. The court was expressly charged to hear and determine the matter, and the ultimate criterion of the unimproved value is specifically mentioned to be "the opinion of the court." The court's decision must reflect the value as at the date the lessee's application is received by the Minister.

Recently a lessee in the Goondiwindi district has tested in the Full Court of the Supreme Court whether Section 25 of the Valuation of Land Acts overrules the provisions of the Land Acts and in effect makes the Land Court a rubber stamp compelled to adopt the Valuer-General's valuations irrespective of the date at which such valuations were made.

**Mr. Hilton:** Has there been a decision on that case yet?

**Mr. FLETCHER:** No, we have not got the decision. Certain other aspects of the judgment of the Land Court are also being tested, but the challenge as to the application of Section 25 of the Valuation of Land Acts has resulted in the Land Court, following well-established legal precedent, refraining from hearing further applications to freehold. That is to say, the freeholding process has come to a full stop. As some 450 applications await hearing and more are received each week, it is highly desirable for legislative action to be taken to clarify the position. The Bill therefore makes clear that the general provisions of the Valuation of Land Acts do not have, and never have had, application to the special provisions of the Land Acts.

At the same time, so as not to bind the Supreme Court or in any way affect its pending decision on this part of the case before it, it is specifically provided that the amendment will have no bearing on the case now before the court and that the court is free to apply the law as heretofore applying, which is for the Full Court to determine on the well-established principles of statutory interpretation.

**Mr. Burrows:** You said a short time ago "and never have had application". How do you reconcile that with your statement that it will not have any effect on the case in dispute?

**Mr. FLETCHER:** It has been specifically excepted, but in all other cases that have been before the Land Court and have been determined, the determinations will stand. The cases that are excepted form the basis of the Supreme Court action at present and, naturally, they have to be excepted. I am sure hon. members will agree that this action is necessary as either party to the current proceedings could appeal, which would have the effect of preventing the Land Court from hearing applications to freehold for probably another 12 or 18 months.

A further provision is designed to give bodies corporate the power to hold land as trustees. The concept of a body corporate is playing a greater part in modern life than used to be the case. Hon. members will know that there are several Acts which incorporate public bodies and empower them to hold land.

It is anomalous that the Land Acts, as presently enacted, do not permit a body corporate, constituted pursuant to an Act of this State or of the Commonwealth, to hold land granted in trust or reserved for a public purpose. The Bill introduces a provision whereby such a body corporate may as trustee hold a Deed of Grant in trust or be trustee of a reserve set aside for a public purpose.

It is emphasised that the Bill does not create bodies corporate and that it applies only to those created by or pursuant to an Act of this State or of the Commonwealth with power to hold land. In short, under the terms of the new provision, only bodies corporate of a public nature could hold land granted in trust or reserved.

**Mr. Hanlon:** Would you give us an example of it?

**Mr. FLETCHER:** Show societies. Perhaps the C.W.A. might want to build on land that is reserved or held in trust for their purposes. Under the Land Acts they have to go to the trouble of nominating certain of their members as trustees. Instead of having the very convenient method of the continuing body, that is the C.W.A., being the trustees, at the moment they are under the necessity of appointing two or three trustees, or as many as are necessary. It is not a permanent arrangement; it is subject to rearrangement every now and then.

**Mr. Burrows:** Only public bodies?

**Mr. FLETCHER:** Yes.

**Mr. Burrows** interjected.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** Once they become a body corporate under certain Acts, then and only then will they be able to hold land granted in trust or held in reserve for special purposes.

**Mr. Burrows:** It could be possible that if there were three trustees, just one could be a body corporate with two private individuals?

**Mr. FLETCHER:** No, I do not think so. I have no legal knowledge of such a situation being possible. As I see it the three trustees would now hand over, say, to the C.W.A. or to the show society. By so handing over they would avoid the continual anxiety about individual trustees dying or moving away. Most hon. members would have had some experience of the difficulties and embarrassment that is caused now and then to very worthwhile bodies.

The new provision will provide machinery whereby present trustees of a body which may be able to become incorporated pursuant to any Act of this State or of the Commonwealth may transfer the trust or reserve land held by them in their individual names to their new corporate name. The three members of the C.W.A. will be able to transfer to the C.W.A. branch in the area, I presume.

The only other provision contained in the Bill is an amendment to clarify the meaning of an existing provision relating to the issue of permits to destroy trees. It is merely a clarification. At the moment it is not lawful to destroy trees without a permit. An attempt was made to test the matter in a case where someone destroyed trees without a permit. It was found that, owing to a typist's or someone's error, the wording of the Act made it impossible to carry out the objects intended in the Bill.

Those constitute the only amendments and principles in the Bill and I leave them to the good sense of the Committee.

**Mr. HANLON** (Baroona) (12.16 p.m.): This Bill is an example, in some ways at least, of the astounding mess into which this Government have got themselves, a Country Party Government dealing with matters with which one would expect they would have a particular facility to deal.

I pointed out by way of interjection when the Minister was speaking on the right of appeal to be given to leaseholders applying for conversion to freehold, that when this measure was originally introduced by the then Minister, the hon. member for Fassifern, we gave what we thought were compelling reasons for the introduction of this provision at that time. Those reasons were partially along the lines mentioned by the Minister this morning.

We pointed out, at that time, that the fixing by the Land Court, generally consisting of one person, of the valuation for the freeholding of the land without the right of appeal was virtually the setting up by the government of a one-man price fixer to determine the price for converting land from leasehold to freehold. Despite all the arguments we put forward at the time the then Minister rejected our views. Apparently experience has shown this Government as it has shown the Menzies-McEwan and other Liberal-Country Party Governments, that the Labour Party often know much more about some of these matters than a Country-Liberal Government, because the Minister is now, in the Bill, more or less adopting the suggestion put forward some years ago from this side of the Chamber and rejected by his Government at the time.

However, it is no use wasting time dwelling on that point now. It is sufficient to say that we did put forward as a practical suggestion at that time, that if the freeholding provisions had to come into operation, although we were opposed to them on principle, they should be implemented by the Government from a common-sense point of view and from the point of view of complete fairness to all the people involved, including the Crown and the applicant for conversion to freehold.

**Mr. Ewan:** How can you sincerely say that? Do you know what is in the original Act?

**Mr. HANLON:** I do not know what the hon. member is talking about. I do not know what he means by asking us can we say it "sincerely" because he has only to look up "Hansard" to prove that what I say is correct. The hon. member for Roma, who possibly has been one of the people requesting the Minister to bring in this right of appeal, did not support hon. members on this side in 1957 or 1958 when they sought to include the right of appeal in the Bill.

**Mr. Ewan:** You put up stupid nonsense.

**Mr. HANLON:** I suggest that the hon. member for Roma is now suggesting that his own Minister is putting up stupid nonsense because the Minister is now advancing the very reasons advanced by the Opposition at that time. Is the hon. member for Roma going to vote against this provision for a right of appeal? If he says the Minister is talking nonsense I shall be pleased if he will explain why the Minister is doing so.

I could not follow the Minister's second point as to the right being given to an applicant to make an election whether payments will date from the time of the application or in due course when the valuation is determined, if he decides to go ahead with it. The suggestion put forward by the Minister seems to be a reasonable one, if as he said the provision will have no effect on Crown revenue, that it is merely a machinery one, and that instead of placing a sudden burden on the landholder-applicant it will give him the opportunity of accepting a more convenient method.

I point out however that some similar principle could be introduced to cover applications made by unions for marginal or wage increases. I do not want to get on to industrial matters, but, if the principle is to be introduced in this sphere, consideration should be given to its introduction in other spheres where applications are made and long delays are experienced before determinations are made. The Minister pointed out that delays under the Act may be up to 18 months. After an application is made it may be 18 months before the matter is determined. If the applicant decides to go ahead with his proposal to freehold, he will under this provision as I understand it be able, as it were, to set aside his rental to meet the instalments he will have to pay on the land. The same principle could apply to unions that make applications to courts and whose applications are held up for a considerable time. Perhaps 18 months would elapse before a decision is given, and provision should be made so that they will be compensated for the losses or the inconvenience suffered in the period while they were awaiting a determination.

The Minister then went on to say that the Bill clarifies the term "unimproved value", and that it was necessary owing to some conflict in interpretation between the Land Court and the Valuer-General, and a conflict in the law. He said that as a consequence of the conflict the process of freeholding land had came to a stop. As we on this side of the Chamber are opposed to the Government's measure to allow of the freeholding of land, we could not be expected to shed any tears at the hold-up in the process of freeholding, but at the same time we must consider measures from the viewpoint of fairness to the individuals involved. The Government's policy has been to make provision for the freeholding of land by those who want to take advantage of the opportunity and, although we are opposed to the principle, we certainly would not take the view that we would want people to be held up and inconvenienced financially and otherwise merely because of a defect in the Act. If the Bill is going to make the position clearer and simpler for applicants who are taking advantage of the Government's policy, I feel we would not be opposed to it, although, as I pointed out earlier, we opposed the principle when it was originally introduced by the Government.

The Minister then went on to explain that under the Bill bodies corporate will have the power to hold land as trustees.

All of these points, of course, will have to be examined in the light of the contents of the Bill, but from the Minister's explanation it does seem that it would be much more logical to allow bodies corporate such as show societies, the C.W.A. and so on to hold land as trustees than to have such land held in the names of individual trustees who from time to time have to be replaced owing to illness or death.

The only other provision mentioned by the Minister was the one clarifying the meaning of permission to destroy trees. If what he says is borne out by an examination of the Bill, this will be more or less a technical amendment to clarify a doubt that has arisen in the application of the Act. It would seem that we could hardly raise any objection to it. All these matters will be examined when we see the Bill. In the meantime there are other members of the Opposition who wish to comment on some features of the Bill.

**Hon. P. J. R. HILTON** (Carnarvon) (12.26 p.m.): This Bill will require very close examination. It is rather hard to make a correct appraisal of what the Bill contains until we see its actual terms. However, I wish to bring to the attention of hon. members what I believe to be the background associated with the principal amendment in the Bill, which is the right of appeal against a valuation fixed by the Land Court for freeholding purposes. In due course, I will refresh my memory on the very lengthy debate that took place when the 1957 Act, that contained so many amendments, was passed by this House. If I remember correctly the Minister stated at the time that the right of appeal was not

being given on these valuations because it would amount to an appeal from Caesar to Caesar. I think that is logical. If I understood him correctly, the Minister intimated today that whilst the court fixes the valuation for freeholding purposes an appeal can be made to the Land Court against the decision. Obviously the Land Court member who fixed the valuation would not hear the appeal. We would have an extraordinary situation if one member of the Land Court was pitted against another on such important matters. That is undesirable. One member of the Land Court may fix a valuation, an appeal may be made to the Land Court, and another member of the Court will hear the appeal. On these valuations, experienced, honourable men of the Land Court will be pitted, one against the other. I think the former Minister for Public Lands, the hon. member for Fassifern, intimates that that is right.

The necessity for this amendment has arisen from an unfortunate departmental war that has been waged for some time now, between the Department of Public Lands and the Valuer-General's Department, which has been fanned into flame because of differences of opinion on values arrived at by the Valuer-General's Department and members of the Land Court. At one time, when the Government were in Opposition, they fostered the idea that the Valuer-General's Department was the big bad wolf so far as land values were concerned.

**Mr. Gaven:** It still is.

**Mr. HILTON:** We will leave the Gold Coast for the time being. We could argue that at length.

We were told that the Valuer-General was a big bad wolf in the country areas and only the Land Court could arrive at a correct appreciation of land values. It is unfortunate that in Opposition, and as the Government, hon. members opposite have helped to develop this erroneous opinion that is held by so many people. I recall pointing out in previous debates in this Assembly that on many occasions the Valuer-General fixed values below the values arrived at by the Land Court, and I gave specific illustrations.

The background to this amending legislation is that in the Goondiwindi area the Valuer-General, in compliance with the obligations imposed on him by these Acts, fixed certain values for certain grazing properties that under the provisions of the legislation enacted by the present Government may be converted to freehold.

Applications were made to convert to freehold and the Land Court fixed certain valuations. The landholders discovered, I think to their astonishment, that the values fixed by the Valuer-General were below those fixed by the Land Court, so there was a hue and cry and overnight the Valuer-General became a white-haired boy to many people. He emerged from disdain to being regarded as a sound man who understood land values. People said of him, "He is the man we want. We want to have this land converted to freehold on the values fixed by his department." Lo and behold, all those men who had a definite interest in the matter headed for the Government in a deputation and wanted an appeal from the Land Court because they claimed that the Land Court was catching them a little in the values fixed and they cited in support of their argument the values fixed by the Valuer-General. Now the Bill provides for an appeal from Caesar to Caesar on those valuations.

**Mr. Ewan:** Do you think the Valuer-General should be heard in the Land Court?

**Mr. HILTON:** In respect of what?

**Mr. Ewan:** The freeholding provisions. If he is subpoenaed and brought into court to give his evidence, will his evidence be admitted or considered by the court?

**Mr. HILTON:** That will be a matter for the court to determine, not me.

**Mr. Ewan:** Do you think it should be allowed?

**Mr. HILTON:** Many aspects of the matter would have to be examined very closely, particularly in view of the departmental warfare that was engendered by the Government when in opposition.

**Mr. Ewan:** You would not object to his evidence being admitted?

**Mr. HILTON:** I state my position this way: I did object to the freeholding of large areas of land, particularly in the arbitrary way the Government decided upon. Remember, they stipulated 5,000 acres. If a man had one acre over the 5,000 he could not freehold. That again caused a great deal of dissatisfaction. My colleagues and I argued very strongly against the whole principle because we realised that it was not necessary and that it was unfair. We realised that there would be a great disparity of opinion on valuations. I am sure that the Government, looking back on what has transpired over the past few years, are sorry they did not take the advice we tendered them. How this appeal from Caesar to Caesar will fare, I do not know. I intend to refresh my memory by a perusal of the previous debates.

**Mr. Ewan:** Who constitutes the Land Appeal Court?

**Mr. HILTON:** The Minister said the Land Court this morning. I did not hear him say the Land Appeal Court. However, the Land Appeal Court is constituted by a judge of the Supreme Court assisted by two members of the Land Court.

**Mr. Ewan:** That is right.

**Mr. HILTON:** The hon. member for Roma should know that without asking me.

**Mr. Ewan:** I know it but I wanted you to say it.

**Mr. HILTON:** What does the hon. member for Roma think I am?

**Mr. Ewan:** I think you are a very fine gentleman.

**Mr. HILTON:** I ask through you, Mr. Taylor, if there is provision in the Bill by which the member of the Land Court who fixed the valuation is precluded from sitting on the Land Appeal Court. I presume that would be so. The Minister said today that the appeal would be to the Land Court.

**Mr. Ewan:** He meant the Land Appeal Court.

**Mr. Fletcher:** The Land Appeal Court.

**Mr. HILTON:** I accept that though I did not hear the Minister say it earlier. He intimated that the member of the court who fixed the valuation would be precluded from sitting on the Land Appeal Court to assist the Supreme Court judge.

**Mr. Fletcher:** That is the way the Land Appeal Court is constituted.

**Mr. HILTON:** That is so. Do I take it that the member of the court who fixed the valuation is precluded from sitting on the Land Appeal Court? Is there specific provision in the legislation to prevent that? I presume there would be. Even though there may be, we still have the rather difficult position to which I referred earlier.

**Mr. Low:** You will find eventually that it is a good piece of legislation.

**Mr. HILTON:** The hon. member for Cooroora is a great antagonist of the Valuer-General; but when he argues in favour of the legislation, he is arguing that the sound values fixed by the Valuer-General have inspired an amendment of the Act to permit appeals to be made to the Land Appeal Court.

I suggest that the Minister could have taken the Committee into his confidence and explained clearly the whole background —why the amendment was necessary, what gave rise to it, and so on. While dealing with that important aspect, he might have given some indication whether there is any truth in the rumours that have been current for a considerable time that the Valuer-General's Department is eventually to be incorporated in the Department of Public Lands, that it is to be eliminated altogether and that there will be only one valuing authority.

**Mr. Gaven:** If my vote counts, he will be banished into the wilderness.

**Mr. HILTON:** I appreciate the views of the hon. member for Gold Coast, but he is logical in some respects and illogical in others.

**Mr. Gaven:** We have heard this before.

**Mr. HILTON:** I shall repeat it. The hon. member said that the agents on the Gold Coast were making a rod for their own backs; now he is blaming the Valuer-General for something for which the agents can be blamed. The hon. member was honest enough to make that admission some years ago, so he should not now argue so viciously against the Valuer-General and his officers.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. HILTON:** I realise that I am digressing a little, Mr. Taylor, but I was replying to the interjection.

Land values are assuming great importance in Queensland, and it is time that the Government gave an indication to the House and to the people of the State what the future basis of valuation will be—who will be the valuing authority; whether the Valuer-General is to be removed completely and his officers incorporated in the Department of Public Lands; whether there is to be a continuation of this unfortunate war that has developed, and has been engendered and fostered by the Government, between the two departments. I think the position should be clarified. In my opinion, valuing for revenue purposes should be done by the Department of Public Lands; for all other purposes the Valuer-General should do it.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the hon. member for Carnarvon not to refer to the Valuer-General again.

**Mr. HILTON:** The matters are linked, so there must be some digression in the early stages of the debate. The real purpose of the introductory stage of a Bill is to give hon. members an opportunity of making suggestions relating to the legislation to be brought down. If there is any aspect of which the Government are not aware, they should take the action necessary to incorporate it in the legislation. I think that the Government should now have a full appreciation of all the pitfalls and difficulties that have become evident because of their own policies, and bring down legislation to amend their past mistakes and provide a clear charter under which their officers can work in the future and, at the same time, engender in the minds of land-holders real confidence in regard to their valuations, rentals, and so on.

I shall withhold further comment until I have read the Bill.

**Mr. EWAN** (Roma) (12.39 p.m.): I support the proposed legislation. I feel constrained to say that there seems to be a complete misunderstanding of the proposal submitted to the Committee, particularly by the hon. member for Baroona. He spoke of the Government getting into a mess in regard to its land legislation. When the Government assumed office, they were faced with the colossal task of cleaning up the mess created over a period of 30 years of Labour's mismanagement of land matters.

That was indicated perfectly clearly when we repealed their 1952 Land Acts Amendment Act. No notice was taken of all the suggestions that were made by us from the Opposition side at the time the measure was introduced. The hon. member for Baroona claims that the present Opposition asked for the right of appeal to be included in the 1957 Act. I say that they did not. If they did, they did it in such a confused fashion that no-one could understand it. Let me explain the measure. In the first place, a person applying for freehold was not compelled to accept the court's decision. The hon. member for Fassifern introduced that legislation when he was Minister for Public Lands. He insisted that the necessery provision be made so that if the applicant for freehold was not satisfied with the court's determination he had the right to apply for freehold on some subsequent occasion. If that is not a right of appeal I do not know what a right of appeal is. When that legislation was being introduced I wanted a right of appeal provision included, just as is being granted under the legislation now before the Committee. I consider that it is only right, just and equitable for anyone to have a right of appeal in any court of law on any subject if he thinks he has been unjustly treated. Therefore I support the right of appeal being granted to landholders on the first application. If they are defeated in their appeals, the Court decision will stand. If they are dissatisfied they will not go on with their freeholding, but in two or three years' time they can apply again to the court. Economic circumstances, the price of land and stock, and overseas conditions may be entirely different in three, four, or five years' time, which might bring the value of land down. It quite conceivably could happen.

