Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 4 MARCH 1964

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(2) As the vacancies referred to are widely spread and extend to places such as Thallon, Quilpie and Cheepie, should an employee be unsuccessful in being appointed to a position which suits his convenience better than many of the places named, and for health and domestic reasons is prevented from accepting appointments in remote areas, will he not be automatically dismissed?

(3) Does not the circular referred to in Question (1) differ from previous circulars, when branch lines were closed, inasmuch as employees were not dismissed, but were held until such time as they could be satisfactorily absorbed?

(4) In view of the long service of several employees concerned, is not such action merely a scientific way of dismissing men, who have the right to expect more sympathetic treatment from the Department?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) "In replying to this Question, I regret that it is necessary to inform this House that by sheer distortion of a circular letter which was issued to certain railway employees, the Leader of the Opposition has endeavoured, for political expediency, to create in the minds of railway employees generally as well as the public, a completely false impression, and one which, if not corrected, could cause considerable worry and serious distress to certain railway employees, their wives and families. In allegedly seeking information which I contend the circular letter adequately conveys, the Honourable Member has used only two paragraphs from such letter, and then proceeds to draw his own conclusions. For the information of this House, I now give the full text of the circular letter which was sent by the General Manager, Toowoomba, to members of fettling gangs on sections of railway being closed on April 30, 1964. It is as follows:—

'With reference to the closure on April 30, 1964, of the branch line on which you are at present working, it is desired to advise that as it will no longer be possible to continue you in employment in your present position, it will be necessary, therefore, to terminate your services as from completion of duty on April 30, 1964. If, however, you wish to accept a transfer to another position, it will be necessary for you to apply for and receive an appointment to an existing vacancy prior to the date mentioned. Attached, hereto, is a list of vacancies for fettlers and gangers in this Division at the present time and, if you wish to continue in employment with this Department, it is desired that you submit applications for any positions you consider suitable, stating the order of preference in regard to the position for which you apply. You may also apply for positions in

WEDNESDAY, 4 MARCH, 1964

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

QUESTIONS

EMPLOYEES RENDERED SURPLUS BY CLOSURE OF RAILWAY BRANCH LINES.—Mr. Duggan, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) In view of his forthright declaration that no person employed on the branch lines, which are shortly to be closed by the Railway Department, will be dismissed, has not a circular been forwarded to several employees under date February 27, 1964, which said, *inter alia*—"It is desired to advise that as it will no longer be possible to continue you in employment in your present position, it will be necessary, therefore, to terminate your services as from completion of duty as from April 30, 1964"; additionally, a further paragraph states "If, however, you wish to accept a transfer to another position, it will be necessary for you to apply for and receive an appointment to an existing vacancy prior to the date mentioned."?

other divisions as they are advertised from time to time in the *Weekly Notice*. Please acknowledge and advise your future intention in regard to this matter.'

It will be noted from the complete letter forwarded to the men that they have been offered continuity of employment with the Department and have been furnished with a list of vacancies for which they have been requested to submit applications in order of preference. There is no desire to terminate the services of these men and the General Manager, Toowoomba, has advised that he does not anticipate having any difficulty in placing all of the men who will be displaced from these closed branch lines, which is in keeping with that portion of my Press statement on February 18, 1964, reading as follows:—

'The Minister stated that there would be no dismissals of permanent staff. Some employees would have to be offered alternative employment for a period, but every possible effort would be made to enable employees surplus to be transferred to areas where equivalent employment would be available.' "

Mr. DUGGAN: I rise to a point of order. The Minister stated in his reply to my question that I have been guilty of improper motives. He said that I had seriously distorted the circular referred to, and that in quoting from it I had conveyed a completely false impression of its contents. The facts are that I included in my question the relevant paragraph, which indicated the action necessary to apply for advertised vacancies. For the record, I wish to say that I have not been guilty of any distortion, nor have I been guilty of any improper motives in asking the question. I should like to add that the answer given by the Minister does not in any way refute the statements contained in my question.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I can assure the Leader of the Opposition that if, when I looked at his question, I had thought that it imputed improper motives, it would not have been allowed.

FEMALES SERVING LIQUOR ON LICENSED PREMISES.—Mr. Tucker, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Justice,—

(1) What is the minimum age at which females may be employed in serving liquor on licensed premises?

(2) On whom falls the responsibility of ensuring that under-age females are not so employed?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) " "*The Liquor Acts*, 1912 *to* 1961," do not prescribe any minimum age at which females may be employed in serving liquor on licensed premises. The matter of employment of females on licensed premises is, however, covered by various awards, both Federal and State, and I would therefore suggest that the Honourable Member might seek the information desired from the Honourable the Minister for Labour and Industry."

FLYING GANGS, NORMANTON-CROYDON RAILWAY.—Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

In view of two serious derailments in the past two months on the Normanton-Croydon railway and the fact that this 100 miles of track which is maintained by one gang of six men has been under water in several places for many weeks, will he consider employing two flying gangs on this line to put it in order as soon as possible?

Answer:—

"The two derailments referred to occurred, one at the 85½ Miles on December 19, 1963, and the other at 41¾ Miles on January 16, 1964, and were caused by a kink in a rail brought about by expansion which was the result of the hot weather being experienced and was therefore not related to any flood condition. The Normanton-Croydon railway is a light axle-load track and is inspected annually by a member of the Civil Engineering staff. The last inspection was made in May, 1963, and it is intended that the next inspection be held in April of this year following the termination of the wet season. The Department considers that the existing maintenance gang is quite capable of keeping the track safe for its limited operations. The only rolling stock employed on the Normanton railway comprises:—1 rail motor; 2 rail motor goods trailers; 1 covered 4-wheeled goods wagon; 1 8-wheeled platform wagon; 1 water gin. The rail motor is capable of hauling a gross load of 33 tons inclusive of the rail motor itself. The Normanton-Croydon railway was opened in 1891. For the period of 15 years after completion of the construction, i.e. until and including the year 1906-07, its earnings exceeded working expenses each year except during the year 1897-98, the net excess earnings over expenditure for that period having been £52,000. Since 1907-08 inclusive, the railway working expenses have consistently exceeded earnings, and the operating loss for the 15 years ended June, 1963, excluding interest, has been £66,198. For the year ended June 30, 1963, the total earnings of this railway were £5,713 and the working expenses £10,506, resulting in an excess of expenses over earnings of £4,793. However, recently Cabinet decided that this line should continue to remain open since under normal conditions it is making a worthwhile contribution towards the very difficult transport problems of the people it serves."

ORE-BUYING CENTRE AND ASSAY OFFICE, CAIRNS.—Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

In view of the increasing number of miners operating in Far North Queensland and the absence of a Government ore-buying centre or convenient assay office, will he consider the establishment of a Government ore-buying centre and assay office in Cairns?

Answer:—

"As all the major ore-buying companies have representatives in North Queensland the establishment of a Government ore-buying centre is not considered necessary. The Government Assay Office at Cloncurry is capable of assaying all samples submitted from far North Queensland and the number of samples submitted from the Cairns hinterland does not warrant the expense of establishing and maintaining a further assay office at Cairns."

PEDESTRIAN HAZARD AT BELMONT TRAM TERMINUS.—Mr. Newton, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

Has the planning yet been completed by his Department and the Brisbane City Council in relation to relieving the traffic and pedestrian hazard at the Belmont tram terminus and shopping centre, which is one of the highest accident spots on the South side?

Answer:—

"Planning for this project has not yet been completed. A supermarket, proposed in the locality, could affect any design for handling traffic movements. The plans for the supermarket layout have not yet been submitted."

SEWERING OF HOUSING COMMISSION PROJECTS.—Mr. Newton, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

In view of the Government's five-year plan, approved in 1960 to sewer Queensland Housing projects, have any plans yet been drawn up and submitted for consideration for the following projects in 1964-65, Mt. Gravatt East, Carina, Cavendish Road and Manly Road?

Answer:—

"No, with the exception of the Commission's new project at Wecker Road, Mount Gravatt East, in respect of which I advised the Honourable Member on 26th ultimo that discussions were currently proceeding with the Brisbane City Council. After the five-year plan for sewering certain Commission projects had been arranged, the Brisbane City Council, in 1961, suggested the provision of special finance to the Council for sewering of other areas, including Creek and Cavendish Roads, Mount Gravatt East. Agreement to this suggestion would have necessitated the deferment of some of the works in the approved five-year plan, and it was not considered desirable to do this. No proposals have been received from the Council in regard to the projects at Carina and Manly Road."

MOBILE CHEST X-RAY UNITS.—Mr. Newton, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) What is the number of mobile chest X-ray units operating in the State at present?

(2) What Electorates are still to be visited by such units (*a*) metropolitan, (*b*) provincial cities, and (*c*) country?

(3) Will the units be used continuously to visit all parts of the State again?

(4) What is the number of years anticipated between such visits?

Answers:—

(1) "Four mobile chest X-ray units are operating in the State at present."

(2) "(*a*) The electorates of Mount Coot-tha, Ashgrove, Ithaca, Baroona, Toowong, and all State electoral districts south of the Brisbane River are still to be done. It is anticipated it will take six months to complete these. (*b*) and (*c*) All the country, including provincial cities outside Brisbane, where it was possible to take the caravan has been done."

(3) "Yes."

(4) "The campaign was commenced in Cairns in November, 1959, and returned to Cairns in September, 1963, but with the experience gained this period should be reduced to approximately 3½ years in the future."

ROAD ACCIDENTS AND POLICE MOTOR CYCLE PATROLS.—Mr. Melloy, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Labour and Industry,—

(1) Is he aware of the widespread demand and need for additional police traffic patrols as expressed by police officials, the general public and Members of the Opposition as an urgent measure to halt and reduce the fast-increasing death toll on Queensland roads?

(2) Will he take immediate action to increase uniformed police motor cycle patrols by at least twenty-five units?

(3) Will he also consider the advisability of imposing more restrictive speed limits on heavy transports because such transports have been shown to have been involved in a large percentage of road accidents?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) "As has recently been announced, the Minister for Labour and Industry is conferring with the Minister

in charge of traffic, the Minister for Transport, and the Minister for Justice, with a view to making a report to Cabinet in June, concerning the very serious problem of the toll of the road. In the meantime, the Commissioner of Police has taken action to ensure the rigid enforcement of the Traffic Regulations."

(3) "To prescribe speed limits for particular classes of vehicles would, it is felt, rather than improve the situation, tend to aggravate it. On a busy highway, the packing up of traffic behind heavy vehicles is already a major traffic problem. The prescribing of reduced speeds for such vehicles could aggravate that packing up. When the Ministerial Conference, referred to above, is held, it will consider, amongst other aspects, means of keeping traffic more fluid, and thus lessening this packing up tendency. It is believed that rigid enforcement of the Traffic Regulations, as they stand, will result in a curtailment of accidents involving death and injury on roads, and this rigid enforcement has commenced and will be pursued in an endeavour to eliminate hazardous driving practices, not only by the drivers of heavy transports, but the drivers of vehicles generally."

ROCKLEA OVERPASS, IPSWICH ROAD.—Mr. Sherrington, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

In view of the opening in the near future of the market at Rocklea—

(1) Are there any plans in hand for the straightening of Ipswich Road and the elimination of the underpass at Rocklea adjacent to the intersection with Fairfield Road?

(2) If not, when will urgent consideration be given to eliminating this dangerous section of road?

Answer:—

"Preparation of plans for an overpass and necessary connections at this point are being prepared. However, as much detailed planning is involved it will be some time before they are likely to be finalised."

GLADSTONE WATER SUPPLY.—Mr. Hanson, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Local Government,—

In view of Cabinet Decision No. 5164 of May 7, 1963, and following a request by Comalco Pty. Ltd. for an investigation into augmenting Gladstone's water supply and as field surveys and investigations were not commenced until the end of October, 1963—

(1) What was the cause of delay in negotiations between the date of Cabinet's decision and the commencement of field operations?

