

Queensland



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[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER 1962

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

QUESTIONS

"STOP" SIGN AT EDWARD-MARY STREETS INTERSECTION

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

"(1) Is he aware that a 'Stop' sign has been erected at the corner of Edward and Mary Streets to halt traffic in Edward Street?"

"(2) If a 'Stop' sign is deemed necessary at this point, why was it not also necessary at the corner of Edward and Margaret Streets and the corner of Edward and Charlotte Streets?"

"(3) What was the theory behind halting traffic in Edward Street when, to my view, the only purpose of 'one-way' streets is to facilitate the flow of traffic?"

"(4) Does he not consider that this sign could constitute a traffic hazard because of the fact that it is a surprise to the motorist?"

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

"(1) Yes. This work was approved by the Traffic Engineer, and the sign erected on the nineteenth of this month."

"(2) This 'stop' sign was authorised following the attention of the Traffic Engineer being brought to the accident hazard existing at this intersection, by the Police Department Accident Analytical Section. The accident history of the other two intersections has been checked but factors which operate at the corner of Edward and Mary Streets do not operate at these other intersections."

"(3) An examination of the accident pattern at the intersection of Edward and Mary Streets revealed that of eleven accidents occurring at this intersection since September, 1960, ten were caused through the failure of Edward Street traffic to yield right of way to Mary Street traffic. Where this situation occurs, it is considered desirable to halt the traffic which is failing to yield right of way. In addition, traffic volumes in Edward Street, between the hours of 9.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. are 2,500 vehicles, compared with 3,200 vehicles both directions in Mary Street, and in the period 6.30 a.m. to 3 p.m. traffic volumes in Edward Street are 3,000 compared with 3,300 both directions in Mary Street. The theory behind stopping the traffic failing to yield right of way is the same as that which was used with the

installation of 'Stop' signs at the intersection of George and Alice Streets in September, 1958. It will be recalled that prior to the erection of these signs, there were eighteen accidents reported in eighteen months. In the four years since erection of these signs, not one accident has been reported to the Police Department at this intersection."

"(4) No."

DEFECTIVE CONCRETE PIPES, MOUNT ISA RAILWAY LINE

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

"(1) Is there any truth in the statement that many of the large concrete pipes manufactured by Hume Pipes Ltd., or other manufacturers, used or to be used on culverts, &c., on the section of the railway line being reconstructed between Townsville and Mount Isa, have been found to be defective and, in consequence, have been rejected?"

"(2) Is it true that the specifications previously adhered to by Hume Pipes Ltd., which were found to be satisfactory, have been varied on the advice or recommendation of Messrs. Ford, Bacon and Davis and, if so, are these pipes those that have now been found to be defective?"

"(3) What action, if any, is proposed to replace the defective pipes?"

"(4) What is the estimated cost of such replacement and by whom will the cost be borne?"

"(5) Have any of similar types of pipes found to be defective already been installed and, if so, is it intended to replace such pipes, what is the estimated cost of effecting such replacement and by whom will the replacement costs be borne?"

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

"(1) It is true that a number of the large diameter concrete pipes manufactured by Humes Limited have been found not to meet specifications and have been rejected by the engineers."

"(2) The sized pipes in question were not previously manufactured by the supplier, and, therefore, I understand no specification previously existed. Consequently, when quotations were called, the specification was based on standard specifications of the American Society for Testing Materials. The defect in some of these pipes is due to displacement of the reinforcement during manufacture. Pipes manufactured in strict conformity with the specifications met all loading tests."

"(3) All defective pipe will be rejected and will be replaced with approved pipe."

"(4 and 5) It is not possible to estimate the cost of such replacement as the field investigations have not been completed yet, and the extent of defective pipe has not been determined. Some pipes are already installed and the contractors will be instructed to replace or strengthen them. An estimate of the cost of replacing or strengthening such pipe will not be available before investigations by the field engineers are completed and the question of responsibility has yet to be resolved."

PACKAGING AND SALE OF GOODS

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"(1) Has any progress been made in regard to the projected conference of interstate Ministers to discuss standardisation of packages and other features of the sale of goods, as reported recently in the press?"

"(2) What is to be the basis of discussions at this conference?"

"(3) Is it intended to investigate the practice of misleading advertising in connection with the sale of certain articles?"

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

"(1) One such conference has been held and another is to be held in Hobart on November 1 and 2 to deal with matters relating to the co-ordination of Commonwealth and State legislation in relation to weights and measures."

"(2) Two matters have been set down for consideration—(a) The effect of the Commonwealth Weights and Measures (National Standards Act of 1960) and regulations under the Weights and Measures legislation of the various States and the amendments necessary to conform to the requirements of the Commonwealth legislation. (b) To consider recommendations in respect of uniform packaging regulations both in relation to standard sizes and the marking of the net contents on the packages. A Board of Inquiry appointed by the Government of Victoria to inquire into all aspects of the sale of pre-packed goods is at present sitting in Melbourne. Advice has now been received by the Honourable the Minister that the Board will not have completed its report in time for consideration by the Conference of Ministers. It is anticipated that the report will be finalised by the end of January, 1963."

"(3) The Board of Inquiry referred to in Question (2) is, among other things, investigating allegations of misleading advertisements and any appropriate action necessary is dependent upon consideration of the result of that inquiry."

COMALCO AGREEMENT, WEIPA

Mr. COBURN (Burdekin) asked the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity—

“As Clauses 4 and 16 of the Agreement between the Queensland Government and Comalco, in conjunction, require the Company to make periodical investigations of the economic possibilities of constructing and operating within the special bauxite mining lease or elsewhere in the State an aluminium smelter of a minimum capacity of 30,000 tons of aluminium per year and to furnish to him the results of all such investigations in order to assist him in determining whether such a large scale enterprise is or is not economically possible, will he please advise how many investigations in accordance with these Clauses of the Agreement have been undertaken, how many reports have been submitted by Comalco to him and what these investigations and reports have revealed?”

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

“Under Clause 4 of the Lease Agreement between the Queensland Government and Comalco the latter is obliged to carry out various investigations and make reports to the Minister. Clause 4 (1) relates to early investigations and surveys which were completed before the due date, June 30, 1958. Clause 4 (2) (a) relates to geological, geophysical and boring reports of a mining nature in Bauxite lease. These are to be furnished progressively at intervals not exceeding five years. The Company has in fact reported regularly and fully under this heading. Clause 4 (2) (b), (d) and (e) relate to investigations and surveys concerning the siting of ports, airfields, townships, water supply and other facilities. Although there is no time limit attached to this, the Company has kept the Government closely informed of its progress with these matters, particularly in connection with the letting of a contract for more than £1 million covering the dredging of the shipping access channel into Weipa. Clause 4 (2) (c) requires the Company, within fifteen years of the date of the Agreement, i.e. by December 16, 1972, to investigate and report on the possibility of economically constructing and operating a smelter at Weipa or elsewhere in Queensland. Subsequently, in Clause 16 of the Agreement it is stated that, if after 20 years from the date of the Agreement, the Minister is satisfied that it is economically possible to establish an aluminium smelter of not less than 30,000 tons in Queensland or elsewhere in Australia, then Comalco shall do so or forfeit some of its lease area. The Honourable Member seems to be under some misapprehension about the Company's obligations to report at this stage on the smelter question. Under Clause 7

the time obligation resting upon the Company is to establish an alumina refinery at Weipa or elsewhere in Queensland. The Company has advised that final details of the plans required for its large Queensland alumina project are in fact at this moment being prepared with its overseas associates. Equally, the Government is aware from the Company's continuing investigations into possible power sources that it is constantly attentive to the desirability of taking the industry in Queensland to the further stage of actual smelting when this is shown to be economically feasible.”

REINSTATEMENT OF FORESTRY EMPLOYEES,
YARRAMAN DISTRICT

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) asked the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry—

“Are there any prospects of the Department reinstating the forestry workers recently dismissed in the Yarraman district, or work being found for them in some other Government department?”

