Queensland



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[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER 1964

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

QUESTIONS

TELEVISION INSURANCE CONTRACTS.—Mr. Lloyd for Mr. Duggan, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Justice,—

In view of some malpractices that have been alleged in relation to the retailing of television sets, by which means the company which insures the sets when purchased is later taken over by another company and this second company refuses to honour the contract made with the first company by the purchaser for repairs and service, despite previous written notification of the transfer of this liability by the first company to the second company, and as this practice entails the purchaser in additional expenditure, as well as being subject to pressure to take out another service cover policy with the second company, and the profiteering potential of this sharp trading practice is extensive, will he take steps to protect the public from such malpractices?

Answer:—

"Legislation relating to insurance or what may be here termed as commercial activities does not come within the administration of the Department of Justice. The Honourable Member is requested to submit his Question to The Honourable the Minister for Industrial Development."

RAILWAY FREIGHT REBATES ON EXPORT GOODS.—Mr. Lloyd for Mr. Duggan, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) To assist the national export drive, is it the policy of the Railway Department to grant freight rebates to commercial organisations as an incentive towards improvement of their exports?

(2) If so, (*a*) what are the names of the firms concerned and/or the type of goods conveyed; (*b*) what is the percentage rebate on freights that is granted; and (*c*) what was the total amount of rebate involved over the three years ended June 30 in 1962, 1963 and 1964?

Answers:—

(1) "The Railway Department has always adopted the policy of granting concessional freight rates to assist industry, both in connection with the initial establishment of the industry and in the marketing of its products."

(2) "Because of his years as Minister for Transport, I am sure the Honourable Member will be aware of the magnitude of the clerical work which would be involved in taking out the figures he has requested. Because of the expense which would be incurred, I do not consider that such occupancy of time is justifiable."

INCREASED ANNUAL LEAVE AND WAGES FOR CROWN EMPLOYEES.—Mr. Lloyd, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) As the Commonwealth Arbitration Court has granted three weeks' annual leave to industry, will he give consideration to extending to public servants, nurses and other Governmental employees the privilege of an extra week's annual leave in view of the doubt as to the powers of the Industrial Commission in this matter?

(2) In view of the recent agreement reached within the metal trades industry providing for a wage increase of 22s. 6d. per week, will he give consideration to extending this increase to Governmental employees?

Answers:—

(1) "Notwithstanding the granting by the Commonwealth Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission of extra annual leave to certain sections of industry, there has not been a corresponding increase in the ordinary annual leave entitlement of officers of the Commonwealth Public Service whose basic annual leave is still as heretofore, namely 3 weeks per annum. The circumstances referred to by the Honourable Member for Kedron therefore do not lend themselves to the inquiry which he makes seeing that comparable Commonwealth and Queensland Public Servants are being granted similar annual leave."

(2) "The capitulation under industrial duress of certain Metal Trade Industrial Establishments to Union demands is not a good ground for the granting of general wage increases which, in industrial equity and in accordance with recognised industrial procedure, should be decided by the State Industrial Commission upon the application of interested Unions."

ALLEGED SLEEPING ON DUTY, NORTH QUEENSLAND TRAIN CREWS.—Mr. Armstrong, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

In view of the statement in "*The Courier-Mail*" of Wednesday, September 2, attributed to the Honourable Member for Townsville North, when speaking on the Address in Reply debate, that "Railway train crews in North Queensland admit that they go to sleep on the job," will he cause an enquiry to be made into such allegation?

Answer:—

"I have read Hansard proofs containing the somewhat amazing charges made by the Honourable Member for Townsville North, concerning railway engine crews whom he describes as dangerous men who go to sleep while in charge of locomotives. If the Honourable Member has any definite proof of this, then, as a responsible citizen, he has a duty to immediately lodge such information with me in the interests of protection of the travelling public and of public property. To date, I have received no advice from the Honourable Member, other than his statement made under privilege in this House. It is true, however, that there are some cases where train-men at Townsville are working in excess of normal shifts, but this is not unusual during the busy livestock and sugar cane seasons of the year. The General Manager at Townsville, assures me that he has not received any report of any crew admitting they go to sleep on the job——in fact, there is evidence that working of overtime with the attendant increase in wages is welcomed by the majority of railway men, their wives and families. However, in view of the advocacy of the Honourable Member for Townsville North for a reduction in the pay envelopes of certain railway men in North Queensland, consideration will be given to his suggestion, but I would remind him that if more men are transferred to North Queensland now, and then later when seasonal conditions are past and Northern men become surplus at certain depots and have to be transferred,

causing consequential disturbance of their families and their domestic arrangements, the General Manager will have no alternative but to point out that such disturbance could have been avoided. The policy of the Government is to protect the security of employment of the trainmen at present stationed in the North. In fairness to such employees, I do not concede that they are dangerous men who go to sleep on the job."

UNDESIRABLE TRADE PRACTICES.—Mr. Sherrington, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Justice,—

In view of the growing dissatisfaction by housewives generally, as expressed by the various organizations, concerning undesirable trade practices in connection with the sale of goods,—

(1) Have there been any further conferences between the Ministers for Justice throughout the Commonwealth to provide uniform legislation to control these undesirable methods of advertising and packaging?

(2) Will he take action under Section 54 (2) of the Weights and Measures Act, by prescribing standard specifications for packages where there is evidence of blatant misleading of the public by the use of oversize cartons or containers used in the marketing of a product?

(3) Will he further invoke Section 39 (1) of the same Act to deal with misleading advertising of articles offered for sale?

Answer:—

(1, 2 and 3) "Uniform legislation relating to these matters has not been one for the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General. The Honourable Member is advised to direct his Question to The Honourable the Minister for Labour and Industry who administers weights and measures legislation in Queensland."

PARCELS OFFICE, TOWNSVILLE RAILWAY STATION.—Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

Has finality been reached concerning the proposed new parcels office at the Townsville Railway station and, if so, where will it be situated and what form will it take?

Answer:—

"A suitable plan layout has now been completed. A decision as to the availability of funds for the carrying out of the work will be made very shortly."

ROYALTY ON METAL, CHARTERS TOWERS. —Mr. Lonergan, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Local Government,—

What is the amount of revenue derived by way of royalty on metal removed from mullock heaps in the Charters Towers City Council area?

Answer:—

"Gross revenue since January 1, 1960, has totalled £2,485 1s. 3d."

BLASTING OPERATIONS AT STERLING QUARRY, THE GAP.—Mr. Lickiss, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

(1) Is he aware of what appeared to be an uncontrolled explosion which occurred at the Sterling Quarry at Waterworks Road, The Gap, on Tuesday, September 1?

(2) Is he aware that serious damage was occasioned to property in the area and that human life was endangered?

(3) Will he instigate a full investigation into the operation of the quarry, bearing in mind its proximity to settled residential areas?

(4) Will consideration be given to the cessation of activities at the quarry in view of the public nuisance and danger involved in its continued operation?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Yes."