(2) Will he see that in the negotiations at present being conducted between officers of his Department, Gladstone Town Council and Queensland Alumina representatives, his officers see that the rights of the ordinary ratepayer are preserved so that they will not be subjected to onerous financial responsibilities?

(3) In view of the heavy resumption cost involved, will he ensure that these resumptions be the financial responsibility of Queensland Alumina Company and not of the ratepayers of the Gladstone Town Council?

Answers:—

(1) "The period of time which has elapsed between Cabinet decision of May 7, 1963, and the commencement of field investigation in early August and not October as stated, cannot be deemed to constitute delay. My Department immediately following Cabinet decision caused enquiries to be made of the Company as to details of its requirements, all known available information on possible weir sites on the Boyne River and the Calliope River together with available records of stream flows were collected. The information obtained was examined and analysed."

(2 and 3) "I would inform the Honourable Member that the whole basis of discussions between officers of my Department and representatives of the Company has been to ensure that the ratepayers of Gladstone Town Council do not become committed to increased water charges on account of the proposed augmentation of the Gladstone Water Supply to meet the requirements of the Company."

"SUNDAY TRUTH" PHOTOGRAPHERS AT SCENES OF ACCIDENTS.—Mr. Bennett, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Labour and Industry,—

(1) Will he investigate the reasons why two-way radio cars carrying *Sunday Truth* photographers are very often able to arrive at the scene of accidents and other locations, requiring police attention, before the police themselves?

(2) During the course of his investigations, will he find out what contacts *Sunday Truth* has inside the Police Force to enable this to be done and whether *Truth's* radio transmitter and receiver can and do operate on the same frequency as the Police Department's transmitter?

(3) Will he consider what harm has been done by the taking of such photographs, bearing in mind the front page photographs appearing in a *Sunday Truth* of last year, showing a man clad in a small towel being ignominiously dragged before a *Truth* camera by Detective Glen Hallahan, and then not being charged with any offence whatsoever?

Answers:—

(1) "It is not considered that the fact that, on isolated occasions, *Sunday Truth* photographers have arrived at the scenes of accidents and other locations, at which matters requiring police attention have occurred, before police is one for investigation. After all, many people like to ring a friend in a newspaper, and there is no secrecy with broadcast matter. It is indeed broadcast. As a matter of fact, it does happen on occasions that quite a number of people not directly connected with accidents and crimes are at the scenes of those accidents or crimes, prior to the arrival of police."

(2) "There is no evidence forthcoming that officials of *Sunday Truth* newspaper contact other than prescribed officers within the Police Department for the purposes of obtaining items of news of public interest. If *Truth* newspaper has a suitable radio receiver, it could receive messages transmitted from the police wireless station, as indeed could any other person who is possessed of such a receiver. It is not an offence for a person to simply listen into a police radio broadcast. There is evidence that there are people who have radios and who are listening in to police broadcasts, and this matter has recently been referred to the Postmaster-General's Department, as it is an offence against the Broadcasting and Television Acts to divulge or make use of such information. It is understood that *Truth* newspaper operates a duly authorised transmitter, but that this transmitter does not operate on the same frequency as the Police Department's transmitter. Whether it can be made to so operate is not known to the Police Department."

(3) "I must confess that I prefer the police to do their necessary work without the doubtful assistance of flashlights and Press photographs. If a charge is to be subsequently laid, the unprejudiced atmosphere, which justice demands, could sometimes be jeopardised. However, this is a State which believes in freedom of the Press, and any question of restraining their judgment of suitable matter for publication is not one to be even considered, except in the face of most convincing evidence. I would not so regard the photograph referred to."

RESIGNATION OF SCHOOL TEACHERS.—Mr. Bromley, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) How many school teachers employed in (*a*) primary schools and (*b*) secondary schools have resigned from the Department this year?

(2) What were the reasons for their resignations and from where were the replacements, if any, recruited?

Answers:—

(1) "(*a*) 425 have resigned since December 13, 1963. Of these 298 have resigned since January 1, 1964; (*b*) 276 have resigned since December 13, 1963. Of these, 124 have resigned since January 1, 1964."

(2) "Reasons for resignation include marriage, family and personal reasons, overseas travel, to study full-time at the University, to enter religious orders, to undertake missionary work, leaving the State and other work. Replacements are recruited from graduates from Teachers' Colleges, and applicants for readmission."

BIBOOHRA–MOUNT MOLLOY ROAD.—Mr. Adair, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

As the unsealed section of the main road from Biboohra to Mount Molloy is in a bad condition and as road transport will now increase on this section due to the closure of the line, will he give early consideration to the bitumen-sealing of the unsealed section?

Answer:—

"Work is just starting on a scheme for the construction to bitumen surfacing of five miles of this road. Further schemes are programmed later."

RATIO OF COMPONENTS, CONCRETE BUILDING BLOCKS.—Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Labour and Industry,—

(1) Has the Government imposed any minimum ratio of dry cement to sand and/or gravel to be used in the manufacture of concrete building blocks and masonry and, if so, what is the ratio and what means are adopted to enforce it?

(2) Has his Department received complaints that a ratio of one part of cement to nine of sand is being used by some firms manufacturing concrete building blocks and masonry and, if so, what action, if any, was taken?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "Enquiries made from Departments, who might be concerned in this matter, reveal there is no knowledge of any such imposition, nor of the receipt of any complaints in regard thereto. If the Honourable Member cares to let me have more specific details, I shall be pleased to have further enquiries made."

ROSS RIVER AND TOWNSVILLE HIGH SCHOOLS.—Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) What is the estimated number of pupils who will be enrolled at the Ross River High School at the commencement of the 1965 school year?

(2) When is it anticipated that the present Townsville High School will cease to function as such and become solely a technical college?

Answers:—

(1) "It is estimated that there will be 530 Grade 8 and Sub-Junior students at the beginning of 1965. When the necessary accommodation is available, an additional 360 students will be transferred across from the High School and Technical College."

(2) "The Townsville Technical College will function as a separate institution when all high school students have been transferred to the new site."

PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT BY COUNTRY SCHOOL COMMITTEES.—Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education.—

Is it a fact that country school committees are not allowed to buy pianos, radiograms, tape-recorders and similar school equipment from local or district firms and are compelled to buy them through the State Stores Board? If so, is this not a negation of the Government's professed policy of decentralisation?

Answer:—

"The Department subsidises the purchase of radiograms, film projectors, tape recorders, pianos and other school equipment. In order to ensure a uniform standard throughout the schools and to simplify maintenance which is a departmental responsibility, the Department has standardised radiograms which are made specifically to an approved design adapted for classroom purposes. The normal practice in the purchase of pianos under subsidy is for the school to seek approval for a particular instrument, usually held by a local dealer or a private resident. After inspection by a Departmental officer and approval of the proposal, the school purchases the instrument and claims subsidy from the Department. Film projectors and tape recorders are purchased in quantity, through the State Stores Board, after thorough testing of the various models available in this country. The Departmental aim is to ensure the use of the equipment considered best suited to the needs of the schools and to make subsequent maintenance effective and economical."

SALE OF CIGARETTES TO CHILDREN.—Mr. Dean, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) In the proposed campaign to be waged against the habit of cigarette smoking among young people of school age, will consideration be given to restricting the sale of cigarettes to children under sixteen years of age?

(2) Will he give consideration to introducing legislation similar to the Canadian Tobacco Restraint Act, which makes it illegal for children under the age of sixteen years to buy or smoke tobacco?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "'*The Juvenile Smoking Suppression Act of* 1905," which is administered by the Department of Labour and Industry, prohibits any person selling, giving, or supplying cigarettes or tobacco in any form to any person under the age of sixteen years and prohibits any person under the age of sixteen years from smoking in a public place. There is, therefore, no need to introduce legislation for this purpose."

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

The Harbours Acts, 1955 to 1963.

The Stamp Acts, 1894 to 1963.

The Workers' Compensation Acts, 1916 to 1962.

Proposal by the Governor in Council to revoke the setting apart and declaration of certain lands as a State Forest.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Industrial Development): I move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Industrial Development Act of 1963, in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong—Minister for Industrial Development): I move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the State Electricity Commission Acts, 1937 to 1962, in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

PRISONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga—Minister for Health): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Prisons Act of 1958, in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

HOSPITALS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga—Minister for Health): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Hospitals Acts, 1936 to 1962, in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

PHYSIOTHERAPISTS BILL

INITIATION

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga—Minister for Health): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the practice of physiotherapy."

Motion agreed to.

NURSES BILL

INITIATION

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga—Minister for Health): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the nursing profession."

Motion agreed to.

CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING SOCIETIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Minister for Works and Housing): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Co-operative Housing Societies Acts, 1958 to 1962, in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

STATE HOUSING ACTS AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Minister for Works and Housing): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the State Housing Acts, 1945 to 1962, and the Workers' Homes Acts Reveal Acts, 1961 to 1962, each in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

MINES REGULATION BILL

THIRD READING

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

CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Hooper, Greenslopes, in the chair)

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (11.36 a.m.): I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend the Constitution of Queensland by further amending the Constitution Act Amendment Act of 1896, and the Officials in Parliament Acts, 1896 to 1963, each in certain particulars."

Possibly some hon. members in the Chamber might think from the title of this Bill that I am introducing this morning a major amendment to the Constitution of Queensland. The whole purpose of the Bill is to adjust Parliamentary salaries, and to do that it is necessary to amend the Constitution Act of 1896 and the Officials in Parliament Acts, 1896 to 1963.

In introducing this Bill I should like to recall to the minds of hon. members that parliamentary salaries were last adjusted by a Bill introduced by me on 17 March, 1961. That Bill was of particular interest in that it accorded with the Government's policy, as put before the electors in its policy speech for the 1960 general election, that the matter of the periodical review of parliamentary salaries should be investigated and reported upon by an independent tribunal.

The 1961 adjustment of parliamentary salaries was based upon an intensive and extensive review by an independent committee of inquiry chaired by Sir William Webb, a former Chief Justice of Queensland and judge of the High Court of Australia.

This Bill results from another review by another committee of inquiry, again chaired by Sir William Webb. This second committee again investigated, both extensively and intensively, the question it had to advise upon and, during the course of that inquiry, it heard 17 witnesses whereas the 1961 tribunal heard 18.

The second committee has adhered to the 1961 committee's view as expressed in their report, as follows—

"That the original and continuing purpose of the payment of members was to secure proper representation in Parliament for the working classes; but that this did not suggest that the salary of a member should be fixed at what would be a mere recompense for a worker leaving his job and losing his wages to represent his fellow-workers in Parliament: the salary should be such as to attract men with the capacity to become effective members of Parliament."

It is, I think, helpful to recall that when the 1961 committee reported, the relevant Constitution Acts provided separate categories of parliamentary salaries for Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition, officers in Parliament, and private members respectively. The 1961 committee recommended a basic salary for all members, whether Ministers, officers in Parliament, or private members.

It further recommended that, instead of separate salaries, Ministers, officers in Parliament, and one or two other members, whose parliamentary and official duties could be regarded as more onerous than those of a private member, should receive equivalent extra remuneration by way of additional salary over the base rate. This recommendation accorded with the practice of other Australian States, which is to pay a basic salary to all members with additional salary to Ministers or officers in Parliament.

When the 1961 Commission reported, the salary of a private member was at the rate of £2,501 10s. per annum. This rate was fixed legislatively in November, 1957, and the 1961 committee recommended that it be not increased. The recommendation was adhered to and it follows that the salaries payable to private members of Parliament have not been increased since November, 1957, a period of over six years.