**Mr. Davies:** Unless there was a change of government.

**Mr. EWAN:** Particularly if there was a change of government. That is the great fear in the minds of everyone in Queensland.

We are not compelling any applicant for freehold to accept the court's decision in the first place. We are extending the right of appeal to the Land Appeal Court. If a man is beaten in his appeal he is not compelled to go ahead with the freeholding. It is not a mandatory decision. He can rest on his laurels and then at some future date apply again to the court in the hope that because of either overseas or internal happenings he may get his land at a cheaper rate. He is not precluded from applying.

I have a great respect for the hon. member for Carnarvon. He is a very clear thinker, a very able and honest man in my opinion. But he suggested that by giving an applicant the right to appeal to the Land Appeal Court we are giving him simply the right to appeal from Caesar unto Caesar. I must disagree with the hon. gentleman. In the first instance the determination is made by a member of the Land Court. He arrives at his determination after taking into consideration the evidence placed before him. Under the legislation now before the Committee the freeholder will have two rights if the determination is not acceptable to him. Firstly, he will have the right to ignore the judgment, and secondly, the right to appeal to the Land Appeal Court. That is not from Caesar unto Caesar but from the judgment of one member of the Land Court to a Supreme Court Judge and two other members of the Land Court who did not hear the case in the first place. If he claims that is appealing from Caesar unto Caesar, I think the hon. member for Carnarvon should go back over his history and clean up his interpretation of it.

The hon member for Carnarvon also touched on other matters which worry me considerably. One was whether a trial Judge, on an application to freehold, will admit the evidence of the Valuer-General. I know that the human element comes into these matters; some Judges may, provided the law will allow them to do so, and some may not.

**Mr. Hilton:** You should have no objection to that.

**Mr. EWAN:** I want the Valuer-General's evidence to be admitted in the Land Court. I want the appellant, if he so desires, to be able to call the officer of the Valuer-General's Department who may have effected a valuation some time in close proximity to that made by the officers of the Department of Lands and I want him cross-examined in court.

**Mr. Hilton:** What would be the position if an appeal against the Valuer-General's valuation had already been made to the Land Appeal Court, and determined.

**Mr. EWAN:** It could not make any difference. It would be simply determined by the Court on the evidence submitted to it.

**Mr. Hilton:** There you have an appeal from Caesar to Caesar because, as the hon. member is arguing, the valuation fixed by the Valuer-General's department has already been determined by the Land Appeal Court.

**Mr. EWAN:** The hon. member for Carnarvon is speaking of a purely hypothetical case.

**Mr. Hilton:** It is not hypothetical. It has happened in many cases.

**Mr. EWAN:** The hon. member has his chance to correct my mistake, if there is any mistake, on the second reading.

I am advocating this because Tom Smith or Bill Jones if they are licensed valuers may go to the court and give evidence on behalf

of the applicant and be cross-examined. Consideration is given to that evidence by the court and I demand the same right for the appellant so far as the Valuer-General's department is concerned. I think, at some future date, that privilege may be extended to the applicant for freeholding in the State of Queensland. That is now denied him. I do not say, for one minute, that the Valuer-General's evidence, submitted to the Land Court, should be conclusive evidence, but it should be taken into consideration by any Land Court member in making his decision or judgment. I shall be delighted to hear if any hon. member in this Chamber can claim that that is being done at the present time.

The Minister touched on the principle of trustees and the creation of bodies corporate. I think that it is entirely necessary and I do not think any hon. member of this Chamber would object to its being done. Anyone who has had experience of special leases vested in trustees will realise that trustees are not models; they die, they leave the district, and, if they are absent for two years, they are no longer carrying out their duties. Associations such as the Country Women's Association and bodies corporate such as the Q.A.T.B. will be able, under this legislation, to have permanent trustees appointed from time to time. It will clear up many of the difficulties at present being experienced.

The clarification of land valuation, touched on by the Minister, is a highly desirable principle because the Act lays down certain ways of valuing for freeholding in that one must first of all find out what a reasonable, prudent purchaser would pay for the land in question. The improvements on the land—including, timber treatment, thanks to the judgment of the President of the Land Court, Mr. Percy Wright—are then valued at present-day values. The sum total of those improvements must then be subtracted from what a reasonably prudent person would pay for the whole property, in order to arrive at the unimproved capital value of the land. No two people would approach this problem in the same manner. No two licensed valuers may have the same opinion of the cost of improvements and the difficulties encountered in making the improvements. For the life of me I cannot see that the present method of valuing is unjust, now that we have received the judgment I have mentioned about timber treatment. If that principle is accepted by the officers of the Department of Public Lands and the Department of the Valuer-General and on that basis a just and equitable valuation is set, there should not be the discrepancy we find from time to time in the valuations of the Department of Public Lands and the Valuer-General. If there is a discrepancy, what is wrong with getting both valuers before the court and letting the court hear their evidence and give judgment on what it considers to be the correct method of valuation, the most honest, fair and just method of valuation?

I commend the legislation to hon. members and reserve my further comments until the second reading stage.

**Mr. O'DONNELL** (Barcoo) (12.51 p.m.): When I heard the Minister's review of the Bill, my immediate reaction was that a previous offer by the Government relating to security of tenure in certain areas of the State had apparently failed and that additional items had to be included in the Act to encourage further interest.

From time to time I have had discussions with various men on the land about opportunities they have of obtaining security of tenure. Having regard to many of the points raised by them, I am convinced that, following on repeated applications by them to the department, a precis of their complaints has been made and that the proposal before us is a part-result of the summary.

I shall deal now with the second point made by the Minister, as to whether a landholder wants to hold his land under perpetual lease or freehold tenure. Prior to the introduction of the Bill an applicant had to make payments retrospective to the date of his application. I want hon. members to consider some figures that I shall give. Suppose a man has a property on a terminating lease for which he pays £287 a year. Having received the offer to perpetually lease his land, his rent from then on would be £400 a year. If he had made application two years before the Court had given him the right to perpetually lease his land, he would have been expected to pay at the rate of £400 a year from the date of his application—a considerable sum of money for him to find. Assume that he accepted the offer to freehold his land. As hon. members are probably aware, he would be expected to pay off the property over 20 years at the rate of £800 per year. Hon. members will realise that there would be a greater sum to make up under those conditions. I should like to know how many people have made applications to the department in the past for the right to perpetually lease their land or to convert it to freehold tenure, and who, because of the considerable delay before judgment, have had reluctantly to forgo their desires. This is one of the crucial points that has been confusing the men on the land. I do not know whether this Bill will encourage them because the Minister mentions that both the applicant and the Crown will have a right of appeal. I am curious about the procedure. I should imagine that the Department of Public Lands would give permission for certain blocks to be converted to perpetual lease, or to freehold. When the applicant moves to acquire security of tenure he is acquainted with the Valuer-General's valuation but he does not know what adjustment the Land Court may make. It is not likely that the Land Court would make any valuation unless there was an application to obtain freehold rights or perpetual lease rights over the land. Immediately the Land

Court makes its decision, there are two prospective appellants, the Crown, and the applicant who is in residence on a terminable lease. Who gets preference in the courts? The Bill does not state that. I should like to know.

**Mr. Aikens:** How do you mean who gets preference? If there is any appeal, both sides are represented.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** In the case of different ideas on valuation?

**Mr. Aikens:** If there are appeals against the valuation both sides would be represented.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** Does the hon. member presume that two aspects of the question of valuation would be put before the court? The Crown would want it increased and the applicant would want it reduced.

**Mr. Aikens:** You would all have equal rights. There would be no question of preference.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** There would be a question of preference.

**Mr. Aikens:** I should not like to think so.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** There would be no question of preference?

**Mr. Fletcher:** Just as in an ordinary legal case.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** Just an ordinary legal case?

**Mr. Aikens:** Yes, just as in any other court.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** Under such circumstances there would be no delay and no repetitive legal actions, one appealing, and then the other appealing? The whole matter would be decided in the one court hearing? I should like the Minister's assurance on that point. I also accept the point that he previously made that there would be no obligation on the applicant to accept the court's decision. I was puzzled at the time as to how the court would deal with the Crown.

I come now to the unimproved value. There has been some controversy about the fixation of unimproved values, particularly with reference to what was previously determined by the Valuer-General and what possibly may be determined by the Land Court. I may have to spend some time investigating that point, because from time to time I have had a number of questions directed to me from various parts of my electorate on this highly contentious matter. An interesting point arises where a man on one block finds that his neighbour, who has a valuation from the Valuer-General's Department similar to his own, has applied for the perpetual lease of his land, and is given an entirely different valuation by the Land Court.

I was about to refer to the point raised by the Minister concerning trustees but I should like to defer that subject till a little later and return to the point that confused me about the possible precedence of the Crown over the applicant in the Land Appeal Court. What concerned me was the introduction of the Valuer-General into the Land Appeal Court. The point was raised by the hon. member for Roma.

**Mr. Ewan:** The Land Court, not the Land Appeal Court.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** Oh, I misunderstood the hon. member. I am sorry. However, I am very interested in the point about the introduction of the Valuer-General into either court but particularly into the Land Appeal Court because I realise that in the past he has been quite a contentious figure and that his valuation and the Land Court's valuation could be at considerable variance. I was wondering whether the Valuer-General would be permitted to give evidence on behalf of an appellant before the Land Appeal Court.

**Mr. Ewan:** No, not at the present time.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** I do not see why he should not be able to do so. I am quite certain that if the Crown was proceeding with an application before the court to increase a valuation and the Valuer-General's opinion was considered to be important he would be introduced.

**Mr. Ewan:** He could not be.

**Mr. Davies:** An answer from the Minister would be more reliable.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** I should like the Minister to reply to that.

**Mr. Fletcher:** Will you repeat the question?

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** I asked whether the Valuer-General could appear on behalf of the Crown in an appeal by the Crown to the Land Appeal Court.

**Mr. Fletcher:** No. The Valuer-General's valuation may be cited but he may not be subpoenaed to give evidence.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** But his opinion could be introduced into the court?

**Mr. Fletcher:** His valuation could be referred to, yes.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** That was the point that confused me. Would the applicant be able to have the Valuer-General's opinion introduced?

**Mr. Fletcher:** I think that would be common knowledge. I do not think there is any doubt that the Valuer-General's valuation would be part of the whole evidence.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** My reason for asking that was to ensure that the Valuer-General's opinion would be available to the applicant as well as to the Crown.

I really think the part of the Bill dealing with trustees solves a problem that has existed for many years. I even know of instances of people who have been approached because they have been the trustees of certain areas and who have disclaimed all knowledge of the matter; it was so long ago that they had forgotten all about it and actually they have argued against it. I know of trustees who never meet. Fortunately they have a long-living secretary who operates for them; he makes every decision. As the Minister said, many trustees have gone into the limbo of the lost. They have either died or left the district.

However, certain aspects of this question indicate that it is time corporate bodies were given trusteeship rights over the areas in which the community are interested.

At this stage I shall content myself with those remarks.

**Mr. MULLER** (Fassifern) (2.20 p.m.): As the person responsible for the introduction of this legislation in the first instance, I should like to make a few comments on the Bill.

I regret that it has been thought necessary to bring down a Bill for this purpose. The original legislation was considered very carefully and deeply before it was introduced, and the Opposition scanned every detail when it was before the Chamber. To get a clear picture of the situation, we must go back to the reason for its introduction.

It had been argued over the years, of course, that we would have to give security of tenure if we wanted development. When these suggestions were submited to me and I discussed them with my colleagues at that time, it was decided that it was advisable to give lessees the right to convert to freehold an area up to 5,000 acres. As one hon. member mentioned this morning, if it were 5,001 acres it would not be eligible for conversion. A line had to be drawn somewhere and I realise that in many cases 4,000 acres would be worth more than would 10,000 acres, perhaps, in other cases. The idea was agreed upon. It did not mean that in every case there would be 5,000 acres. The Minister was not obliged to accept an application if he believed that there was more than one living area in a property. It is quite possible that there might be three or four living areas in 5,000 acres.

In any case, the question arose of providing equity and justice for all—for the Crown as well as for the lessee. It was finally decided to allow anyone wanting to convert to freehold to make application for an area up to 5,000 acres. That was not a contract binding the Crown or the lessee, but it was considered that if a lessee decided that his purpose would be served to greater advantage by conversion to freehold, he was entitled to make the application. After he made application, the application would be submitted to the Land Court.

Members of the Opposition raised the question of who was entitled to give evidence and who was not, but that does not really come into the matter. If an application was lodged and the court decided that it would hear the case, the applicant was then entitled to go into court, bring what witnesses he wished to the court, and submit evidence as to the true value of the land. That really did not debar anyone from giving evidence. At the same time, it would not really be right and proper to expect the Valuer-General to give evidence on behalf of the applicant when officials of the Department of Public Lands were giving evidence for the Crown. That would be merely pitting one Government department against the other. The legislation was framed in this way because I knew, and I think other hon. members knew, that in some cases the Valuer-General's values were higher than the values of the Department of Public Lands. I fought very hard to substitute one valuing authority for the two. If we had had only one valuing authority, whether it was the Valuer-General's Department or the Department of Public Lands, this situation would never have arisen. If Bill Smith, the lessee, thought that the value placed on his land was too high, he could produce any evidence that he liked to the court to prove that it was too high. The court member would be influenced by that evidence, plus his own knowledge of the land. We have to be realistic. In my opinion there is no doubt about it, the proposal has sprung from an action that took place at Goondiwindi some little time ago where several lessees made application to convert to freehold. The case was heard by a new member of the Land Court appointed since my time. He determined a value much higher than the lessees considered it should have been. A matter of that kind arising out of an application to freehold is not a job for a new member of the Land Court. He needs to be very fully experienced, a man who knows land and knows the ropes pretty well. Anyway, his judgment was questioned, hence the need to amend the Act to satisfy those who wish to convert to freehold.

No government have the right to give away the Crown estate. Therefore when framing the legislation I considered that the court should be the judge, that it should not be the Minister or the members of the Land Administration Commission. If the decision was in favour of the applicant, well and good, but if it was against him he just had to take it. At the time the proposal was made I admitted that there could be an appeal to higher authority, but I said that there was no reason for it because it looked to me more like an appeal from Caesar to Caesar. A person would be appealing from one member of the Land

Court to another. The legislation had the effect that in the case of an applicant's value not being favourable he could reject it. He could say, "I will not go on with it." The legislation provided that he could make a further application, in which case it would be heard by another member. If the case went to the Land Appeal Court it would mean that it would be heard by a tribunal constituted by a Supreme Court judge and two members of the Land Court who had not heard the case in the first instance. But let us look at that carefully. I have the greatest respect and admiration for the judiciary in matters of law but when the the value of land is the important point in a case you need to go to men who are experts on land matters, men trained in valuing land. On land matters none of us would go to a Supreme Court judge, even though he might be the most highly learned person in the State, but would prefer to go to a Land Court member who has spent his life training in land values. In my opinion a Supreme Court judge would be guided very largely by the opinions expressed by his two Land Court colleagues. In effect you are really getting back to the Land Court again; an applicant would be appearing a second time before a Land Court member. If pressure is being brought to bear by people outside who have not been met as favourably as they would like to be, and they are going to get some other authority to examine the matter, in my opinion you are beginning to trade in the Crown estate.

Let me point out how sincere I am about it. I hold a small lease. I made application for conversion to freehold. I am prepared to take the Court's judgment. If the court is not prepared to determine a value that I think would be beneficial to me, I will leave it as it is. It has to be remembered that in scores of cases—in fact, in hundreds of cases—leasehold is preferable to freehold. But, there are cases where a freehold is desirable, particularly where heavy improvements are required. Where one has green blocks, scrub blocks and heavy improvement costs, to the extent sometimes of £10 or £12 an acre, then it is advisable to freehold, and anyone is entitled to make that application.

However, I think that is very fully covered in the existing Act and that it will be found, when this amendment is in practice, as it undoubtedly will be, that in many of these cases the applicants who might apply for conversion will not be pleased with the value found by the Land Court or the Land Appeal Court.

**Mr. Hanlon:** They still will not be obliged to accept it.

**Mr. MULLER:** No, it is a matter almost of bargaining. If I am palming something off, Mr. Taylor, you are not obliged to buy it any more than I am obliged to sell it.

I should not like to see too many tribunals appointed to satisfy the wishes of people seeking to get Crown land at less than its fair value. I think that, under existing conditions, the Act does provide for all cases and I think it will be found when the amendment becomes operative, that there will not be a great deal of difference in the position. The appeal will be only from one Land Court member to another and that position applies now. There may well be a difference of opinion in the two court cases. I think in the case at Goondiwindi the member who heard it was perhaps too high in his values. He was, in my opinion, but I am not the only judge of the value of land. In that case the applicant had his remedy by simply rejecting the offer and making further application to the Court in six months' time, when the case could have been reviewed.

My reason for participating in this debate is that I should not like to see matters made too easy for anyone to demand land at his or her own price. Those of us who have been in office know only too well the pressures that are brought to bear. The hon. member for Carnarvon will know the pressure that is brought to bear from time to time for extension of lease or low rental, or for conditions in excess of what they are entitled to. After all, that is only human nature, but it becomes the duty of the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation to protect the interests of the Crown, and I believe that he is much more fully protected under the existing legislation than he will be if the amendment is passed.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Townsville South) (2.33 p.m.): It has been mentioned that there are a couple of valuing authorities in Queensland. It must be remembered that there are at least three valuing authorities in Queensland and I am going to deal particularly with the class of people I represent—the small home-owner.

I have had several cases recently in Townsville that are typical of many cases I have had in the past, and I have no doubt that every hon. member in this Chamber will have had similar trouble. I think it is about time that we decided upon only one authority's owning or controlling the land of this State that still belongs to the Crown—that is, of course, leasehold land.

For some reason that has been explained to me, but never satisfactorily explained to me, the Queensland Housing Commission owns and controls all allotments on which any type of Government house is built and purchased on time payment, such as workers' dwellings, workers' homes, Housing Commission houses, and so on. It does not matter if the buyer of such a home has paid it off years ago, or paid his land off years ago, the land, under perpetual town lease, still remains in the control of the State Housing Commission. As I said earlier, I, for the life of me, cannot understand why that should be. When such

persons want to convert from leasehold to freehold they run up against an amazing display of not exactly bureaucratic interference but I should say an inextricably woven pattern of bureaucratic muddling. Let us put it that way.