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick) replied—

“The present strength of forestry workers in the Yarraman district is the number required to carry out current essential work. The recent reduction in employees there was due to staffing being above the normal level because of the extra men employed in the early part of the year. The work of planting the new areas and tending of weeds will commence in the near future but what additional labour will be required is dependent on seasonal conditions which cannot be forecast at this stage. I am not in a position to indicate what the labour requirements of other Government Departments might be.”

APPOINTMENT OF FULL-TIME CORONER

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

“(1) Is it a fact, as reported in the press of September 25, 1962, that only one-sixth of accidental deaths are subject to coronial inquiry?”

“(2) Is this situation due to the fact that the Coroner functions only on a part-time basis?”

“(3) As relatives of victims of fatal accidents are frequently left in doubt as to all circumstances associated with these accidents, will he give consideration to placing the Coroner's duties on a full-time basis?”

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

“(1) The legislation dealing with coroners and coroners' inquests covers deaths which are violent or unnatural as well as

sudden deaths of which the cause is unknown. It is understood that this question relating to 'accidental' deaths would refer to deaths within the violent or unnatural classes. On this basis the answer to this is 'No.'

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

"(2 and 3) The Coroners Act of 1958 is modern legislation which compares very favourably with legislation elsewhere and has been acclaimed by authorities in other States. Under this Act if a coroner after inquiry is satisfied that the death is due to natural causes and did not occur in such a place or in such circumstances as would require the holding of an inquest or that no good purpose would be served by the holding of an inquest he may, in the first of these cases, dispense with the inquest and, in the second of these cases, recommend for the decision of the Under Secretary, Department of Justice, that the holding of an inquest is unnecessary. I have power under the Act to direct the holding of an inquest. Moreover, the Commissioner of Police or an Inspector of Police or the near relatives of the deceased may at any time request the coroner to hold an inquest. In practice inquests are held into all violent or unnatural deaths unless the circumstances are such as to indicate clearly that an inquest is unnecessary. The coroner makes an inquiry in every case preliminary to his determining whether or not an inquest will be held. On occasions the holding of inquests may be delayed, but this is invariably due to reasons not associated with the availability of a coroner; for example, witnesses living outside the State or inquiries being extensive. It will be noted that the non-holding of any inquest is not due to the fact that any coroner functions on a part-time basis. The appointment of a full-time coroner is not warranted at present. The position in matters of this kind is reviewed periodically in the light of requirements."

INCIDENCE OF "Q" FEVER

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

"(1) How many cases of 'Q' fever have been treated in Queensland public hospitals in the years 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961 and 1962?"

"(2) What have been the ages of the patients and their occupations?"

"(3) Has he received any official report that it has been ascertained by medical authorities in public hospitals under Government jurisdiction that this fever shortens the lives of those persons contracting the disease? If not, can this information be obtained and conveyed to the House?"

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Minister for Transport), for Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga), replied—

"(1 and 2) I would refer the Honourable Member to the Annual Reports of the Director-General of Health and Medical Services for the years 1958-1959, 1959-1960, and 1960-1961, which contain the information sought. For the year 1961-1962 the figures are as shown hereunder:—

Number of Cases notified	100
Age Groups were as follows:—	
0-9 years	2
10-19 years	23
20-29 years	17
30-39 years	20
40-49 years	22
50-59 years	7
60-69 years	1
70 years and over
Age unknown	8
	—100
Occupations—	
Unknown	1
Sheep and Wool	20
Meat	30
Dairying	5
Other Primary	9
Others	35
Totals (including Six Females) 100."	—

"(3) The Department has not received any official reports that it has been ascertained by medical authorities in public hospitals under Government jurisdiction that this fever shortens the lives of those persons contracting the disease. The Honourable Member's request that information be sought on this matter will be referred to the Honourable the Minister on his return."

INFORMATION SUPPLIED TO AGENT-GENERAL

Mr. BROMLEY (Norman) asked the Premier—

"(1) How often does the Government send information and brochures relating to overall conditions in this State to the Agent-General for Queensland in London for the general information of the public, tourists and firms in England?"

"(2) When were information and brochures as referred to last forwarded?"

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

"(1 and 2) Apparently, the Honourable Member has not read the Annual Report of the Agent-General for Queensland for 1961-1962 or, seemingly, for any other year. If he had, he would have quickly acquainted himself with the fact that the Agent-General and his officers are fully briefed—far better, it seems, than himself—on day-to-day overall conditions in this State. However, for his enlightenment, I supply the following facts:—(1) Mail relating to multitudinous matters affecting the State is forwarded to the Agent-General by my Department on an average of three postings a week; (2) Brisbane and provincial newspapers are despatched daily by air-mail; (3) Hansard is sent by air-mail

daily when the House is sitting; (4) The week's news pictures from the 'Telegraph', supplied free by the management, are sent by air-mail once a week; (5) Photographs, the Government 'News Bulletin' and other publicity material from the State Public Relations Bureau, Ministerial statements, matters affecting estates and the Public Curator's Office, State Stores Board indents, and a great variety of business matters from the various departments make up a constant air-mail stream; (6) 'Queensland, Land of the Sun', published annually, is despatched by the State Stores Board by surface mail upon delivery from the Government Printer. Eighteen thousand copies of the 1962 edition left Brisbane on September 1; (7) The Agent-General receives copies of all annual reports and material emanating from the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau. He carries out many liaison functions between overseas firms and the Division of Secondary Industries; (8) Films are sent when made or acquired. Twelve were added to the Agent-General's film library last year, as his annual report shows; (9) From the material received, the Agent-General is able to compile a rounded fortnightly up-to-the-minute Queensland Newsletter which, he currently reports, 'still enjoys its reputation as an authoritative source of information about Queensland' and has an expanding circulation. As Australia's leading figure on international sugar matters, the Agent-General is, of course, intimately briefed by the industry on everything touching its welfare."

HOUSING OF CLERK OF PETTY SESSIONS, MOUNT ISA

Mr. INCH (Burke) asked the Premier—
"Are negotiations proceeding between the Government and Woolworths Qld. Ltd. for the exchange of property on which the residence of the Clerk of Petty Sessions at Mount Isa is situated for property owned by Woolworths in Brisbane? If so, what plans have the Government in mind to ensure that the Clerk of Petty Sessions at Mount Isa will be adequately housed?"

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

"I believe that the prime object of the Honourable Member in asking this question is to receive an assurance that the accommodation interests of the Mining Registrar (also Clerk of Petty Sessions) will be protected in the event of there being negotiations of the nature mentioned by him. I can give such an assurance as regards the Mining Registrar's accommodation and say that, under the Country Housing Scheme, a house has recently been completed at Mt. Isa which will be available for occupancy by this officer should the necessity arise."

SUPERVISION OF CONVALESCENT HOMES

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

"(1) Was the New Farm convalescent home that recently was burnt down, causing the death of three people, receiving a subsidy from the Government?"

"(2) If so, what supervision over the home was maintained by the Department?"

"(3) Was he satisfied with the night-time arrangements made for the care of patients?"

"(4) What other homes used for similar purposes are being subsidised by the Government and what supervision, if any, is being maintained?"

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Minister for Transport), for **Hon. H. W. NOBLE** (Yeronga), replied—

"(1) Convalescent Homes are not subsidised by the State."

"(2) Convalescent Homes are licensed and controlled by the Local Authority."

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

"(4) See answer to Question (1) and Question (2) above. I would refer the Honourable Member to the answer given on September 19, 1962, to questions asked by the Honourable Member for Kedron regarding Convalescent Homes."

COVER FOR POLICY-HOLDERS, SEVEN SEAS INSURANCE CO. LTD.

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

"(1) Is he aware that insurers with the Seven Seas Insurance Company who have been advised to seek cover elsewhere are finding it almost impossible to secure such cover?"

"(2) In view of the serious position which could arise, especially in regard to third party insurance, and for the protection of innocent victims of accidents, could such cover be given by the State Government Insurance Office?"

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

"(1 and 2) No cases of difficulty have yet been brought to my notice. Indeed, my last advice from the Insurance Commissioner was that other insurers were co-operating splendidly. If the Honourable Member will let me have details of any cases within his knowledge, I will be pleased to have immediate enquiries made with a view to assisting the persons concerned to obtain a cover."