(3) "I have already obtained a report on this incident. As a matter of fact, when it was ascertained that this explosive charge had been prepared, and was ready for detonation, two of my Inspectors of Mines proceeded to the quarry, to gauge the degree of vibration, caused by the explosion. My Inspectors are of the opinion, that the blast was overcharged. An instruction has been issued to the quarry operators, that no major blasting is to proceed, without prior notification to my Department, so that any future blasting programme can be carefully examined, to ensure adequate precautions are taken. Furthermore, action is proceeding to revise the rules, relating to quarry operations, with a view to obviating a repetition of this incident. My Inspectors are investigating, to see whether the Mines Regulation Acts have been breached. If they have, appropriate action will be taken. I would mention at this point, that this quarry comes under the Mines Regulation Acts, These Acts are to protect the health, and safety of workers at the quarry. They do not cover safety to persons, or property, beyond the quarry. That is the responsibility of the Brisbane City Council, which gives a permit for a quarry to operate, in a suburban area. The Brisbane City Council also controls the blasting procedure, as it issues the permit to blast, and has the power to refuse a permit, where there is risk to life or property. Crown Law opinion has confirmed this, and as far back as 1953 the Brisbane City Council was informed by my Department, as to its responsibilities, in regard to residents in nearby areas."

(4) "As will be seen from the foregoing, the matters of public nuisance, and danger, are clearly the responsibility of the Local Authority and not the Government. The issue, or withdrawal of a permit, to carry on these quarrying operations, are functions of the Brisbane City Council. The quarry is not on a mining title, and I have no power to finalise its operations."

ACCOMMODATION, MITCHELL RIVER AND EDWARD RIVER MISSIONS.—Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

In view of the urgency existing at Mitchell River and Edward River Missions to have more suitable accommodation to overcome the present overcrowding and the fact that with the onset of excessively hot weather these conditions will be aggravated,—

(1) When will tenders for the construction of Mission homes close?

(2) Do tenders provide for the supply of materials and construction?

(3) Is there a time limit in the contract?

(4) When will tenders be considered?

(5) Has any provision been made as to the method of transport of materials?

Answers:—

(1) "Tenders for the construction of the Mission homes were opened at 2 p.m. on September 2, 1964."

(2) "Yes."

(3) "Yes."

(4) "Tenders will be considered on completion of their analyses and examination, which commenced immediately tenders were opened."

(5) "No."

EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS.—Mr. Knox, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

In view of the Answer of the Minister for Labour and Industry to my Question on September 2 wherein he revealed that there had been an increase of 52,200 in the number of people employed in Queensland since 1957, what have been the steps taken by the Country-Liberal Government to improve employment opportunities in this State which have resulted in this increased employment?

Answer:—

"As a Government we have improved employment opportunities in this State, principally by creating the right climate for investment by private enterprise, plus Government expenditure on developmental projects. These are some of the important things that are happening in the State as a result of Government policy and which are decisive factors in the increased employment: Two large oil refineries at the mouth of the Brisbane River under construction; A big dredging scheme to improve the port of Brisbane; Three great thermal power stations on the West Moreton, Callide and Collinsville coalfields; Annual production at Moura coalfield to reach 1½ million tons in 1967; Site preparation for the world's largest single alumina plant at Gladstone; Unprecedented period of expansion in the sugar industry; £64 million spent by Mt. Isa Mines on a ten-year expansion programme by end of 1965; Expansion of Queensland meat industry in western and northern beef roads, and Fitzroy Basin brigalow land development scheme; The Moonie pipeline; Oil strike at Alton, and a series of gas strikes in the Surat-Bowen basins; Since the Government came into power many new manufacturing industries have been opened. In the five years from 1957-1958 to 1961-1962, 45 major manufacturing companies came to Queensland and some 141 longer established companies launched into new fields of production or expanded their existing industries. In the last financial year 22 new major industries were announced or opened, and 25 companies embarked on expansion programmes. Industry is the whole basis of employment and since it first came to office the Government created—and has maintained—a climate for investment. Many new industries have been opened and at the present time projects worth more than £300 million are under way in the State. It can truthfully be said that there is not one engineering works in the State at present that is not working to capacity. I emphasise that the development of such things as Weipa bauxite, Kianga coal, and the oil search have all resulted from Government policy. Furthermore, public works, such as school building and main roads development have all added to security of employment. Another considerable factor has been the expansion of primary industry."

FLOOD-LIGHTING, BADDOW RAILWAY YARDS.—Mr. Davies, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

As the lighting at Baddow Railway yards, Maryborough, is still unsatisfactory, will he arrange for the installation of two flood-lights?

Answer:—

"By way of reply to a question on September 11, 1963, I informed the Honourable Member that improved yard lighting would be provided at Baddow. Such included two additional flood-lights as now mentioned by the Honourable Member and I would point out to him that they were, in fact, installed in June last."

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Financial Statements, Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Fund.

Amendments to the Coal Mining Certificate and Winding License Rules of 1964.

PERSONAL STATEMENTS

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) (11.20 a.m.), by leave: This morning the Minister for Transport, in reply to a question by the hon. member for Mulgrave, deliberately or otherwise misquoted something I said in this

House on Tuesday last. Firstly, he said that I had advocated a reduction in the wages of railway workers in Townsville. That is completely untrue, and I want my denial to go on record.

Secondly, he quoted me out of context when he said that I described railwaymen in Townsville who go to sleep on the job as dangerous men. I think in all fairness I should be allowed, from my notes, to repeat what I did say on that occasion. According to my notes, this is what I said—

> "Because of that, train crews are forced to work long hours. I should say that if train crews work 12, 14 and 16 hours in one shift, they are dangerous men. If they are forced to work those long hours and take trains out for long periods, they are certainly dangerous. They go to sleep. They will admit that they do, and such admission is not derogatory to them because they are forced to work these long hours. If they ask for relief they are laughed at."

I think in all fairness the Minister should have quoted me correctly.

Mr. KNOX (Nundah) (11.23 a.m.), by leave: On Tuesday last, during the course of my Address-in-Reply speech I made reference to a case that had been brought before me which, because of its nature, I felt should be brought to public notice.

I referred to the fact that a citizen who lived in the electorate of Nundah, and who had lived in the area for 70 years, had applied some time ago to have part of his land subdivided. His application had been rejected by the Brisbane City Council and he had appealed against that decision. I also mentioned that a few days before the matter was to have been heard by the delegate of the Minister for Local Government the Brisbane City Council resumed all the land, including that on which the appellant's house stood, that portion which he was seeking to subdivide, and that portion which he had not sought to subdivide. I went on to say that when the matter of the subdivision appeal was brought before the Minister's delegate the Brisbane City Council claimed that the appellant had no case as at that stage all the land belonged to the Brisbane City Council. I further said that the action of the Brisbane City Council in doing this was morally unjustified.

Yesterday—Wednesday, 2 September—the Leader of the Opposition sought a ruling on a question of privilege claiming that I had raised a matter which was the subject of a decision by the Supreme Court. The matter raised by the Leader of the Opposition was one relating to the question of the jurisdiction of the Minister's delegate, and was not mentioned by me in my speech nor was it alluded to by inference. In the preparation of my speech I took particular care, as always, to see that the privilege of the House would not be prejudiced, and consulted various authorities before proceeding.

In regard to the case I mentioned, I am not aware that any legal proceedings endeavouring to restrain the Brisbane City Council from resuming the land in question have commenced, although in due course, should the owner be in a position to do so, there could be.

In this case, as in all cases of apparent victimisation of the citizen, I feel it is my bounden duty as an elected member of the Legislative Assembly to bring the matter to the notice of this Assembly.