Before November 1957 the salaries of private members were allied to those of under secretaries of departments of govenment. Since 1957 salaries of under secretaries have risen from £2,900 to £4,310 per annum, which figures are to be read with an annual cost-of-living allowance ranging from £41 in 1957 to £39 at the present time. In the same period the basic wage has increased from £12 1s. to £14 6s. per week. Keeping these and other relevant factors in mind, the increases in parliamentary salaries recommended by the 1963 committee must be regarded as moderate.

The Bill that I am asking leave to introduce adopts the recommendations of the committee, which are that the salary of a member of Parliament, that is, the basic parliamentary salary payable to all members, including Ministers and officers in Parliament, be increased from the rate of £2,501 10s. to the rate of £2,650 per annum. The amount of this increase is £148 10s. per annum.

As regards the additional salaries payable to Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition, and officers in Parliament, increases are recommended in some cases and not in others.

I tabulate these recommendations as follows—

Office	Present Additional Salary	Recommendation
Premier	£2,700 per annum	£2,750 per annum (increase of £50 per annum)
Deputy Premier	£1,600 per annum	£1,800 per annum (increase of £200 per annum)
Other Ministers	£1,350 per annum	No increase
Speaker	£750 per annum	£900 per annum (increase of £150 per annum)
Chairman of Committees	£250 per annum	£300 per annum (increase of £50 per annum)
Leader of the Opposition	£1,000 per annum	No increase
Deputy Leader of the Opposition	£250 per annum	£300 per annum (increase of £50 per annum)
Leader of further Party in Opposition	No increase in this additional salary which, if payable, is now at rate of £200 per annum	
Whips	£100 per annum	£200 per annum (increase of £100 per annum)

The recommendations for the increase in salaries will be ratified by the passage of this Bill. It provides that these additional salaries will be paid from 1 July last. The reasons for that provision is that the policy enunciated by the committee was that there should be a triennial review of parliamentary salaries. That recommendation has been adopted by the Government and consequently these recommendations of the committee have been taken as applying to the current Parliament. Therefore, they will be dated back to 1 July last.

Those are the provisions of the Bill, and I commend it to the Committee.

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (11.47 a.m.): The Premier has indicated that, following the recommendations of the committee of inquiry that was set up, the Government has accepted the recommendations contained in its report. It is interesting to observe that the terms of reference of the committees that were appointed in 1960 and in 1963 were identical in every respect. Because of his inability to accept a position on the 1963 committee of inquiry, the representative from Victoria on the 1960 committee, Mr. Sorell, was replaced by the Honourable B. Courtice, a former senator in the Commonwealth Parliament. Otherwise, the personnel remained the same. In fairness to the Government, I point out that it indicated in its 1960 policy speech that it intended, as a matter of policy, to adopt the practice of having a triennial review of parliamentary salaries, and that a committee would be appointed for this purpose. A mandate was given to the Government and, while the people generally may not have based their vote on that particular aspect of the policy speech, nonetheless the Government can fairly claim that it did have a mandate to appoint a tribunal to determine parliamentary salaries.

The Premier has not taken advantage of the opportunity afforded by this debate to do what was done on a previous occasion, namely, distort the A.L.P. attitude on this matter, and I do not intend to be provocative in this regard this morning except to say that I plead guilty perhaps to the charge that there may have been some inconsistency in the A.L.P. policy on salaries. It is true that on one occasion, as the Premier pointed out this morning, we did introduce a provision for linking the salaries of members of Parliament with the minimum classification of under secretaries and, because a very substantial increase was accorded to various sections of the Public Service, particularly under secretaries, there was a very steep increase, which caused hon. members opposite in 1957 to capitalise on what they believed to be an opportunity to foment discontent with the electors over that provision and they indicated that they would repeal it, which they did immediately upon being elected to office.

Mr. Aikens: Was there any evidence of this mounting discontent?

Mr. DUGGAN: All I can say is that there was subsequent discontent within the ranks of Government parties at the haste with which the measure had been repealed. I think many Government members regretted that the opportunity was taken to try to secure an electoral advantage at the time.

Mr. Aikens: They frankly admit now that it was the silliest thing they ever did.

Mr. DUGGAN: I refer to the circumstances of that occasion only because I want to indicate that the intention of the then A.L.P. Government was not that members of Parliament should be given a disproportionate salary, taking into consideration the many responsibilities that a member of Parliament is expected to discharge, but merely that there should be taken away from the ambit of political controversy this periodic question of what remuneration a member of Parliament should receive.

It is a matter for general regret that the subject of the emoluments parliamentarians should receive is given so much Press publicity from time to time, when very often the picture is presented to the public completely out of perspective. For instance, when the provision to which I have referred was introduced there was, I think, an increase of many hundreds of pounds in the salary of under secretaries—I think from memory it was something to the order of £780—and there was no heading in the newspaper about that increase. But when a lesser amount was accorded to parliamentarians the fact that parliamentarians were getting less than under secretaries was announced in thick black italics across the page of the newspaper. I am not debating the relative abilities or responsibilities of members of Parliament and under secretaries. I am merely pointing out that quite astronomical increases are accorded some public servants from time to time and accepted as normal routine adjustments whereas, for some reason or other, when the salaries of members of Parliament are adjusted, irrespective of whether the claim is well founded, the Press seem to think they should be given this kind of publicity.

I think it is only fair and proper that the Press should expose fully the deliberations of this Parliament and, as people who have some joint responsibility with parliamentarians as custodians of the public interest, see that the fullest possible publicity is given to discussions here. I have no cavil or criticism at the Press exposing fully the debates and deliberations that take place in the Chamber or focusing public attention on what they might consider to be a mistake on the part of the legislature in its legislation. It is a pity that this particular matter cannot be resolved in a more objective fashion.

I am leading up to the point by saying that that was an honest attempt to take this matter out of the ambit of political controversy and to put the parliamentarian on a basis whereby his responsibilities should be measured against the responsibilities of somebody on an approximately equivalent salary at that particular time and the movement up or down of his emoluments should be governed by the movement up or down of the salary of the officer receiving a comparable sum in the Public Service.

A good deal of political propaganda was made out of the point at the time but I think it is reasonable to have recorded in the pages of "Hansard", now that we are discussing the matter, that the tribunal itself rejected this particular method of determining parliamentarians' basic salary rates mainly on the ground that Queensland could not afford it, or at least that there could not be justification for determining a rate for members of the Queensland Legislative Assembly which would be in excess of that obtained by those in what they considered to be the strongest State economically in the Commonwealth, namely, New South Wales. Having said that, they added this rider to their recommendation—

> "It must be conceded, however, that when the tie to the Public Service classification was decided upon by Parliament it was, if the Committee may say so with respect, quite reasonable, and there was no ground for anticipating at that stage that the particular classification would be increased so much."

I think that that should be recorded in "Hansard" to show that the Labour Party did not approach this matter from any irresponsible point of view.

Again, in my 1957 election speech I wanted to try to protect Labour members of Parliament, as this was quite a controversial subject. Although there may be hon. members on the other side of the Chamber

who feel that they have a responsibility to the workers, it is accepted that workers generally expect members on this side to face up to their responsibilities to them more than they expect it from members of the Country-Liberal Government. Facts prove this to be so. In a time of unprecedented prosperity in the mining industry, when a bonus issue of three shares for two was made by Mount Isa Mines Ltd., a company which has already built up fantastic reserves for future benefit, the Government introduced legislation preventing the workers from receiving any favourable consideration from the Industrial Commission. Do not let it be said that hon. members opposite represent the workers.

In order to protect Labour members had the Labour Party been returned to office, I said that we were prepared to get away from the idea that we wanted some special grab for ourselves. I said that we would be prepared to accept the decision of the then Industrial Court, it being the body chosen to determine salaries for people engaged in industry. I want to place on record that we did not wish to receive any preferential treatment but merely that received by all others in the community. All that we wanted was what was considered a reasonable emolument for a parliamentarian.

I admit quite frankly that it could have been a difficult decision for the court to make because, apart from salaries received by members of Parliament throughout the Commonwealth, there was no measuring stick to go by. There were no determinations of other industrial tribunals to refer to because parliamentary salaries have always been decided by the legislatures.

I mention all those things in passing. Adjustments have been made in various directions to the salaries of Ministers. They have been given 60 per cent. of their electorate allowances instead of 40 per cent. There are certain adjustments that the Premier indicated in regard to salaries. There have been one or two adjustments in travelling allowances which, I must say in fairness, apply also to the Leader of the Opposition.

I do not want to canvass the question of allowances now because they are not before the Committee, although hon. members are entitled to raise these matters. The only point I wish to make is that successive tribunals, not only in Queensland but elsewhere, have indicated in strong and forthright terms that the salary received by a member of Parliament should be an acknowledgment of the office that he holds, and that he is just as much entitled to a salary determination as is any other professional man holding a similar position in the community. Expenses that he is obliged to incur in the performance of his duty over and above those incurred by the ordinary person should be treated in exactly the same way as they are treated by those similarly placed in private industry. That position is met by the provision of allowances. One should not make a profit out of them; conversely, one should not show a loss.

I want to say briefly that the Australian Labour Party did not accept the invitation to give evidence before this tribunal. Its appointment was a matter of Government policy, and not all members of the coalition Government completed the questionnaire. I am not criticising those who did not, but there were some who, for reasons best known to themselves, elected not to furnish replies. I want to make it quite clear that there was never intended by us to be any reflection on the professional competence of the people chosen. I know that when it is suggested that tribunals be appointed to determine parliamentary salaries cynics, and sometimes well-intentioned people, suggest that the tribunal has been chosen to carry out the wishes of the Government of the day, or the opinion is expressed that its members could be influenced by the wishes of the Government.

I do not think that was the case with the 1961 committee of inquiry. The name of Sir William Webb is honoured over the length and breadth of Queensland as a former Chief Justice of the State and a former member of the High Court of Australia—a very kindly gentleman, a man whose services have been used by successive Governments, both Labour and Country-Liberal, over many years for inquiries of different types. I think one must confess, after reading the report, that it has been lucidly presented and that the arguments used are logical. Personally, I cannot find anything in the reasoning to quarrel with, other than that the document does reinforce the attitude of many hon. members in this Chamber, including members of the A.L.P., that finally this Parliament must determine what the emoluments should be. I do not want to exclude from my remarks Mr. Jameson, who is a very well-known and highly-respected accountant in this city, and Mr. Courtice, who has a fine record of service to this country. No-one can quibble about their qualifications. But, irrespective of what their recommendations might be, the attitude adopted by the A.L.P. was that finally we must determine here whether or not we think their recommendations are desirable.

It is interesting to observe in passing that althought great stress was laid on statements by Government spokesmen that there was value in giving evidence to the committee of inquiry, it does not seem to me that the committee was influenced very greatly by the evidence presented to it. For instance, each of the 26 members of the Government parties who gave evidence made a plea for a dress allowance for his wife, but that was completely and absolutely disregarded by the committee. Certain other claims were made by members who gave evidence, and the committee rejected them in toto. I think

it follows, therefore, that the committee of inquiry proceeded on a general basis laid down by the 1961 committee of inquiry and then made such adjustments as it thought were justified in the light of current circumstances. In only one instance did the committee acknowledge that had evidence not been put forward there would not have been an increase of the type that it recommended.

As I said, I am not canvassing the question of allowances, because one should make neither a profit nor a loss on allowances; but it is interesting to note that variations in allowances were recommended in the 1961 report, and on this occasion variations were made in six different brackets, as against variations in 11 brackets in 1961. I think it can be argued, therefore, that with one reservation that I have mentioned, the committee was not influenced to any material degree by the evidence given before it.