DREDGING OF CHANNEL AT WEIPA

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

"(1) Is the work on the channel presently being dredged at Weipa the sole responsibility of the company concerned or is some supervision being exercised by officers of the Harbours and Marine Department?"

"(2) Does the location of the channel conform with the accepted standards and principles laid down by that Department?"

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

"(1) The work is the sole responsibility of the Company."

"(2) Yes. The scheme was designed only after detailed hydrographic studies by the Company and detailed testing work by a Dutch company well experienced in such work. The designs were approved by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Marine Board, pursuant to Section 86 of the Harbours Acts."

PRINCIPAL'S RESIDENCE, TOWNSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) asked the Minister for Public Works and Local Government—

"(1) Is it intended to call tenders for the erection of a home for the principal of the Townsville High School on land lately acquired for that purpose or is the home to be built by employees of his Department?"

"(2) When is it anticipated that building will commence?"

Hon. H. RICHTER (Somerset) replied—

"(1) It is intended to call tenders for the erection of the residence."

"(2) It will not be possible to indicate when building will commence until a tender has been accepted."

PAPER

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

Report of the Golden Casket Art Union for the year 1961-1962.

COMMONWEALTH AND STATE (GLADSTONE COAL LOADING WORKS) AGREEMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

QUEENSLAND MARINE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING SOCIETIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

THIESS PEABODY COAL PTY. LTD. AGREEMENT BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 25 September (see p. 587) on Mr. Evans's motion—

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

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (11.26 a.m.): I quite agree with the Minister's claim that this Bill provides a very satisfactory agreement for Thiess Peabody Coal Pty. Ltd., but I very much regret that provision has not been made to safeguard the workers, particularly their living and working conditions. After all, no matter how much expense this company incurs and how much machinery it puts on the field, not one ounce of coal will be won from the face or transported to the port without the skill and labour of the workers.

The Leader of the Opposition dealt with this matter fairly fully, and I feel that it is sufficient for me to say that I endorse every word that he said. However, for the information of hon. members on both sides of the House I think it advisable to read from a report that followed a visit to the field by Mr. Justice Gallagher, the Coal Mining Industry Tribunal of the Commonwealth, and trade-union officials. The report reads—

"At the time of inspection the Kianga Cut was out of production and the work force was concentrating on the Moura Open-cut."

The method adopted by the company for the exploitation of this field is to take sufficient overburden off the Moura cut to work the coal that is exposed, then move to Kianga the equipment used to remove the overburden and repeat the process there, thereby working both open-cuts alternatively. That method of winning coal progressively will be carried out.

The quotation continues—

"The Moura Open-cut has an overburden of 95 feet of sandstone and the coal seam exposed is 20 feet thick. The walls of the cut, which appear to be hanging over the men working below, are very dangerous, there are very large facings of stone above the men, which are fractured in many places due to the heavy shooting necessary to remove the overburden."

That illustrates the difficulty of exploiting this coal at Moura. The overburden is almost five to one and the proportion will probably increase. This necessitates a considerable amount of blasting operations. It has been considered in years gone by that a field of this nature could not be successfully operated by open-cut methods.

The report continues—

"At the present time the overburden is being removed by the mechanical shovel filling into trucks and carted to the dump. This method will continue until the New Dragline is installed towards the end of the year; this dragline will be the largest 40 cubic yard dragline excavator ever built by the Marion Power Shovel Co. of U.S.A. It will load and dump the overburden without the use of trucks; it has a dumping radius of 215 feet and can dump to a height of 126 feet; the distance from the boom point to the ground is 168 feet."

That should indicate to hon. members the size, and incidentally the cost, of modern open-cut mining equipment.

The investigating party included, in addition to Mr. Justice Gallagher, the general president and general secretary of the Coal Miners' Federation, the district secretary and president of the Queensland Colliery Employees' Union, and representatives of craft unions with members employed on the open-cut at Moura. This is what they had to say about the living conditions—

"The parties also inspected the living quarters supplied by the Company and for which a charge is made against the employees."

"The single men's quarters disclosed a very low standard for which each man pays 15s. 6d. per week. The size of each hut was approximately 16 x 12 and each hut contains four bunks with no other furniture, no ceiling, no lining, no water, no heating; the water is carted from the river supply and chemicals have to be added to make it fit for human consumption."

There is a serious epidemic sweeping Cloncurry at the moment because people there have been drinking water that is unfit for human consumption. At Moura the water used for human consumption is taken from the river and supposedly purified by the hazardous method of a person in authority occasionally throwing in some chemicals. I think that a wealthy and powerful company such as this should at least try to provide water suitable for use by the men on the job and their families.

Mr. Aikens: The only thing that can be put into water is chloride to kill the typhoid germs. You cannot kill the other germs.

Mr. DONALD: That may be. The report goes on—

"The Open-cut Field is situated 35 miles from the nearest township of Biloela, which means that no doctor or hospital is available in case of sudden illness and no form of entertainment."

It has been said that the Housing Commission will erect homes at Biloela for the workers. If we examine that suggestion, it is obvious that it will not be very convenient for a man to make a 35-mile trip to work

each morning and a 35-mile trip back after he finishes work over an extremely rough road. The second point that must be taken into consideration is that if a worker contracts to build a home he wants at least some security. He wants a guarantee that he will be able to pay for it, that he will not be put to the expense of going through the preliminaries of building it and living in it for a short time, and then find that there is no work available for him. The fact that no alternative work will be available to employees on the Moura coalfield should be taken into consideration. If something happens that makes it impossible for them to continue working at Moura, they have no other jobs to go to and their homes still have to be paid for. That is another reason why the company should be compelled to erect and make available to the workers suitable living quarters.

Mr. Aikens: Won't they be brought under the Workers' Accommodation Act?

Mr. DONALD: Apparently not. The report goes on—

"The living quarters for married families is certainly shocking and one which calls for immediate action being taken by the Unions. Families are living in corrugated iron sheds, approximately 20 x 10, with a small skillion attached where the fuel stove is placed for the cooking needs of each family. The occupants are charged 30s per week."

"Some sheds are housing a man, wife and six children which means very little room inside and certainly makes it very bad for the occupants."

"The Central Executive feel that as every assistance is being given to Thiess Bros. and Peabody Co. by the Queensland Government to develop the Open-cut Field, the least the Government can do is to see that the workers are provided with living quarters up to standard in 1962."

Neither the unions nor the workers should be compelled to do that. The Government should ensure in the agreement that comfortable and decent living conditions are provided for the men who will win wealth for the company from the bowels of the earth.

I am not happy about the ease with which the agreement can be varied. All that is required is an Order in Council. If it is gazetted while the House is in recess and disallowed when the House reassembles, any wrong that may have been done while it is in operation cannot be righted till that period expires. I realise, of course, that it can be rectified in the future.

Mr. Hanlon: It could be from December to August.

Mr. DONALD: It could be from December to August and this Order in Council, or the advantage flowing from it, could be going to the company and the

disadvantage going to the State and to the employees. Then, when the House reassembles, the Opposition have to be very diligent and watch the Orders in Council that are tabled and then convince members of the Government that what we say is right and that the Order in Council is wrong and should not be allowed. From past experience that would be an impossible task, no matter how sincere or eloquent we might be. They would ignore our pleadings and, I venture to say, there should be some better protection than merely that an Order in Council can bring about an alteration to the agreement at the whim of the Government.

We are informed in the schedule that an extensive seam of coal has been found in the defined area of 350 square miles embracing about 14 towns and parishes, including Kiang and Moura. I think all hon. members will agree that 350 square miles is a tremendous tract of country, however considered in relation to a mining lease. We are also informed that a proclamation was issued in January 1960 declaring that this area would not be open to licence or lease under the Coal Mining Acts, 1925 to 1952. However, extensive prospecting work has been carried out at considerable expense, presumably by Thiess Peabody Coal Pty. Ltd. The seam of coal found at Moura is of high-grade, hard quality coking coal capable of being worked by the open-cut method, although the overburden is thick and consists in the main of hard sandstone.