CHARITABLE FUNDS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. P. R. DELAMOTHE (Bowen—Minister for Justice): 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 Charitable Funds Acts, 1958 to 1962, in a certain particular."

Motion agreed to.

TRUSTEES AND EXECUTORS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. P. R. DELAMOTHE (Bowen—Minister for Justice): 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 enactments relating to trustees and executors, and for other purposes."

Motion agreed to.

PERCY RAYMUND SMITH DECLARATORY BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (11.27 a.m.): I move—

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

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE

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

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—Membership of Legislative Assembly—

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (11.28 a.m.): I will not delay the Committee for long. I think we are indebted to the hon. member for South Brisbane for explaining just what the duties of Judge-Advocate-General of the R.A.A.F. really consist of. He told us that the Judge-Advocate-General of the R.A.A.F. is merely a legal adviser or a legal "tip-off" to a court martial. He merely advises the court martial on points of law concerning procedure. So he does not act as a judge; he does not act as an advocate; he does not act as a

general. The title of Judge-Advocate-General is a lot of flamboyant verbiage and nonsense, probably inherited down through the ages from Great Britain. I think we are indebted to the hon. member for South Brisbane for stripping the position of Judge-Advocate-General of all the nonsensical verbiage attaching to it by that title.

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) (11.30 a.m.): There is one brief point I wish to add concerning the duties of Judge-Advocate-General. I sincerely hope that this particular person, Percy Raymund Smith, in his position of importance and power will do something through his advocacy and the powers we are giving him to correct the decisions that can be made by a court martial. I refer now particularly to penalities. I hope that by his activities he will in due course remove many of the barbaric regulations that are at present written into the Air Force regulations, particularly in certain subsections of Regulation 425.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Clause 2 of the Bill deals with membership of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. BENNETT: Under this measure we are giving the hon. member for Windsor protection in this Legislative Assembly to allow him to carry out his duties as Judge-Advocate-General. I want to make the very short point that in the carrying out of those duties I hope he will do his best to have the regulations amended. One regulation refers to any Air Force man who has passed his medical, physical and educational tests——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is completely off course. Unless he returns to the clause under discussion, which deals with the position of the hon. member for Windsor in the Legislative Assembly, I am afraid I cannot allow him to continue.

Mr. Aikens: You should have raised this point at the introductory stage.

Mr. BENNETT: I exhausted my time at the introductory stage.

Clause 2 of the Bill says—

> "So far as relates to the holding by the said Percy Raymund Smith, and whether before, or after, or partly before and partly after the passing of this Act, of the offices of Acting Judge Advocate General, Deputy Judge Advocate General, or Judge-Advocate-General of the Royal Australian Air Force, it is hereby declared—
>
> (a) that section five of 'The Officials in Parliament Acts, 1896 to 1964,' does not apply and never has applied;"

If Percy Raymund Smith is prepared to see that certain amendments are effected to the Air Force regulations I will wholeheartedly support this clause, but if he is not I am not prepared to agree to it. I give one instance. A member of the Air Force can be put on a restricted diet; he can be given only 1 lb. of bread a day and water, with no other food or means of sustenance. That is returning to the barbaric days of our inglorious past. I sincerely hope that the hon. member for Windsor will do something to bring these regulations into line with modern thinking and that he will also take action on many other penalties contained in the Air Force regulations.

Clause 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Nicklin, by leave, read a third time.

TREASURY FUNDS INVESTMENT ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Chatsworth—Treasurer) (11.33 a.m.): I move—

> "That a Bill be introduced to amend the Treasury Funds Investment Acts, 1958 to 1960, in certain particulars."

This Bill is a simple measure to correct an anomaly. When the Treasury Funds Investment Act of 1958 was drafted, the power of the Treasurer to make investments of Treasury funds was given to the Corporation of the Treasurer of Queensland.

There was already in existence a separate corporation styled the Corporation of the Treasurer of Queensland, constituted under and for the purposes of the Harbours Acts. Hence, there were two separate corporations with the one name, a position which could lead to confusion.

As they stand, the Treasury Funds Investment Acts do not allow investments to be made in the name of the Treasurer of Queensland, although for some time such investments have, in fact, been made in that name.

In the circumstances, the Bill which I now present deletes all reference in the Treasury Funds Investment Acts to a corporation in the name and style of the Corporation of the Treasurer of Queensland and substitutes the Treasurer of Queensland as the authority by whom investments under the Acts may be made.

It is also proposed under the Bill to validate all investments made in the name of the Treasurer of Queensland since 19 December, 1958, when the Treasury Funds Investment Act became effective.

Mr. Aikens: Can you give us any idea how much money has been made as a result of short-term investment?

Mr. HILEY: I could not give the actual amount, but it has been some hundreds of thousands of pounds a year.

Mr. Aikens: That was not made before this Act?

Mr. HILEY: That is right.

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (11.37 a.m.): I will not delay the Committee long on this matter. The Treasurer's explanation bears out what I have said on so many occasions, that is, that very often the title of a portfolio is changed and then the title of an Act has to be changed to bring it into line with that new title. As an example, the Minister for Primary Industries was previously the Minister for Agriculture and Stock. There have been quite a number of alterations of that kind, so there seems to be necessary reason for this Bill.

The services of the Parliamentary Draftsman could be used to more advantage if some carte blanche authority was given to him to draft legislation of a blanket nature to obviate the need to deal with cases such as this. Too much of our time is taken up in putting these things into the proper and appropriate form. However, as it is the opinion of the Government that this amendment is necessary to safeguard the validity of the Act, it would be unwise not to accept that expert advice. It seems to be a mere technicality. It is pleasing to hear that because of this particular statute many thousands of pounds have been won for the Treasury of this State.

The Treasurer has indicated that there is a need for this amendment, so I support it.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (11.39 a.m.): Members of this Assembly have frequently heard me express the opinion that it would be a tragedy if a member of a particular profession became the Minister of the Crown controlling that profession. I had in mind the office of Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, and also that of Minister for Health, because in my opinion Ministers who are members of those professions would be concerned more with protecting the profession than with protecting the public.

I am happy to say, however, that that remark does not apply to the present occupant of the office of Treasurer. He is a qualified accountant, and in the control of the Treasury Department he has been able to use the knowledge he gleaned in that capacity. He has used that knowledge in the interests of the people of Queensland.

Mr. Bennett: Dr. Noble did not use his position unfairly. Your criticism would not apply to him.

Mr. AIKENS: We will let the dead past bury its dead. If the hon. member for South Brisbane cared to read "Hansard" or attended the sittings of Parliament more often, he would know that I have made specific references to doctors holding the office of Minister for Health, and he would also have heard me refer to the late Dr. Noble as being unable to do things he wanted to do because of pressure applied to him by the medical profession. He is dead, and I hold his memory in the highest regard. Let us deal with the Minister for Justice or anyone else who is alive. I like to deal with the living and allow the dead to rest in peace.

The Treasurer has been able to use his knowledge of accountancy in the interests of the people of this State. Prior to the passing of the original Act in, I think, 1958, it was the custom to allow these very large sums of money that are credited to various departments and semi-governmental instrumentalities to lie virtually idle in the bank till the departments or instrumentalities could use them. It was the Treasurer who, from his knowledge and practice of the profession of accountancy, had the brilliant idea that it would be a good thing if money lying idle for nine or ten months could be placed in short-term investments and thus return something to the State. That has been done since 1958, and this amendment is merely to clean up some small legal technicality that has arisen as a result of the application of the original Act.