I will quote two cases of men who recently wanted to convert their perpetual town leases from leasehold to freehold, and will tell of the trouble they ran into in doing so. The first is the case of a man who had bought and paid for his home through the Housing Commission many years ago. It was, I understand, a workers' dwelling. He wanted to convert his allotment from leasehold to freehold. He made an offer and I understand the Land Court or the Valuer-General or the Department of Public Lands made him an offer, and he accepted that offer. There was no doubt about it, and he paid the amount. For argument purposes let us say the amount agreed upon by him and the Department of Public Lands was £300. He paid the £300 late in November last, so that the Crown had the use of his £300 for all of the month of December. The Department of Public Lands advised him that the freehold tenure of the land would commence from the following 1 January, and that the necessary deed, papers and documents would be issued accordingly. The man was quite happy about that and then, blow me down, to use a nautical expression, if he did not get a notification from the Housing Commission telling him that before the land could be converted from leasehold to freehold he would have to pay one month's rent for the month of December, for his leasehold land, to the Housing Commission, the rent amounting to 14s. 7d.

The man came to me and said, "I have no objection to paying 14s. 7d. for the rent of my leasehold land for the month of December provided that the Government who have had my £300 for the whole of December will pay me the ordinary bank interest rate for December on my £300 they are holding. They are not going to convert my land to freehold until 1 January although they are holding my money.

I put the position to the Treasurer. I should have sent a copy to the Minister for Public Lands; knowing he has a keen sense of humour, I know he would have enjoyed it. I merely said to the Treasurer, "Make up your mind what you are going to ask this chap for. If you want his 14s. 7d. in rent for his leasehold for December, then pay him interest on his £300 being held by some other Government department for the month of December."

The man will be quite happy to have interest on his money. I worked out the amount. I am not very good at figures. If my old mathematical mate, the hon. member for Burdekin, had been available, he would have worked out the amount correctly, but I really think the interest for December on the £300 amounts to 18s. 4d., so that this man would have been about 3s.-odd better off if he had been paid interest on his money —that is if he had to pay rent for the leasehold to the Housing Commission.

The Treasurer courteously acknowledged receipt of my letter some months ago, and they are still pondering the problem. I would not mind betting there has been a whole plethora of inter-departmental correspondence on the matter. I would not mind betting there has been a couple of deputations between the Housing Commission and the Department of Public Lands as to who is going to pay him. The whole transaction has been held up, while they are waiting to find out what they are going to do. I know it would take a governmental Solomon to work it out, and knowing the devious and tortuous ways of bureaucracy I have not the slightest doubt that I will long since have passed into the silence when they come to a decision.

Another case is that of a man who wanted to convert his perpetual town lease from leasehold to freehold. The Valuer-General decided that the value of his allotment was £375. He went to the Land Court some time ago and the Land Court upheld the valuation of £375. The man said, "All right, I will convert from leasehold to freehold for the accepted price of £375." In the interim he received a notification from the Housing Commission. Incidentally his house had been paid off years ago. He has paid all committments to the Housing Commission, and he is free of debt to the Commission. The Housing Commission advised him that as from March, 1959, the Housing Commission had decided that the value of his land was £500 for land rental purposes. There is a man who has already agreed to the terms of the Valuer-General and the decision of the Land Court, to resume at £375, and the Housing Commission walked in and said, "You will have to pay your yearly rental on your perpetual town lease right back for two years based on £500." That is what the unfortunate chap has to do. He has written to the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation. I assume he has filled in the usual ponderous and copious documents advising them that he is quite prepared to accept their valuation of £375. I think he has sent the money down. If he has not, he will send it down within a few days. He will convert his perpetual leasehold to freehold at a price of £375, and then he will have to pay the State Housing Commission back rental—because this is 15-years' reassessment and they reassess two or three years after the assessment is due—for about 18 months on a rental basis of £500. That is the sort of thing that goes on in Queensland every day while we have two conflicting authorities on the value of land. I repeat that I should like someone to explain it to me. I know I am a man of limited intelligence. I should like someone to try to explain to me, in the simplest possible terms, avoiding any polysyllabic profundity, if they would, just why

the State Housing Commission still hangs onto land that has been paid for and is no longer the responsibility of the State Housing Commission; why all the land in this State that is leasehold land does not come under the one Minister. I have only been in this Chamber for 18 years so consequently I have not learnt everything about the tortuous windings and twistings of the bureaucratic departments. I should not mind betting that other departments are hanging onto land. For instance, there are the magazines at Brook Hill in which are stored all the explosives for Mt. Isa Mines. The buildings are owned by the Department of Harbours and Marine and come under the ministerial jurisdiction of the Treasurer. Apparently the Department of Harbours and Marine, or any other department cannot hold freehold land and therefore the land is owned by the Railway Department. The Railway Department owns the land and the Department of Harbours and Marine owns the magazines on it. One chap who merely wants to put up a fence on it so that he can continue to run his stock on it as he has done since the days when the blacks were bad—when the land was first acquired by the Railway Department to be used for magazine purposes—has found that no-one can give him permission to fence the land, because the Railway Department owns the land and the Department of Harbours and Marine owns the building on it. I bring to the Minister's attention the confusion with regard to the ownership and control of land in the State. He probably has more time on his hands than any other member of Cabinet due, perhaps, to his zeal and the manner in which he appears to get through his work. I hope that the Minister may be able to go into this matter and lay down some simple rule about the ownership and control of Government lands in the State.

**Mr. DUFFICY** (Warrego) (2.44 p.m.): I was impressed by the remarks of the former Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation. His remarks influenced me to enter the debate. Before making reference to his comments, I should like to sound this warning for the present Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation: we on this side of the Chamber always look at any legislation with some degree of suspicion when his first lieutenant to assist him is the hon. member for Roma. I am not saying that unkindly. Personally I like the hon. member for Roma, but on land matters I have known him to take more tumbles in this House than any tumbler in Wirth's Circus. We on this side are always a little suspicious when he rushes in to support the Minister on legislation that seems on the face of it to be quite innocent. For that reason, among others, I intend to reserve most of my remarks till the second reading so that we can take advantage of the opportunity to consider the Bill in detail and also have the benefit of reading the speeches made by the former Minister and by members on this side of the Chamber when the original legislation was introduced.

It is unfortunate if what the former Minister said is true and the Bill is being rushed before us because of something that occurred in Goondiwindi which may have been an isolated case. Of course that is typical of this Government. They always bow to pressure from little pressure groups throughout the State. As a matter of fact, the former Minister is a former Minister because he would not bow to outside dictation; he would not bow to outside pressure groups, as he himself has said previously. If that is the reason for the Bill, we must view it carefully.

I was very interested in this statement by the former Minister: "No Minister has the right to give away the Crown estate." It is interesting to note that because he was not prepared to give away the Crown estate when he was Minister for Public Lands he is now only a private member in this Assembly. You do not have to take my word for that. We have the word of the former Minister himself. Now that he is free from the pressure that was exerted on him in the past, when he said that the executive of the Country Party rolled down to Parliament House and tried to tell him what to do, he is prepared to admit what hon. members on this side have been saying over the years, that we are the custodians of the Crown estate and that no individual, even the Minister for Public Lands, and no government, no collection of people who happen to be in the Chamber for the time being, has the right to give away the public estate.

I am not prepared to argue the matter at this stage but if the Bill will in any way facilitate the conversion of the Crown estate to freehold I am opposed to it. I do not oppose a right of appeal but I agree with the former Minister that the Crown estate should in the last analysis be administered by officers of the Department of Public Lands. In my opinion, they are the people most competent to administer it. In the main, I should say that officers of the Department of Public Lands have done a magnificent job in Queensland over the years. I know that their advice is disregarded at times because it conflicts with Government policy. I know, too, that their advice on a number of Bills that have been introduced since the Government took office has been disregarded not only because it conflicted with Government policy but also because it conflicted with the opinion of certain small pressure groups of which the Government are too apt to take notice. The executives of their parties are still rolling down to Parliament House telling Ministers, including the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation, what they must do. I suggest that the proposed legislation—I am not arguing the rights or wrongs of it at the moment—emanated from

a small pressure group in the Goondiwindi district, and it is a sad state of affairs if legislation is introduced because a small, insignificant group wants it introduced.

I shall reserve any further remarks on the merits or demerits of the legislation until the Bill is printed and I have an opportunity of reading it.

**Hon. A. R. FLETCHER** (Cunningham—Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation) (2.51 p.m.), in reply: I thank most hon. members who have spoken in the debate for agreeing in principle with most of the things that are intended by the amendment to the Act. Certain questions in regard to freeholding have been raised in the debate, and I do not mind that in the least. Members of the Opposition are entitled, as I would be if I were in Opposition, to restate their views on freeholding. I respect their opinion, as I hope they respect mine. I believe in freeholding for reasons that have been stated here often. The Opposition does not believe in it for reasons that have also been stated here often.

The hon. member for Baroona, rather becomingly I thought, gave us credit for merely wanting to carry out our point of view, and I give him credit for a reasoned statement of his own. Generally speaking, I think he agrees with the right of appeal. Indeed, he took a good deal of unction to his political soul when he said that the Opposition had wanted to include this very provision when the original legislation was introduced. I have not read carefully the "Hansards" covering that debate, so I do not know whether or not he is correct. Perhaps he is not. But if he takes unction to his soul, I know that when we were in Opposition we had the satisfaction on a number of occasions of finding something that we had put forward as an argument being taken into account when the Government was amending legislation. If what the hon. member for Baroona says is true, he is only getting a little of the satisfaction that we got when we were in Opposition. As I said, I do not know whether he can rightfully do that.

I am sorry that the hon. member did not quite follow my explanation of the time from which the first payment is dated in relation to freehold. I may not have gone into the matter in enough detail. Perhaps the hon. member has understood it since I gave my explanation, because another hon. member referred to it.

I shall give a very short and clear exposition of what has happened. Suppose a man who is paying £100 a year in rent on his lease decides to freehold, and the determination of the Court takes approximately 18 months. In the event of the determination being that he has to pay £500 a year for freehold, under the present Act he has to start paying that £500 a year at the next quarter day after his original application. It means that when the determination takes effect it is in its second year and he would be required to find two lots of £500, less, of course, the two lots of £100 that he paid in rent, which is £800 in the one year. I have got over that administratively by allowing them to let their first application lapse and make another one. This is the obvious way to clear up a little matter that was a bit of an embarrassment to the man who perhaps had had a bad year and was required suddenly to find the best part of £1,000 out of one year's income.

**Mr. O'Donnell:** Would it not be more unjust if he were perpetually leasing it?

**Mr. FLETCHER:** Yes. It makes it easier to understand if I put it in terms regarding freehold, but you can apply it to perpetual lease as well.

As I said before, I respect the views of the hon. member for Baroona on freeholding. I know that if ever the Opposition become the Government the very first thing they will do will be to abolish freehold. We have the assurance of the Leader of the Opposition on that. It is just as well to know what sort of background we are working against. It is because of that that I want as many people as possible to take the opportunity to freehold while we are here. Political accidents can happen to anybody. It could happen to us, although I do not think it will because we are so outstanding as a Government. After a long run of 30 years of Labour administration our administration stands out so clearly that nobody who has intelligently followed our record would make a mistake like that.

The hon. member for Carnarvon started in a very cautious and suspicious manner. He did not trust us at all. He spoke largely of the appeal being in the nature of an appeal from Caesar to Caesar. You cannot go along with that if you are going to look at it from the point of view of men who are trained in the traditions of British justice. In the traditions of British justice an appeal lies with another judicial authority. If you lose your case in the Supreme Court you do not go outside and find a different sort of person to whom you appeal, but you make your appeal to the Full Court, which is constituted by the same sort of people. You do not call that an appeal from Caesar to Caesar. From the decision of a Land Court member you appeal to the Land Appeal Court, which consists of a Supreme Court judge and two Land Court members, neither of whom is the one whose judgment is being appealed against. I do not think there can be anything fairer than that. It was the appeal instituted years and years ago. It has been working without any suspicion of its having a weakness merely because it is an appeal from one member to two members and a Supreme Court judge. That objection has never been substantially raised.

**Mr. Hilton:** A Supreme Court judge is nominated for the Land Appeal Court each year for a specific term.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** I could not tell the hon. gentleman the procedure there. In this instance it would be a Supreme Court judge and two Land Court members, neither of whom was the author of the judgment being appealed against.

**Mr. Hilton** interjected.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** Does the hon. gentleman suggest it should be on some other basis?

**Mr. Hilton:** Certainly.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** What?

**Mr. Hilton:** I will tell you in due course.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** I would not want him to think one up on the spur of the moment. There is not any departmental war. I know there are difficulties with regard to valuation. There were just as many when the Labour Party was in power and we had, perhaps, a certain amount of satisfaction as an Opposition in stirring them up over differences as it is becoming apparent they are getting satisfaction from stirring up differences in valuations now. Perhaps we should not mind that. Possibly we did some of it in our time, but there is not any departmental war and, for the hon. member for Carnarvon to talk about our only allowing people with less than 5,000 acres to freehold and to parade that as something in the nature of an injustice to the person with 5,001, is just silly. One cannot put a line of demarcation anywhere without having somebody just inside of it and somebody just outside of it. It is a matter of departmental or administrative expediency to find some fair line of demarcation. The former Minister who administered the department in those days, after a great deal of thought and discussion with his committee, decided that this was a fair and reasonable place to put the line of demarcation. It is better than the line of demarcation that was a complete veto put on by our predecessors. It was not 5,000 acres in those days, it was no acres at all, and it is a great deal of comfort to our land-owners generally who want this for security purposes, to know that they can have 5,000 acres.

Valuations have always been a problem and still are. We may as well face the fact that it is a most difficult problem. The hon. member for Carnarvon, when in charge of the Valuer-General's Department, freely admitted to me during a conversation that they had a considerable number of problems left and he could not see how he could possibly get over the matters he admitted to me in the conversation were apparent as injustices and anomalies. I can remember that conversation very well.

**Mr. Hilton:** That was the time when you suggested that the improvement of fencing should be eliminated from valuations.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** I cannot remember what else I suggested but it would be found to be a good common-sense suggestion if I made it.

The hon. member for Barcoo is apparently absorbing a great many of our Country Party principles on security of tenure and I congratulate him on it. He had a little to say on behalf of some of the men he represents out there. I think this regeneration of the hon. member for Barcoo is a fine thing to see. He came in here with his stereotyped socialistic instructions and now he comes in with quite sound common sense based on security for land-owners. I congratulate him; I think he should worry more and more about those chaps out there and I suggest he have a good long yarn with the hon. member for Warrego.

**Mr. Dufficy:** It would be more beneficial if you did that because I would tell you something.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** On the other hand, one might militate against the other. I was not able to follow the hon. member's point about who gets priority in appeals. Any appeal against a valuation merely means that the whole matter is thrashed out in the appeal court and the decision of that court is binding on both parties. It does not seem to matter who gets in first with the appeal, or if only one appeals. After all, surely it is easy to follow that if one appeals against a valuation of £100 and the Land Appeal Court places it at £101 or £99, both parties are bound by it. There is no question of which has priority in appeals. I found that really a little difficult to follow.

The hon. member also mentioned different valuations as between neighbours and its being a source of annoyance and disquiet. Of course it is. My neighbour's property and mine are almost always valued differently and we both think that they are over-valued. That is common to land-owners. They are entitled to push their barrows a little and it is very difficult to say of two pieces of land that they are entirely comparable in all respects. Indeed, if one goes over pieces of land that are claimed to be entirely comparable—and I have often done it on behalf of people who were worried about it—it will be found that they are not comparable. When one gets 5 miles, 2 miles or even half a-mile from the fences of the properties it is found that they are completely different in character. Some of the country is fit to be cultivated and some is not; some is ironbark country and some soft brigalow country. One cannot see it from the outside. The arguments of these men are pretty futile when it comes to valuation. You have to check the area with some authority who knows; you cannot just go around and look at it and make up your mind about it yourself.

**Mr. Houghton:** You cannot tell when sitting in your car.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** No.

The hon. member for Fassifern had some common-sense things to say. He suggested we should not give a right of appeal. I agree with him that no Government are entitled to give away the public estate, and

that is why I want the right of appeal—to make sure of it, if there is any doubt about it. On the other hand I respect the man who says, "I have an honest feeling the Land Court has made a mistake, but I have not a right of appeal and I want to go on with my proposed freeholding straightaway. I do not want to drop it. I am sincerely anxious to freehold, but I think the Court has decided on too high a value and I want the right of appeal." There might not be many such cases and I do not think there will be, but I think it is fair enough to give people the right of appeal if they sincerely want to get on with the job and sincerely believe the values established by the Court are too high. There is no reason for anyone to suggest that such a provision involves me in a charge of giving away the public estate. If anything, the contrary is the case. I do not thing the provision will be used frequently, because our experience has been that not many people want to appeal. There is no suggestion of making the process easier or the land cheaper. It is merely a matter of arriving at the correct value.

The senior officers of the Department of Public Lands do not have anything to do with the setting of values. The valuers are asked to arrive at a value for the guidance of the Court, and their valuations are part of the argument and evidence placed before the Court. My instruction to the valuers has been to bring in an absolutely honest valuation. I have told them, "Do not be influenced by anybody. Do not be influenced by the lessee. For goodness sake keep from getting warmly interested in him personally. Do not bring in a valuation that you think I would like or that my department would like. Bring in a valuation that you think is right according to the formula." I cannot do anything more than that, and I do not think I should do anything less.

The hon. member for Townsville South made my heart bleed a little for his home-owners in Townsville. The pressing question it would seem is whether the Housing Commision owes the home-owner 18s. 4d. or the home-owner owes the Housing Commission 14s. 7d. or something like that. There would seem to be a germ of justice, as he related it, in the case he put forward on behalf of the man he represents. I think it merely points to one more of the problems that we have had to iron out in the system we inherited. We have worked very hard ever since we have been the Government, but there were many matters that had to be streamlined and ironed out, inequalites and injustices. We have not done all the work yet, and the case mentioned by the hon. member for Townsville South is probably one of the matters we still have to attend to. We have not got the system completely to the stage of efficiency that is desirable, but we are still working on it.

The hon. member for Warrego referred quite mistakenly to the hon. member for Roma as my first lieutenant. I have no first lieutenant. He suggested that there is something sinister in the action of the Government, but I do not know how he can make that suggestion. I have revealed the whole intention of the Government and the reasons for it.

**Mr. Dufficy:** Attack him and you will get me another 1,000 votes.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** I have no intention of attacking the hon. member.

**Mr. Dufficy:** I want you to attack me. It will get me another 1,000 votes.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** I would not do anything that could be construed as an attack. I am a moderate man with feeling for my fellow-men, and I would not attack anyone so obviously defenceless as the hon. member.