Now we come to the question as to whether there is justification for an increase. The Premier has accepted the responsibility of speaking on behalf of the Government parties, and I accept the responsibility of speaking on behalf of members of the Australian Labour Party, so our views express the opinion held on each side of the Chamber. If Government members wish to participate in the debate, speakers on this side of the Chamber will support me. I do not say that provocatively, but I do not want it to be thought that there is any reluctance on the part of members of the Opposition to take part in the debate or to make their views known. Hon. members on this side of the Chamber think there is justification for an increase. Although I do not necessarily agree with all the conclusions reached in the committee's report or the basis on which its recommendations are founded, I must agree that it is a well-reasoned document and that the committee's recommendations have not been arrived at loosely but as a result of very careful examination.

There has been an adjustment in wages and salaries in every field except, I regret to say, that covering some sections of unskilled workers, and I feel very strongly on this matter. I am not raising it merely for party-political propaganda purposes. I think there is an obligation on the Parliament to see that justice is distributed fairly and equitably in the community, and I believe that there has not been an acceptance of this obligation in the case of some sections of what might be termed black-shirted workers outside. We have not been successful in various attempts to rectify this position by constitutional means, and I will certainly use this occasion to see whether we can achieve something in that direction. I do not think that we should use this Parliament as an Arbitration Court. However, I will certainly use my vote, and I think my colleagues will, too, to see that at least the basis is laid down in statutory legislation to provide for economic and financial justice to the great body of people covered by awards throughout the State. The actual detailed examination of this basis naturally must be carried out by an industrial tribunal of some kind. We believe in arbitration—we were responsible for its establishment—and I am not for one moment suggesting, directly or indirectly, that it should be superseded. However, I regret that, in my view, there are still some sections of the community that are not yet receiving what I believe to be adequate wage justice.

Large salary increases have been awarded to sections of people outside the particular section I have referred to, increases far in excess of those contemplated in this proposal. I do not think anybody, except people who hold extreme views in this matter, could fairly regard this adjustment as being unnecessarily high. It has been suggested on some occasions that members of Parliament should receive only the net basic wage increases as determined by the court. I see no reason why public servants on higher salaries than members of Parliament should have basic wage adjustments added to their remuneration while similar treatment is denied to members of Parliament.

In fairness to those who hold that point of view, I realise just how difficult it is for a man with a wife and three or more children to attain a high standard of living on the basic wage. Admittedly there is not a great number of people on the basic wage, but even those with small margins over the basic wage must find it very difficult to make ends meet particularly if they have family responsibilities. The movements of the basic wage, generally speaking, are reflected in the cost of basic commodities like rents, etc., whereas a member of Parliament moving around the country usually stays at hotels and one does not find that hotel tariffs are increased by 4d., from £3 to £3 0s. 4d. a night. It usually goes from £3 to £3 10s., and expenditure generally that a member of Parliament is obliged to incur is in excess of fluctuations in the basic wage.

I think in this instance a case has been established by the tribunal, as documented, if we are to accept the basis that so far has been the governing factor throughout Australia. New South Wales is virtually the measuring stick for the rest of the Commonwealth. If one takes New South Wales as a measuring stick, in comparing like with like it will be seen that, except in the grades below £2,000 per annum, public servants in Queensland receive less than those in New South Wales. Many under the £2,000 per annum grade in Queensland are getting more than their counterparts in New South Wales. Judges get less in Queensland than in New South Wales and it has been stated by various tribunals that the amount should not be in excess of what is determined by the New South Wales legislature. I am not arguing with that but that has been the standard practice. For that reason the committee might have felt that there was justification

for holding that the nearest States will be a limiting factor in determining parliamentary salaries—that we are not going above the New South Wales rate.

I do not think that any fair-minded critic would say that these recommendations are over-generous because, since 1957, people in the Public Service throughout Australia have received increases far in excess of those proposed by this measure. Therefore, it cannot be said that this is a raid on the public purse.

There are several other points which, if necessary, I shall canvass during the second-reading stage. I simply want to point out that there are one or two inconsistencies in this report compared with that of 1961. There is clear evidence that, in the main, the committee rejected the evidence asked for by questionnaire.

I think I have stated fairly and objectively the attitude of the A.L.P. in these matters. I take the opportunity to urge the doing of justice to people outside, but I do not think there is any reason for members of Parliament to apologise when one considers that they are on duty at all hours and have to act diligently and intelligently, and when the multifarious duties which fall on the shoulders of a member of Parliament are taken into account. I do not think that the increase suggested on this occasion is in any way unreasonable. So, on behalf of my colleagues, who are uncommitted so far as speaking on the measure is concerned, I say that the Opposition supports the Bill.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (12.11 p.m.): This Bill, of course, like the one introduced three years ago, and like legislation introduced by the Leader of the Opposition on one occasion when he was Acting Premier, brings forward quite an amount of, shall I say, casuistry and sophistry, and I would say that there has been more discontent in the corridors and rooms of this House as the result of this inquiry than anything else I know. Members on both sides of the Chamber are squealing to high heaven. If we had a wailing wall here such as there is in Jerusalem they would be wailing at it crying that the rises recommended are not sufficient, that the salaries recommended are miserably low, and that the allowances are lousy. They think they got a raw deal from the committee of inquiry and that they are going to get a raw deal from the Government. But they have not the guts to do anything about it, either in their own party rooms or out on the public platform. Whenever a rise in parliamentary salaries and allowances is suggested we immediately find politicians on both sides of the Chamber running for cover. They go out and talk to people and start to hedge and square off; they start to apologise; they start to alibi. I have been in this Parliament for 20 years and I have taken the attitude throughout my parliamentary career that I am not overpaid, that I deserve twice as much as I am getting, that I will honestly try to earn every penny I get, and that I will vote for any rise I consider I am entitled to. It has not done me any harm at the polls. No-one can say I have been decimated at the polls. No-one can say that my frank and forthright statements on the subject of parliamentary salaries has reacted against me. I have told people on the public platform for years what I think about parliamentary salaries. I have always said that Parliament should have the courage to fix parliamentary salaries, and then members of Parliament should have the courage to go out and defend those salaries before their electors, either en masse or in person.

We have the A.L.P. on this occasion playing the typical role of the A.L.P. today. They play the role that is played by the scab in an industrial dispute. When the salaries tribunal was set up they were invited to give evidence and they were invited to fill in the questionnaire. But they refused to do it. They said, "It is not in accordance with our policy. If there is going to be a fight for increased salaries and increased allowances we are going to leave it to those who are prepared to give evidence before the inquiry. We are going to leave it to those members of the Government and those Independent members who care to go along and fight the fight for us. But after they have fought a good fight, after they have won from the committee even these measly recommendations for an increase in salary and an increase in allowances, we will rush with outstretched hands to grab every penny they fought and got for us." That is the role of the scab in an industrial dispute. That is the role that the A.L.P. have played on this particular issue, and they cannot deny it. I am not going to be any more provocative than that because the Leader of the Opposition was not provocative. I supported him when he supported a measure to provide that our salaries either should be fixed by Parliament periodically—that we should have the courage to fix them and defend them—or they should be tied, as they were tied, to somebody in the Public Service, so that they could fluctuate up and down with the salaries of the public servants as fixed by Parliament or arbitration.

I repeat that every time the issue of parliamentary salaries is raised there are not enough funkholes to harbour the politicians from both sides of the Chamber. Why don't you be like me and tell the people what you believe? Get the people on your side and you will realise, as I realise, that the only people who oppose politicians getting a fair and reasonable salary are the sourguts and the envious ones who are the first on our backs. You know that what I am saying is true. The people who complain most to me—there are only a few of them—about the salary I get and the allowances I get are never off my back.

They are the people who get you to do jobs for them all the time. For goodness sake, give the people credit for having an intelligent and sane outlook on this matter. Go up to them and say, "I believe I am entitled to £3,500 a year and £1,000 a year allowance." If you can prove to them that you are entitled to it they will support you in getting it, but while you run for cover and while you adopt this gutless attitude you will never get anywhere with parliamentary salaries.

I am going to comment on a couple of things. I know the allowances cannot be debated but I should like to point to the most stupid recommendation in this report, that is, that a bed at the Parliamentary Lodge is worth £3 3s. a night. It is the dearest bed in Queensland. It is dearer than a bed at the Chevron-Hilton, or whatever it is, on the South Coast. If you have a bed at the Parliamentary Lodge you do not get £3 3s. a day; if you have not, you do get £3 3s. a day. I understand that has been tossed over, of course, because none of us is ever going to get the £3 3s. Mr. Speaker will stick beds and shakedowns on the verandahs and dump more beds into the rooms——

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: Isn't it ridiculous to suggest that it is worth £3 3s. a night! After all it is barrack-type accommodation. The only decent thing is the way the Lodge is run and controlled. The present manageress, as was her predecessor, is a woman of outstanding ability. That is the only pleasing thing about the Lodge. I told the committee of inquiry that I would not stay at the Lodge. When I first came here I wanted to stay there for economic reasons, but, because of the enmity of the A.L.P. Government of the day, I was refused a room. I asked Mr. Speaker for permission to pitch a tent on the lawn, but he told me not to be facetious. I have never since applied to stay at the Lodge.

I am glad to see that the Treasurer is in the Chamber. I do hope that when this Bill becomes law—of course, our allowances have already become law because we have been paid them—the Treasurer and the Taxation Department will not get together to work the rort on the country members of Parliament in the taxation of allowances that they worked three years ago. The result was, as I pointed out to the committee of inquiry, that, after the increase in allowances three years ago, I was actually £60 a year worse off than a metropolitan member. I hope that the Treasurer's officers will not work the same rort with the Taxation Department to rob the country members on the taxation deduction for electoral allowances as was done three years ago.

We know, of course, that the whole basis of this Assembly is stacked in favour of the metropolitan member. Irrespective of the party to which he belongs, he has it laid on a golden platter for him. He has an office here for seven days a week if he wants it, with free telephone, free secretarial service and library, and cheap dining-room and bar service. He has that for 12 months of the year, every day of the week. The country member comes down here, lives out of a suitcase for about three months of the year and then has to go back, as I pointed out to the committee, buy his own typewriter, type his own letters and put stamps on them after he types them. As against that, in Brisbane half the letters that are typed are delivered free by messenger, and the metropolitan member does not get a letter in any case. (Laughter). I am not breaching any confidence when I say I remember that, when the Minister for Health was a private member, he came along the corridor of this building one day and said, "What do you think, Tom? I just got a letter!"

Dr. NOBLE: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member is drawing on his very fertile imagination.

An Opposition Member: It was a bill, too, wasn't it?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: Mr. Hooper, it is not that I have a fertile imagination; the Minister has a bad memory.

Now let me get to the real position. The most amazing thing about the salaries committee of inquiry, of course, was that it was set up—and I am not going to cast any aspersions—with two men on it on this occasion who owed everything in their political life and their professional life to the A.L.P. Sir William Webb was the chairman. Justice Webb was elevated to the Supreme Court bench by the A.L.P. He was made Chief Justice by the A.L.P. He was knighted by the A.L.P. He was put onto the High Court bench by the A.L.P. So he owed all his loyalty and all his thanks to the A.L.P. Senator Courtice was in exactly the same position. So that, whatever might be said about the committee of inquiry, the Government cannot be charged with stacking it with its own political supporters.

And what happened as a result of the appointment to the committee of members who owed everything they had in life to the A.L.P.? We had the munificent jack-up in salary that the Leader of the Opposition received three years ago, and that has been perpetuated in this report and in the Bill. I am going to tell this Committee perhaps the most glaring anomaly in this report between what Ministers receive—that is, what they actually receive and put in their pockets every fortnight—and what the Leader of the Opposition receives and puts in his pocket every fortnight. The Leader

of the Opposition, of course, has his parliamentary salary, now to be £2,650, and he gets a £1,000 allowance as Leader of the Opposition as well as £850 a year as allowance as member for Toowoomba East. Ministers receive £4,000 a year and 60 per cent. of the allowance that applies to their particular electorate. I am going to ask you to excuse me, Mr. Hooper, for not using their full ministerial titles—for the purpose of clarity and, of course, quickness. This is how it works out: Mr. Duggan will receive a total take-home-in-his-pocket pay of £4,500 a year. Hiley, Noble and Dewar will receive £4,360, or £140 a year less than the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Duggan: That is not true, anyway.