Mr. Duggan: The short-term money market is a comparatively recent development.

Mr. AIKENS: I am prepared to accept the statement of the Leader of the Opposition on that point, but at least we must give credit to the Treasurer who, because of his specialised accountancy knowledge, was able to grasp the opportunity when it was presented. I am not saying, of course, that another Treasurer might not have done the same.

Mr. Duggan: I said that.

Mr. AIKENS: Unfortunately the Leader of the Opposition does not speak as loudly or as lucidly as he used to. He has got into the habit of using what I might term a dignified mumble. He was once very lucid. As a matter of fact, he was very interesting and pleasant to listen to, and I request that he try to regain the timbre, loquacity, and lucidity that he once demonstrated for many years in this Chamber. We will then probably be able to understand what he is talking about.

When the Treasurer was speaking I asked him if he could give me some idea of how much money has come into the coffers of the State as a result of the application of the 1958 Act. Despite his monumental knowledge of these matters, naturally he was unable to give the figure offhand. He said it amounted to several hundreds of thousands of pounds, which is several hundreds of thousands of pounds the State has available that otherwise it would not have. My strictures and criticism referring to professional men holding ministerial positions in control of their own professions do not apply to accountants.

Motion (Mr. Hiley) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

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

ADDRESS IN REPLY

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—FOURTH ALLOTTED DAY

Debate resumed from 1 September (see p. 202) on Mr. Lee's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) (11.46 a.m.): Although I appreciate the contributions of the hon. member for Yeronga and the hon. member for Warwick in moving and seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, and although I realise that they have a responsibility to their respective parties, I believe that they were hampered and handicapped by the emptiness and inadequacy of the Government's plans for the development of Queensland as outlined in the Opening Speech delivered by His Excellency Sir Henry Abel Smith. I congratulate them on the excellent effort that they made under very adverse circumstances.

The hon. member for Yeronga is a newcomer to the Assembly, and I do not know him very well at this stage. However, on a recent visit to the aboriginal settlements I had an opportunity of furthering my acquaintanceship with the hon. member for Warwick, Mr. David Cory, who I found to be a very sincere, down-to-earth type of individual, a man who, if he were not handicapped by his political affiliations, would be capable of doing a very good job for his constituents. I congratulate him on the manner in which he seconded the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

The Governor's Opening Speech gives little or no indication of any substantial plans that this rift-racked Government has for the progress of Queensland, and I hope that His Excellency, who works very hard for Queensland, was not unduly depressed by the document that he was called upon to read. In passing, I might say that His Excellency retains the very high regard of the people of Queensland for his interest in the State and its development. I am sure that he will continue to do so, because the people of Queensland see in him the qualities necessary to enable a man to carry out all the duties of a Governor of the State.

The problems of housing, transport, traffic, and health, are given scant attention in the Governor's Opening Speech. Despite this, I hope that the Government has in mind plans and legislation that will further develop and improve these facilities. I have little doubt, however, that when the Estimates are presented the Minister for Housing will assure hon. members, as the Treasurer has done in years past, that the housing shortage in Queensland has been overcome. I have no doubt, too, that the appropriate Minister will assure us that Queensland, and Brisbane in particular, no longer has any traffic problems. Although those matters are not referred to in the Governor's Opening Speech, I am sure that the Government will attempt to rest on its laurels to a certain extent in that respect. However, I realise that, handicapped by a lack of ability in the younger members of its Cabinet and senility in the ageing ones, the Government is——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is speaking rather disparagingly of his fellow members of Parliament. His last remark is quite unparliamentary, and I ask him not to continue speaking in that strain.

Mr. MELLOY: I accept your ruling, Mr. Speaker, but I recall many occasions on which Government members have spoken very disparagingly of members of the Opposition.

Mr. SPEAKER: Not in my hearing.

Mr. MELLOY: Apparently the acoustics of the Chamber are very bad.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! By that remark the hon. member is casting reflection upon the Chair and I ask him to withdraw it. If he wishes to continue with his speech, he should do so in a proper manner.

Mr. MELLOY: I withdraw accordingly.

The Government is at present embarrassed by the buoyancy of the finances of the State, buoyancy that has been brought about by the boom in wool and sugar and the production of oil and bauxite, which have attracted to this State the favourable attention of overseas investors who, in no small manner are responsible for the financial buoyancy of the State. I do not agree that they were attracted here by the ability of the Government or by the possible security of investment engendered by the Government's legislation. They were attracted here by the natural deposits that are available to be worked by them and by the fact that investment in overseas countries has not the security which Australia's political stability provides.

I have no doubt that with capable and virile government such as the Australian Labour Party could provide, the future of Queensland would be assured.

Mr. Windsor interjected.

Mr. MELLOY: I heard the hon. member for Ithaca interject but I did not catch his words. However, I assume he was making some disparaging remark about the Australian Labour Party and its ability to govern. I assure him that the day is not far distant when the Australian Labour Party will return as the Government of this State. That time is not far off, if we are to be guided by the rift in the ranks of the Government parties, their difficulties in reconciling their views on the Senate ballot ticket and the apparent disinclination of certain members of one of the parties to mingle with members of the other in this Chamber, despite suggestions—I was going to say "instructions"—by the ruling body of that party that they should do so. I feel sure that those hon. members will not take advantage of the opportunity to

mingle with each other as they feel very deeply on the differences that exist in the Government parties at present.

Mr. Windsor: There are no differences.

Mr. MELLOY: I shall have something more to say on that score in a moment. The differences between the Government parties are very real.

To support my remarks I should like to refer to a speech that was made on Tuesday last by the hon. member for Nundah. He took the Australian Labour Party to task on the score of its failure to participate in the Yeronga by-election campaign and said that Labour members were subjected to severe censure as a result of that failure. I wish to correct his statement. As a matter of fact, I was one of 12 members of the Australian Labour Party members of this Assembly who took part in the Yeronga by-election campaign and there was no hesitation whatever on the part of any member of this party to play his part and support the Australian Labour Party candidate in that by-election. We have not been the subject of any censure or criticism by the controlling body of our party in relation to that by-election.

I think the hon. member for Nundah was given a task in his Address-in-Reply speech. I think he was charged with the responsibility of trying to soft-soap members of the Country Party, and to try to assure them that the Liberal Party was not concerned with the assumption of the role of the major party in the coalition. He spent 20 minutes of his time dealing with the split, which he claims does not exist. He spent 20 minutes telling us that it did not exist. I think he was given this job to do by his party's executive. By spending so much time on this matter he confirmed the fact that there was trouble in the ranks of the Government parties. I have no doubt that his remarks were not directed so much to members of the Opposition as to members of the Country Party in an attempt to allay their suspicions, to try to convince them, despite all this talk about the Liberal Party's taking over Country Party seats, that that was not intended, and that they could be assured that nobody in the Liberal Party intended to attempt to take over Country Party seats. But I feel quite sure that Country Party members are not going to be fooled; they will not be lulled into a feeling of false security by any attempts to distract their attention from the problem that faces them in Country Party seats.