**Mr. Dufficy:** I will pass that over.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** The suggestion was made that we have been giving away the public estate. That is not so. There is no way in the world that a charge such as that can be substantiated. It was also said that this was at the instance of pressure groups. If hon. members opposite can construe as a pressure group those who make reasonable objections or reasonable representations in the belief there is reason for some action in the interest of justice, then perhaps they can safety make that charge. We are only trying to iron out anomalies and injustices and give everybody in this State a fair go. We are not giving away the public estate, and we are not unreasonably giving in to pressure groups. There is a serious connotation attached to the term "pressure groups". There is no doubt that all hon. members in the Chamber know about pressure groups, especially those in Opposition. Pressure groups operate to quite an effective degree on that side of the Chamber. I thank the hon. member for his obviously sincere tribute to my departmental officers. It is deserved. I have a fine group of men in my department I am glad the hon. member appreciates them.

**Mr. Dufficy:** I do.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** The hon. member referred to an insignificant pressure group from Goondiwindi. On behalf of the Government I point out that in our view no-one is insignificant. No group or individual is insignificant. If any person is suffering any injustice it is our job to give him justice and give him an opportunity to have his case heard. That word is inconsistent with our attitude.

Motion (Mr. Fletcher) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

### FIRST READING

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

## STOCK ROUTES AND RURAL LANDS PROTECTION ACTS AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### Initiation in Committee

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

**Hon. A. R. FLETCHER** (Cunningham—Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation) (3.14 p.m.): I move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Acts, 1944 to 1961, and the Barrier Fences Act of 1954, each in certain particulars."

In the administration of the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Act and of the Barrier Fences Act it is necessary from time to time for the Co-ordinating Board to appoint inspectors. It has been the custom for the Co-ordinating Board, with the prior approval of the Public Service Commissioner, to advertise for applications to these positions and the board selects and recommends direct to the Minister.

In the initial stages the Public Service Commissioner's Department suggested that, as these inspectors were employees on a weekly wage, and by reason of their line of duty, they should be excluded from the provisions of the Public Service Act.

It is now considered that the Acts as they now stand do not suitably provide for the issue of Orders in Council excluding such appointees from the operations of the Public Service Act and the purpose of the Bill is to remove any doubt as to the validity of the Orders in Council that have already been made and to enable any inspector appointed in future to be excluded from the provisions of the Public Service Act.

**Mr. Aikens:** Why do you want to remove them from the provisions of the Act?

**Mr. FLETCHER:** It is just not appropriate. They are not salaried men. They are wages men employed from week to week, with a fixed allowance. With their conditions of employment it is just not appropriate to have them covered by the Public Service Act.

**Mr. Aikens:** You mean there is a touch of social snobbery in the Public Service Act?

**Mr. FLETCHER:** No, it is merely administrative convenience.

**Mr. Dufficy:** Are they covered by the Public Service Act now?

**Mr. FLETCHER:** No. They have been excluded but there is a little doubt as to our power to exclude them and the Bill makes it quite clear that there is that power. They are men who are employed on wages. They are given a job to do at about double the basic wage and they are paid a camping allowance of something like £4 a week. I am not sure of the figure. They are not salaried officers who would appropriately come under the Public Service Act. To put the matter clearly beyond doubt should anyone be inclined to cast doubts on it, we are introducing this short Bill.

It is a very short Bill. As I have said, it is necessary to give clear intent to the relevant sections of the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Act and of the Barrier Fences Act. It does not change anything. The intention was clear to everyone right from the start. It is merely that some slight doubt has been cast on the wording or the validity of the section of the Act.

**Mr. DUFFICY** (Warrego) (3.18 p.m.): At least the Minister cannot be accused of giving us too much information. He simply said that these inspectors were not at the present time covered by the Public Service Act and that, being weekly employees, in effect they were not a type who should be covered by that Act. I do not know whether he wanted to be a deliberate snob or whether that was what he intended to convey but it occurred to me immediately he mentioned that they were weekly employees. I know the type of work the men on the barrier fence carry out, and the men on the stock routes too. They carry out a very important function, as the Minister will agree, and the fact that their job is away out in the far west of Queensland and that they are merely weekly employees is not a sufficient argument to satisfy me, anyhow, at this stage that they should be excluded from the Public Service Act.

The Minister went further in reply to a question from me and said they never had been covered by that Act. I ask him now to confirm that.

**Mr. Fletcher:** Yes.

**Mr. DUFFICY:** If that is so, I do not know why the legislation is being introduced. The only reason I can see is that applications were called for the appointment of employees on the barrier fence, and possibly certain employees on stock routes, and their appointment was recommended by the Public Service Commissioner or made by him. I ask the Minister whether that is correct.

**Mr. Fletcher:** By the Co-ordinating Board, and approved by the Public Service Commissioner.

**Mr. DUFFICY:** And approved by the Public Service Commissioner.

**Mr. Fletcher:** Not necessarily.

**Mr. DUFFICY:** That is what the Minister said. I do not know whether it is necessarily so. It is unfortunate that the Minister should speak for only two minutes——

**Mr. Fletcher:** It was two and a half minutes.

**Mr. DUFFICY:** It is a very short Bill, and it is unfortunate that the Minister should

give members of the Opposition absolutely no information and then sit down. As the Minister occupied such a short time, I do not think I would be justified in taking an unlimited time in replying to him. I suggest that at the second reading stage, in fairness to the House generally and to members of the Opposition particularly, he should give us some real information, if he cannot do it when replying to whatever remarks may be made from this side of the House. I am not binding the Opposition in any way, but from the information that the Minister has given us at this stage I, for one, cannot say whether or not I am in favour of the proposed legislation.

**Hon. A. R. FLETCHER** (Cunningham—Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation) (3.22), in reply: I have been chided for not giving more information.

**Mr. Aikens:** "Rebuked" would be a better word.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** Yes, rebuked. The Public Service Act provides that wages employees may be exempt from the provisions of the Act. The Bill is to make it quite clear that those employees are not subject to all the provisions of the Public Service Act. This is a very small Bill, and I gave hon. members all details that were relevant and necessary.

**Mr. Davies:** As you said before, every individual is important; no-one is insignificant.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** Granted. I would counsel the hon. member for Warrego to listen carefully to what I am about to say.

**Mr. Dufficy:** I listen carefully whether I am counselled to or not.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** In the administration of the Stock Routes Act and the Barrier Fences Act it is necessary from time to time for the Co-ordinating Board to appoint inspectors. I said this before, but I am saying it again. It has been the custom for the Co-ordinating Board, with the prior approval of the Public Service Commissioner, to advertise for applications for appointment to these positions, and the Co-ordinating Board selects and recommends direct to the Minister. That is about all I can tell the hon. member about these employees. They are not appointed by the Public Service Commissioner and the appointments are not consistent with the usual appointments made under the Public Service Act.

**Mr. Aikens:** But you did exclude them under an Order in Council or Regulation?

**Mr. FLETCHER:** That is correct.

**Mr. Aikens:** And the Bill will validate that exclusion.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** That is so.

Motion (Mr. Fletcher) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

### FIRST READING

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

## HOSPITALS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

### SECOND READING

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (3.26 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

During my introductory speech I outlined to hon. members the various provisions contained in this amending Bill but I shall now deal more specifically with those provisions. As I stated previously a considerable number of the provisions deal with hospital financial matters and the financial arrangements and accounting of hospitals boards, designed to give a better presentation of hospital accounting.

Under the Acts as they now stand it is unlawful for any person or association of persons, other than a hospitals board, an ambulance committee, a friendly society or a religious body, to raise moneys by public contribution for the purpose of the treatment of the sick. As indicated during the introduction of the Bill the provisions relating to unauthorised collections have been amended, and they now extend the scope of the section to include public collections for ambulance purposes or allied purposes such as first aid and the teaching of first aid.

The St. John Ambulance Brigade, Australia, as well as any other body other than hospitals boards or the Q.A.T.B., will be debarred from engaging in public collections for ambulance purposes.

From time to time my department has received requests from hospital auxiliaries and such bodies as Jaycees, rotary clubs, Lions clubs and the like to raise money for specific purposes associated with local hospitals. These organisations could not legally be given permission to raise funds by public subscriptions for hospital purposes in view of the existing legislation, but it is felt that the desire of the local people to raise funds for their hospital should be fostered, but that in raising such funds the body or bodies concerned should be appropriately controlled in their activities.

An organiser of hospital auxiliaries was appointed to my department, and the duty of this officer was to promote the formation of local groups who would take an interest in their local hospital, particularly for the provision of amenities for the nursing staff. It was intended also that these local groups could be utilised to stimulate the desires of local peoples to interest themselves in their hospital, and to assist financially in the provision of amenities not normally provided.

There is provision in the amending Bill that the Minister may, in relation to any hospital or locality, permit any body or

association of persons, corporate or unincorporate, to raise moneys by public contributions for the purpose of the treatment of the sick, or of ambulance transport, first aid, or the teaching of first aid.

The permits may be subjected by the Minister to such conditions as he deems fit, such as limiting the purpose for which the approved body or organisation may raise moneys by public contribution, fixing the maximum amount that may be so raised, and specifying the manner in which and the times when these moneys can be raised.

At the present time hospitals boards are operating, inter alia, a patients' trust fund for all moneys received in trust for any patient, yet the authority for the operation of such a fund is not contained in the existing Acts. The amendment will provide for legislative authority for the operation of such a fund.

At the same time opportunity has been taken to give legislative authority for Hospitals Boards to utilise the interest accruing to the Boards' Patients' Trust Fund for the purpose of providing amenities for the patients generally. This interest is interest accruing in respect of balances of the individual patients accounts, collectively deposited to the Boards' Patients' Trust Fund in an interest bearing account, or in fixed deposit.

The benefit of this provision will be evidenced mainly in our hospitals where long-term patients are being cared for. In these hospitals, the financial affairs of the patients, due primarily to their medical condition, are supervised by the hospital authorities, necessitating full and accurate records being maintained of each and every patient, who desires that his spare cash be looked after for him. The patient is entitled to withdraw from his account as and when he requires to do so, and purchases of a personal nature are made for him. Naturally, the combined total of these individual balances being deposited with the one Patients' Trust Fund of the Board, in, say, a savings bank account, attracts the payment of some interest.

An accurate apportionment of this interest, on a monthly basis, to the various individual accounts comprising a Boards' Patients' Trust Fund would prove no easy task and would involve a considerable amount of clerical work.

**Mr. Hanlon:** That has been done in the past?

**Dr. NOBLE:** In the past interest on the Patients' Trust Funds has been used in accordance with the provisions of the Bill, which is just giving legislative authority to what has been going on for years.

The use of this collective interest for the purchase of amenities for the patients generally, as is proposed in the amending Bill, will ensure that the patients are themselves benefiting from the interest amount accruing in respect of the total of their individual bank balances.

It is not intended to depart from the existing practice whereby interest from investments of money standing to the credit of the Patients' Trust Fund in any debentures, stock, Treasury bills or other securities of the Government of Queensland or of the Commonwealth, is apportioned to the accounts comprising the Boards' Patients' Trust Fund. In effect, there is only one Hospitals Board that has had sufficient moneys in its Patients' Trust Fund to avail itself of the investments abovementioned. There is only one Hospitals Board with funds to invest in Commonwealth loans and the like. It is the Dalby Hospitals Board where, over the years, they had a number of chronic patients whose funds accumulated to some large extent.

The Bill, as I stated earlier, also provides for the establishment of the Hospital Administration Trust Fund kept in the Treasury, with a view to a better presentation of hospital accounting.

Over the past years, there have been several changes in the method of presenting hospital expenditure in the yearly Estimates, and at present, certain recoupments by the Commonwealth of Hospitals Boards expenditure in respect of the treatment of tuberculosis in State hospitals, of pharmaceutical benefits and of hospital benefits are paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund as receipts. Patients' fees payments of the individual boards, and proceeds of Golden Casket Art Unions are, however, deducted from the gross expenditure of boards, and the net expenditure appropriated from Consolidated Revenue.

It is proposed, with the establishment of the Hospital Administration Trust Fund, to pay into this Trust Fund all revenue applicable to hospitals, comprising Commonwealth recoupments and payments affecting hospitals, patients' payments and local hospital receipts, and payments from the proceeds of Golden Casket Art Unions.

The difference between these funds and the approved gross expenditure for hospitals generally would be provided from Consolidated Revenue, and will have to be appropriated by Parliament.

It is considered that this new system would indicate more clearly the costs, both gross and net, of maintaining public hospitals in Queensland. It will give a clearer picture and better control of expenditure by both the Treasury and my department. Any fluctuation in anticipated receipts, either from local sources or from Commonwealth recoupments would be adjusted in the grant from Consolidated Revenue Fund. It is proposed to introduce this new fund as from 1 July, 1962.

**Mr. Hanlon:** That would not apply to moneys collected by hospital auxiliaries, would it?

**Dr. NOBLE:** No.

**Mr. Hanlon:** That would be kept separate?

**Dr. NOBLE:** Yes, it would be kept separate.

**Mr. Melloy:** On what basis are the administrative trust fund moneys paid back to the hospitals? Do they go back to the hospitals in any way?

**Dr. NOBLE:** What does the hon. member mean?

**Mr. Melloy:** Will all hospital collections now be paid into a general fund, or the administration fund?

**Dr. NOBLE:** Yes, but it will fall short by a very large sum of the moneys needed by hospitals.

**Mr. Melloy:** Will the amounts now received from each board have any bearing on the amount allocated?

**Dr. NOBLE:** No, their total expenditure in a year will be fairly worked out and the difference in the approved expenditure will be provided from Consolidated Revenue.

**Mr. Melloy:** No notice is taken of the amount of fees?

**Dr. NOBLE:** It cannot very well, because some hospitals may have, say, a senile annex. They would be in a very happy position because of that fact, in that they would be getting large sums from those patients by way of fees. In looking at the budgets at the end of the year it can be seen that some hospital boards by way of patients' fees have obtained far larger sums than other hospital boards, merely because they have such things as senile annexes.

**Mr. Davies:** The inefficient board would profit by this pooling.

**Dr. NOBLE:** No. All boards are pretty efficient.

**Mr. Davies:** The less efficient.

**Dr. NOBLE:** I say all boards are fairly efficient.

There is power in the Bill authorising hospital boards to invest any moneys which are temporarily surplus in any of their funds. These investments can be made in any securities of or guaranteed by the Government or Treasurer of the Commonwealth or of this State, on deposit in any bank, or on the short-term money market. It is extremely desirable that hospitals boards be given the opportunity of investment in the short-term money market, with the object of securing the higher interest rate offering on this type of investment. It has been found in the past, under existing legislation, that boards holding temporarily surplus amounts in their funds have been restricted to placing these in savings bank accounts, or on short-term fixed deposits. The provision is on similar lines to existing provisions in the Local Government Acts.

**Mr. Hanlon:** Where will the interest on the investments go? Into the central fund?

**Dr. NOBLE:** At the end of every year there will be an accounting and any surplus money will go back to the Treasury.

Provisions is also made for hospitals boards to utilise moneys remaining in their loan funds after the completion of the project for which the loan was approved, for some other specific purpose or applied for the purpose of some other loan, subject to the approval of the Treasurer.

Under existing legislation, such balances are repaid to the Treasury, if a Treasury loan, or paid into the General Fund, if a debenture loan. As I stated earlier, this will allow full use to be made of loan moneys for works of a capital nature. I think that is a very good departure. If some money is left over from the loan, it is better to spend it in the hospital district for some new venture.

**Mr. Davies:** Such as the proposition I mentioned, the reconstruction of something?

**Dr. NOBLE:** Yes.

With the system of hospital budgeting as exists under present legislation, it is necessary for the approval of the Governor in Council to be obtained in every instance where expenditure in any hospital exceeds any one of the 17 Budget heading appropriations.

It will be realised that a hospital may, through the exercise of sound economy and prudent planning, effect some savings in one particular vote, and later on in the year find itself exceeding its allocation under another vote, through circumstances beyond its control. Even though the total appropriation to that particular hospital will not be exceeded for the year, it is still necessary under the present Act, for the approval of the Governor in Council to be obtained for expenditure to be exceeded in respect of that one vote.

The Bill proposes that the Minister may approve of transfers of moneys between Votes, provided the total year's approved expenditure of the particular board is not exceeded. In those cases where emergent and/or extraordinary circumstances result in a board's exceeding its total approved expenditure for the year, approval of the Governor in Council will still be necessary.

As the present Act stands, it is obligatory for the budgets of the General Fund, Loan Fund and Trust Funds to be approved by the Governor in Council. This has never been done, the budget of the General Fund being the only budget submitted for approval of the Governor in Council.

The form of presentation of the General Fund Budget is entirely different from that of the Loan Fund and Trust Fund, the latter two funds requiring no appropriation from Consolidated Revenue Funds. It is not necessary for the budgets of the Loan Fund and Trust Fund to be submitted to the Governor in Council, for the reason that the expenditure from these funds is limited and

restricted to the extent of allocations by the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works on the annual works programme—in the case of the Loan Fund—and to the nature and amounts of legacies or bequests—in the case of the Trust Fund—which may be left from time to time to the various hospitals boards.

The Bill makes it mandatory only for the budget of the general fund to be submitted for approval of the Governor in Council, and will remove any suggestion of non-compliance with the provisions of the Act. Under the existing legislation, the Governor in Council may authorise hospitals boards to borrow money from the Treasurer and by the sale of debentures.

In so far as debenture loans are concerned, present legislation prescribes that coupons shall be attached to every debenture. The amendment will provide that any debenture may, at the option of the lender, be issued with or without coupons. The Act allows for the transfer of debentures with coupons attached. There will be no restriction on the transfer of debentures without coupons attached. Provision is also made for the Governor in Council to prescribe by regulation standard forms of debentures, but a lender may accept such standard form if he so desires, but will not be bound to do so. The effect of the amending provisions will simplify the preparation of debenture documents and facilitate administrative arrangements connected therewith. Both printing and legal costs associated with the preparation of the debentures will be reduced.

This section of the Act dealing with the obligation of boards with regard to borrowing powers, and the provisions on default of payment by boards, whether of principal or interest, makes reference to "Precepts" payable by local authorities towards hospital maintenance costs. As no financial contribution is now made by local authorities towards hospitals boards by way of precepts, the sections referring to this are being omitted in the Bill.

The Bill provides for some alterations in respect to the appointment to a hospitals board of a member of the component local authorities in the board's district.

Provision has been made for the time of holding of the triennial election to be extended from 31 May to 30 June. It has been brought to notice that with the local authorities' elections being held at the end of April, the holding of the election of a member to the hospitals board before 31 May does not allow much time for all the necessary formalities associated with the election of the hospitals board member, to be finalised. The extension of time provided in the Bill should give ample time for all formalities associated with the election of the representative of the component local authority to be satisfactorily arranged.

As the Act now stands, it is possible for a local authority member to be nominated for the hospital board appointment, without his consent. Steps have been taken in the amending legislation to provide for the written consent of a person nominated for election to a hospitals board and for the candidate to have the right to retire from his candidature within 72 hours after nomination day.