Mr. AIKENS: It is true.

Mr. Duggan: It isn't true.

Mr. AIKENS: Fletcher, Bjelke-Petersen, Chalk, and Richter will receive £4,588 a year, or only £88 more than the Leader of the Opposition. Delamothe and Row will receive £4,654 a year, or only £154 a year more than the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. DUGGAN: I rise to a point of order. I do not want to become involved in controversy with the hon. member but, if this is going to be a factual record, I want to point out that Ministers receive expenses that the Leader of the Opposition does not and that the report shows that, comparatively, the Leader of the Opposition of Queensland is no better or worse off than his counterpart in any other State.

Mr. AIKENS: I am not concerned with any argument about that. I am merely pointing out solid fact. Here it is. The Leader of the Opposition receives £2,650 plus £1,000 allowance, making a total of £3,650 in salary and special allowance as Leader of the Opposition. Then he receives £850 electoral allowance as member for Toowoomba East. Ministers receive only their ministerial salary of £4,000 plus 60 per cent. of their electoral allowance.

Mr. Duggan: Plus £2 a day when they are in Brisbane.

Mr. AIKENS: I am not talking about that. I am talking about salary. If we are to go into that, the Leader of the Opposition is given a private secretary on nearly £2,000, which is paid by the Government. He has a stenographer on about £20 a week paid by the Government. A motor-car is provided for him, as well as a special railway coach when he travels by rail. If we are to go into these extraneous matters, there is no end to them.

Mr. Duggan: I don't mind a personal attack on me.

Mr. AIKENS: It is not a personal attack on the Leader of the Opposition. I am pointing out anomalies under this Bill, just as I pointed out the stupid anomaly relating to the £3 3s. a night for a bed at the Lodge. It is not a personal attack at all.

The Minister for Justice and the Minister for Primary Industries each receives £4,654, or £154 more than the Leader of the Opposition. The Minister for Education receives £4,618, or £118 more than the Leader of the Opposition. The Minister for Mines and Main Roads receives £4,666, or £166 a year more than the Leader of the Opposition. That is money actually taken home in the pocket, apart from allowances and all the little office perks. I know that the Leader of the Opposition does not want to enlarge on the office perks that he receives, or that he received as a Minister. I am referring to actual money in his pocket. The Leader of the Opposition receives more in his pocket each fortnight than do three Ministers, namely, the Treasurer, the Minister for Health, and the Minister for Labour and Industry, and only approximately £2 a week less than other Ministers.

Now we come to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. He received his cut from Sir William Webb three years ago, and it is perpetuated in this report and in the Bill. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition receives as much money as the second most important man in the House, namely, the Chairman of Committees. Can anyone justify paying the Deputy Leader of the Opposition as much as the Chairman of Committees? Nevertheless, he gets it, according to the ruling of three years ago and of today.

Mr. Duggan: He gets the lowest rate in the Commonwealth.

Mr. AIKENS: I am not concerned with what happens in the Commonwealth or anywhere else; I am concerned only with what happens in this Parliament. Unlike the Leader of the Opposition and members of the Government, I am not tied to the spokes of any party-political wheel. I am free and completely independent, and I am completely honest with this Parliament and my electors. That is what happened.

Dr. Noble: Would you say that they are entitled to those salaries?

Mr. AIKENS: I would say that if they are entitled to them, how much more is a Minister entitled to? How much more am I entitled to, seeing that I do ten times as much as is done by any one of them? If we go into comparisons, which are odious, we will never end that argument. If the Leader of the Opposition can take home £4,500 a year, surely a Minister can take home as much, if not more. And yet there are three taking home less!

We know, of course, that the A.L.P. will go out into the highways and byways and tell their gullible supporters that they were not in favour of the appointment of the committee to determine parliamentary

salaries and allowances, and consequently did not attend and give evidence. They did not help in the fight at all, but they are prepared to take everything that the other people secured for them. They will say, "You know how it is. In Parliament you have to be governed by the rule of the majority. The Government carried this Bill by a majority and, of course, we are entitled to take what the majority decided for us."

I hoped for a moment that the Leader of the Opposition would raise some opposition to this measure because I was going to tell the Committee what happened in 1953 or 1954 when the Leader of the Opposition, who was then Acting Premier, introduced a similar amendment to the Constitution Act. The Premier, then Leader of the Opposition, and, I think, the present Minister for Works and Housing, voiced some opposition, and the present Leader of the Opposition said, "I'll fix you," and moved an amendment that I suggest be put into this Bill to put the A.L.P. right on the spot, just as he put the Country-Liberal Opposition on the spot then. He moved an amendment to the effect that anyone wanting the increased parliamentary salary prescribed in the Bill had to make written application to the Clerk of the Parliament within a stipulated time. Those who did not apply would not be paid the increased salary.

Mr. Duggan: If you like to move an amendment, I will sign the necessary authority.

Mr. AIKENS: I will accept that challenge and make all you "mugs" apply for your increases. I will accept that challenge and move word for word the amendment that the Leader of the Opposition, who was then Acting Premier, moved to that Constitution Act Amendment Bill.

Mr. BENNETT: I rise to a point of order. I resent being called a "mug" by a man of the calibre of the hon. member for Townsville South. So far as the dignity of Parliament is concerned, it is a sad and sorry state of affairs when epithets of that nature are hurled about, and I ask that that remark be withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for South Brisbane has taken exception to the remark of the hon. member for Townsville South. I ask the hon. member for Townsville South to withdraw the word "mugs".

Mr. AIKENS: I certainly will withdraw it. Is it not amazing that his Leader did not object? He left it to someone sitting behind him. However, I will withdraw it. If anything offends the hon. member for South Brisbane, I will withdraw it, because he might come across and king-hit me.

Mr. Bennett: I can tell you, Mr. Hooper, that if he does not withdraw it properly——

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Bennett: If I am told to withdraw a remark, I withdraw it without making any comment.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Bennett: It would not be too hard to king-hit you. You would run away like a dingo.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: You could not hit me with a bloody handful of sand.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the hon. member for Townsville South, and all other hon. members, that this place is not just a joke. I ask him to continue his speech, and to make an audible and coherent speech.

Mr. AIKENS: Thank you, Mr. Hooper. Although you have not asked me to, I will withdraw my use of the great Australian adjective. It is not quite a nice word, so I will withdraw it—just the word, not the rest of the remark.

The Leader of the Opposition has asked me to move an amendment along the lines of the amendment that he moved on another occasion. He knows very well that I will move it and that perhaps the A.L.P. will support it. However, it will be defeated by the Government and he will not be bound by it, because the Premier, who was Leader of the Opposition at the time, said, "I would never agree, even if the A.L.P. moved such a shocking amendment to any amendment of the Constitution Act." Does the Premier remember that? I remember it very clearly.

Mr. Nicklin: I did not claim the increase in salary, either.

Mr. AIKENS: No, the Premier did not, and I think he lost £200 a year. I think the hon. member for Barambah also declined to accept it; it may have been the Treasurer who did so. I am confused as to which other member it was, but I know one other member refused to accept it. Those hon. members lost £200 a year for years because of the amendment that was moved on that occasion.

Mr. Duggan: I can tell you now that we are in favour of an increase in salary. I would not vote for any amendment that you moved on any subject.

Mr. AIKENS: That is the way hon. members opposite run, Mr. Hooper.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: One moves something and they say they will take certain action. If I say I will do something, you know that I will do it.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: I have a luncheon appointment; I have to address a group of very distinguished ladies in Brisbane; but I will be back.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: I will be here to watch the scabs of the A.L.P. crawling forward with both hands extended to take the rise in salary and the rise in allowances.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. WALLACE: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Townsville South has referred to members of the Australian Labour Party as "scabs". That is offensive to me, because the only scab in this Chamber is the hon. member for Townsville South.

Mr. Bennett: He is a yellow scab.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Cairns has asked that the hon. member for Townsville South withdraw the remark. I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. AIKENS: If he objects to it, I am very sorry for the hon. member for Cairns. But fancy a member of the A.L.P. calling anyone else a scab after what they did with their preference votes at the last election.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. WALLACE: I rise to a further point of order. I ask that the remark be withdrawn without any equivocation.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Townsville South to withdraw the word "scabs".

Mr. AIKENS: I will withdraw the word "scabs".

Mr. HILEY: I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention to the fact that, in rising to a point of order, the hon. member who complained of the use of that appellation himself applied it in turn, and I ask you to take notice of that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am afraid that I did not hear the remark. If the hon. member for Cairns made that remark, I ask him to apologise to the Chair.

Mr. WALLACE: With due deference to you, I will not withdraw the remark, because he is not——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to withdraw the remark that he made about the hon. member for Townsville South.

Mr. WALLACE: I will not withdraw the remark.

Mr. Bennett interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have asked the hon. member for Cairns to withdraw the remark and he has refused. I warn him, and I again ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. WALLACE: I cannot withdraw the remark in relation to that member.

NAMING OF MEMBER

The CHAIRMAN: I have no other avenue but to name the hon. member for Cairns for disregarding an order of the Chair.

The House resumed.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have to report that in Committee I named the hon. member for Cairns for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Chairman reports that in Committee he named the hon. member for Cairns for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier): I think all hon. members regret the incident that happened and also the fact that the hon. member for Cairns has left the Chamber. I hope this resulted from a misunderstanding of what the Chairman said and that he will please come back into the Chamber.

Undoubtedly, the hon. member for Cairns did disobey a request from the Chair and I appeal to him, in view of the fact that in the heat of the moment he referred to the hon. member for Townsville South as a "scab", to withdraw it. The hon. member for Townsville South withdrew his remark, and I ask the hon. member for Cairns if he will withdraw to save me having to take action to uphold the rightful ruling of the Chair.

Mr. WALLACE (Cairns): In reply to the Premier, I just want to say that had any other hon. member been involved I would be prepared to withdraw, but in view of the terrible things the hon. member for Townsville South says about various members of this Chamber—and I, of course, take strong exception to being called a scab—I have to again refuse to withdraw.

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier): I am sorry that the hon. member has taken that attitude. I have no alternative but to move—

> "That the hon. member for Cairns be suspended from the service of the House for the remainder of this sitting."

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition): I appreciate the effort made by the Premier——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is no debate on a motion for suspension.

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 38

Mr. Anderson	Mr. Lonergan
,, Armstrong	,, Low
,, Beardmore	,, McKechnie
,, Bjelke-Petersen	,, Munro
,, Camm	,, Murray
,, Carey	,, Nicklin
,, Chalk	Dr. Noble
,, Chinchen	Mr. Pilbeam
,, Cory	,, Pizzey
Dr. Delamothe	,, Rae
Mr. Evans	,, Ramsden
,, Ewan	,, Richter
,, Fletcher	,, Row
,, Herbert	,, Tooth
,, Hiley	,, Wharton
,, Hodges	
,, Hooper	
,, Houghton	*Tellers:*
,, Hughes	Mr. Campbell
,, Knox	,, Hewitt
,, Lickiss	

NOES, 26

Mr. Adair	Mr. Inch
,, Baxter	,, Lloyd
,, Bennett	,, Marsden
,, Bromley	,, Melloy
,, Byrne	,, Newton
,, Davies	,, O'Donnell
,, Dean	,, Tucker
,, Donald	,, Wallace
,, Dufficy	,, Wallis-Smith
,, Duggan	
,, Graham	
,, Gunn	
,, Hanlon	*Tellers:*
,, Hanson	Mr. Sherrington
,, Houston	,, Thackeray

PAIR

Mr. Dewar	Mr. Mann

Resolved in the affirmative.

CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Hooper Greenslopes, in the chair)

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (12.46 p.m.), in reply: I regret that the debate, which started on a good level, finished in the way it did. I do appreciate the objective approach of the Leader of the Opposition to the provisions of this Bill. I am very sorry to see that hon. members on the Opposition side, for some reason or other, are deserting their Leader.

Mr. Duggan: Their action is no reflection on you. We want to protest forcibly against what is happening in this Chamber as far as the hon. member for Townsville South is concerned. It is no reflection on you at all.

Mr. NICKLIN: They are protesting against a move that upholds the authority of the Chair and the dignity of this Parliament.

Mr. Duggan: No. It got out of hand.

Mr. NICKLIN: The hon. member for Cairns was suspended from the service of the House not because of what he may have said to the hon. member for Townsville South or what the hon. member for Townsville South said to him; he was suspended because he refused to obey a lawful request of the Chair, which is most regrettable.

However, let us get down to the question before us now, namely, the introduction of this Bill to adjust the salaries of members of this Parliament and officers in this Parliament. As I have said previously, the Leader of the Opposition approached the matter in a very objective way. I have not a great deal of quarrel with what he said. I take exception to one remark he made when I took him to say that in his opinion members of the Opposition are called upon to do more work than Government members.

Mr. Duggan: No, I did not say that.

Mr. NICKLIN: I am sorry. I must have misunderstood the hon. gentleman. It is my opinion that every hon. member who does his job properly has plenty to do, irrespective of which side he is on.

Mr. Duggan: I agree.

Mr. NICKLIN: I misunderstood the hon. gentleman.

He pointed out that very many different methods have been tried to adjust what unfortunately is a very controversial matter generally—the salaries of members of Parliament. He reviewed various methods that have been used in the past. But I think, in view of the way in which the adjusted salaries in 1961 and the proposed adjusted salaries in 1963 have been received by the general public, they apparently approve the method that is being used—that adjustment of salaries should be made only following an inquiry by an independent tribunal. That is what has been followed by the Government on this occasion and it is our policy for the handling of this very contentious subject. Naturally one would not expect any report of any committee to meet with 100 per cent. agreement—it would be remarkable if the decisions arrived at by the committee were so received—but in the main the committee did a reasonably good job.

I repeat, as I said in my introductory remarks, that the salary that has been arrived at by the committee is indeed a moderate one when it is remembered that there has been no movement in parliamentary salaries for over six years whereas there has been a very substantial movement in the salaries of practically every other section of the community in that period.

I just want to make one very brief reference to the hon. member for Townsville South. His speech on this occasion followed his pattern over the years on measures that come before us dealing with the salaries of members of this Assembly. I remember once when the late Hon. E. M. Hanlon was Premier of Queensland and the hon. member for Townsville South said that his Townsville constituents would approve of his receiving £4,000 a year. Mr. Hanlon said he accepted that because the public had always valued its entertainers very highly. I think that could be taken as a very appropriate reply to anything the hon. member said this morning.

Motion (Mr. Nicklin) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

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

COAL MINING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (12.53 p.m.): I move—

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

In introducing the Bill I set out the main points contained in it and outlined the objects to be achieved.

In my opinion the Bill is a major step forward in the coal-mining industry of this State by modernising the Act to provide for large-scale open-cut mining. In doing that, we are giving to operators security of tenure over large areas and permitting them to plan confidently long-range programmes and commit themselves to heavy expenditure.

The provisions relating to certificates and licences are self-evident and need no further amplification by me.

With regard to authorities to prospect on private land as well as Crown land, there is already provision in the Act for the granting of coal-mining licences on both private and Crown land, but the maximum area of these is only 1,280 acres. Such a small area is inadequate except on known coalfields.

The rights of freeholders are protected when authorities to prospect are granted over their land, as, before the holder can enter their land, a permit to enter under the Mining on Private Land Act will have to be obtained and the compensation provisions of that Act will apply.

The provisions of the Bill have been discussed with the industry and the union, and I feel that the amendments are just.

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (12.55 p.m.): I do not intend to speak at length on this Bill. The hon. member for Ipswich East wishes to participate in the debate. If he is not here by the conclusion of the second-reading stage, he will have an opportunity to speak at the Committee stage.

As the Minister pointed out, this Bill has been before the various unions and I understand from my consultations with members of the committee that met the unions that, in the main, they feel that the various amendments are in accord with the requirements of present-day conditions. They appreciate that there has been a measure of consultation between the Minister and his officers and the unions.

Those consultations also resulted in the unions being made aware of the general intentions of the Bill. When they had the opportunity of seeing the Bill they sought a further discussion with some members of our committee.

The hon. member for Ipswich East is now present, and I do not propose to speak at any greater length. I shall leave it to him to elaborate on the points appropriately brought forward at the second-reading stage.

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (12.57 p.m.): Working conditions in every industry should be as safe as it is humanly possible to make them, and all care should be taken to see that accidents are kept to a minimum. This should be done not only in the interests of employees but also in the interests of the economy of the State as a whole. The loss of production due to accidents is still far too great.

In an industry prone to accidents due to the many risks involved in its operation, extra care, precaution, and vigilance must be exercised at all times. Too often has the old saying that familiarity breeds contempt been proved beyond any doubt. Perhaps this occurs more often, strangely enough, in an industry considered to be a dangerous one, and in occupations regarded generally as being dangerous, such as timber getting, logging, sawmilling, and coal and metalliferous mining.

As I feel that the Bill that we are discussing has been drafted to make working conditions in the coal-mining industry safer, I welcome its introduction and give it my support, with certain reservations. A great deal of labour and care have gone into its preparation. I think that has to be admitted. Unfortunately I was not able to be present when the Minister was piloting the Bill through the introductory stage. I missed his remarks on the second reading because of an unfortunate incident that we witnessed some little time ago.

I say very deliberately that the Minister has been very wise and, indeed, courteous in consulting with officials of the Queensland

Colliery Employees' Union to obtain their views and reaction to the amending legislation. I congratulate the Minister, as I have done before, in introducing a Bill of benefit to not only the employees but the coal-mining industry as a whole. I have no hesitation in saying that again, and I thank him for his courtesy. The union's check inspectors have assured me that, in the main, this Bill has their approval. I should not like to convey the impression that Mr. Millar, the president of the Queensland Colliery Employees' Union, Mr. "Digger" Murphy, and Mr. Ron Murphy are wholeheartedly in support of the Bill. I shall, however, repeat the assertion that in the main they agree with it.

In making reference to the miners' check inspectors, I should like the Minister to explain why it was found necessary to seek an amendment to change the title of the member selected by his workmates to occupy the very important position of miners' check inspector. In fact, the title of miners' check inspectors has been changed to district union inspectors, and that of miners' inspector has been changed to miners' officer.

I fully realise that the change of name will not interfere with the zeal, enthusiasm and efficiency of these officers, but I am curious to know the reason for the change, particularly as they have given excellent service to the coal-mining industry for over 50 years.

The official recognition of an open-cut examiner and the protection given to him under the amended Act should, I think, give general satisfaction.

I firmly believe that the substitution of persons having practical knowledge and skill in the coal-mining industry for four experienced miners will not result in any better findings at inquiries into accidents that have caused serious injury or death. I am mindful that the industry is highly mechanised, and becoming more so every day, that accidents may happen to fitters, electricians, and other tradesmen employed in the mine, and that the cause may be outside the knowledge of practical miners. I also know from practical experience that when accidents have resulted from the operation of machinery or winding equipment, workmen from those sections of the industry have been appointed to inquire into the accidents. I myself have been so appointed. Broadly speaking, if one works in or around a colliery, no matter in what calling, one is generally recognised as a miner. Anyway, one is a mine worker and works with a team of very excellent citizens.

The Coal Mining Act now limits the area of a coal-mining lease to 640 acres. However, provision is made in the Bill for the Governor in Council to determine the area of a special coal-mining lease. There may be a very good reason for this—I am not disputing that there is—and I am sure that the Minister will be pleased to inform the House why this amendment is necessary.

As a former winding engine driver, I do not like any inspector being granted permission to issue, without an examination, a winding permit to a person who he thinks is competent. It will not bring about the safe working conditions that we are all anxious to have. For similar reasons, I am not happy with the proposed amendments to Sections 80 and 90 of the Act.

Standing Orders prevent me from elaborating on these matters, so I shall reserve further criticism till we are dealing with the various clauses of the Bill.

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (2.19 p.m.), in reply: I am sorry that the hon. member for Ipswich East was not able to be present when I introduced the Bill. I will repeat what I said about mining inspectors.

The existing Act provides for the workmen employed in a mine to appoint persons known as "miners' inspectors" and for the union to appoint persons known as "miners' check inspectors." Thus we had the Government's inspectors of mines (usually referred to as the "mines inspectors"), the miners' inspectors, and the miners' check inspectors. It does not need much imagination to understand how confusing some situations could become. The new terms give quick appreciation of the persons referred to. We discussed with the president and secretary of the union the proposed change in titles and they agreed that confusion did arise. Although they did not agree entirely, the new names are the ones suggested by them, and the duties and powers of those persons have not been altered in any way.

I might mention, too, that, as recently as last Thursday, Mr. Millar and some members of his executive were conferring with me and I asked them if they could make any suggestions for improvements. They had no suggestions to make.

Referring to coal-mining leases, we had to amend the Act in this regard because we have had to give bigger areas. The Utah people are coming in, and to give them the franchise they will want we have to give a big area to enable them to get the quantity of coal necessary after committing themselves to the enormous expenditure we will require them to undertake. Thiess-Peabody are in the same position. Coal has been found at Nebo and the same position arises there. That is the reason for that amendment.

The Leader of the Opposition did not debate the Bill; he left it to the hon. member for Ipswich East, who has had a wide experience in the industry and whose remarks I appreciate very much.

Motion (Mr. Evans) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Hooper, Greenslopes, in the chair)

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment to s. 3; Act does not apply to petroleum, natural gas, or mineral oil—

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (2.22 p.m.): I should like some elucidation of paragraph 3 of Clause 3, which reads—

> "(3) The Governor in Council may, by Order in Council, declare any coal mine to be an underground coal mine or to be an open-cut coal mine irrespective of the method of working that coal mine and, thereupon, for so long as the Order in Council remains in force the coal mine in question shall be deemed to be the class of coal mine as so declared."

In my opinion the position could arise of a coal mine that is being worked as an open-cut being declared an undeground mine, and vice versa. We have the position at Moura where coal is being extracted by the open-cut method but a tunnel is being driven from the seam. One would think that, in the true sense of the words, they are an open-cut mine and also an underground mine where coal will be won by the tunnel method. It is not a shaft, but it could not be called an open-cut mine nor could it be called an underground mine. I suppose there is a reason for it, otherwise it would not be there. However, there may be some confusion over the matter unless we get some explanation of it.

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (2.23 p.m.): The reason is that in open-cut mines, as has happened at Moura, it may be decided to go underground. At Moura the position could be declared by inspectors to be dangerous and we should have the right to declare it an underground mine and make them go underground. I think we should have that right.

Clause 3, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—Amendments to s. 4; Intrepretation—

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (2.24 p.m.): Paragraph (b) of this clause provides for the omission from the definition of "coal" of the words "stratified ironstone, shale, and". Without quoting from the Act, it provides that coal is stratified ironstone or shale and/or fire clay. The Act is being amended by deleting the words "stratified ironstone and shale" but the words "fire clay" are retained. I should like to know, if it is necessary to delete statified ironstone and shale, why it is permissible to retain fire clay in the definition of coal.