Before proceeding to the various matters I propose to deal with, I should like to express my appreciation to the Minister for Education for his action in making it possible for certain members of the Opposition, together with Government members, to inspect aboriginal missions and settlements on the mainland and the Torres Strait islands. In view of the proposed legislation relating to the control of aboriginals and Torres Strait islanders, I think it was a very necessary and wise move. Anyone who has not visited the aboriginal settlements and the Torres Strait islands to make his own study of the their conditions would have no real conception of the problems facing their future progress. It is necessary to visit these places to realise the conditions under which these people live. That visit will provide excellent material for those who are able to make a contribution to the debate when the proposed legislation is introduced.

In reply to my question yesterday about the treatment of nurses at the Cherbourg settlement the Minister for Health referred to the policy of excessive paternalism that is being followed by the Government through the Department of Native Affairs. Rather than excessive paternalism it could well be described as repressive paternalism. I hope to have an opportunity at a later date to convey my impressions to the House. But once again I express my appreciation to the Minister for his action in allowing hon. members to make that trip to the various missions.

I shall deal now with certain matters concerning the health administration of the Government. In 1957 the late Dr. Noble outlined the policy to be followed by the Government in health services and hospitals and, as part of a 12-point plan, he said the Government would—

1. Maintain the free-hospital system in Queensland and provide more intermediate beds;
2. Decentralise the hospital system and provide cottage hospitals in suburbs;
3. Subsidise co-operative community hospitals and encourage the establishment of church hospitals;
4. Overhaul hospital administration;
5. Consider establishing a school of nursing; and
6. Tackle the shortage of doctors at country hospitals.

Let us look at the record of the Government in the implementation of this plan as outlined by Dr. Noble in 1957. Firstly, with reference to maintaining free hospitals and providing more intermediate beds, the Government did not provide more beds but altered the set-up by converting public wards into intermediate and sub-intermediate wards. The Minister introduced sub-intermediate wards by closing down certain portions of the public wards and providing movable or portable screens. Thus without removing patients from their beds he was able to convert public wards into sub-intermediate wards; the patients were not moved from the wards in which they were being treated. No extra beds were provided by this scheme but the number of public beds was reduced.

Four years later, in 1961, Arthur Richards wrote a series of articles about the hospital system in Queensland and reported that at

the Princess Alexandra Hospital, which he visited, two wards he examined—he looked over the whole of the hospital, as a matter of fact—built to contain 20 patients and 40 patients respectively, at the time of his visit contained respectively 40 beds and 70 beds. That is an indication of how the Government kept its promise to increase facilities at public hospitals. It was done in a manner detrimental to the patients who were unfortunate to be inmates of the hospital.

Upon the introduction of the sub-intermediate wards, patients who were too ill to know what was happening were asked to sign documents agreeing to their transfer to the sub-intermediate wards. This was done merely by the provision of removable partitions in the wards.

At the same time, the doctors voiced many complaints that the standard of the hospitals was too low, and that that was due to the Government's policy of restricting the number of patients in public hospitals and by the imposition of a greater amount of work on the staffs of those hospitals. Intense pressure was brought to bear on the doctors and nurses, who at that time were reported to have been forced to work up to 15 hours a day, which resulted in the quality of their services and work being seriously affected. That, in turn, must have seriously affected the progress of the patients.

Part of this Government's policy has been to restrict the amount of treatment made available to patients in those hospitals, because of a lack of adequate medical staff. No doubt the Minister could reply that the proportion of doctors to patients in hospitals at the present time is greater than it was five or six years ago, but that has come about, to a certain extent, by the policy adopted by the hospital authorities of restricting the admission of people in need of hospital treatment.

People are examined and advised to return to their homes and seek private treatment, or to return for treatment at a later stage.

I have heard of cases where people suffering from broken bones have presented themselves at a hospital and their condition has not been properly diagnosed. These people have been sent from the hospital when instead they should have been admitted. They have gone to a private doctor, who found they were suffering from broken limbs or other serious conditions.

This is heightened by the recent case, at present being reported in the Press, which had a tragic consequence. A person suffering from poisoning presented himself and members of his family at the hospital, and had to wait there in that serious condition, without treatment or attention, for 20 minutes or half an hour. Nobody bothered to take any notice of them. These people were of the opinion that they were not being properly attended to, so they left the hospital and consulted a private doctor.

I do not blame the staff for what happened on that occasion. Apparently there is nobody who is able to decide which are urgent cases and which are not. It is possible that on examination these people appeared to be under the influence of alcohol and that they were treated accordingly. I am not saying that they were, but apparently there was no method by which they could be classified as cases requiring urgent attention or whether they could be left until a routine examination could be made.

Mr. Hanlon: Doctors are discouraged from admitting them for observation.

Mr. MELLOY: That is true. The policy at present is not to admit patients unless their admission is considered to be absolutely necessary. As has been pointed out by the hon. member for Baroona, doctors are not encouraged to make admissions for observation. I think that if anyone presents himself claiming to have a serious complaint or with suspected poisoning, he should be admitted for observation. The position now is that no-one can go to the hospital with any certainty of receiving urgent treatment. Many people look upon the hospital as their first source of treatment if they become sick. Many of them perhaps do not feel able to afford to call in a private practitioner to diagnose their complaints, and are taken by their families to the General Hospital. There is no certainty that they will receive any urgent treatment that may be required. As I have already said, such a situation could well result in tragedy.

The second part of the plan enunciated by the late Dr. Noble was the decentralising of the hospital system and the provision of cottage hospitals in the suburbs. What has been done in this matter by the Government? Very little. There is not even an adequate clinic service in the hospitals. There are in my electorate pensioners who have to wait months for treatment at medical clinics. Those requiring dental treatment are put off for months, and eventually are denied the attention needed because, after a period of months, they have to lose the teeth for which they were seeking attention.

Pensioners at Cribb Island are dependent to a large degree on the service provided by medical clinics. Some of them were recently told to return to their private doctor if they wanted medical treatment. This happened because the doctor who had been visiting Cribb Island ceased to practise there, and these pensioners naturally had to attend the medical clinic which visits there weekly. They were told that they could not receive treatment at the clinic at Cribb Island because they had been receiving treatment from the private doctor. They were told to return to him. He, incidentally, has returned to his practice at Nundah, and attending there requires the additional expense of travelling from Cribb Island. Treatment should have remained available at the medical clinic at Cribb Island.

There has been constructed recently at St. Paul's Terrace a children's dental hospital. I do not know the exact amount spent in the reconstruction of the old school building and equipping it for this purpose, but I feel that the money spent on that hospital would have been better used on the provision of more facilities for dental treatment for country children. Every year the report of the dental service in schools reveals that thousands and thousands of children are unable to obtain adequate dental treatment. In my opinion, the money spent on the provision of that dental hospital could have been used better in the provision of additional road or rail travelling dental clinics. The services provided at the Dental Hospital at Turbot Street could have been continued and, as was suggested to the Minister for Health at the time, the premises that were being vacated by the University Faculty of Dentistry at Turbot Street could have been used to provide additional dental services for children.

Mr. Windsor: Johnno Mann will not like you saying that.

Mr. Mann: We always tell the truth.

Mr. MELLOY: The Children's Dental Hospital would have remained in the electorate of the hon. member for Brisbane if it had been established at Turbot Street, as I suggested.