The form of ballot paper has also been amended to ensure that a secret ballot is conducted. It will still be necessary for the voter to affix his signature to the declaration form attached to the ballot paper, but this declaration form is detached by the returning officer before the gummed top section is deposited in a locked ballot box and subsequently opened at the appointed time for the returning officer to conduct his count of the votes. The provision will remove what has been considered by some voters to be an undesirable and unsatisfactory method of conducting a ballot in the past.

The Bill also raises the amount that any board member may earn from the sale of goods to, or performance of any work for, the hospital board's bona fide in the ordinary course of business and not pursuant to any written contract, before he becomes disqualified from being a member of the board. The amount at present stipulated in the Act is £100. Over the years, this amount has lost its significance and in keeping with present-day valuations, an amount of £250 is being substituted.

Following the division of the Brisbane and South Coast Hospitals Board into the North Brisbane Hospitals Board and the South Brisbane Hospitals Board, and the transfer of officers to the South Brisbane Board, it became evident, that if each of the new boards were to act separately and independently in the promotion of officers within the separate boards, anomalies and possible injustices would occur in the matter of promotion of certain officers. It will be agreed that such a position is to be avoided, as it cannot be expected that a board officer should be subjected to the probability of losing promotion, through an administrative action of the Government in constituting two separate boards.

A new section has therefore been included to ensure that officers of either board will preserve all seniority rights that they would have had if the original single board had been allowed to continue as such.

The new section also provides that full-time officers employed in a clerical capacity, by any hospitals board throughout the State, whose employment is permanent at the date of passing of this amending legislation or is thereafter made permanent, will be protected for seniority purposes—in that the whole of their service will be regarded as permanent service.

Authority is given in the Bill for contract deposits retained by the board in respect of building works to be deposited to the board's trust fund. At the present time, the trust

fund consists of all moneys arising from any bequests, legacy or gift and all moneys arising from any gift, demise or bequest of property received by or vested in the board.

As the trust fund will by the Bill consist of moneys additional to bequests, etc., it has become necessary to amend this section further by omitting the words "by the testator or donor", as with these words retained it could be construed that contractors' deposits shall be applied to the purposes directed by a testator or donor. The Bill amends the Act to read that the trust fund "shall be applied for the purposes directed", and in the case of bequests, etc., these will be in accordance with any directions of the testator or donor.

A purely administrative correction is being made by the Bill relating to legal action taken for the recovery of fees. Under the Act, the methods of serving any documents associated with any action instituted by hospitals boards for the recovery of any charges or fees apply to fees and charges fixed by a by-law. Fees for hospital accommodation and ancillary services are fixed by regulation. It could be argued that for this reason the board is denied the right of adopting the methods prescribed in the Act for the serving of any legal documents. The Bill removes this anomaly.

I have already informed the House that the Bill provides for the incorporation of the executive committee of the Q.A.T.B. as a corporate body which shall be capable in law of taking, holding and dealing with lands in trust on behalf of any ambulance brigade.

The incorporation of the executive committee is the culmination of years of effort by ambulance authorities to obtain definite legal status for the central body of the ambulance. At the same time, there will be no interference with the local autonomy of the various ambulance brigades that go to make up the organisation.

The executive committee, in pursuance of its powers under the new provisions, will be able to hold land under any tenure including land held under fee simple and will be able to mortgage, sell or otherwise dispose of such land as required by the ambulance brigade concerned.

The executive committee will be reconstituted triennially following the usual triennial elections of ambulance bridgades generally. The executive committee will comprise representatives from each ambulance brigade. Each member of the executive committee will hold office for three years unless he dies or resigns or is removed from office by the committee that elected him.

**Mr. Sherrington:** Can the absence of so many Government members from the Chamber be taken as an indication that they are not supporters of the Bill?

**Dr. NOBLE:** I think they are all supporting it; that is why they are not here.

The constitution of the present executive committee is protected in the Bill and such committee and the officers thereof will continue to hold office until reconstituted and re-elected respectively following the next triennial election of ambulance brigades.

As I have already indicated, the executive committee will act as trustee for all ambulance brigades in the holding of land and in respect of the raising of loans. On the passing of the Bill, all existing ambulance lands will become vested in the executive committee as trustee and all necessary machinery powers for the transfer of titles and the like are provided for in the Bill.

Although the powers of the executive committee, under the Bill, apart from some minor powers dealing with the appointment of officers and the convening of triennial conferences, are limited to the holding of land and the raising of loans on behalf of various ambulance brigades, provision is made for the voluntary transfer of the executive of other powers now possessed by the ambulance brigades. Any such transfer of powers is subject to an affirmative vote of not less than 90 per cent. of the various ambulance brigades represented on the executive.

These features adequately preserve the autonomy of the local ambulance brigade.

**Mr. Hanlon:** How did you arrive at 90 per cent.?

**Dr. NOBLE:** We thought we had to fix a very high percentage. There are very many small boards throughout the State and very few large boards. For example, the metropolitan board and the boards in cities along the coast and in Toowoomba are only a very small proportion of the total number. However, they really represent the greater proportion of the function of the ambulance brigade. It is necessary, therefore, that we have a high proportion.

**Mr. Melloy:** Under that provision, any 10 one-man centres could frustrate the wishes of the majority.

**Dr. NOBLE:** I could not tell the hon. member how many ambulance brigades there are.

**Mr. Melloy:** I think there are about 21 one-man centres.

**Dr. NOBLE:** The hon. member must know that if voluntary organisations have powers taken from them that they desire to hold, it can lead to all sorts of disturbances within the organisations.

**Mr. Melloy:** I agree.

**Mr. Hanlon:** You do have a safety provision in the approval of the Governor in Council.

**Dr. NOBLE:** That is correct. The executive committee will have power under

the Bill to define its own rules of procedure; but until such time as rules have been made by the executive, a schedule has been included in the Bill to provide the necessary rules of procedure in the meantime.

The purpose of the amendment to that section of the principal Act dealing with the establishment of ambulance brigades—Section 32—is to ensure that the existing ambulance organisation in Queensland, namely, the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade, will be adequately protected against the duplication of the ambulance service by the unauthorised setting up of another ambulance service within the State. No organisation other than a hospitals board or an ambulance brigade established under the Hospitals Act will be able to carry on any operations relating to ambulance transport, first aid, or the teaching of first aid.

Provision is made, however, for the St. John Ambulance Brigade, Australia, to continue to function in its present form. This would not include any activity such as the carrying out of actual transport work, the setting up of first aid stations, or the provision of first aid services, except under certain conditions that are set out in the Bill.

**Mr. Melloy:** How will your amendment affect that?

**Dr. NOBLE:** I will talk about it when I deal with the amendment. It was considered that putting "prior" in would affect the previous working of the St. John Ambulance Brigade. It was pointed out that it may desire to set up male divisions. There will be nothing in the Bill to prevent the St. John Ambulance Brigade from constituting male divisions.

As I have indicated already, exceptions are made also in the case of employers who provide without charge or reward first aid service for the benefit of their own employees.

In relation to the provision of first aid services at sporting functions and the like, the St. John Ambulance Brigade is free to provide such a service at events where no admission charge is made. In cases where an admission charge is made, it will be a matter of mutual arrangement with the local committee of the Q.A.T.B. if the St. John Ambulance Brigade wishes to provide the first aid service. If the Q.A.T.B. is not agreeable to the St. John Ambulance Brigade providing the service, there is provision for the St. John Ambulance Brigade to have the right of appeal to the Minister.

**Mr. Melloy:** Can they apply to the Minister in the first place?

**Dr. NOBLE:** We hope to have co-operation between the brigades.

**Mr. Melloy:** They can under the Act.

**Dr. NOBLE:** They go through the usual channels.

**Mr. Melloy:** The Act does not say "in the event of a disagreement."

**Dr. NOBLE:** I think it is covered in the Act. If the Minister is of opinion that consent has been refused unreasonably, he may approve of St. John Ambulance Brigade supplying the first aid service.

Under the Act a schedule has been included setting out rules for the conduct of elections by contributors. Several amendments are being made to this schedule that are aimed at clarifying and tightening the election procedure. One amendment requires that the consent of any person nominated for election to an ambulance committee shall be obtained before his nomination can be accepted. This corrects the omission that exists in the present law and which can allow a person to be nominated for election without his knowledge or consent. That does happen, too. Moreover, under the present provisions any such person cannot decline or withdraw his nomination. This is also corrected in the Bill, provision being made for the withdrawal of nomination within 72 hours after the time fixed for the receipt of nominations. It has happened on a number of occasions that persons wishing to withdraw their nominations were debarred from doing so by the absence of any provision in the existing Act, which resulted in the heavy expense of a postal ballot for an election which could have otherwise been avoided.

The existing provisions relating to the publication of an announcement of an election, the result of an election and the declaration of the poll are amended in the Bill to provide for such publication to be made in a newspaper circulating in the locality in which the election is held. The present Act provides for such publication to be made by advertisement in some newspaper. This is not sufficiently definite and there would be nothing to prevent an advertisement relating to an election for, say, the Julia Creek Ambulance, to be published in a newspaper circulating in Ipswich. The amending provisions will correct this obvious looseness in the Acts.

The other minor amendment in this clause makes provision for the signature of a voter to be witnessed by an elector under the Elections Acts, which will bring the Hospitals Acts into conformity with the election procedure generally.

I commend the Bill to the House for its consideration.

**Mr. MELLOY** (Nudgee) (3.56 p.m.): In his second reading speech the Minister has gone very little further than he did at the introductory stage. He has more or less repeated his introductory remarks and read the provisions of the Bill to us again. We consider he should have gone into more detail on this occasion. Although we realise he is anxious to get the Bill through there

are features of it that require close examination. We require as much explanation of those provisions as we can get from the Minister. He should have allowed a greater length of time for an examination of the measure by those associations and bodies that are vitally concerned with it to give them an opportunity to consider the implications of the amendments he is making to the Act. We know that he has been approached over the last few months by the Q.A.T.B. executive about amendments to the Act. He should have given greater heed to the submissions made by them, particularly those dealing with the constitution of the executive committee. We propose to deal with those matters at length during the Committee stage.

With the new financial set-up of hospitals boards he has removed some degree of the financial autonomy of local hospitals boards.

**Dr. Noble:** It is exactly the same as before.

**Mr. MELLOY:** The Minister is legalising a practice that has been prevalent prior to the introduction of the Bill. Instead of it being a practice it will be law that these things be done. There is no way around it. We intend to discuss certain provisions dealing with the constitution of the Q.A.T.B. executive. I am mentioning these matters now to indicate that at this stage we are not going deeply into the provisions of the Bill but wish to reserve comment until the Committee stage. We are indicating the lines that we shall follow when the Committee stage is reached. We shall go into the constitution of the executive of the Q.A.T.B. and its relationship with the St. John Ambulance Brigade as distinct from the St. John Ambulance Association. There is one point that we will not raise in the Committee stage. It is the provision that deals with the right of withdrawal of a nomination by a nominee to a hospital board or an ambulance executive. There was previously no right of withdrawal and there have been occasions when persons have been nominated for office without their consent or even without their knowledge. This has occasioned considerable expense to certain ambulance centres where, in calling for nominations for seven committee members, eight nominations have been received, the eighth being nominated without his knowledge. Because of the absence of any right of withdrawal an election had to be proceeded with and a postal ballot taken. It has cost a particular centre £75 to take that postal ballot. Under the new provision a nominee has 72 hours in which to withdraw his nomination. I feel that that provision will meet with general approval.

In regard to the reciprocity that has now been established between the North Brisbane and South Brisbane Hospitals Boards in relation to promotions and seniority, I feel this will remove a sore point with the staffs of the hospitals concerned, although I do not know that they will be entirely happy with the position even now.

Some of the clerical staff of these boards by progressive promotion eventually reach the positions of senior administrative officers of boards and, having reached that stage, they are not automatically eligible for appointment to the position of secretary to a hospital board. I understand that they are eligible to a degree but that they do encounter considerable competition from public servants who might not necessarily have been members of hospitals staffs. I think that is something the Minister should look at. Whether it involves clerks, at a certain stage, reverting back or transferring to the Public Service Union, I do not know, but I think some provision should be made to enable senior administrative officers to move directly to the position of board secretary. I know that the hospital clerical staffs are concerned with that angle of promotion.

That generally is our attitude to the Bill and, as I stated earlier, we will go into greater detail during the Committee stage.

**Mr. HANLON** (Baroona) (4.3 p.m.): I agree with the hon. member for Nudgee and would like to endorse his remarks, insofar as they indicate our regret that the Government found it necessary to proceed rather speedily to push this legislation through at present, particularly in view of the fact that there was such a lengthy delay in its introduction. For a number of years now ambulance people who are concerned in one section of the Act in particular have been pressing for a separate ambulance Act. Pressure was put on the previous Government originally in 1956, not long before they went out of office and has been exerted on the present Government since their advent to office in 1957.

The Government have not seen fit to accede to their wishes in that regard and this Government have incorporated some measures relating to the ambulance services in this amendment of the Hospitals Acts. It is nearly six years now since steps were first taken and it has been suggested continually to ambulance people that the Government were going to bring down legislation to deal with the matter. As I mentioned in the first reading stage last year, it was thought that this legislation would probably be coming before the Assembly in the August session of 1961.

At that time as a delegate at the ambulance executive I moved a motion that a special meeting of the executive committee be called to consider the Bill when it was introduced. I understood that it was to be introduced before the November meeting of the executive committee. If the legislation had been introduced in the August session, which lasts for some time and when there is a deal of legislation ready on the stocks, the Bill could have been introduced by the Minister and he could have left the second reading stage for

perhaps a month or six weeks, during which time the ambulance committee in Brisbane and the centres would have had an opportunity to consider what the Government were doing and the way in which they were affected. Unfortunately no such opportunity has been given on this occasion, as the Bill was introduced last Tuesday and we are now proceeding with the second reading stage, and will perhaps proceed with the Committee stage only a week after its introduction. In the circumstances the ambulance committee and particularly the centres scattered throughout the State have not had an opportunity to consider the Government's action and therefore had no time to get in touch with their representatives on the executive committee or the ambulance executive council of the committee to let them know whether they think the Bill as it affects them meets with their wishes.

As the hon. member for Nudgee pointed out, we think that we should draw to the attention of the Minister at the Committee stage some of the points that possibly would be exercising the minds of members of the ambulance executive committee and ambulance centres. According to the Acting President and the General Secretary of the ambulance committee, a number of suggestions were put to the Government when the ambulance committee was seeking a separate Act to cover the ambulance, and later again when it was known that this legislation was to be introduced. Various suggestions were made and I do not say the Minister was bound to accept them. I am not suggesting the Minister had to introduce legislation on every point suggested by the ambulance executive, but it would seem to be reasonable to suggest that the Minister when not carrying out the wishes of the ambulance executive should have dwelt on those points and should have explained just why he did not see fit to agree with them.

Later we will deal with some of those including zone delegates. When suggestions were being made by the ambulance people that they should have a separate Act covering the ambulance, one point put forward was that the executive committee should be comprised of zone delegates rather than delegates from individual centres. It seems democratic and it is democratic to give each centre the opportunity to be individually represented, irrespective of the size of the centre, but the position in practice is that there are more than 100 ambulance centres, and that number will probably increase in time, and an executive composed of up to 100 delegates is very unwieldy. If the executive at its regular meetings was fully representative of all centres, the committee would be one of more than 100 delegates, a number in excess by 25 or more of the total strength of this House when on the rare occasions the full number of 78 hon. members are present. I mention that to give some idea of the size of an executive committee of an association such as the ambulance. It would have 105 or more delegates, if all of them attended each meeting. The hon. member for Salisbury pointed out this afternoon that when the Minister was introducing the Bill there were only three or four Government members on the benches behind him. Even if a similar position existed at the meetings of the ambulance executive, there would be an average attendance of between 30 and 40. I am not saying the view is not open to dispute by those who differ in opinion, but the suggestion has been put forward that it would be preferable to have zonal representation so that the areas could pick their delegates to represent the southern area, the western area, the south-eastern area, the northern area, and so on. Two or three delegates would then be sent from a particular zone, and all the delegates would constitute the committee. It is more likely that such people would be able to attend and, there would not be so many city people, such as myself, representing country areas. If there was a zone representative, for an area, or if the opportunity were given of electing a zone representative, I am sure that the zone representative would come to Brisbane for executive committee meetings. I represent the Mt. Garnett Ambulance Executive. If the Mt. Garnett Ambulance Executive and other centres in that zone had the opportunity to elect two or three delegates to attend executive committee meetings, they could be present on many occasions, but at present it is not possible for individual centres in the far northern areas to send people to Brisbane for regular meetings of the executive. This is an example of a number of points raised by the ambulance executive. I understand that the Minister knows about these points through representations that have been made to his department recently, and over the years. The Minister should indicate during the Committee stage why the Government have not taken some note of the suggestions put forward by the ambulance executive.

**Mr. Walsh:** The Minister might give consideration to moving some amendments.

**Mr. HANLON:** Yes, he could.

The Opposition are in some difficulty because the Bill has been brought on only a week after its introduction. It is not so bad for us if we just want to look at it, but when we come to consider amendments it is necessary for the Minister to give some indication if he is interested in the proposals before we can draft amendments because quite a considerable changing around of the present clauses in the Bill would be required. As the hon. member has said, the Minister might deal with that suggestion when he replies and give us some idea whether he is interested in accepting and giving time for such amendments.

The Leader of the Opposition will move an amendment in relation to the sum of £250 provided in the Bill as the maximum amount that any board member may earn from the sale of goods to, or performance of any work for, the hospitals board. The Leader of the

Opposition has pointed out that only recently the Treasurer brought in a Bill in which the amount was raised to £500. The Leader of the Opposition will move an amendment in the Committee stage to try to standardise the Local Authorities Act, the Hospitals Act, and various other Acts, so that a standard amount of money may be set down. If his amendment is accepted someone who is appointed to a committee will have a clear idea of the limits set down instead of having to look at each Act to ascertain whether the permitted amount is £250 or £500.

I regard the hospital accountancy procedures which the Minister proposes to introduce with some little suspicion. On the surface they appear to be an improvement in getting the overall picture for hospitals throughout the State. From the departmental point of view it will provide a better overall picture and we may be able to draw some conclusions from the State hospitals but I can assure the Minister that when it comes into operation we shall be watching it closely to see how it is handled administratively. If the hospitals administration trust fund is to be held in the Treasury as a sort of key-point whereby a finger can be kept on all hospitals throughout the State monthly to see that they are bringing in as much by way of patients' fees and other fees as they are expected to so that they will not be a drain on the Consolidated Revenue, it might not be as good an idea as it might appear from the Minister's outline of it. That is to say, if it is to be used as a system by which the Minister can at any stage say that from its returns such-and-such a hospital is not getting in enough from intermediate patients or from some other patients, and he lets that hospital know accordingly, if it is to be used as a sort of waddy to be held over hospitals, we will have grave reservations about it. On the other hand, if it is truly to be used to facilitate accounting procedures and for the greater convenience of the department and the hospitals, it would be hard to raise objection to it. I suppose all we can do is wait and see how the system is used and hope that it will be in the interests of the hospitals rather than in the interests of the pinch-penny economising for which the Government unfortunately have already earned themselves a name in their four or five years of office.