I am informed that the seam can also be worked successfully by modern underground methods. I realise that the method adopted to win the coal will be the one that the company considers the most efficient and economical. I am not going to say that the method that is adopted will be incorrect. I would be foolish to do so. This company has extensive coal-mining experience and it has already demonstrated or is about to demonstrate, that it can successfully win coal by the open-cut method at Moura although it was thought many years ago to be impractical. Not only is the overburden more than one would have thought could be worked by this method, but in addition, it does not lend itself to easy removal. The company is desirous of exploiting in a big way so as to ensure a large production of coal for export. Broadly speaking, I do not see any serious objection to that.

Over many years, repeated attempts have been made by those in control of the coal-mining industry in Queensland, including the Government to obtain and develop an export trade, but, unfortunately for all concerned in the industry, without success.

From 1949-1950 to 1960-1961 we exported from Queensland to other States of the Commonwealth almost 1,000,000 tons of coal—to be precise, 946,248 tons. During the same years we exported overseas

446,978 tons. From 1949-1950 to 1960-1962 we have exported 1,393,226 tons interstate and overseas from Queensland. The best interstate year was in 1951-1952. It has dwindled considerably since then and our best export trade—I think hon. members will agree, naturally—was during last year. Coal has come from New South Wales to Queensland for many years.

Mr. Evans: It is still coming.

Mr. DONALD: It is still coming because some Queensland industries refuse to burn Queensland coal. There was a case in the North of the gas company in either Townsville or Cairns—

Mr. Evans: Both.

Mr. DONALD: I thought it was both, but I did not want to assume that I was absolutely correct. The meatworks in Gladstone, too, refused to burn Queensland coal for many years until they were forced to do so. Those companies are now taking Queensland coal and getting satisfaction. We can expect some opposition—maybe strong opposition—from certain colliery-proprietors in New South Wales and perhaps the U.S.A., who see in this something of a threat to their own export trade. It would be folly to pretend otherwise because we do know that there is extensive competition to build the trade offering with Japan. We know that some collieries, particularly those on the South Coast of New South Wales are exporting a tremendous amount of coal to Japan. We know, too, that United States interests, in which Peabody Thiess Coal Pty. Ltd. plays no small part, are also exporting coal.

If any coal that is being won in the Moura field by the open-cut method is to be used in Queensland for any purpose whatever when it could be supplied from collieries presently operating here, it would be not only unwise but also disastrous and extremely hurtful.

Mr. Evans: Unfair, too.

Mr. DONALD: Unfair, too. Personally I do not think that the Minister would allow that to happen, but he will not always be the Minister for Mines. Whoever the next Minister for Mines may be, he may not have the outlook of the present Minister. He may not be as good a Queenslander as the present Minister.

Mr. Sullivan: He would have to be a very good Queenslander to be as good as the present Minister.

Mr. DONALD: I agree. He would have to be a very good Minister for Mines, if he came from the hon. member's side of the House, to be nearly equal to the present Minister.

There may be confusion about, and different ways of interpreting, Clause 27 on page 12 of the Bill. It says—

“Coal produced from any Special Coal Mining Lease granted pursuant to this Agreement shall be the property of the Company and may be used by the Company for its own requirements; . . .”

If the company is to set up any industry on the field and it has to use coal for the production of some commodity there, and if it is generating its own electricity, again perhaps it would be foolish to say, “You have to get coal from other sources to produce that.”

The clause continues—

“ . . . but subject as hereinafter provided shall be sold only for use outside the State of Queensland:—”

I can see the hand of the Minister there.

“ . . . Provided that if the Minister at any time by notice in writing requests or authorises the Company to negotiate for the supply and sale of coal to any person within Queensland who is unable to obtain adequate supplies of coal suitable for his purposes on terms satisfactory to him the Company shall negotiate for the making of such an Agreement . . .”

Mr. Evans: Read it all.

Mr. DONALD: I will deal with the other matter later. That is what is concerning the minds of those in the coal-mining industry of Queensland, both the proprietor and the miner. It means that a consumer of coal, whether he be large or small, can say, “This coal from such-and-such a colliery is no good to me. It is not suitable for my line of business. It has too much ash in it. The calorific value is not high enough and the price is not suitable. I am demanding under this agreement that I should get coal from Thiess Peabody Coal Pty. Ltd.” Would not the Government under this agreement have to grant that coal to that consumer? There is no way the Government could get around it.

Mr. Evans: Be fair. Read on.

Mr. DONALD: This is just the first portion of it. There is a further proviso. Again I am not misquoting the Minister, but I am expressing the opinion that is being expressed by those close to the coal-mining industry. They see a danger to their existence in this clause. It must be admitted that the colliery-proprietors of Queensland have played a splendid part in the industry, as have the coal-miners of Queensland. The colliery-proprietors have spent hundreds of thousands of pounds to develop the industry and to give the consumer good-quality coal. Never in the history of Queensland have they let down the manufacturers or the consumers of coal.

The clause continues—

“Provided further that if such Agreement be not arrived at within a time considered reasonable by the Minister the

Governor in Council may by Order in Council declare that such person being a new consumer or prospective consumer of coking coal requires—”

Mr. Evans: Coking coal.

Mr. DONALD: It says, “a new consumer”—“such person being a new consumer.” It does not say that that new consumer requires coking coal. It just says, “being a new consumer or prospective consumer.” That new consumer could be engaged in any industry. Again he could get coal from Moura coalfield to the detriment of collieries operating at the present time. It is not that I am merely trying to pick out faults in the Bill. I am trying to point out, or to pinpoint, a weakness in the Bill whereby the economy of the present coal industry in this State could be seriously affected. I should like the Minister to be more definite. We could write into the agreement that coal can be supplied by this company for domestic use only when no other coal of the same class is available. As the Minister pointed out in both the introductory stage and in his second speech, we want a steel works in Queensland. I think we all do, and we all know that only coal of a certain quality can be used for the manufacture of steel. It has to be a hard coking coal. We were told over the years that we did not have that type of coal in Queensland. I have protested in this House against exporting coal of this type because we are supposed to have only a limited supply of it. Incidentally, the Japanese are not using their hard coking coal; they are reserving it and importing coking coal from abroad.

Perhaps I should at this stage correct the thinking of members of the Government who have claimed that Opposition members are opposed to the export of coal and other primary products from Queensland. Every member of the Opposition would welcome overseas orders for steaming coal, or any other commodity that we have in abundance, to the limit of our capacity to supply it. What would the people of Blair Athol want? Do they want to be existing on intermittent work or to have staff reduced by one-third on a coalfield almost unique in the world with a capacity to produce cheaply a good steaming coal? If we could get export orders for that coal, there would be no opposition from anyone. But we just cannot do it.

Personally I think it is wrong to export raw material, the production of which employs only a handful of men—comparatively few workers—to be manufactured into various commodities, thereby giving employment to many thousands of people outside Queensland. I think it is sound economics and very logical that we should try to manufacture in Queensland what we can from our raw materials and employ many more people than we can at present. We have to admit that we are short of steel and aluminium. We have in Queensland the

raw materials necessary for the production of both steel and aluminium. Is not development the State's greatest need? We talk about our great potential, but what is the use of it unless we exploit it to the best advantage—and to the best advantage of not only those employed in the various industries but also of the State as a whole and of the people as a whole. I feel sure all hon. members will agree that the safest and surest way of achieving development is by using all our raw materials in the manufacture in Queensland of commodities essential for our own development.

Attention is drawn in the schedule also to the company's willingness and capacity to incur heavy capital expenditure necessary for the development of this project. We are assured that the State is satisfied that the company has the technical knowledge and the finance to win successfully and treat large tonnages of coal for export over a lengthy period. To do this the company is prepared to construct, among other things, a high-capacity washing plant, a railway system for the transport of coal from the mine to the port, and modern bulk-handling facilities at the port. It would be folly to attempt to belittle what the company is proposing to do. It would be folly also to try to create the impression that it can do it with very little expenditure of capital. We know the price of coal-cutting machines. We know the price of a continuous miner. We have not had in Queensland the open-cut equipment that is to be used by this company. When we know the capacity and the size of this equipment, we also know that it will cost not tens of thousands of pounds but perhaps hundreds of thousands, or even millions. We know what it costs to build a railway line and to run one. We fully realise the magnitude of the entire undertaking. In return for all this expenditure the Government is to grant the company the sole right to exploit this extensive and valuable Moura coalfield. When I refer to the Moura coalfield I mean the coal seam that is contained in this 350 square miles of country. We just have to admit that.