The plan outlined provided for the subsidisation of co-operative hospitals, and it also would encourage the establishment of church hospitals. I wish to say something now about church hospitals, which in the majority of cases rely on public contributions for their establishment and maintenance. I know what was said by the Leader of the Opposition on this subject, but I believe that, by endorsing the Children's Hospital Foundation that has been established, the Government has done something that will be to the detriment of church hospitals. As I said, they rely heavily on public subscriptions, and the Children's Hospital Foundation will almost certainly make inroads into their sources of revenue.

In my opinion, the work that will be done by the Foundation is, and was, the responsibility of the State Government. It should provide the equipment and buildings that the Children's Hospital Foundation is going to provide. I believe, too, that the Government should accept its responsibility and leave the field of public donations to hospitals that depend upon public subscriptions for their maintenance. As a matter of fact, the public is already inundated with appeals for contributions; almost every second Sunday there is a house-to-house appeal by some organisation or public charity. If the Children's Hospital Foundation comes into this field of collections, it will add another burden to an already overburdened public.

It was outlined, also, that hospital administration would be overhauled. Since this Government came to power, the administration of hospitals has become less well known to the general public because of the Government's policy of restricting the availability of minutes of hospital board meetings. Recent legislation relating to hospitals increased the control of hospital boards over matrons. I did not agree with that; I thought the control should have been left as it was.

There are many examples of the way in which the Government has cracked down on the availability of information on the administration of hospital boards in Queensland. The position that is being created now is that the public will have no knowledge of the manner in which hospital boards are being conducted, nor will they have any idea of the pressures that are being brought to bear on hospital boards by the Government. Even the Premier cannot feel very happy about this suppression of board minutes, because in 1960, at Innisfail, he expressed the opinion that hospital board meetings should be open to the Press and to the public. At the same time the late Dr. Noble himself said that the matter was entirely one for board members to decide. My time is apparently running out and there are various other matters with which I wish to deal, so I shall skip certain remarks I wished to make on our hospital system.

I should like now to spend several minutes discussing the ambulance services of Queensland, and of Brisbane in particular, and to stress the inadequacy of the financial support given to the ambulance services of this State by the Government. This is an organisation providing a most essential and necessary service to the people of the State, and one which, I should say, should be an adjunct of the State's hospital service.

The Q.A.T.B. is providing many services to the hospitals of this State for which it is not receiving adequate recompense. For the benefit of the public, and for inclusion in "Hansard", I shall give details of the transport services that are provided by the ambulance brigade between hospitals and various institutions controlled by hospital boards in the metropolitan area alone. I will read through them very quickly so that the details can be placed on record in "Hansard". The number of patients transported between the North Brisbane Hospital and Princess Alexandra Hospital for the 12 months just ended totalled 1,028; from Princess Alexandra Hospital to the North Brisbane Hospital, 1,035 patients were transported; from North Brisbane Hospital to the Hospital for Sick Children there were 284 cases; from the Hospital for Sick Children to the North Brisbane Hospital, 180 cases; from the North Brisbane Hospital to the Dental Hospital, 60 cases; from the Dental Hospital to the North Brisbane Hospital, 58; from the North Brisbane Hospital to the Mater Public Hospital, 109; from the Mater Public Hospital to the North Brisbane Hospital, 136; from the Brisbane Women's Hospital to the Corinda Hospital, 183; from the Chermside

Chest Hospital to Princess Alexandra Hospital, 58; from the Princess Alexandra Hospital to the Chermside Chest Hospital, 86; from the Chermside Chest Hospital to the North Brisbane Hospital, 786; from the North Brisbane Hospital to the Chermside Chest Hospital, 1,571 cases.

Those figures will indicate the extent of the services provided by the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade in relation to our hospital services.

One other matter I wish to deal with is the introduction of a superannuation scheme for ambulance employees. The Government has failed to implement the superannuation scheme that has been approved by Cabinet and we are concerned as to why no legislation has been introduced by the Government to implement Cabinet's decision to provide superannuation for Q.A.T.B. employees. I hope that the time will not be long delayed when this superannuation scheme is introduced by legislation, because the Q.A.T.B. executive is at present fully prepared to implement such a scheme and the men are awaiting it with some anxiety.

I have a few words to say about the attitude of this Government towards juvenile delinquency. This is a very important matter and is one in which the Government could interest itself to a greater degree by providing assistance to youth clubs. It has failed to introduce any measure to deal adequately with the problem of juvenile delinquency, which is in sharp contrast to the work being done by the many youth clubs throughout the State.

(Time expired.)

Mr. PILBEAM (Rockhampton South) (12.26 p.m.): I take the opportunity afforded by this motion to express, on behalf of the good people of the modern and progressive city of Rockhampton and the expanding area of Central Queensland, our feelings of loyalty to Her Majesty and appreciation of the outstanding service performed by her representative in Queensland, Sir Henry Abel Smith. His Excellency has taken every opportunity to visit my area and to contact my people. He has gone out of his way to learn about our problems, and he has always evinced a very keen interest in our welfare. I am grateful to him for his interest and unqualified support.

I feel that on this occasion I should congratulate our newest arrival on the Parliamentary scene, the hon. member for Yeronga, for the excellent way in which he moved the motion. I should also congratulate my young friend, the hon. member for Warwick, on the way he seconded the motion. Both hon. members made excellent speeches.

I also take the opportunity to present the latest chapter in the story of Central Queensland. I am happy to present it in an atmosphere of high hope, at a time when we are about to enter an era of unprecedented progress. Five years ago, when I presented to this House my first report on Central Queensland, I presented it in a very different atmosphere—an atmosphere of doubt and near despair. At that time a desperate effort was being made by people in Central Queensland to build up a prosperous and separate economy for that part of the State, to develop Central Queensland's resources and to attract the attention of both Commonwealth and State Governments to a part of the State which had been hitherto sadly neglected. In support of my contention that this part of Queensland had been neglected I presented figures supplied by the Commonwealth Statistician which proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that Central Queensland had the lowest population rise of any part of Australia. In view of the depressed state of our part of Queensland, the Rockhampton people in particular set up a Research and Promotion Bureau and contributed £5,000 a year for a period of five years to finance it. The task of that body was to investigate the resources of the area and to promote cases for industrial growth wherever possible. I congratulate them on the work they have done and the progress they have substantially helped to achieve. It is fair to say that the efforts of those people, particularly the people in the local-government field in Central Queensland, have born fruit because Central Queensland's development is now being recognised everywhere as vital in any plan of national development.

To support my statement, I refer hon. members to a book recently written by three American research experts who were brought to Australia by the Australian Research Foundation. They published this book, called "The Development of Australia", after travelling 24,000 miles throughout the length and breadth of the land to investigate its various regions. They studied conditions in all parts of Australia and finally drew up a blueprint for integrating growth within our country, in which particular emphasis was placed on two parts of Australia, first, the Ord River district in Western Australia and, second, the Fitzroy River Basin. One passage from the book reads—

> "Central Queensland's development must play a leading part in Australian planning."

Those words by world experts from overseas, outside the influence of people in Australia, must surely justify my faith in Central Queensland and must remove from me any charge of parochialism in advancing its development.