Any further remarks I will make more appropriately at the Committee stage.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Townsville South) (4.17 p.m.): At the introductory stage I said that the ambulance brigade in Townsville had refused to go out to render first aid to a young boy who had been very seriously injured, because the boy's parents were not subscribers to the ambulance. The Minister questioned me on it and asked me to give the boy's name and address. Incidentally, the hon. member for Maryborough came into the picture with his usual vociferous, asinine guffaws of derision and scepticism. I was in Townsville on the week-end. Over the years I have never found it necessary to stand up in self-vindication or to justify any statement of mine because I have become known, in this Parliament at any rate and in North Queensland, for my transparent honesty. However, I should like the Minister, and anyone else who might be concerned, to know that the boy's name is Smith and that he and his parents live at Lowth Street, Rosslea Estate, Townsville. The boy, who is a lad in his teens, was climbing round the rocks on Castle Hill when he fell down, seriously injuring himself. He was bleeding profusely. The ambulance were rung. They asked, "Are the boy's parents subscribers to the ambulance?" When told they were not they said, "In that case we cannot come out and you will have to get attention for the boy from some other source.", which they did.

I merely rose to let the House know that the statement I made was quite true. Naturally many of us expect when we make a serious statement in the House that it will be received with ribald glee by some hon. members and that it will meet with vulgar interjections from certain members of the Opposition. Such was the case.

**Mr. Walsh:** How long ago was it?

**Mr. AIKENS:** Not so very long ago—only a matter of months. Since that time it was reported to me by distant relatives of the boy. Later it was reported to me by the boy's father. So there is no doubt about its authenticity. I told the boy's father to make a complaint to the Townsville ambulance committee. After my speech on the introduction of the Bill I wrote to the man who first gave me the information. He was good enough to come round to my home over the week-end and give me the boy's name and address.

**Mr. Walsh:** And the boy was subsequently taken to hospital?

**Mr. AIKENS:** I doubt it. I think he was taken to a private doctor's surgery and treated there.

However it is true that the ambulance refused to go out and see him; it is true that they refused to go out and treat him, and it is true that they refused to go out and render first aid. As I said, the boy's name is Smith. He lives at Lowth Street, Rosslea Estate, Townsville.

**Mr. Walsh:** And his father works on the wharves.

**Mr. AIKENS:** Yes, I think that is true. How the hon. member for Bundaberg knows that, I do not know. Perhaps he does not care for people working on the wharves.

**Mr. Walsh:** I have some doubts about the case.

**Mr. AIKENS:** I have given the full facts. I could have gone along and given them to the Minister quietly, but I have given them

in the Chamber so that they will be indelibly imprinted in "Hansard" and all who run may read. Anyone who wants to carry on from there can do so.

**Mr. WALSH** (Bundaberg) (4.21 p.m.): I regret having missed the Minister's second reading speech. I have just returned from Bundaberg and I did not have much time over the week-end to peruse the Act, having spent a busy week-end otherwise with my constituents.

Before proceeding to make some comments about the Act, I wish to deal with the case mentioned by the hon. member for Townsville South. At this stage I am not saying that I disbelieve what the hon. member said, but it would surprise me, and really surprise me, if any ambulance centre in Queensland refused to pick up an injured person and transport him to hospital. I asked the hon. member for Townsville South whether the boy's father worked on the wharf—the hon. member mentioned the name; I do not propose to mention names—because I thought he might be able to confirm the advice that was given to me during the week-end. If the action taken by the Townsville Centre is in accordance with what I was told, what I am about to say is not an attempt to justify something wrong that may have been done by it but an explanation of its attitude.

It appears that the lad had been transported for some considerable time to a chiropractor or a person who undertakes that class of work.

**Mr. Aikens:** I do not know anything about that.

**Mr. WALSH:** The hon. member dealt with something that occurred in Townsville. Having stated a case in the House, I imagined that he would know something about it instead of putting himself in the position of having to condemn an institution that has given such good service throughout the State. If the case is in fact as it was stated to me, I do not blame the ambulance brigade for having adopted the attitude that it did in the particular case. I am not denying the right of the particular gentleman in Townsville to continue in practice as a chiropractor, either, as long as he keeps within the law. If I want to go to somebody who is referred to by other people as a "quack" instead of going to a doctor, that is my business. I was told that the boy had been transported regularly by private transport to this particular chiropractor, and when the private transport broke down somebody got in touch with the ambulance and asked the ambulance to undertake the work that had been performed by the private transport.

**Mr. Aikens:** It is obvious that someone has told you quite a long story over the week-end, but that is not the story that I was told. The boy fell down the hill and injured himself and was bleeding profusely.

**Mr. WALSH:** I asked the hon. member for Townsville South whether the patient was taken to hospital.

**Mr. Aikens:** As far as I know, he was not.

**Mr. WALSH:** If he was in the state suggested by the hon. member, that is the only place he could have gone to.

**Mr. Aikens:** I am only interested in the fact that the ambulance would not go and treat him.

**Mr. WALSH:** My information came through ambulance sources. The hon. member admitted that the boy was the son of a wharf labourer.

**Mr. Aikens:** At least, I think he is.

**Mr. WALSH:** If it is the same case, I understand that the wharf labourer has refused to contribute any further to the ambulance. I do not know whether the hon. member for Townsville South is interested in that, but that is the way it was put to me.

**Mr. Aikens:** I am interested in only one thing: the ambulance would not attend to the boy who was injured and bleeding profusely.

**Mr. WALSH:** If the circumstances were as set out by the hon. member, I would agree. If the circumstances were as conveyed to me by ambulance sources outside of the city I would agree with the ambulance. I think every other hon. member would.

**Mr. Knox:** Tell us some of the other circumstances.

**Mr. WALSH:** Let the hon. member fish about for himself. All I want to do is straighten out the matter. The hon. member for Townsville South has been trying to make some defamatory statements about the Townsville Centre. I have stated the circumstances of a case that might be the case the hon. member is referring to.

**Mr. Aikens:** I gave the House first-hand information whereas you are giving us a fourth-hand story.

**Mr. WALSH:** The hon. member did not give the House first-hand evidence. He fell down on the job to the extent that he said that the boy was severely injured and bleeding profusely, yet the case was not taken to the hospital. He does not know whether he was taken to a doctor. I am conveying to the House that a patient was taken to a chiropractor type of professional man.

**Mr. Aikens:** Let the Minister for Health and Home Affairs investigate the whole matter and tell us the result.

**Mr. WALSH:** I should like the Minister to do that. I should be surprised if he has not done it in the meantime. There will be plenty of time for him to do it if he agrees with the suggestion I am about

to make. I do not want to enter into a lengthy debate on the second reading of the Bill because I missed the Minister's second reading speech. From what I have seen of the proposed amendments I would suggest that the Minister might delay the Committee stage if that would not interfere with his movements overseas. I realise that that is a matter that has to be considered.

It does occur to me that some matters contained in the Bill require a little consideration. The point made by the hon. member for Baroona is one that needs examination. I say that at the present time the setup of the executive committee as a body corporate is somewhat farcical. With a body constituted of something like 102 or 104 representatives, with each centre as set out in the Fourth Schedule having the right to elect their representative to the executive committee, it becomes a cumbersome body. That is the position apparently now.

In the Committee stage I should like the Minister to make it clear whether the existing system of appointment of proxies is to be continued. It would appear to me from an examination of the Bill that it is going out, that there will be no provision for proxies. Therefore the person elected will be the person who will have to turn up at the meeting.

**Mr. Hanlon:** Anybody living in Brisbane could be elected.

**Mr. WALSH:** As the hon. member for Baroona points out, anybody living in Brisbane could be elected. That raises another point. However, I prefer not to discuss these matters at this stage. If necessary there could be a discussion with responsible people in the Q.A.T.B. who might be able to offer some suggestions that the Minister would be prepared to accept as amendments in the Committee stage.

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (4.29 p.m.), in reply: I am not going to enter into the argument between the hon. member for Bundaberg and the hon. member for Townsville South. I can assure the hon. members that through my officers I will have inquiries made to see what the true story is.

**Mr. Aikens:** Will you inquire from the family as well as the ambulance?

**Dr. NOBLE:** Complete inquiries will be made. I doubt very much that an ambulance brigade in an emergency would refuse to go out. It must be the first case in Queensland if there is any truth in the story.

In my life association with members of ambulance committees I have never once heard of an ambulance refusing to go to such a case. There seems to be much concern that the ambulance committees might want further amendments of the Act. All we have done here is incorporate the central executive and ambulance committees as a corporate body giving them the power held by any corporate body and also in a most democratic way we have permitted voluntary brigades to do certain things. One has only to cause a voluntary brigade to do certain things and that brigade will want to withdraw from the central set-up. These voluntary brigades use their own funds. They are independent brigades and we want to preserve their autonomy. All we have done is incorporate an executive and given power to the brigades to confer further powers on the executive if they so desire. If the members of a brigade desire to have a zoning system in Queensland they can put it to their own executive and, having got 90 per cent. of the brigades to agree to such a move, the Governor in Council would have no objection whatever to such zoning being introduced.

**Mr. Melloy:** It would have to be submitted to the Governor in Council? It would not have to be an amendment to the Act?

**Dr. NOBLE:** No, we could do it by regulation in those circumstances. All we are doing is giving power to the executive and providing that the brigades may confer further powers on them if, in the wisdom of the brigades such powers should be conferred. We are giving them the right to do it.

**Mr. Walsh:** There is power in the Fourth Schedule to do these things; the question is would they be done?

**Dr. NOBLE:** The point is, in dealing with a voluntary brigade, it is better not to interfere with what is, at present, a very fine organisation in this State. We are conferring on the executives of ambulances and on the ambulance brigades themselves power to work out their own destiny. Surely that is a wise approach so far as the Government are concerned.

Motion (Dr. Noble) agreed to.

## COMMITTEE

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

Clause 1—Short title—as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendments of s. 10; Unauthorised collections—

**Mr. MELLOY** (Nudgee) (4.34 p.m.): Clause 2 provides—

> "Subject to this sub-section the Minister may, in relation to any hospital or locality, permit any body or association of persons, corporate or unincorporate, to raise moneys by public contribution for the purpose of the treatment of the sick, or of ambulance transport, first-aid, or teaching of first-aid."

I should like to ask the Minister through you, Mr. Taylor, would the sub-committee set up by the Q.A.T.B. at a public meeting in any

locality be required to obtain a permit to raise funds to establish a centre or sub-centre in the locality?

**Dr. Noble:** Yes, they would have to get a permit.

**Mr. MELLOY:** The Q.A.T.B.?

**Dr. Noble:** Probably an over-riding permit.

**Mr. MELLOY:** They would not have any difficulty in doing that?

**Dr. Noble:** No.

**Mr. HANLON** (Baroona) (4.36 p.m.): Sub-section 2 reads—

> "(2) Subject to this subsection the Minister may, in relation to any hospital or locality, permit any body or association of persons, corporate or unincorporate, to raise moneys by public contribution for the purpose of the treatment of the sick, or of ambulance transport, first-aid, or teaching of first-aid."

It is rather difficult to be decisive, but the subsection virtually gives the Minister power to do anything. Officials of the Q.A.T.B. are still concerned about the extent of the power given to the Minister and the protection of the Q.A.T.B. as the brigade that provides the actual ambulance service that we have known in Queensland over the years. In putting forward this subsection the Minister argued that it was designed to enable bodies such as Apex, Rotary, and others to raise money for the ambulance and hospital auxiliaries whereas previously they had no authority to do so, but at the same time it gives the Minister of whatever Government may be in power the opportunity to do at any time he so desires just what the Q.A.T.B. are objecting to, that is, to allow another more or less competitive ambulance service to be set up, thus duplicating to a great extent the work carried out and accepted by most people as the function in Queensland of the Q.A.T.B.

I do not want to deal with other sections of the Bill, but it contains other provisions including the definition of a first-aid station which seem to support the suggestion that the Minister under the power given to him in this clause could do anything along those lines. I am not saying that the Minister would do such a thing; I am merely pointing out that the clause gives him the power to do it. When introducing the Bill, the Minister told us it clearly provided that the setting up virtually of a second ambulance service that would provide among other things ambulance transport was not possible. I think there is some looseness in the provision. If the Government want to retain for the Minister this over-riding power, I suppose it would be difficult to find any way of overcoming the objection, but I should like the Minister to indicate the way in which he thinks he has given to the Q.A.T.B. the protection he mentioned, bearing in mind the wording of the clause under discussion and later clauses to which we will draw his attention.

**Mr. DEAN** (Sandgate) (4.39 p.m.): I support the views of my colleague on Clause 2. It is the crux of the Bill. It is a very important one and is very relevant to the argument advanced for months and months by the Q.A.T.B. about the collection of money in the name of the ambulance for a service in competition with the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade. This clause is the real core of the Bill. We can throw the rest overboard. This is the dangerous part of the Bill. As a member of the executive, and as a representative of one of the centres, and after all the work that has been done, I am sorry to see a clause like this still in the Bill. I repeat that this is the very centre of all the trouble over the months. If this is to be retained we will still have the trouble and the confusion in the mind of the public about the collection of money by two ambulance organisations.

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (4.41 p.m.): Under this provision, powers are given to me, if necessary, to permit any association or body of persons to raise money. It also gives me power to stop other people from raising money. The Parliamentary draftsman assures me that is the best way of inserting it in the Bill. No organisation, such as the St. John Ambulance Brigade, will ever at any time be allowed to raise money by public subscription. After all, we are not silly on this side of the Chamber, nor has any other Government been so silly as to allow that.

**Mr. Hilton:** Are they a body corporate?

**Dr. NOBLE:** I could not tell the hon. member whether they are.

I should say that any Government would be quite mad even to think of allowing an ambulance body of any sort to raise money by public subscription and so interfere with the financing of the ambulance system of the State. They are doing a mighty job raising the money and if the system broke down it would mean that a tremendous extra expenditure would be needed. Very large sums would have to be found in any year. No matter what Government are in power, they will at all times protect the financial rights of the Q.A.T.B. to raise funds and prevent any other body from raising money which might interfere with the Q.A.T.B.'s financial effort.

**Mr. WALSH** (Bundaberg) (4.43 p.m.): I do not want there to be any misunderstanding of the remarks from this side of the Chamber. I do not support any further restrictions that may be put on the St. John Ambulance Brigade. However, this Bill is right in so far as it protects the St. John Ambulance Brigade by allowing them to continue what they have done in the past. If we have accepted that over the years, and the Bill seeks to prevent them from going any further, and making inroads into the Q.A.T.B. that should be satisfactory to all.

On the St. John Ambulance side of it, there is the nursing division. We have heard a great deal about child delinquency and the necessity for youth organisations and movements. If we were to go to one of these functions and see all the girls lined up, dressed in uniforms, being taught self aid as it were, we should encourage it. If the Q.A.T.B. does not do that do not let us deny the right to anybody else to continue doing something they have been doing for so long. I made it clear before that I am against any other body being given statutory recognition in the way that the Q.A.T.B. is recognised in this State. That would have the effect of duplicating the ambulance service. I think the Minister has done the right thing in trying to clear the atmosphere for the future without in any way putting any restriction on the activities of the organisation of St. John. At the same time, they are protecting the Q.A.T.B. against further inroads. We must acknowledge that there has been an agitation in some quarters to allow the St. John Brigade to be recognised as a statutory body. As I see it, the Government have not done that and I am quite happy that the Q.A.T.B. are to continue as the accredited representatives for ambulance cases in this State. That gives the Q.A.T.B. the necessary protection.

**Mr. HANLON** (Baroona) (4.45 p.m.): The hon. member for Bundaberg stressed that he had no desire to interfere with the training of youngsters in first-aid by the St. John Ambulance and so on. I have no such desire either, nor do I think any member of the Q.A.T.B. Executive Committee has. However, the suggestion has been made that some people associated with the St. John Ambulance might feel impelled to expand their activities. That is understandable. They become interested in their work; they feel that they are doing a good job and that they could be doing more, so they push for more opportunities.

Perhaps this could be dealt with more appropriately on another clause, but in New South Wales the St. John Ambulance people are represented on the ambulance board, and the two bodies actually work together. That is the way it should be. The St. John Ambulance and the Q.A.T.B. should be working together and arriving at decisions in the interests of the people they serve.

One of the worries the ambulance have is that loopholes will be left for permission to be given for the raising of funds in the name of the ambulance. Confusion can arise when the term "ambulance" is used. A canvasser knocks at the door of a house and asks for a £1 donation for the ambulance. Next week somebody else comes along and asks for £1 for the ambulance. You say you gave £1 last week. You do not know whether one was for the St. John Ambulance and the other for the Q.A.T.B. or what.

**Dr. Noble:** They cannot be given a permit to go round. They have no right to raise money publicly.

**Mr. HANLON:** No, but they can make suggestions to people, and if the Minister gives that permission the loophole is there.

The Minister said that no Goverment would want to see the Q.A.T.B. disadvantaged financially. Their figures for the period from 1956 to 1961 highlight their difficulties. They are as follows—

| | £ | |
|---|---|---|
| 1956-1957 .. | 56,936 | surplus |
| 1957-1958 .. | 37,702 | ,, |
| 1958-1959 .. | 33,234 | ,, |
| 1959-1960 .. | 5,695 | deficit |
| 1960-1961 .. | 9,522 | ,, |

It will be seen that since 1956-1957 the position has deteriorated from a surplus of £56,936 to a deficit of £9,522. It should not be taken from that that there has been a decline in the efficiency of the executive.

**Dr. Noble:** There have been some very big wage rises in that time.

**Mr. HANLON:** That is so. The Minister and his Government would be the first to admit in defending their own record that they have not been doing so well with deficits either. The figures merely show that the same problems of rising costs that have faced others have fallen heavily on the ambulance. The deterioration in their financial position is not because of inefficiency but because the services required of them are continually expanding as against the money available. So their finances have declined to the extent of over £66,000 in four or five years. It is obvious that if in the next four or five years there are any inroads into the sources of their funds, with equivalent loss of subsidy they will be very seriously hampered. If they cannot provide the services the public expects, the Government will be called upon to make a much greater contribution. In view of the figures I have given, it might be reasonable to suggest that the Government should make a greater contribution by way of subsidy than they are making now. We do not want to waste time, nor do we want any misunderstanding. We are not trying to eradicate any of the work or services of the St. John Ambulance Brigade. We are merely pointing out the opportunity that will exist to draw finance away from the Q.A.T.B. Even if it is done with the best of intentions, the public generally will suffer, and they are the people in whom the Q.A.T.B. and the St. John Ambulance Brigade are interested.