Now I come to royalties. I suggest that the royalty should be a flat rate of 6d. a ton on all coal produced. When I say "all coal produced" I include the coal used by the company itself. If coal is to be used to fire the engine that pulls the coal trucks along the railway line from the field to the port, then the company should be required to pay royalty on that coal. If coal is to be used for the generation of electricity, royalties should be paid on that, too. One does not need a very vivid imagination to have some idea of the amount of coal needed to run the railway if the coal is to be hauled by steam power. The amount of coal required for the running of a plant to generate electricity can also be realised. I do not see why the company should get that coal for nothing, nor do I see why there

should be a reduction of 3d. a ton for the second million tons. I think that the rate of royalty should be the same as on the first million. Small colliery-proprietors in Queensland have to pay 6d. a ton for every ton won from the earth. Why should a large, wealthy foreign company, if one likes to call it that, be given the privilege of paying only half that amount?

In addition to paying royalties, many coal companies have to pay further amounts on way-leave; so much a ton has to be paid to cart coal over properties belonging to other people. I cannot see any way in which this company will be asked to pay way-leave.

I suggest that some of this money collected in royalties should be earmarked for the development of the coal-mining industry in Queensland, to help the laboratories set up in Ipswich, to help train people to be efficient coal mine managers and administrators, and perhaps to assist in financing the miners' pension and long-service leave schemes. I make that suggestion quite deliberately.

What will be the position if and when the Japanese trade peters out? We may get assurances that that will never happen, but what is to happen if it does, or if the amount of coal taken decreases? We have to realise that there will be very strong competition from not only New South Wales, particularly the southern district, but also America and perhaps Mainland China. These Japanese firms are not going to buy coal from Queensland just to suit Queenslanders, or the convenience of Thiess Peabody Coal Pty. Ltd. Whilst Peabody is spending a great amount of capital in Queensland, it will not allow its investment here to interfere with the success of its interests in the United States.

Until the railway is built, this company has to produce half a million tons of coal a year. When the railway is completed, it is obliged to produce 2,000,000 tons of coal a year, and that amount will be produced with very few employees. I ask hon. members to compare that figure with Queensland's coal production at present. Last year the figure for Queensland was 2,754,192 tons. To produce that coal, almost 3,000 coal-mine workers—not miners only—were required. This company can produce almost all the coal requirements of Queensland, plus some for export, with very few men. I think it will be agreed that I make no fantastic claim when I say that this is a serious threat to the coal-mining industry in Queensland, and something that cannot be lightly waved aside. We must in some way make provision for such an eventuality.

Let me say again that over the years the coal-mining industry has given excellent service to the development of Queensland and its secondary industries. A tremendous amount of money has been spent in the

industry, and there has been a revolution in the methods of winning coal in Queensland, just as there has been in every other coal-producing country in the world. Methods that were followed even as recently as 10 years ago have been found now to be unsatisfactory. We have at present a machine capable of producing, with only seven men, 900 tons of coal a day.

Miners' long-service leave, and particularly the miners' pension fund, must be given consideration in this debate. Those things are closely related to this matter because the finance necessary to keep the pension and long-service leave funds going has to come from the production of coal. When the pensions scheme was first introduced in New South Wales, Queensland, and the other Australian States, the employers' contribution was based on tonnage, and they were charged so much for each ton of coal produced. This means of financing it proved satisfactory for a time. However, as a result of action taken by certain colliery-proprietors on the northern coalfields of New South Wales, whose total output was sent to Victoria and South Australia, it was revealed that under the Commonwealth Constitution it was not competent for a State to levy excise duty on coal exported out of the State. The Government of New South Wales was compelled to amend its Act, and the Government of Queensland followed suit. The employers' contribution is now based on $4\frac{1}{2}$ times the contribution of the employees. If we have a company producing 2,000,000 tons of coal a year with very few men, the pensions scheme will not receive much assistance from it. This could cause the collapse of the pensions scheme, and I do not think that anybody wants to see that happen. If my memory is correct, the pension payable at the moment is £6 7s. 6d. a week for a miner, and the allowance for a wife brings it up to £12 or a little more.

I do not suggest that the open-cut method of mining should be eliminated. Recently I heard two men prominent in the coal-mining industry speaking on this subject. One said that he would rather work in an open-cut than underground. The other, who had seen the open-cut at Moura, said that he would rather work underground than work in that open-cut. Let me repeat what has been said before: if the energy that is obtained from coal could be won from any other source, thus eliminating the need for people to work underground, it would be a blessing for all concerned.

In its Fifth Annual Report, the Joint Coal Board had this to say—

"Such a policy accords with the Board's original concept that the open-cuts were designed to operate as a fluctuating fringe on the margin of the underground industry. This was stated in paragraph 34 of the Board's first report and the point was reaffirmed in paragraph 155 of its fourth report as follows—

"In addition to these considerations account must be taken of the fact that in order to provide both proprietors and employees with a sense of security the Board has given the industry an undertaking that the development of open-cuts will not prejudice the future of underground mines.

"This undertaking has been given verbally on many occasions. The Board now reaffirms this undertaking."

I do not think that the Queensland Coal Board has given such an undertaking. However, particularly because of the interest that the present Minister for Mines has taken in the coal-mining industry and those engaged in it, the Board has protected the industry, and I should like to see a provision similar to that incorporated in the Bill to enable the Board to protect the Queensland coal-mining industry against any action this company, or any other company, might take.

I should like the Minister to inform the House how much coal will be left in the seam after the company has exploited it. I ask this because the seam dips 4 in 1 and the overburden is almost 5 to 1—in fact, the Minister told us that it is more than 5 to 1. Therefore, a large proportion of the seam will not lend itself to open-cut methods. If the floor is to be on coal, what thickness of coal will be left in the seam that is being worked at present? I ask that question because this is very valuable coal, coal that we have nowhere else in the State. If the present method is used and coal is left in the seam, something should be done to ensure that it is eventually used. I do not know why the company wants to have a coal floor. Is the floor to be 1 foot or 2 feet of excellent coking coal? No doubt the company has a reason for it, and its action may be justified from its own point of view. Perhaps the working of the coal will be easier. But will this interfere with the efficient working of the remainder of the seam by underground methods? How much of the coal will have to be left underground and be of no value? If the Minister can give the House an assurance on that, I shall be very happy.

I think all hon. members should, and can, approve of the amendment that the Minister forecast yesterday relating to Crown land. He assured us that it will improve the agreement, and I think that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Lloyd, should be thanked for bringing it under the Minister's notice.

This is the opinion of the Queensland Colliery Employees' Union—I shall not read all of it as I have not time:—

"We also desire to draw the attention of this Congress to the fact that the Queensland Liberal-Country Party Government have literally handed over to American and Japanese monopoly interests the rich Kianga-Moura coalfield and the full exploitation of this particular field will

most assuredly have severe repercussions on the Queensland Mining Industry generally.

"We declare that this rich metallurgic coking coal should have been exploited on a nationalised basis, providing a nationalised Queensland Steel Industry with the necessary coking coal for the production of steel, thus ensuring that these rich deposits would have been utilised in the interests of the Queensland people and not in the interests of American and Japanese monopoly.

"We declare our intention to resist any encroachment into the domestic coal market of this State by this monopoly group, with the inevitable severe repercussion . . ."

(Time expired.)

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (12.7 p.m.): The Opposition has already indicated that it fosters any move that will lead to progress in the development of this State. Indeed, it supports any feature of Government policy that will benefit the State and its people. As members of the Opposition, we would be greatly remiss if we did not fully examine such an important document as that now being debated, look into it thoroughly and see that not only will the State derive the greatest benefit from it but also that the people of the State—and the workers particularly—will gain in some material way from the export of a product.