We in Central Queensland are very conscious of the tremendous development being triggered off by such undertakings as the Callide power station construction, the alumina project, the coal development at Moura and Blackwater, oil exploration in the region, the brigalow-lands development scheme which is proving so successful, the grain-growing properties of the Central

Highlands, and the two agricultural valleys of the Dawson and the Callide, and the plans we are now interested in for the construction of major water-conservation schemes on the tributaries of the Fitzroy which must inevitably result, amongst other things, in the uplifting of the cotton industry in this area.

It is true that we are only on the threshhold of these great developments and that much hard work and sacrifice still lie ahead, but I am firm in my faith that most of us here will see tremendous progress in all these mighty endeavours.

It is fair to say that most of the problems that confronted us five years ago in Central Queensland still confront us today; we still have many problems to overcome. We must, for example, complete the vital highway from Rockhampton to Longreach, which I would describe as the backbone of Central Queensland.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr. PILBEAM: Those other roads are necessary, but the highway to which I refer is the real backbone. I cannot over-emphasise how necessary it is to Central Queensland's development. What good is it if we have all the heart and brain in the world if we have a dislocated spinal column? At present this road is a very serious dislocation.

Mr. O'Donnell interjected.

Mr. PILBEAM: The hon. member has made his speech, and I ask him to let me make mine.

I am very grateful to the Minister for Main Roads and to his helpful officers, particularly Mr. Don Young, the Assistant Commissioner at Rockhampton, for the work that has already been done on this road. At last certain vital steps for its advancement have been taken. Firstly, the Minister decentralised his department and Rockhampton has a reasonably autonomous section of the department, with an officer who can make and promulgate decisions without recourse to Brisbane.

Secondly, the Government gazetted the road from Rockhampton to Longreach in its State-wide plan. For years it was not a main road, and in effect it is still a bullock track between Emerald and Barcaldine. Even now it is very distressing for anyone to drive along it and do substantial damage to his car. It is also distressing to those who are keen on seeing Central Queensland advance, to be in a train on a wet night and see people leave their cars at the side of the road and enter the railway carriages because they cannot finish their journey otherwise.

I am grateful to the Minister for the action he has taken to improve that situation. He has guaranteed the expenditure of at least £600,000 a year for the next five years, but at the end of the five years we will have only a gravel road between Emerald and Barcaldine. We have not yet had advanced an adequate scheme to modify the grade in the Drummond Range section. Even when that road is finished it will be difficult to traverse the Drummond Range section, and that is a pretty sorry state in this modern road age.

Mr. Thackeray: A road running parallel with a railway line.

Mr. PILBEAM: The old theory that roads running parallel with railway lines are in opposition to them died many years ago. It is known now that highways running parallel with railway lines are complementary to them, and we have examples all over Queensland of the railway alone not being sufficient to cater for the growing population.

Mr. Bennett: Do you support the closing of branch lines?

Mr. PILBEAM: Yes. Two branch lines in the Rockhampton area have been closed, one to Ridgelands and the other to Emu Park. The former was closed by the Labour Government and the latter by this Government, and in both cases I support the decision.

We must get the road to the West completed. People do not realise how completely we are divorced from one of our main sources of primary products by the state of this road. I have here a map supplied to me by the Main Roads Department, which shows the road with a major break between Emerald and Barcaldine. I compare that with the highway between Barcaldine and Brisbane. In the first place we have a highway approximately 400 miles long, about half of which is bitumen, and in the second place a highway 700 miles long which, with the exception of a few small sections, is bitumen all the way. That is the basis of the appeal I make to the Minister on this road. I think that any road is a good road. I do not mind a bitumen road being constructed anywhere in Queensland, but I think our highway should be built as well as other main highways so that our people can compete with Brisbane to some extent. One road is responsible for decentralisation and the other for centralisation, and I think that roads which use the principle of decentralisation should be built at least at the same time as, if not before, roads direct to Brisbane.

I strongly support the action of the Government in the building of beef roads. I am gratified to see the latest substantial Commonwealth grant under this heading. The only representation I make to the Minister is that he should give consideration to bituminising the short Windorah-Yaraka section. That is the only request that has been made by the Rockhampton and Central Queensland interests as far as beef roads are concerned. It is vital that that section of the road be constructed because following the recent construction of a meat works at Biloela by Amagraze and the completion of

Field's meat works at Rockhampton, more cattle will be handled and they should be transported to the area over a bitumen roadway wherever possible.

It is a dangerous policy to build roads in areas that produce most wealth for the State. If this policy is slavishly adhered to it will lead to centralisation, not decentralisation. It is the Government's obligation to build roads in decentralised areas that are not making major contributions as well as in the more heavily populated areas.

A better air service is still required in Central Queensland. I am happy to acknowledge the co-operation extended to me by officers of Trans-Australia Airlines and Ansett-A.N.A. I am pleased to say that there is under consideration at present a new system of airline travel between Rockhampton and Brisbane which will operate from about December. Under it there will be a Viscount service to Rockhampton every day, which will make a big difference to the people of Rockhampton. A couple of the services envisaged in the new schedule are a little out of order in their times, but officers of the two airlines have agreed to study the proposals and to endeavour to meet the requirements of the people of Rockhampton and Central Queensland. I look forward to a very much improved air service in our part of Queensland as from December next.

We have also been upset in Rockhampton by long delays in trunk-line telephone calls. However, I am happy to acknowledge that the Postal Department has made available approximately 20 additional lines between the two centres, and there is now no delay in making trunk-line calls from Rockhampton to Brisbane. This did cause serious dislocation to commerce and was irksome to the business people of Rockhampton.

A system of tapering freights is still needed from the western areas of Queensland to Rockhampton. Such a system applies between western areas and the capital, and I am very grateful to the Minister for Transport because he will, in special instances, allow special rates. For the encouragement of industries, there is still present the obligation to allow comparable freight concessions for shorter distances, say, from Rockhampton to Brisbane. That is something that must be introduced if the industrial development of Rockhampton and Central Queensland is to be encouraged.

One of the most important requirements of Central Queensland is the pushing ahead with efforts to harness the waters of the mighty Fitzroy River. This is the second largest river system in Australia, being second only to the Murray-Darling system. In spite of this, it has not one water-conservation project along its entire length. Some idea of the great volume of water that goes to waste each day down the Fitzroy is gained when I mention that the flow is 5,500,000 acre-feet a day. That is three times the total capacity of the Snowy Mountains scheme.

In my first year in this House I was very perturbed to hear Ministers express the opinion that they favoured small weirs and were against large-scale irrigation projects. I am more than gratified now to find that they have changed their views and are in favour of a large-scale water-conservation scheme on the Nogoa River above Emerald. At the request of the Government, officers of the Commonwealth Bureau of Agricultural Economics are at present carrying out an economic study of this proposal. The areas proposed to be irrigated by gravity from this source are suitable for a wide range of crops, including pastures, lucerne, grain, and particularly cotton. Another major water-conservation scheme on the Dawson River at the Nathan Gorge would be even more important in the development of the cotton industry, but that scheme has been deferred pending further investigation of alternative proposals. In the interests of saving the cotton industry for Queensland—and this is most important—I strongly urge my Government to press for a rapid accomplishment of these proposals.