**Mr. MELLOY** (Nudgee) (4.51 p.m.): I wish to refer to the matter raised by the hon. member for Bundaberg. I do not believe that the Q.A.T.B. is desirous of restricting the work of the St. John Ambulance Association, as distinct from the St. John Ambulance Brigade. In fact, the St. John Ambulance Association has the blessing of the Q.A.T.B. and works in co-operation with it, particularly in its first-aid classes, and so on. I think that any extension of the work of the association would be looked upon with favour by the Q.A.T.B.

Clause 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendments of s. 13; Constitution of Boards—

**Mr. DUGGAN** (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (4.52 p.m.): I raise this matter because I referred to it in a debate following the introduction by the Treasurer of the Harbours Acts Amendment Bill. He pointed out that there was a lack of uniformity in the provisions in various Acts to prevent persons who were earning above a certain amount from sitting as members of statutory bodies. He postulated the idea that these varying amounts should be made uniform and he indicated that £500 had been agreed upon as a reasonable figure because that was the amount laid down in the Local Government Act. I pointed out then that it was a pity he had not discussed the question with the Minister for Health and Home Affairs because on the previous day he had introduced a Bill providing for a limit of £250.

Because I have previously contended on behalf of the Opposition that when legislation is introduced we should try to get uniformity, I move the following amendment:—

> "On page 3, lines 20 and 21, omit the words—
>
> 'two hundred and fifty pounds'
>
> and insert in lieu thereof the words—
>
> 'five hundred pounds'."

It will make the Act uniform with the Harbours Act and the Local Government Act. If the sum of £500 is included in those Acts, I cannot see why there should be any differentiation in this case.

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (4.53 p.m.): There is a good deal of merit in the Leader of the Opposition's suggestion. I am quite happy to accept his amendment.

Amendment (Mr. Duggan) agreed to.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4—Amendment of s. 18B (1); Appeals against promotions and punishments —as read, agreed to.

Clause 5—Amendments of s. 21; Funds of board—

**Mr. MELLOY** (Nudgee) (4.54 p.m.): I understand that the amendment proposed on page 6 of the Bill, line 8—

> "(e) omitting in paragraph (ii) of subsection (3) the words 'by the testator or donor';"

will restrict the objects of donors or testators in relation to gifts to hospitals. They will not be able to designate the purpose for which their donation is to be used. That might deter people who are inclined to make donations to hospitals for a certain purpose. Anyone who is particularly interested in cancer research or who has been affected by cancer, or any other disease for that matter, may feel inclined to make a donation for research into that particular disease. If they are not able to do so because of that provision they may hesitate to donate the amount they are prepared to give. The Minister should have a look at that matter. If I am not correct in my interpretation I should like him to tell me so. On the face of it it appears that all donations will be paid into the general fund to be used at the discretion or direction of the Minister, without being allocated for any particular purpose.

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (4.56 p.m.): It is not quite as the hon. member thinks. The last thing we would do would be to take away from the person prepared to give money the right to say how it is to be used. The full paragraph of the subsection reads—

> "The Trust Fund shall be applied to the purposes directed by the testator or donor, but in the absence of any such direction shall be applied in aid of the function of the Board in such manner as may be approved by the Minister."

We are merely taking out the words "by the testator or donor". I do not know why the Parliamentary Draftsman did it but he says that it still protects the purpose for which the donation is made. It says, "The Trust Fund shall be applied to the purposes directed . . . "

**Mr. Melloy:** Whom by?

**Dr. NOBLE:** The testator or donor.

**Mr. Melloy:** It does not say that. That is the weakness of it.

**Dr. NOBLE:** That is what I am assured.

**Mr. Melloy:** I want to get an assurance from the Minister.

**Dr. NOBLE:** The reason is that into this fund will be paid contract deposits. It would mean that the contracts could be affected by the testator or donor. Because of that I understand it is desirable legally to remove the words "by the testator or donor". It does not interfere in any way with the right of the person making the gift to direct how it shall be applied.

**Mr. MELLOY** (Nudgee) (4.57 p.m.): The answer is to separate the donors and testators from the contract deposits. If you do not want to involve the contract deposits then separate them. The Minister is taking away the right to make donations for a specific purpose. The fund will be used as directed, but once the words "by the testator or donor" are removed the Minister is taking away all direction from those people. They are being removed from the provision.

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (4.58 p.m.): The legal position is that the money has

to be paid into the trust fund by the person making the gift. The paragraph reads—

"The Trust Fund shall be applied to the purposes directed . . . ",

in other words, by the people paying money into the trust fund who can direct how it may be used. Contract moneys are paid into the fund, and it would interfere with the use of that money if the words "by the testator or donor" were left in.

**Mr. MELLOY:** Mr. Taylor——

**The CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member has spoken three times.

**Mr. HANLON** (Baroona) (4.59 p.m.): It seems to me that the Minister is not going to accept our contention on the matter, nor are we going to run away from it. The Minister has had to go to his officers three times to find out why he took the words out. I am not saying that in a derogatory manner but it shows there are some weaknesses in the consideration given to it at ministerial level. I do not expect the Minister to know all these things personally. It is only now that he has given any attention to the matter, it obviously having been dealt with by his officers previously. I agree with the hon. member for Nudgee that if he takes out the words, "by a testator or donor" and there is no stipulation by the testator or donor, the Minister may decide for what purpose the fund shall be applied. It can be widely interpreted and, while the Minister has given his assurance that he does not think it can be interpreted in that way we have had assurances from previous Ministers, in Labour Governments and in this Government, given in good faith, but as time went on we found that our fears were well founded. Apparently the Minister is not prepared to do anything about it but we do not retreat from our suggestion that discrimination could take place.

We cannot very well oppose the whole clause in this instance. From time to time we are required to consider long clauses in amending Bills covering pages and pages and it is very difficult, unless matters are continually held up to move long amendments, to indicate by way of resolution just what is our opposition to a portion of a clause.

I asked by way of interjection at the second reading stage if the moneys collected by hospital auxiliaries had to come to Brisbane and be paid into the Hospital Administration Trust Fund. It was suggested that all money collected by hospital auxiliaries in different centres had to come to Brisbane for inclusion in the General Hospital Administration Trust Fund at the Treasury. In other words, if £1,000 were raised at a hospital centre for some purpose at that hospital, the money would have to come to Brisbane and it would be at the whim of the Government whether that hospital would get the amenity for which money had been collected locally.

The Minister says that it will not have to come to Brisbane but, Clause 5 says—

"There shall be paid to the credit of the Hospital Administration Trust Fund,"

Then at lines 19 and 20, it reads—

"all other moneys received from any source in respect of hospitals;"

I cannot see where there is any authority for the money collected locally for a particular purpose to be paid into the local account. The money they collect will come into the category of "all other moneys received from any source in respect of hospitals." It is clearly not the Minister's intention, but there may be some technical hitch, and the money collected in a district for a particular purpose, say for nurses' quarters, or for the supply of equipment at the hospital, may have to be sent to Brisbane.

We have some reservations about the operation of hospital auxiliaries. Nobody wants to discourage people from collecting money for their own district hospital, but it should not be sent down here to the central fund. Where is the authority for the money to be paid into the general fund of the local board? I cannot see any reference to a general fund except the Treasury fund, the Hospital Administration Trust Fund in Brisbane.

I want to deal now with the Patients' Trust Fund. At page six, lines 21 to 23, the Bill reads—

"Moneys to the credit of a patient in the Patients' Trust Fund shall be applied for the benefit of or as directed by the patient."

A patient may have £25 in the trust fund and he may want to get something with it. If the money was spent for that purpose it could be said that it was spent as directed by the patient, but the clause also contains the words, "shall be applied for the benefit of the patient." What the medical superintendent, the Minister or someone else may think is for the benefit of a patient may not be what the patient thinks is for his benefit. There is the risk that some of the money held in trust for him may be applied in a manner not desired by the patient. The Minister has said that the interest on the money in the fund will go into a general fund for the benefit of patients generally. The clause as it stands leaves an opening for a hospital board to use some of the money held in trust in a way that a patient may not consider desirable.

**Mr. Aikens:** It may be like the money held in trust for aboriginals.

**Mr. HANLON:** That is another subject, but possibly it may.

The only reason I can see for the inclusion of the words "for the benefit of the patient"

would be that the money could be used for the benefit of a patient who is so far gone that he cannot tell anybody what he wants and cannot direct that something be bought for him with the money he has to his credit. Nevertheless the opening is there for the money to be used for something he may not want. I should like the Minister to answer those points.

**Mr. MELLOY** (Nudgee) (5.7 p.m.): The Minister has said that the interest on money invested from the Patients' Trust Fund may be applied for the provision of amenities for patients generally. I think some limitation is required, otherwise such money could amount to a forced donation by a particular patient. Perhaps the patient may have £2,500. No limit is set by the clause. The patient's money is accepted and held in the fund. It is then invested and the interest may be used for amenities for patients generally. A patient may have an income of £15 to £20 a week from a private source. The Bill does not cover such a position. It is possible that a patient may be providing £4 or £5 a week for amenities for the other patients of the hospital. Some limitation should be placed on the use of interest from the fund. Perhaps some provision could be inserted fixing the amount of money that may be placed in the joint fund. Perhaps patients who have a considerable amount of money could have their money invested separately so that they could get the interest from the investment of their money. If that is not done the interest on the funds of some patients will amount to a forced donation by them.

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (5.9 p.m.): The provision in respect of the words "testator or donor" is a common-sense one. The money is to be applied as directed and if a person directs that it shall be used in a certain way then that is the way in which it will be used. Under the Bill contract deposits are to go into the Board's Trust Fund. A testator or donor can say how his money is to be spent. I am not a legal man, but I am assured by legal men that in regard to bequests if there is a direction as to how the money shall be spent it will be spent in that way and can be used in no other way. That is the case at the present time. In those circumstances, I do not think I am able to accept any amendment from the Opposition.

**Mr. Melloy:** There is a distinction between the money held in trust for patients and——

**Dr. NOBLE:** There is a separate Trust Fund called the Patients' Trust Fund.

**Mr. Melloy:** That is the one I am speaking about.

**Dr. NOBLE:** Previously the hon member was talking about the Board's Trust Fund. There is another fund called the Patients' Trust Fund.

**Mr. Melloy:** That is the one I was speaking about.

**Dr. NOBLE:** In the first instance the hon. member was worrying about the Board's Trust Fund. Now we come to the Patients' Trust Fund and he is worried that moneys invested in this fund may be used for purposes not desired by the patients. Of course, if a patient is compus mentis he has to give permission at all times as to how the money shall be used. There are two types of Patients' Trust Funds, one with various small amounts say, £10, £20, or £30. Instead of putting this money out in hundreds of savings bank accounts they combine it and put it into one savings bank account and attract a few pounds a year by way of interest. Instead of their splitting this money up among a number of patients, the interest from this fund is used for the purchase of amentities for patients generally. There is a second Trust Fund, at the Dalby Hospital only, where over the years, some quite large sums of money, running into hundreds of pounds have been accumulated by patients. That is possibly what the hon. member for Nudgee is worried about. All those moneys have to be invested in securities guaranteed by the Treasurer of the Comonwealth or of the State. The interest from this money goes back to the individual patient and is not used to purchase amenities for the patients generally.

**Mr. Melloy:** Is that the Patients' Trust Fund?

**Dr. NOBLE:** There are two types of Patients' Trust Funds, one for smaller amounts of money which are put into a savings bank account. The small amount of interest at the end of the year would present a tremendous amount of work if it had to be split up and credited to each patient. That small amount of interest is spent in buying amenities for the patients in the chronic wards. Where large sums of money are invested in Government securities the interest accruing on those securities has to be paid to the individual accounts.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Townsville South) (5.13 p.m.): I am very interested in these Patients' Trust Funds because, in the first place, when we are dealing with the disbursement of money from a fund I am always interested in how the money first of all got into the fund. On page 6, subclause (5) (a), with reference to "Patients' Trust Fund" we find—

> "The Patients' Trust Fund shall consist of all moneys received in trust for any patient."

Where will that money come from? I understand that in the geriatrics' ward, for instance, in some of our public hospitals—and the Government are to be commended for establishing these wards—pensioner patients are given much the same treatment as in an Eventide Home, inasmuch as a certain portion of their pension goes to the hospital for their maintenance and care. I could be wrong about the exact amount, but I think 33s. or 35s. a week goes to the patient himself or herself. I understand

that in Eventide Homes, 35s. or whatever the amount happens to be, that belongs to the pensioner is handed to the pensioner personally for banking or spending, if the pensioner is capable of handling it. Where a pensioner is not capable of handling it, the money is paid into a trust fund at the Eventide Home. Is that so, Mr. Minister?

**Dr. Noble:** Yes, it can be put into a savings bank account.

**Mr. AIKENS:** He can do what he likes with it. But if he is not capable of looking after his own money it is paid into a trust fund at the Eventide home. Does the same provision apply to patients' trust funds at Eventide as applies to this, that is, that the interest from the money in the trust fund is used for the general benefit of all the patients in the Eventide home?

**Dr. Noble:** I would not be certain of that.

**Mr. AIKENS:** I am not sure. That is why I asked the Minister. I notice further down, in sub-paragraph (c) that there appears to be, although it is not very clearly stated, a second trust fund. That is to say, if a patient has a large sum invested in bonds or shares—perhaps a parcel of shares in Moonie or some other big-paying dividend concern like B.H.P. or C.S.R.—that money is not used for the general benefit of all the other patients in the hospital. It is only the money in what is known as the first Patients' Trust Fund.

Frankly I find the whole clause somewhat ambiguous, somewhat cloudy. I should have preferred to see it much more explicit so that we should know what we were dealing with.

**Dr. Noble:** That has been the practice for years.

**Mr. AIKENS:** And has the interest from the Patients' Trust Fund been used for the general benefit of patients?

**Dr. Noble:** In the smaller amounts of up to £20 or £30, it is put in the one savings bank account.

**Mr. AIKENS:** If you have 20 or 30 patients in a hospital and you hold a trust fund for each, it entails a great deal of work if they each have their own bank account and their own bank book. It is far better to put all the money into the one joint trust fund and to keep merely a record of what each patient is entitled to.

**Dr. Noble:** At Eventide homes, too, if they desire to have their money put into a trust fund the interest from it is used for the patients.

**Mr. AIKENS:** So that the Bill is doing only what has been the practice at Eventide homes for some considerable time?

**Dr. Noble:** Yes.

**Mr. AIKENS:** As I say, I should have much preferred to see the wording of the clause more detailed and explicit than it is but if it merely perpetuates something that has been going on at Eventide homes for many years, there cannot be very much wrong with it. I am glad to have the Minister's assurance, however, about patients with money invested, in terms of sub-paragraph (c) of sub-section 5, which includes the words—

> "other than any investment specified in sub-paragraph (i.) of paragraph (b) of sub-section (6) of this section, may be applied by the Board for the provision of amenities for patients generally."

**Mr. BURROWS** (Port Curtis) (5.18 p.m.): In respect of sub-paragraph (b) of sub-section 5, which says—

> "(b) Moneys to the credit of a patient in the Patients' Trust Fund shall be applied for the benefit of or as directed by the patient."

In my experience over a number of years with those funds, a great deal of common sense has to be used.

**Dr. Noble:** The practice has been going on for years. You have probably handled them yourself.

**Mr. BURROWS:** The nurse on duty would hand the money to the secretary and the secretary's duty would be to bank it. If a man had a bank book among his effects, obviously the money would go in there. I know of one instance where one night a man was brought into a hospital unconscious and he had £500 or so in his pocket. That, of course, was an exception. Very rarely is the amount substantial. If you were to say to the patient, "Look, we could bank the money in a trust fund but it would be much simpler for everybody concerned if we banked it in your bank account.", that would be all right. The Public Curator has to take over when a patient dies and the money is paid to his estate. I think the words "or as directed by the patient" should be a little more explicit. I know of cases where patients honestly believed that they had more money on them than they actually had. If a person is brought in unconscious or not normal in some way, he sometimes honestly believes that he has more money.

**Mr. Aikens:** And when he dies some of his relatives think that he had a lot more, too.

**Mr. BURROWS:** Yes. Those matters arouse suspicion. If the patient wants his money applied in any particular way, I think there should be evidence in writing of that. It should not be left up in the air in this way—"He asked me to buy this for him." I know of men who have made good fellows of themselves with the nurses by

spending their money, although only rarely do we strike a case in which a nurse takes advantage of a patient's generosity. We see the type of man who goes into the pub and wants to buy the girls behind the bar silk stockings, and we see that type of person in hospitals, too.

I did not like having anything to do with this particular trust fund. It was a matter of taking people's word that the man had £50, £29 11s. 6d. or whatever the amount was. There was no evidence, actually, and the nurses' job was to hand it over to the superintendent if it was after office hours and it was then handed over to the secretarial staff in the morning. Trust moneys are sacred, and I think that the Minister could make the provision more water-tight by adding the words "in writing" to the words "or as directed by the patient".

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (5.23 p.m.): I can see no reason for adding the words "in writing". Surely that is a matter for the administration. The secretary can get them to sign a document saying what they have.

Clause 5, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 9, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 10—New s. 31A inserted; Corporation of the Executive Committee of the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade—

**Mr. MELLOY** (Nudgee) (5.24 p.m.): I shall speak only briefly on this matter because it has been dealt with fairly fully by the hon. member for Baroona, who outlined the wishes of the executive of the Q.A.T.B. in relation to the constitution of the executive as decided upon at its conferences in 1956 and 1959. They were unanimously in favour of a constitution of the executive by means of delegations from zones. I think that the Minister should give consideration to this question when it is brought to him, as I am sure it will be, by the executive of the Q.A.T.B.

**Dr. Noble:** It will be a matter for themselves to make that arrangement.

**Mr. MELLOY:** They have to decide it themselves. However, having the Minister's assurance that it will be considered favourably, I am sure that they will approach him and the Governor in Council to have the constitution of the executive altered to bring it into line with the decisions of the State conferences of the Q.A.T.B. in 1956 and 1959.

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (5.25 p.m.): If the executive decides to divide the State into zones I should say that the ambulance brigade, being a voluntary organisation, would be quite happy about it.

**Mr. HANLON** (Baroona) (5.26 p.m.): Earlier we mentioned the difficulty about getting 90 per cent. of acceptors in any body of people. The clause provides in lines 8 and 9 on page 12—

> "Whenever not less than 90 per centum of the Ambulance Brigades represented on the Executive Committee pass a resolution referring any power . . . "

It would be a better indication if a postal ballot was conducted. Would that be a resolution?

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (5.27 p.m.): I should say you might never get sufficient at an executive meeting to put a decision through. If they reached a decision it would apply to the various brigades.