Like the hon. member for Ipswich East, who has just resumed his seat, I feel that the matter of royalties should be examined very closely because, after all, there is an obligation on the Minister administering this department to see that he obtains the greatest amount of revenue he can from the industry without detriment to the marketing of the product. It is envisaged that the production figure of 2,000,000 tons of coal annually will be attained, and on it a royalty has been set of 6d. a ton for the first 1,000,000 tons and 3d. a ton thereafter. That works out to a revenue to the Government of £25,000 annually for the first 1,000,000 tons and £12,500 for the second 1,000,000 tons. For a total of 2,000,000 tons the small sum of £37,500 will be received by the Government in royalty. Speaking purely from the point of view of royalty, it would seem that on a production of 2,000,000 tons the Government will be handed peanuts by Peabody.

Mr. Ramsden interjected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I do not need to be assisted. Unlike the hon. member for Merthyr—

Mr. Thackeray: He is only a mug over there.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Rockhampton North passed an unparliamentary remark which I ask him to withdraw.

Mr. Thackeray: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will withdraw the remark.

Mr. Thackeray: I withdraw it. Why don't you apply the same restraint to the member for Townsville South when he calls us mugs?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Rockhampton North persists in arguing with the Chair. I warn him that if he interrupts once more I shall suspend him.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Unlike the hon. member for Merthyr, I consider it somewhat fantastic that for a production of some 2,000,000 tons of coal this Government will receive only £37,500 annually. Both by interjection and in his second-reading speech the Minister has said that these are better figures than those in previous agreements under Labour Governments. That argument is answered by referring to the inflation that has occurred since those agreements were enacted by Labour Governments. On many occasions recently the Premier has indicated that the discovery of oil in Queensland could be of great advantage to the State's revenue. No doubt he would be referring in the first instance to royalties. I do not think that the Minister has obtained a very favourable deal in the royalties that will be payable on the coal that is produced and exported overseas.

Mr. Evans: Your other agreement never came to fruition.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Maybe not.

Mr. Evans: You do not want to hunt them out, do you?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Not for one moment. We have already indicated that we welcome any measure which, in the first instance, will provide employment for Queenslanders. That is an essential. We welcome this scheme. Do not let us get back into the old political clap-trap about Opposition members being knockers. We welcome this because most of us have sprung from the industrial trade-union movement. We realise that any scheme that provides employment helps the State from the purely humane angle.

Mr. Evans: That is where I came from, too.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That is all right, but the Minister has got a long way from it.

Mr. Evans: I am always looking after the little people.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The Minister might be egotistical enough to believe that.

Mr. Evans: I will prove it to you when I speak.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That is all right, but that will be only the Minister's say-so. He should not forget that I recently made

a visit to Sarina. I do not think all the little people in the hon. gentleman's electorate are entirely satisfied that he represents the little people. Rather, I think they feel that he does little for the people. However, I am not going to be side-tracked by the Minister. Although I may be somewhat young in experience I am not going to be side-tracked by his political tricks. I rose to speak for a definite purpose.

The Bill introduces the principle that the company will be given the same powers as the Commissioner for Railways for the operation of the private railway line. The company shall have the right to make its own By-laws and such necessary rules and regulations for the operation of the line. I am not going to canvas the merits or demerits of private railway lines, but there is a feeling abroad in the minds of those interested in railways that there is always a certain amount of risk involved in capital expenditure on railway lines to mining towns. There is always some uncertainty whether the line in the future will be an economic proposition.

Although the principle is introduced to give the company the powers held by the Commissioner for Railways, there is no provision that the employees of the company will be employed at rates and conditions comparable with railway workers employed under the State Award. Already the company has indicated that its sole intention is to mine coal and make money. The Minister has said that rates and conditions are matters for the industrial trade unions, the Industrial Commission, and the machinery under the industrial laws. Because of the failure of the Minister to include an industrial clause providing that, as the company has the same power as the Commissioner for Railways, its employees must be engaged on terms comparable with those provided in the Railway Award—State, the company will take advantage of the position to implement the Federal Award. It will take advantage of employing workers under an Award that may give them the lowest possible rates and the worst conditions. Already, I know, in discussions trade-union leaders have had with the Minister for Transport they have expounded the view that, because these employees will be essentially railway workers, they are determined to see that they will be engaged under the Railway Award—State. But the unions cannot get any assurance on the matter. I hazard the guess that the company will attempt to have the Federal Award applied to employees operating the railway line. I say quite confidently that the railway unions of this State would not touch the Federal Award with a 40-ft. pole. We have seen in recent days the chaos that has resulted from the conditions imposed on the railways of other States by some of the provisions of the Federal Award. I can foresee that, unless some undertaking is given by the company, unless the Minister ensures by an amendment to the Bill that the company shall be obliged to give its employees conditions comparable with those under the

State Award, there could well be industrial disturbances when this railway comes into operation. Although the Minister might want to dismiss the matter lightly and say it is entirely a matter for the Court and the unions to decide, I think it is in the interests of the people of the State that we have it clarified. If he wants to live up to the image that he represents the little people, let him ensure that the employees on the railway will enjoy the conditions enjoyed by the railway workers of Queensland generally. I do not for a moment concede that the State Railway Awards are entirely satisfactory to the railway men but at least conditions under them are far better than those under the Federal Award.

The Bill provides that the company may construct, use and employ on the railway locomotive engines or other motive power, and rolling-stock to be drawn and propelled thereby, and also machinery, appliances and plant of every kind, and may use for the operation thereof any kind of fuel. Again the Minister has been remiss because no obligation is imposed on the company to purchase one item of its equipment in Queensland, or indeed in Australia. We have witnessed and heard a concentrated campaign over the television and radio stations to "be Australian and buy Australian." If I might digress for a moment, I point out how completely farcial this campaign is when one hears on a local television station an American voice advising listeners to be Australian and buy Australian. Perhaps that does not relate directly to the Bill, but I thought this an opportune moment to draw the attention of the public to an entirely farcial situation.

As I say, there is no obligation on the company to purchase one part of its rolling-stock, its locomotive power and so on, from any company in Queensland.

Mr. Hughes: Don't you think price and service will dictate that?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: If the hon. member thinks anything, let him get up and speak instead of interrupting me.

Mr. Hughes: I thought it was only your ears flapping.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Those Government members who always make their speeches by way of interjection are a source of amusement to me. This is an important Bill and at least my contribution is very much more helpful than the silence of hon. members opposite. I was speaking of the obligation that should be imposed on the company to purchase equipment in Queensland. Let us approach it from the angle that we could tie in the construction of rolling stock—of coal-wagons and so on—with our own existing railway workshops. No doubt a considerable amount will be spent by the company in acquiring rolling-stock to operate this line. If we are to assist the railways in Queensland, why could not that rolling-stock be produced in our

own railway workshops? If the Government is frightened that this may seem a socialistic attitude, we have in Brisbane excellent engineering workshops that have been constructing rolling-stock for a number of years. Why could not the Minister have insisted that these vehicles be constructed in some of them?

Mr. Hughes interjected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I have just heard a barely intelligible interjection from the hon. member for Kurilpa concerning nationalisation and common sense.

Mr. Hughes: We do not nationalise industries. We leave the matter to common sense.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The hon. member refers to nationalisation. I feel that if his common sense were nationalised, the net result would be absolutely nothing.

If the Government felt that it could not, in all conscience, give this work to local firms and insist that this rolling-stock be built in Queensland, it could have been shared equally between the railway workshops and those companies that construct this type of wagon.

This argument can be carried further. What will happen when this rolling-stock requires maintenance? The company has a franchise of some 41 or 42 years, and in the foreseeable future quite a considerable amount of maintenance will have to be carried out. I feel that the Minister could have secured some of that work for our railway workshops. Following the inquiry by Messrs. Ford, Bacon and Davis, work has been restricted in our workshops. I am not suggesting for a moment that the maintenance of this rolling-stock will assist these workshops in the near future, but if they were engaged in the construction of the rolling-stock in the first instance, that would assist them till maintenance work became available.

I feel that the Minister could well look at the points that I have mentioned, particularly the protection of railway workers employed on this line and the provision for them of State Award conditions, and the placing of some obligation on the company to purchase some of its machinery in this State. That is quite a sensible and reasonable suggestion because, after all, as I said at the outset, if we are to get any benefit from this agreement it must be firstly by royalties, and secondly by development in the State and the prosperity that that brings. Thirdly, we must extract from the company as much local employment as we can so that workers in this State will not be subjected to periods of unemployment.