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (2.25 p.m.): Stratified ironstone and shale is being omitted from the definition of coal because in Queensland they do not occur in conjunction with coal as they do overseas. If they do occur with coal, Clause 15 of this Bill, Section 49 of the Act, provides that the working methods may be brought under the Coal Mining Act.

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (2.27 p.m.): The clause provides—

> " 'Trainee winding driver'—A person operating or driving a winding engine under the personal supervision of the holder of a winding license."

Will this provision permit an unclassified or unqualified man to operate a winding engine? I want to know the position because a winding engine driver holds a very responsible position in the coal-mining industry. Any misdemeanour on his part could bring about a rather serious accident which might result in loss of life and limb to people employed in the mine and damage to the property of the mine.

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (2.28 p.m.): I understand that only a few coal mines in Queensland have the higher horsepower engines. The amending of the Act is merely validating something that has been going on in the coal-mining industry for years.

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (2.28 p.m.): A steam winding engine driver must have a first-class engine driver's certificate, to obtain which he must have six months' experience on boilers, and sit for and pass his third-class engine driver's certificate. After having had twelve months' experience in this position he sits for his second-class engine driver's certificate. If successful, he then has to serve in that capacity for twelve months and then sit for and pass an examination for a first-class engine driver's certificate. He then must have six months' experience on a winding engine under the supervision of a winding engine driver, putting in, I think it is, 12 hours per week during this period. That has been necessary over the years and I should not like to see any slackening of it.

Clause 4, as read, agreed to.

Clause 5—Repeal of and new s. 6; Appointment of Officers—

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (2.29 p.m.): By this clause the Bill repeals a section of the Act which I think is very important. I think we should think twice and very seriously before agreeing to this proposal. It is proposed to repeal the following paragraph—

> "No person who holds any interest in any mine shall be appointed to be an inspector; and any inspector who holds or acquires any interest in any mine in Queensland shall forthwith vacate his office."

I am not quarrelling with the part that is retained but as it has been found necessary in the past to have the provision that I have just read included in the Act it would seem

to be just as important to have it now. If that portion is deleted it will mean that a man with an interest in a mine or mines could continue to be an inspector, inspecting, among others, the mine in which he has an interest. He could hold that position as an inspector while he had a financial interest in a colliery or a group of collieries. I urge that the provision be retained.

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (2.30 p.m.): Clause 5 deals with the appointment of officers. As a result of the tremendous extension of the use of mechanical equipment in all types of coal mines the need may arise for an officer with special mechanical training, and they are hard to get. I give the hon. member the definite assurance that no-one interested or concerned will be offered or given that position. Under present-day conditions it is possible for a person to hold shares in a company which, without his knowledge, could have an interest in a coal mine. If an inspector favours one coal mine the union, the department, and the Public Service Commissioner would see that the matter was dealt with. I assure the hon. member that that will be done.

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (2.31 p.m.): I feel that the explanation of the Minister does not protect the industry and the people employed in it, or the people who have their money invested in it. I see no justification at all for deleting this section. If there is a shortage of qualified inspectors there is more likelihood of getting inspectors who have no financial or any other kind of interest in collieries than there is of getting them from the shareholders of the various collieries. I do not think that the Minister's explanation can justify the deletion of this very important part of the section.

Mr. Walsh: Can you get an explanation for the deletion?

Mr. DONALD: I have been asking for it. I am saying very deliberately that the explanation given by the Minister does not justify the deletion of this paragraph.

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (2.33 p.m.): Surely the hon. member will admit that if he has a qualified man——

Mr. Donald: I am not admitting it.

Mr. EVANS: The reason for the deletion of the provision was that we discussed it with the union officers and they agreed to it and I was guided by them to a great extent. I take more notice of the union officers than I do of the owners. The union officers know more about it than I do. If the mine-owners had made the submission I would have examined it more carefully but, when the union officers were agreeable, I thought it was all right and went ahead with it.

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (2.34 p.m.): The strong point made by the Minister was that the mines were becoming more highly mechanised. There is no argument about that. Economic circumstances have compelled the mine-owners to mechanise the mines. If there is a shortage, it is logical that there is more chance of getting a qualified man who is not a shareholder of a colliery company or who has not any financial interest in one. There are many shareholders in colliery companies who have never worked in a coal mine but surely there are enough men in Queensland to fill any inspectorial position in the coal-mining industry. If there are not, then we are not going to get them from among the members or shareholders of a colliery. That is my strong point and I urge the Minister to retain the provision. If there is a shortage of qualified men, the deletion of the provision will not overcome that shortage. However, if there are men qualified for the position, they should have legal protection under the Act. If the history of the coal-mining industry over the years has proved that it is necessary to have a provision like it in the Act, then it is more necessary now than in the past, and there is no argument that can justify its repeal.

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (2.36 p.m.): The position could arise that somebody with a few shares in a mining company could take on another occupation and be qualified for this job. Would the hon. member debar him from it because he held a few shares in another company? He could have severed connection with that company while still retaining some shares in it. Debarring him because he held one or two shares would be doing him an injustice and preventing him from making a living.

Mr. WALSH (Bundaberg) (2.37 p.m.): I think it would have been better if the Minister had let his first explanation stand without making the second. I do not profess to know anything about all the intricacies of coal-mining or any other form of mining but, where questions of inspection involving the safety of human life arise, I think every member should interest himself in any provision that will alter the status quo. In this case, having listened to part of the debate, I am wondering what could be the reason for the repeal of the provision.

The Minister said that there was a shortage of qualified inspectors. I do not think I am misinterpreting what he said. If that is the case, and if the Minister for Health followed that line of reasoning and, simply because of a shortage of qualified doctors to fill all the positions in hospitals we ended up appointing people who had partly qualified as doctors, we should be in a very desperate position indeed.

On what the Minister said in the first place, I would agree, and I take it that the hon. member for Ipswich East would agree, that, if there were evidence of a shortage of

qualified men having regard to the qualifications laid down in the existing section, and if some discretionary power were given to the Minister, with the approval of the union representing the body of workers, I do not think we could argue about it. I do not think it is reasonable to delete a provision simply on the score that there are no qualified inspectors available for the job, having regard to the qualifications set out relating to interest in a coal mine. I do not think that is a reasonable proposition to put up. I ask the Minister to give the matter further consideration. If there is a shortage of qualified inspectors there should be some way of introducing a person with the qualifications of a coal-mining inspector even though he may be disqualified under other headings. That is important. I do not think it is reasonable to put it through on the basis firstly that there is a shortage of qualified inspectors and, secondly, that because a person has one or two shares in a coal-mining company he should not be allowed to be appointed as an approved inspector. If this provision was good enough to be in operation for all these years, I do not see any reason why it should be withdrawn now.

Mr. MURRAY (Clayfield) (2.40 p.m.): I find it difficult to see how the Opposition can sustain their argument in this matter. Surely the first thing to be desired is the efficient operation of mines. How can we possibly bar a man from holding a position as an inspector because he holds shares in the mine?

Mr. Nicklin: Not in "the" mine; in "any" mine.

Mr. MURRAY: He could hold shares in a unit trust that held mining shares and not know what it was all about. Surely it is as simple as that. In any case, should we not encourage all mine employees, from the lowest to the highest, to have shares in mines? That is not uncommon. There are many men working on lines of lode today who hold hundreds of shares in the mines in which they are working. This trend should be encouraged to the full. To prevent a man with high qualifications from being employed in a mine because he holds mining shares is, I think, entirely wrong.

Mr. Houston: Why was it put in the Act in the first place?

Mr. MURRAY: Frankly, I do not know. I cannot answer that question.

Mr. Evans: We are amending the Act.

Mr. MURRAY: Yes, we are amending it, and that is the critical thing. I believe it to be an enlightened and sensible amendment in this day and age. I fully support the Minister. I believe that instead of widening the gulf we should be trying to make it narrower. I cannot see how the argument of the Opposition can be sustained. The main thing is that the Government is interested in mining operations, and there is no way of sustaining an argument that bars a man from working in this capacity merely because he owns some shares. That would be quite wrong.

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (2.42 p.m.): This amendment was not included without the consent of both the union and the employers. As the hon. member for Clayfield said, an inspector could have invested money in unit trusts, and one of the companies invested in by that trust could be associated with coal-mining. Would it not be cruel and wrong to sack him for that reason? That type of investment is being made every day.

We are amending this Act and trying to make its operation reasonable. I would not have anyone taking advantage of any shares that he might have in a mine to do something for the owners which was against the interests of the workers. I would see that that was stopped immediately. There are, however, many men who have taken shares in unit trusts or in other mines and who have no interest at all in a particular mine. They may be highly qualified men, and it would be quite wrong to debar them. Their only concern would be to conform to the Act and do the job they were appointed to do.

That is the reason why we are amending the Act. If the unions had raised any objection to it, I would have given it a lot more consideration.

Mr. Tucker: How could anybody have shares in a mine through unit trusts? He would have shares in the trust, not in the mine.

Mr. EVANS: Trusts invest money in various companies.

Mr. Tucker: He would not have shares in a mine.

Mr. EVANS: He would have an interest in the mine.

Clause 5, as read, agreed to.

Clause 6—Amendments to s. 10; Coal-mining leases—

Mr. HANSON (Port Curtis) (2.45 p.m.): This section deals with the authority of the Governor in Council to grant coal-mining leases which may exceed 640 acres. I quite realise, in view of what the Minister has said, that possibly this provision has become necessary because of the extent of the coal deposits concerned. He mentioned the costliness of the machinery to be installed and the extent of the planning required to work the coal deposit in one instance. I realise that this is possibly the result of a request made to the department, or to the Minister, by the Thiess interests, who experienced difficulty, probably for the first time in the history of the mining industry in Queensland, because of the limit of 640 acres. It

may be desirable to some extent, but I should like the Minister to tell us what the limit of the actual lease will be. A lease in excess of 640 acres may be granted, but has the department any idea what the upper limit will be?

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (2.46 p.m.): That will be decided when the lease is applied for. Take the Thiess-Peabody-Mitsui group. When we froze the area and gave them the right to prospect, they spent £400,000. They would not have spent that amount if we had not given them protection. I had Bowers Constructions on my doorstep; I had Utah crying out to go in. To protect the State—that is the first thing we have to consider—we gave a franchise. We provided that the Thiess interests build a railway line, and we asked them for a bank guarantee of £100,000. They have spent hundreds of thousands of pounds in prospecting the area. When they have prospected it fully, we will decide what area they will receive.

Mr. Hanson: You will decide the actual lease area?

Mr. EVANS: Yes. They have to prospect it, and they keep relinquishing areas as they prospect them. The first thing I did in that area—I think the Committee will agree with my action—was to give Baralaba the right to take what they wanted, and they did. Now we have given this big area to Thiess-Peabody-Mitsui and they are prospecting it. They will not know how much coal is there till they have finished prospecting, but they are spending large sums of money and they are using a great deal of equipment. They are exporting 1,000,000 tons of coal this year. As I said, until they finish prospecting, we cannot decide what area they will be given.

Utah is in a similar position. Utah tried to horn in on the Thiess-Peabody-Mitsui area without doing any work, but we would not let them go in. They went in on an area of their own, and we have treated them in exactly the same way as we have treated Thiess-Peabody-Mitsui. I understand representatives of Utah are in Australia now. They will be asking for a franchise, and they will have to comply with the same definite conditions as have Thiess-Peabody Mitsui.

Then we come to Nebo. The same position applies there. If we allowed everybody in, nobody would be prospecting. There are no transport facilities there. It is all export coal, and we have to give the companies large areas to enable them to do the prospecting necessary to prove what coal is in the fields.