**Mr. MELLOY** (Nudgee) (5.28 p.m.): I consider that the 90 per cent. referred to on page 12 is excessive. If 75 per cent. of the members of any organisation wish to effect any changes in the constitution or to effect any other matter, surely it is indicative of the opinion of the majority. As the Act stands concerning the referring of any power or function of the brigade to the executive, surely the acceptance of 75 per cent. of those represented would be sufficient to represent the view of a considerable majority of the members of that executive. It is all very well to provide 90 per cent. to protect the interests of sub-centres, but with 521 employees in the Q.A.T.B. it means that 10 of that number could thwart the wishes of the other 511. I do not think that is right. If the Minister was prepared to reduce the percentage to 75 he would be bringing about a more democratic expression of opinion. The percentage of 90 is only obstructive. It does not protect the wishes of the majority by any means. The 10 could thwart the wishes of the 511.

**Mr. WALSH** (Bundaberg) (5.29 p.m.): I want to make just a few general observations. Since the Bill was made available last week I have not had much time to go into large aspects of it. But this clause can be said to be the new charter for the Q.A.T.B. throughout Queensland. From the Minister's remarks and the clause itself I know that most of the rectification of any of the disabilities that might be seen at the moment by hon. members ultimately will be left in the hands of the executive committee itself. While provision is made in the Fourth Schedule for the conduct of the functions and powers, meetings, elections, etc., of the executive committee, nevertheless there is this provision in the clause—

> "The Governor in Council, upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, may make rules setting out the powers, functions and authorities of the Executive Committee and governing the proceedings thereof, and providing for all or any purposes whether general or to meet particular cases that may be convenient for the administration of the

Executive Committee or that may be necessary or expedient to carry out the objects and purposes of this section."

I agree with the Minister that he is leaving in the hands of the Executive Committee power to decide their own future and it will rest with them as to whether they decide to have a zonal system or whatever other system they may decide upon, for the election of delegates to the Executive Committee. That being the case, at the moment I cannot see anything wrong with it.

The hon. members for Baroona and Nudgee pointed out that it would be very difficult at any stage to get a 90 per cent. vote in this Chamber unless on a question that was almost unanimously accepted by hon. members on both sides. I can visualise that there would be very controversial questions, where it might be desirable to make some amendment on matters sponsored by many delegates to the Executive Committee, nevertheless, there would be great difficulty in getting a 90 per cent. vote.

I should like the Minister to advise the Committee and put it on record for members of the Parliament who are interested in the working of the Q.A.T.B., whether the committee or any one of the centres will be authorised in the future to appoint proxy delegates to the Executive Committee. I think the hon. member for Baroona will see the point I am trying to make. We could still provide for the election of delegates from the various centres to constitute the Executive Committee of the Q.A.T.B. and those members may be elected from within centres in which their brigades are operating, but we might end up having a committee of Brisbane delegates because of the appointment of proxies consisting almost wholly of Brisbane residents. I should like to know if either in the fourth schedule or anywhere else in this Bill there will still be power for any delegate for any centre to appoint a delegate to the Executive Committee other than the duly elected delegate for that centre.

These matters are important because now that a body corporate is being created under this section—and as I have stated earlier, this is where the new charter for the ambulance committee begins—the whole of the Executive Committee will be trustees and will be the body entrusted to deal with the whole of the assets of the different centres throughout Queensland. Up until the present there has been power for the Q.A.T.B. to be a body corporate to the extent that they might sue or be sued. Never have they had the power to deal in, buy or sell land, or deal in land in fee simple as a body corporate. I am wondering how this cumbersome body of up to 102 delegates will act as trustee for the whole of the assets. I know that the trustee law might provide for the nomination of certain signatures and so on but the Minister will agree that even in a racecourse trusteeship there are five trustees and approval of those five trustees is necessary before anything



can be done to interfere in any way with the trust. In this instance the number will be 102, and I am pointing out the position if there is not some delegation of power. As I said during my remarks on the introduction, if these powers could be entrusted to the president, treasurer or secretary of the Q.A.T.B., those persons could handle these matters as trustees and, if the trustees did not give effect to the wishes of the Executive Committee, the remedy would be to appoint a new president, a new treasurer and a new secretary. I am merely pointing out the cumbersome nature of the proposal.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Townsville South) (5.36 p.m.): Clause 10 is a very long one, occupying about 6½ pages of the Bill. I am afraid the hon. member for Bundaberg has not waded through the 6½ pages as meticulously as I have. When I read the first of the several subclauses of Clause 10, I was very concerned about the power vested in the Executive Committee that will, of course, be down here in Brisbane, because through my rather checkered lifetime I have had some rather shocking examples of the undesirability of vesting power in one executive in Brisbane. The hon. member for Bundaberg could now join with me in making some comment if he wishes as to the shocking centralised power vested in the Queensland Central Executive of the A.L.P. in Brisbane. Consequently, when I see power vested in one central executive in Brisbane, I examine the provision very carefully.

In sub-clause (6) we find that the Executive Committee shall be the trustee of all Q.A.T.B. lands. It also states, "A person other than the Executive Committee shall not act in the office of trustee of any Q.A.T.B. lands." We keep turning over the pages, restraining our impatience as best we can, and trying to remember the contents of the preceding pages of this monumental clause, and we find a very saving provision in subclause (10). It refers to the Executive Committee, that is, this Queen Street centralised body with all its proxy delegates such as the hon. member for Baroona and what-have-you——

**Mr. HANLON:** I rise to a point of order. To remove the ignorance of the hon. member I point out that I am not a proxy delegate, but an actual delegate.

**Mr. AIKENS:** I accept the hon. member's statement that he is an actual delegate. He said something about being a proxy delegate for Mt. Garnet, and in a rather humorous exchange he assured us that he has actually been to Mt. Garnet, and that is something because often we find that proxy representatives have very rarely been to the places for which they are the proxy delegates or representatives.

The clause, I am pleased to say, reads—

"The Executive Committee shall not sell or mortgage or lease or let, or agree to

sell or mortgage or lease or let, Q.A.T.B. lands or any building or any part of any building erected on such lands—

(i) without the consent of the committee of the Ambulance Brigade for which it holds such lands upon trust; or

(ii) where such committee consents subject to any term or condition, contrary in any respect to such term or condition."

In my humble opinion sub-clause (10) of Clause 10 very effectively stymies any arbitrary or tyrannical action by the centralised Executive Committee to dispose of or let or lease any land, for instance, that belongs to the Townsville Centre of the Q.A.T.B.

I am pleased I took the trouble to wade through this monumental clause in order to find that safeguard. If the hon. member for Bundaberg had been aware of it——

**Mr. Walsh:** I am aware of that.

**Mr. AIKENS:** If the hon. member for Bundaberg was quite aware of it, I wonder why he made the remarks he did, because they would create the impression in the minds of those who are foolish enough to read "Hansard" that this Bill was going to concentrate all the power with regard to the disposal, the letting and leasing of Q.A.T.B. land wherever situated, and buildings wherever situated, in the hands of the Central Executive.

**Mr. Walsh:** Nothing of the sort. I never said that.

**Mr. AIKENS:** If I have been instrumental in any way in clearing the fog in the mind of the hon. member for Bundaberg, I am very happy to do so. When I went down to my room a little while ago I found a letter from Townsville which gave me the full particulars of the Smith case. I have handed them to the Minister. They did not want him taken for "treatment" by any chiropractor. He fell down Castle Hill and his mother rang the ambulance, and they asked her was he a subscriber and she said "I don't know." They said, "Well, in that case you get a taxi", so they got a taxi. I do not know where they took the boy to. However, his father is a subscriber. We will hear more about that from the Minister.

If hon. members care to read right through clause 10——

**Mr. Walsh:** It is quite a good clause.

**Mr. AIKENS:** Yes—they will find it is like that lovely solo in Gilbert and Sullivan's "Mikado", "a thing of shreds and patches"——

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. Melloy:** Might I point out to the hon. member for Townsville South that whereas he has pointed out that the assets are protected by that 90 per cent. vote, in fact it is not so. If he reads the Bill——

**Mr. AIKENS:** There is nothing about a 90 per cent. vote in sub-clause 10.

**Mr. Melloy:** No, but that 90 per cent. majority does not protect or cover the sale of lands, or the disposal of property by the Q.A.T.B.

**Mr. AIKENS:** If an ambulance sub-centre objects to the sale or lease of their land the executive cannot sell it or lease it.

**Mr. Melloy:** It does not require 90 per cent.

**Mr. AIKENS:** No, a simple majority.

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (5.42 p.m.): The hon. member for Bundaberg is worried about the nature of the executive being constituted from each ambulance brigade. I have no doubt that at the present time the lands held by ambulances throughout the State are held in the name of three trustees. The circumstances surrounding Mr. Miller raised one of the urgent reasons for the incorporation of the ambulance brigade. In the event of a death there is the bother of getting another trustee. It is often not possible to get the services of someone willing to take on this very great responsibility of being a trustee for such large sums of money that now constitute the property of the Ambulance Brigade in the State. For that reason, the ambulance executive was incorporated. I have no doubt that at their meeting after this incorporation, provision will be made for certain members, perhaps the president, the treasurer and the secretary, and so on—anyone whom they themselves designate—to become the signatories for any business that may have to be transacted by the executive, in the way of mortgages, and the various affairs that will have to be dealt with.

There is nothing in the Bill providing for proxies, but if 90 per cent. wish to make use of proxies that may be provided within their constitution. I can assure hon. members that this 90 per cent. is essential. We thought a great deal about it. At present the brigade is working in complete harmony but if a large percentage, such as 90 per cent., is not stipulated the occasion could arise when some power could be passed, or handed to the executive, by a 75 per cent. majority of the brigades, and the other 25 per cent. would not be happy. There would be all kinds of schisms and factions, and resignations from the committee. It could lead to many problems, and a great deal of controversy. We considered the 90 per cent. very carefully. When we were considering it we consulted two, maybe three members of the executive of the Ambulance Brigade who were present, and after a great deal of argument and debate it was finally decided that 90 per cent. would be the safest in the circumstances,

especially as we were dealing with a voluntary body, each local brigade being, in most cases, very jealous of its local autonomy.

**Mr. Hanlon:** The Governor in Council has to give his approval. If you dropped it to 75 per cent. they still would have to get the approval of the Governor in Council.

**Dr. NOBLE:** I do not want the Governor in Council to come into it very much.

**Mr. Walsh:** You are not taking any power?

**Dr. NOBLE:** If they decided to take over a power it would have to go to the Governor in Council for approval and he may refuse.

**Mr. Walsh:** You do not take any power for the initiative to rest with the Governor in Council?

**Dr. NOBLE:** No. The initiative rests with the ambulance brigade. In the long run it will be realised that 90 per cent. is a very wise provision. I should not like to see it altered at this stage.

**Mr. WALSH** (Bundaberg) (5.46 p.m.): I think the Minister understands my reason for raising the subject of proxies because through it the position could become farcical. If the committee became constituted by so many proxies it might be quite easy to get the 90 per cent. That is why I wanted the Minister's interpretation on whether the power to appoint proxies would remain with the centre. I do not know what authority there is for appointing proxies at present. The Minister says there is nothing in the Act to provide for it. As I see it, there would be no provision in the future for the appointment of proxies.

**Dr. Noble:** Unless they confer that power upon them.

**Mr. WALSH:** Unless a regulation is introduced and approved by the Governor in Council. We can easily get into these legal arguments. There is some agreement between the hon. member for Nudgee and the hon. member for Townsville South that the 90 per cent. would not apply to this reference in sub-paragraph (10) on page 14—

> "The Executive Committee shall not sell or mortgage or lease or let, or agree to sell or mortgage or lease or let, Q.A.T.B. lands or any building or any part of any building erected on any such lands."

**Mr. Aikens:** I agreed with him that it did not affect the centres of the Q.A.T.B.

**Mr. WALSH:** I do not know so much about that. I should be very interested to hear what the Parliamentary Draftsman's reference is on this passage under (g) on page 12—

> "Whenever not less than ninety per centum of the Ambulance Brigades represented on the Executive Committee pass a resolution referring any power, function or authority of an Ambulance Brigade under this Act to the Executive Committee, and the Governor in Council approves of such reference, then, in addition to any powers, functions or authorities given to the Executive Committee by this Act, or by the rules as hereinafter provided, the Executive Committee shall have and may exercise the power, function or authority so referred."

Despite the possible protection in one part of the Act which more or less lays it down that these lands cannot be sold without the consent of the particular ambulance brigade, what would be the effect if 90 per cent. of the brigade voted the power to sell these lands?

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (5.49 p.m.): I think we are entering into a legal quibble. Sub-paragraph (10) on page 14 takes complete care of that. In any case, even if 90 per cent. of the brigades do——

**Mr. Walsh:** It has to be approved by the Governor in Council.

**Dr. NOBLE:** Yes, and I can assure the hon. member that no Governor in Council would give any power to centralise all the money of the ambulance brigades in Brisbane. There is a group within the brigades who would like to see it—some delegates to the executive would—but it would be very foolish because in those circumstances you would have to give away any idea of having local boards collecting and the whole financial structure of the Q.A.T.B. would disappear.

Clause 10, as read, agreed to.

Clause 11—Amendment of s. 32; Special provisions as to ambulance brigades—

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (5.50 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

> "On page 16, lines 38 and 39, omit the words—
>
> 'Brigade Overseas carried on prior to the commencement of "The Hospitals Acts Amendment Act of 1962" ',
>
> and insert in lieu thereof the words—
>
> 'the St. John Ambulance Brigade in Australia'."

I might mention that when we drew up the Bill the idea was to protect the work of the St. John Ambulance Brigade as it had been carried on in the past. On the other hand, we did not want to stifle a brigade that wanted to form male divisions. Surely to goodness there should be nothing to prevent a brigade from forming a male division and teaching first-aid. The St. John Ambulance Brigade goes right back to the St. John Hospitalers, and the Queen is the Patron, or Prior. It was the basis on which all ambulance brigades throughout the western world were founded, and it would be dreadful if we were to stifle the brigade's normal function of teaching first-aid. As a matter of

fact, members of the Q.A.T.B. have their certificates from the St. John Brigade and cherish their association with the brigade.

The idea behind the amendment is that the words "prior to the commencement" may give the impression that because the St. John Ambulance Brigade did not have male divisions previously— I think only in Bundaberg did it have a male division—it could be left out and the Government wished to ensure that the further development of the St. John Ambulance Brigade was not stifled.

**Mr. MELLOY** (Nudgee) (5.53 p.m.): Here we have the back door through which the St. John Ambulance Brigade can encroach upon the province of the Q.A.T.B. A first-aid station is defined as any place established on a permanent basis for the supplying of first aid, and the St. John Ambulance Brigade will be able to set up tents and carry out its work. It will be able to encroach upon the work of the Q.A.T.B. at seaside resorts, for example, that have been well and truly catered for by the Q.A.T.B., which sets up tents and provides a service for the holidaying public. Under this provision the St. John Ambulance Brigade will also be able to set up tents and provide a similar service in competition with the Q.A.T.B. I think that the Minister should give that matter some attention. He states that his intention is to protect the interests of the Q.A.T.B. but at the same time he provides loopholes that will allow the St. John Ambulance Brigade to supply services similar to those already provided by the Q.A.T.B. in certain areas. Once it does that, I believe it will be in a position to accept donations from the public although it may not solicit them. There is nothing to stop it from accepting donations, and that is a source of revenue that is already being used successfully by the Q.A.T.B. In holiday periods the Q.A.T.B. collects quite a large amount of money at seaside resorts. If the St. John Ambulance Brigade is to be allowed to set up tents and provide a first-aid service, that will attract a certain percentage of the money that now goes to the Q.A.T.B.

**Mr. HANLON** (Baroona) (5.55 p.m.): It is obvious that the Q.A.T.B. have opposite thoughts to the Minister on this matter. Whether it is going to turn out to their disadvantage—the Minister says it will not—only time will tell. Obviously the Minister thinks he is doing the right thing. By a ballot of their centres the Q.A.T.B. indicated conclusively that they did not share the Minister's opinion about the possibilities arising from the male division of the St. John Ambulance Brigade. A foreshadowed amendment deals with the definition of "first aid station". The Q.A.T.B. would be opposed to the Minister on this matter.

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (5.56 p.m.): We live in very difficult times. Who is to know that in the next few years, or may be even tomorrow, that there will not be a worldwide holocaust with thousands and thousands of casualties. It is necessary to keep that in mind at all times and to have the personnel available who are able to render the necessary first aid. For years the St. John Ambulance Brigade have been noted for their training in this field. It would be very serious for the Government or Parliament to prevent them from carrying out their normal function. These men pay for their own uniforms and kits. They are willing to take time off to learn more than an essence of first aid for the benefit of the people generally in the case of any emergency. Under the other provisions of the clause special provision is made that they cannot take part in ambulance transport and so on.

**Mr. MELLOY** (Nudgee) (5.57 p.m.): At page 17 the clause reads—

> "Any Ambulance Brigade mentioned in this subsection may consent to the supplying by St. John Ambulance Brigade Overseas of a first-aid service in respect of any sporting event for admission whereto a charge is made within the locality within which such Ambulance Brigade operates.
>
> "If upon application by St. John Ambulance Brigade Overseas an Ambulance Brigade refuses to so consent, St. John Ambulance Brigade Overseas may appeal to the Minister who, if he is of opinion that consent has been unreasonably refused, may approve of St. John Ambulance Brigade Overseas supplying the first-aid service."

It is obvious that if the Q.A.T.B. refuse permission to the St. John Ambulance Brigade to provide service at a football event, for instance, the Minister is going to be sympathetic. In any case it will be in the hands of the Minister if the Q.A.T.B. refuse. Apart from the attitude of the Minister on it what we have to consider is that if he does support the St. John Ambulance Brigade in their application and grants them permission, it means that where the Q.A.T.B. are also on the ground—the Minister may consider that the service provided by the ambulance brigade is not sufficient to cover the event and therefore allows one St. John Ambulance Brigade man in also—then we could have what we had many years ago, a situation tantamount to body snatching. When an accident occurred it was a race between two ambulance men to see who got the body. Perhaps that is stretching it a little but the Minister should have another look at the matter. If he is going to allow the Q.A.T.B. to provide this service, let it be done thoroughly; do not leave any loopholes. As the Minister has pointed out, they are both admirable bodies both doing excellent work in their particular spheres. Why accentuate any conflict by providing opportunities for them to "have a go" at each other on any football field? The

Minister has the power to allow the one body to carry on the work as it has done and will continue to do.

**Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs) (6.1 p.m.): The reason for giving power to the Minister to adjudicate is that certain amateur bodies in sporting fields, charge a fee for entrance and their financial status is very poor. They have not got anything at all. I can assure hon. members I do not want the power and that I looked everywhere for an excuse to dodge it. They cannot expect the Q.A.T.B. to go to these functions without being paid. The ambulance bearers have to be paid and it would be a dead loss for the Q.A.T.B. They must find some money to pay the bearers.

In this case, I do not think there will be any argument. There was one with the Rugby Union but that has settled down now. I think good sense will prevail and I will not need to adjudicate. If I have to, I will do it very fairly.

Amendment (Dr. Noble) agreed to.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 6.3 p.m.