I hope that the Minister in his reply will give some thought to, and acknowledgment of, the arguments that I have advanced.

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity) (12.30 p.m.), in reply: I thank

the House for the way in which the Bill has been received. I shall reply to the various queries that were brought forward.

I should like to reply first to the hon. member who has just resumed his seat. I want to inform him that at this moment a coal-washing plant costing £650,000 ordered by Thiess-Peabody Coal Pty. Ltd. is being built at Scotts of Ipswich. Thiess Bros. is a Queensland company, and Peabody is a company that has, from reports that we have received, a very good reputation as an employer. I should say that hardly a man working for Thiess Peabody Coal Pty. Ltd. is not getting over the Award rate. I admit that, owing to trying to hold and fill these orders, some of the conditions are not as good as I should like them to be.

Mr. Newton: I am pleased you said that.

Mr. EVANS: Dealing with housing, I visualise big towns at Moura and Kianga.

Mr. Sherrington: You would agree that the railway employees should at least have the same conditions as employees in the Government railways?

Mr. EVANS: Of course they should, and I am satisfied that their unions will see that they get them. The Government is not a low-wage Government. We will give them any support that we can.

Mr. Davies: The production of coal will not create a town. There will be no employment for them in other industries.

Mr. EVANS: The production of coal will create a town. I think the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Ipswich East will agree with me when I say that, with the steep dip in the coal seam and the hard sandstone overburden, it will not be very long before this is an underground mine. With 2,000,000 tons of coal taken out, it will become an underground mine.

Mr. Davies: It will be several years.

Mr. EVANS: I do not think it will be very long. It is very steep. When I bring down a Bill, I make a practice—I did it before introducing the agreement with Comalco at Weipa—of having a look at the area and getting a clear picture of what I am trying to do. My first objective is to provide employment. There has been much talk about royalties, but it is easy to kill the goose that lays the golden egg. Some years ago the then Premier, for whom I had a very high regard, brought before the House an agreement between his government and the Electric Supply Corporation (Overseas) Limited in an endeavour to assist the company by reducing royalties from 6d. to 3d. and 1d.

Mr. Hanlon: That was to make it the same average as applied in other States.

Mr. EVANS: He did it to try to make it "gee".

Mr. Hanlon: How do your royalties compare with the royalties in other States?

Mr. EVANS: Our royalties are higher than those in the Electric Supply Corporation agreement.

Mr. Hanlon: But what about the royalties in other States?

Mr. EVANS: I have not inquired about royalties in other States. We have to fix the royalties according to conditions. No coal mining company in another State has laid a railway line over 100 miles long. I know what it costs to lay railway lines. I was chairman of a sugar milling company that had to build a line, and so I know the cost, the amortisation, and the overhead. I want this to "gee", and I have included very onerous conditions. In the case of the Electric Supply Corporation (Overseas) Limited there was no paid-up capital. The Thiess-Peabody company has to have a paid-up capital of £2,000,000 and a nominal capital of £8,000,000.

Mr. Hanlon: That is not as strict as it looks. A couple of years ago Latec could have complied with those requirements, so it does not mean very much.

Mr. EVANS: The company has to put in a guarantee of £100,000, not a bond, and it is tied hand and foot. It must build the line. The schedule goes even further. It says that if the company does not do this it goes back to the Coal Mining Act, and it will go broke if it goes back to that Act.

Mr. Newton: Firms of that type would take the risk in any case.

Mr. EVANS: The hon. member knows that it will not go back, and I have made sure that it will build the line. The royalty is chicken feed. I am worried more about getting coking coal, getting steel works, getting coal exports, and providing employment. I have not thought of the company, and never has a Bill been put through the House in which there was such tight financial control as there is in this Bill.

Mr. Davies: Companies such as Peabodys expect hard bargaining.

Mr. EVANS: We did bargain hard.

The hon. member for Ipswich East, who was very fair, read the whole of the clause relating to local supply, and there has been a good deal of talk about this subject. It was never the Government's intention to allow competition, and I do not think it would be the intention of the A.L.P. to allow competition if it became the Government—I do not think it will. This is the only coking coal in Queensland that is suitable for steel works. I cannot sell a ton of coke from Collinsville. I cannot sell a ton of coal

from Collinsville overseas because of the sulphur content. Hon. members opposite have been blowing a lot of hot air about steel works. It is not possible to build steel works unless you have supplies of iron ore and coking coal. I have expressed my views about iron ore and what action I will take if I am Minister for Mines. I want to see Queensland go ahead. I was born and reared here. Queensland has been good to me, although I have helped myself to a certain extent, and I want to go out leaving behind me footprints in the sands of time in the form of industries that have been established through my efforts and the efforts of this Parliament. I have really done something towards achieving that, and the company can look after itself. I say here, as I say everywhere, that since I have been a Minister I have had a great deal to do with Communists, people for whom I have no time. I have had much to do with vested interests, also, and there is not much difference between them. I say that everywhere, but the people about whom I am concerned are the little people, the people who work, the people who produce. They want protection.

Mr. Davies: We do not expect you to speak so harshly about the Liberal Party.

Mr. EVANS: I am not talking about the Liberal Party. I get on well with the Liberal Party, but vested interests are different from the people who sit with me.

Mr. Hanlon: You don't get on too well with some of them.

Mr. EVANS: I get on better with them than the hon. member gets on with his Leader. His party is split to ribbons, and he knows it.

The Leader of the Opposition said he would beg, borrow, or steal—those were his words—to build a powerhouse in Central Queensland. Does he read the newspapers? Obviously he does not, because it is stated here that a powerhouse will be operating at Callide in 1965. Tenders have been called.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. EVANS: He was not doing anything of the sort. Hon. members opposite were over here for 25 years and they did nothing. They sat down in Brisbane and thought only about Brisbane. They never went outside of Brisbane. We have gone to Weipa and all over Queensland. We found oil—

Mr. Newton: When did you find oil?

Mr. EVANS: We gave the incentive. In the last year before I took office £300,000 was spent. Because of an amendment to the Act and the incentive offered by this Government, £7,500,000 is being spent this year. We found oil. Hon. members opposite did not care about it and did not know where to start.

The Leader of the Opposition tells us that he will beg, borrow, or steal. He does not need to beg, borrow, or steal. He will not be in office to do so, but we have arranged finance for a powerhouse at Callide and we are calling tenders for the dam that is so very necessary for a big powerhouse. We are negotiating at the present time with the Commissioner for Electricity Supply, Kaisers, Rio Tinto, and Comalco and, if we can get some finality we are prepared to go ahead and build a big power station. We have started it. There is no need to beg, borrow, or steal; it is done. He said he went around Queensland. He must have been mentally affected if he went through Queensland talking that way.

Mr. Davies: The little praise we gave you has spoilt you.

Mr. EVANS: I do not want praise and I stand by what I did. Hon. members opposite talk about labour conditions. They have talked about how afraid they are of what might happen to the workers. They were not very afraid—I am excluding some of them because they were not in the House—of what happened to those seven widows at Collinsville when their husbands were killed, and the Pensions Act debarred them from drawing the miners' pension. They did not draw it until this Government took over and amended the Act. The hon. member for Ipswich East, whom I have always found to be a gentleman, supported us. I discussed it with him before I brought the Bill down. We put those women, and others who were unfortunate enough to lose their husbands, in the position of drawing pensions by making workers' compensation and miners' pensions separate units, whereas hon. members opposite robbed them for years. They cannot deny that.

Mr. Hanlon: We give you credit for that, but that does not give you licence to rob anybody else.

Mr. EVANS: I am not robbing anybody. Everything I have done in this Bill I stand by. Firstly, I am protecting the State, and secondly, it is in the minds of the Government that we will provide a big export market and cheap coking coal for steel works at a price that will be fixed by the Coal Board. Do not hon. members opposite want a steel works? We are 18 months behind in steel deliveries in Australia. We are manufacturing the cheapest steel in the world, and if these iron-ore deposits are not developed we might have to bring in outside capital to develop them because it will take an enormous amount of money. What is the good of talking about potential or building up overseas trade? It is a matter of finance and logic and facts. It is the way we live and act and what we do for our State that counts. It is not a matter of my being a member of the Country

Party and hon. members opposite being members of the Labour Party. That is nothing. I could say, "I am a doctor." But I am not; I was an ordinary cane-cutter, and later a sugar-farmer. I am still friendly with the people I grew up with. I have wanted to do something, and I have done something for the people I represent. I have provided employment. I believe in good conditions. I was chairman of a sugar-mill for 23 years. The little juice boy could come and see me. He could get protection from me. That is the way it should be.