It must be remembered, too, that many companies have spent hundreds of thousands of pounds and have not found anything. These three companies have been fortunate.

Mr. Hanson: A consortium of companies could have 5,000 acres?

Mr. EVANS: They can have enormous areas, and we think they should.

Clause 6, as read, agreed to.

Clause 7—Amendments to s. 11; Applications for leases—

Mr. HANSON (Port Curtis) (2.50 p.m.): In his introductory remarks, the Minister mentioned the increase in rental from 1s. an acre to 10s. an acre and said that it would throw no undue burden on the industry.

Mr. Evans: It is only reasonable on the score of cost, is it not?

Mr. HANSON: Yes, but I should like the Minister's explanation in regard to an existing lease. A lease that runs till the end of a 21-year period may have been acquired in the last 12 months or two years. The rental on that will still be only 1s. an acre.

Mr. Evans: We do not break agreements.

Mr. HANSON: But the new people coming in will be paying 10s. an acre, in the main, and the existing ones will be paying 1s. an acre?

Mr. Evans: Yes.

Mr. HANSON: That could lead to discrepancies in the amount of rental due to the Crown.

Mr. Evans: Yes, but we do not break agreements.

Mr. HANSON: I wish the Treasurer had thought of that in the hotel industry.

Clause 7, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 8 to 13, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 14—Enactment of Part 11B; Authority to prospect for coal—

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (2.51 p.m.): This clause deals with application for and grant of authority to prospect, and reads—

> "Any person may apply to the Minister for an authority to prospect for coal on any land."

That is a far-reaching type of provision. Does it mean that the owner of a property has no legal right to refuse anyone the right to prospect on his land? That is what it looks like to me if I read the clause correctly, and I should like some clarification on the matter.

Does it mean that any person can go to the Minister and get a permit or authority to prospect and then go on the land no matter where it is situated, what inconvenience it may put the owner of the property to, or what injury it might do to his crops or to a workshop or anything like that? One might have a workshop like the Ipswich

Railway Workshops, which has for many years refused an application by the Klondike Company to prospect under it because of the fear that the installations there might be damaged.

I am anxious to protect the interests of the owner of any property and to specify that if someone wanted to prospect in an area where there was an industry that required non-interference he could be refused the right to prospect for coal on that land. This clause refers to "any person" and "any land". That is the position I am trying to avoid.

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (2.54 p.m.): In my introductory speech I said that the rights of freeholders would be protected and before the holder of a licence could enter land with a prospector's licence he would have to obtain a permit to enter under the Mining on Private Land Act. The provisions of that Act will apply.

There are many cases in which we exempt land to prevent people from going onto it. The property-owner may have a home or some agricultural land there. That is all protected with the issue of the prospector's licence.

Mr. Donald: You still have the authority to say, "You cannot."

Mr. EVANS: Yes.

Clause 14, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 15 to 31, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 32—Repeal of and new s. 80; Winding engine to be in the charge of a licensed person——

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (2.55 p.m.): Paragraph (2) of this clause reads—

> "Any inspector may issue a winding permit subject to such conditions as he may deem fit, to a person who, in the opinion of the inspector, is a competent person and who holds a medical certificate referred to in section eighty-one of this Act and any inspector (whether the same or another inspector) may, from time to time, vary the conditions upon which the same has previously been issued or renewed."

The clause in the Coal Mining Acts reads as follows—I will not read the whole of it, only the relevant part—

> "Except in the case of applications made under rule one hundred and three, satisfactory evidence that during the twelve months immediately preceding the application the applicant has had, under the supervision of the holder of a winding license, six months' practice, amounting to not less than twelve hours per week, in driving at a shaft of the type and on a winding engine of the class in respect of which the license is applied for;"

It continues—

> "The evidence in the case of paragraph (b) of this rule shall be a statutory declaration in the prescribed form, and the evidence in the case of paragraphs (c) and (d) shall be the engine-driver's certificate, which shall be produced to the Board. The evidence in the case of paragraph (e) shall consist of a document certifying to the applicant's competency, obtained from some source or authority recognised by the Board, or shall be the passing of a special examination which may be held by the Board."

I feel that every precaution should be taken to ensure that a man who is given a permit to drive a winding engine should be qualified, and not qualified merely because some inspector regards him as competent. I will not repeat what I said previously about qualifications, but in addition to studying and qualifying for a first-class steam engine driver's licence he has to put in the practice under the supervision of a first-class winding driver to qualify for his time to sit for the examination for a winding licence. If I read the clause correctly, the only qualification he would need would be that in the opinion of the inspector he was a competent person to control the engine. I feel that it is a dangerous procedure, and I want to voice my opposition to it.

The same clause provides—

> "Winding engines operated underground not exceeding 10 brake horsepower. A competent person not being the holder of a winding license granted or a winding permit issued under this Act may operate or be in charge of a winding engine which is operated underground and which—
>
> (a) is powered by air or electricity or is operated by the force of gravity;
>
> (b) is of a size not exceeding ten brake horsepower;
>
> (c) has been installed in such manner as an inspector has approved;
>
> (d) is operated under such conditions as an inspector has approved; and
>
> (e) is not being used to raise or lower a man."

Even though it may not be used to haul a man, danger can come from this winding equipment. It can occur in the hauling of timber, rails, cement or any equipment. Injury can occur if the winding engine is in the hands of an unqualified person. The Minister in charge of the Bill is just as anxious as I am to have the conditions of work as safe as possible. I feel that we are departing from the safety rule, even if the engine is small in horsepower capacity, by allowing it to be operated by unqualified persons. I should like some assurance that my suspicions that this is a dangerous practice are unfounded.

Mr. INCH (Burke) (3 p.m.): I should like to support the remarks of the hon. member for Ipswich East. I agree that these permits should not be issued unless some previous period of training has been given to the applicants. It appears to me from reading the clause that an inspector could get anybody at all, give him some sort of examination, according to his own ideas, and then pass him as fit and competent to handle a winding engine up to 30 brake horsepower. Those who have handled winding engines know that there are safety measures on the big ones, but it is quite possible that there may not be any safety measures on some of the smaller ones. What about overwind, overspeed, overload, and that sort of thing? What would these people know about those things if they had not had a certain period of training? I do not agree with this provision. Applicants for permits should be given a special period of training under a licensed winding engine driver. Frankly, I do not think permits should be issued. Applicants should have to do a full period of training and sit for the examination. I realise that in the past small Holman hoists have been temporarily set up in shafts to assist gougers and small operators. What the Minister said about the 30-h.p. engines may be very laudable; it was also very laudable to set up the small hoists temporarily in small mines but they are now being used by big mining interests. We will find now that eventually big mining interests are going to have unlicensed winding drivers on 30-h.p. engines, while licensed winding engine drivers are walking around with certificates in their hands but with no machines available for them to drive. If there is a machine there, even if it is only 30 h.p., or even only 10 h.p., if it is available to be driven by a licensed winding engine-driver, I see no reason at all why another man should be allowed to use it.

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (3.4 p.m.): Clause 31 deals with winding engines and is identical with the provision in the Mines Regulation Act. There has been considerable discussion on this proposed enactment, which appears to offer a solution to problems met in modern mining.

The provisions contained are for—

(a) Issue of winding licences:

(b) Issue of winding permits;

(c) The operation of winding engines under 10 horsepower used underground;

(d) For persons to be licensed as winding drivers;

(e) Exemption in the case of automatically operated winding engines.

In the case of (a), the multiplicity of licences will be removed and one type of licence, with variations to meet particular circumstances, will be issued upon the applicant's satisfying the requirements of the board of examiners.

A winding permit will be issued by an inspector to a competent person for use at a specific mine. The conditions of issue will be a matter for the inspector; but it has been determined that the scope and form of examination of applicants to be conducted by the inspector will be to a standard laid down by the chief inspector, who may, of course, consult with the board of examiners so that there is uniformity throughout the State in the case of both coal and metalliferous mines.

Clause 32, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 33 to 49, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

MINERS' HOMESTEAD LEASES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (3.7 p.m.): I move—

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

In presenting the Bill to the House for the second reading, I can only confirm the remarks I made when introducing it. I again state that it is a good Bill and that the amendments contained in it are sound. Basically all that the Bill does is give the opportunity to home builders, including people over 18 years of age and under 21, to obtain finance with a minimum of trouble and give them justice if their land is resumed.

Some members might consider that, by giving leaseholders the instrument of lease before the required improvements are erected, we are giving speculators the opportunity to obtain higher prices for their unimproved leases. This is not so. I did consider inserting a clause in the Bill to forbid the transfer of any lease before the improvements were erected, but to my mind this could have imposed hardship in some cases. Under the Act I have the power to approve or reject transfers and there is no appeal from my decision. Consequently, any special provision is unnecessary. However, I will instruct my district officers that, when they refer a proposed transfer to me, they must not recommend the approval of the transfer of any lease where the improvements have not been erected unless there are extenuating circumstances and they advise me fully of those circumstances. I can assure hon. members that my approval of these transfers will not be given lightly.

Another point that may have raised some doubts in the minds of members is the extension of time from six months to 12 months for the erection of the required improvements. This amendment is brought about by the fact that originally the Act required the holder to erect improvements to the value of only £25, whereas since 1957 the value of the improvements to be erected has been determined by the Minister.

In towns such as Mt. Isa this could be £750 or, in some cases, much higher. The ordinary home builder has not the ready cash available and must obtain finance from some lending authority. I am sure hon. members will agree that it is reasonable to give the holders 12 months instead of six months to arrange finance, call tenders, sign contracts with builders, and have the builders erect the improvements to the required amount.

With regard to compensation payable on resumption, this merely gives leaseholders justice. I mentioned the other day what happened in the case of a resumption at Gympie. The woman concerned had an overdraft of £1,100-odd and under the old Act her compensation was valued at about £150. I supported strongly the making of an ex gratia payment to her of what we thought the value was, and I think that she received £1,700. This gives the right to have a real valuation put on the property to which people are entitled because they have conformed with the conditions of the lease and the land is really their land.

There is, however, one point I should like to make clear, and that is the compensation to be paid for the holder's interest in the land. Naturally this will vary in all cases, and hon. members can rest assured that speculators who take up land in anticipation of early resumption and the payment of large sums for their interest in the land will be disappointed. I am sure that the wardens and, if necessary, the Land Court, will give determinations that give justice to both the leaseholders and the State.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Motion (Mr. Evans) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

(The Chairman of Committees Mr. Hooper, Greenslopes, in the chair)

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendments to s. 3; Interpretation—

Mr. INCH (Burke) (3.12 p.m.): I ask for some clarification of Clause 2, which allows non-residents of mining fields to take up leases for the purpose of retirement or the building of flats or houses. What restrictions, if any, is it intended to place on these leases? Will they be confined to half an acre, 1 acre, 3 acres, or 5 acres? I am concerned at the prospect of large miners' homestead perpetual leaseholdings on the fringes of towns eventually restricting their growth and making difficulties in town planning. I do not wish to see home building prevented on the fringe areas of, for example, Mt. Isa.

There has been some inflation in land values at Mt. Isa, and we do not wish to see a growth of speculation. I shall be pleased if the Minister could give some indication of the sizes of the leases that people from other areas will be permitted to hold.

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (3.14 p.m.): I can assure the hon. member for Burke that this amendment has been introduced because there are now so many dead mines in areas where people want to reside. They could not take up miners' homestead leases because they did not live there. People wanting to retire will not be requiring large areas. They will be of small size; we certainly will not allow the taking up of large areas, which could prevent other people from settling in thriving towns. If any of us want to go to Charters Towers, Gympie, or any of many other mining areas, and take up miners' homestead leases, we should be able to do so. We are not going to allow speculators to take up large areas, particularly in towns where mining is in operation.

Clause 2, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 6, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

The House adjourned at 3.16 p.m.