Mr. Dufficy: He who protesteth too much!

Mr. EVANS: I do not want any "bull" from the hon. member. People who know me know that I am fair. That is why they vote for me. The hon. member for Salisbury talked about what people said at Sarina. I got a majority at Sarina. I beat his party's representative. I get a majority in every polling booth in my electorate. I get it because I am fair, because I look after everybody, because my services are available both to the rich and to the poor—more so to the poor.

This Bill is a very good one. Some people have said that we should work the field ourselves. Let us look at what happens when you do. Hon. members opposite set a great example! At Warra they showed a loss of £38,000; at Styx No. 2, a loss of £71,000; at Baralaba, a loss of £58,000; at Mt. Mulligan, a loss of £711,000; at Ogmore, a loss of £397,000. Now I come to Collinsville. Hon. members opposite said that I should go up there and re-engage those Communists who were wrecking Queensland and imposing the darg all the time they were there. They attacked me here because we sold the mine. Collinsville showed a loss of £943,000. The previous Government's total losses on State coal-mining enterprises was £2,218,000. Ogmore showed a loss of £397,000. Last year we made a profit of £6,722 at Ogmore. The State Coke Works always showed a loss in the past, but last year we made a profit of £12,043. The people who work there invite me to many of their functions so that we can meet and talk. They pleaded with me when the Communists broke up Collinsville not to bring any of the Communists to Ogmore. That is what I have done for the coal-mining industry.

When I first took over my portfolio I did not know very much about coal-mining. I did not know a great deal about the set-up of the coal-mining industry but I listened to people. I talked to the hon. member for Ipswich East on many occasions. I still do now. I regard him as a friend of mine, although we differ politically. A move was made to create district boards. I held the movers off. I said, "No, I want to have a look at this. I am not going to let you do this until I am sure it is the right thing."

Did I allow them to create district boards? Of course not. We have the Coal Board. I appointed a consultative committee on which I allowed the unions to have a representative. I allowed the coal-owners to have a representative and I allowed the consumers to have a representative. If anyone had any grievance affecting the unions, the coal-owners or the consumers they had the right to come to me. Since that committee was formed I have never had one of them come to me. The system has worked splendidly. I will not be here always; I will not be here much longer. Whoever does take over should never get rid of the Coal Board. There must be a Coal Board. There would be chaos if the Coal Board was dispensed with. My Government is unanimously with me on this. I never have a recommendation knocked back. Are there any alterations in the Bill? Not one.

Mr. Davies: You had a fight over the Coal Board set-up.

Mr. EVANS: There was no resolution moved against me.

The amendment I intend to move in Committee adequately covers the position concerning Crown land. I think that was accepted by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. For quite a while I was not happy about that matter. I discussed it with the Parliamentary Draftsman and officers of the Crown Law Office because we wanted to give every protection to the people whose property will be affected. The hon. member for Mackenzie also made requests to me. I want to tell hon. members—and I want them to listen to this—the powerline is not going through properties from Kianga to Moura. Agreement has been reached in the matter. I suggested it and I am very happy about it. Agreement has been reached that it shall go along the road. It is to be built by the Capricornia Regional Electricity Board and the dragline for many years will go from one mine to the other along the road. It will not go through properties. However, when properties are affected, the Mining Act gives every protection as to compensation. The matter of resumptions for the railway line brings in the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works and even comes down to the Land Court.

I feel that the Bill is a good one. I do not mind hon. members opposite putting up their proposals and submissions. However, the hon. member for Ipswich East said he was doubtful about how the company could build the line while, on the other hand, the hon. member for Salisbury said we should get more royalty. The hon. member for Salisbury spoke of what could happen to the market. I say very definitely that Thiess Peabody Coal Pty. Ltd. is a very bold company to enter into an agreement

committing itself to such an expenditure. It has spent £400,000 in borings to test the field. It has to find a paid-up capital of £2,000,000 and a nominal capital of £8,000,000, with a further £2,000,000 by 1963. It has to put up in cash or bank guarantee—no bonds—£100,000. If the survey is not done it loses £20,000 and if the line is not built it loses the other £80,000; the money goes into Consolidated Revenue. No other agreement has ever had such stipulations. Further, it reverts to the operations of the Coal Mining Act. That puts the control under the Coal Mining Act—of so many men to so many acres. And no company can exist under the Coal Mining Act with the big area it would have to hold.

It was said that we froze the area. I have dealt with that. I froze the area because so many speculators and snipers and go-getters were trying to get in on it. I want it developed. It was my duty to protect the people who discovered the field. I want to see the line built. I want to see the coal being exported. I want to have coal for a steel works and other things that coking coal is necessary for, so that we will not affect other mines supplying coal. I am very definite on that.

Mr. Davies: You said you have the coking coal and you have plenty of iron ore. Why don't you get on with the steel works?

Mr. EVANS: We cannot get on with everything at once. We have not money to burn. It is like Comalco. Comalco started in Weipa. It was required to spend £1,500,000 by a given time but already it has spent more than is required up to 1975. We can talk about millions but when the money has to be found, it is a horse of a different colour. The Leader of the Opposition told the House that to build a steel works would cost about £100,000,000. We have to get companies and people with financial strength and we have to get them from outside the State. It was like boring for oil. I have no interest in it now—I immediately resigned when I took this portfolio—but I remember when I was chairman of a syndicate. If we had endeavoured to float a company we could not have got £30,000 but, by amending the Act, we got in the capital and the people with know-how. Look at the thousands of pounds, the fortunes, people have made out of floating companies since oil was found at Moonie! It was done only by bringing capital in. The only way to find oil is to bore holes. I know hon. members will admit that a good job has been done in prospecting. £7,500,000 is a lot of money to spend on the search for oil.

Mr. Davies: It is not enough.

Mr. EVANS: The hon. member's Government attracted only £300,000 so we have improved on its performance by £7,200,000. That is rather a good performance. People were interested in those days but the Government failed them.

With the provisions we have in this Bill we cannot fail because the company has put so much in. It is so tied up that it must go ahead, and we must hold that market. I would say that Thiess Peabody is scratching to pay its way at present. As the hon. member for Port Curtis knows, the harbour board is not getting what it is entitled to because it has cut the price to help the company hold the export market. That is a fact, is it not?

Mr. Burrows: Yes.

Mr. EVANS: There is no doubt about that. The building of this line will put us in a position in which we should be able to compete with any coal-producing country in the world.

Mr. Davies: Is Peabody associated with the Peabody company in the United States?

Mr. EVANS: Yes, it is a subsidiary. This is Thiess Peabody, but it has the backing of the major Peabody company that sells 30,000,000 tons of coal a year in various parts of the world.

Mr. Davies: It is one of the wealthiest companies in the United States and would not go broke.

Mr. EVANS: That is all that I have to say on the Bill. I would have liked to deal more fully with it, but time is running out.

Mr. Davies: How many men do you expect will be working on the two fields whilst the open-cut is being worked?

Mr. EVANS: Within 18 months there will be 500 to 600 men employed on the field and on the construction of the railway line.

Mr. Davies: Will there be about 30 or 40 men on the field?

Mr. EVANS: No, I think there will be more. That material has to be replaced. It is not an ordinary open-cut. Comparisons have been made with Blair Athol. I have seen 6,000 tons of coal shot down with one shot, but nothing like that can be done at Kianga and Moura. Blair Athol has a good surface and over-burden is easily taken off, but there is a very, very hard cross-grain sandstone at Kianga and Moura. I think that the hon. member for Ipswich East will agree that that sandstone makes a splendid cover top. I feel that it will not be many years before it will be an underground mine.

Motion (Mr. Evans) agreed to.

The House adjourned at 12.57 p.m.