It has already been abundantly proved that the quantity of cotton that can be grown by rain only is not sufficient to supply Australian demands, and it certainly is not sufficient to supply Australian requirements at world prices. It is only in good seasons that rain-grown cotton is a profitable crop, and good seasons in Central Queensland are far too infrequent. With irrigation such as could be provided from these major conservation schemes on the Fitzroy River, not only would a greater quantity of cotton be provided; it would also be of a quality acceptable to the Australian spinning industry.

The vastness of the Australian market can be gauged from the fact that, on present consumption, the local industry absorbs 110,000 bales of raw cotton annually—that would cost about £6,000,000—and, in addition, Australia imports each year cotton and textile goods valued at approximately £45,000,000. Up to 1961, Queensland was the only State to contribute to Australia's cotton requirements and had the only two ginneries in Australia, one at Glenmore in Rockhampton and the other at Whinstanes in Brisbane. There are now six ginneries in Australia—the two in Queensland, two in the Namoi River area of northern New South Wales, one at Leeton in the Murrumbidgee area of New South Wales, and one at Ord River in Western Australia. The two New South Wales areas and the Ord River area have been producing expanding areas of cotton grown under irrigation, so much so that next season's Australian crop is assessed at 35,000 bales of raw cotton, of which Queensland's share is only 12,000 bales. However, there is an encouraging note even here, because the yield from irrigated cotton in Queensland in the last year was higher than that in either the Ord River area or the two New South Wales areas. The yields there have been rather disappointing, whereas the Queensland yield from cotton under irrigation has been very satisfactory.

We must realise, too, that although Queensland appears to be losing the race for supremacy as the premier cotton-producing State, it can pick up if it goes in for irrigation projects on the Fitzroy River at the earliest possible opportunity.

Another very real use is being made of the Fitzroy River adjacent to the city of Rockhampton. For many years the city had a false concept of the river's importance. It saw the river only as a means of providing navigation, but it has been found that keeping 50 miles of waterway navigable is completely uneconomic. The city now looks to the river as a means of getting water, particularly for industrial projects. For the past six years, with the co-operation of the university and the Department of Local Government, we have been making tests and investigating the possibility of putting a barrage across the river at Rockhampton to stop the encroachment of the tides and turn the Fitzroy there from a salt-water to a fresh-water stream. I am happy to report that the results of all investigations have been in favour of building the barrage and the design is now being drawn by engineers of the department. It is expected to be completed by June next year, and the barrage will then be constructed over a period of two years. When it is constructed, we shall be able to supply approximately 40,000,000 gallons of fresh water a day to the city of Rockhampton, which makes prospects for industrial development very favourable.

My report also includes a very substantial industrial increase in the Rockhampton scheme. At the present time the Central Queensland Cement Works are constructing the second and major part of their works at a cost of over £1,000,000. This involves the manufacture of cement from indigenous materials, and up to 200 men will be employed.

At Nerimbera, T. A. Field Pty. Ltd. are constructing a major and very modern meatworks which they hope to have in operation by March next year. In addition a substantial rebuilding programme is being undertaken by the other meatworks, the C.Q.M.E. Company and at the present time both works are engaged in drawing up plans for very large cold stores at Port Alma. The C.Q.M.E. Company has already completed its plans. It proposes to build its cold stores over the water in a well in the wharf and we hope that T. A. Field will do the same.

We have many other industrial developments. Two prefabricating steelworks are being set up at the present time. We also have the Queensland Can Company and Commonwealth Industrial Gas, and quite a few other smaller works such as Provincial Traders, Pioneer Ready-Mixed Concrete, and others already in operation. The prospects, industrially, in Rockhampton are starting to look very bright.

It is necessary for us, with this industrial expansion, to put all those other things I have discussed into the picture. It is necessary, for example that we harness the Fitzroy as it should be harnessed and that we get the transport lines to sources of produce firmly laid down in bitumen.

We are pressing forward in that direction and are getting results but it is necessary also that we develop two ports in Central Queensland. Statistical figures, for which I am grateful to Professor Greenwood who gave them at an Australian Institute of Management lecture at Rockhampton, show that Gladstone and Rockhampton together are at present exporting only 5 per cent of the total exports of the State. Those figures are unanswerable—they are taken from the statistical records of the State—and they show that a tremendous increase in exports can be expected over both those ports. It is recognised by the Australian Institute of Management which is constituted of some of the leading business men of the State, and also by all port authorities, that the development of Port Alma, as well as continued support for Gladstone, is necessary. That is the way we like to look at matters in Rockhampton.

Mr. Walsh: Has work stopped at Port Alma?

Mr. PILBEAM: Certainly not. There is plenty of work going on at Port Alma at present. I invite the hon. member for Bundaberg to travel up there and see for himself. He always takes an interest in Rockhampton but I suggest that, instead of sitting in the House, he go there and have a look for himself.

We have every need for two ports. Those of us who have faith in the future of Central Queensland see the necessity for developing them, and those who are capable of progressive thought both in this House and outside of it, support the idea.

Nobody could be anything but happy with the progress that the city of Rockhampton is making on the architectural skyline. Every month we add a new project to a city that is already becoming very modern. Only recently we completed our new Civic Theatre. It is a municipal theatre and will be complete with air-conditioning. The Minister for Primary Industries saw it and I am sure he will support me in saying that it is indeed a very modern and beautiful theatre.

We have a first-class police station at Rockhampton. It is air-conditioned—a real cooler, if you like—and I am proud of it. We also have a very fine air terminal; it is one of the best in the State and would be the pride of any provincial city.

We are now putting the final touches to a very scenic road up Mt. Archer. That development has been made possible by the consistent support of the Minister for Main Roads and the Minister for Lands, and I thank them for their help. The Minister

for Lands gave the council a lease of the land at Mt. Archer, and that has encouraged us.

Mr. Thackeray: How much land do you own up that way?

Mr. PILBEAM: The city of Rockhampton will own 250 acres.

Mr. Thackeray: How much do you own?

Mr. PILBEAM: I own no land at all at Mt. Archer. I will tell the House a little story about it. When I first had this project on the drawing board it was referred to by the hon. member for Rockhampton North as "the goat track up Mt. Archer". A very old citizen of Rockhampton gave me a bridle and said to me, "I know you will build the road despite the opposition, Mr. Mayor. When you do I want you to lead Rockhampton's leading goat up it." Hon. members can draw their own conclusions about whom he meant.

A few improvements are required in the city of Rockhampton. What we need as much as anything else is a new railway station. For 40 years various Ministers have promised us a new railway station. I am not going to be political on this subject. The present Minister for Transport has promised me a new station and I have faith in him. I look forward to his doing something that no previous Minister has been able to do—the keeping of a promise for the construction of a new railway station at Rockhampton. We also need an air-conditioned mail train.

We are very keen to enlist the sympathetic support of the new Minister for Health in the reconstruction of the General Hospital at Rockhampton. I am sure we will have it. Some sections of the old hospital would be a credit to any provincial city, but the old wards in the hospital proper are certainly no credit to Rockhampton. I have enlisted the sympathetic support of the Minister in having them replaced at the earliest possible opportunity. He is doing just that. A new two-storey dental clinic is being constructed immediately, and the other matters have been placed before him. I think they will receive his sympathetic consideration.

It is with great pride and gratification that I present this story of Central Queensland's progress and it is real progress. It is true that we are just at the beginning of a very exciting era of development, but we are taking forward steps. I have the utmost confidence in this Government and the local government in office in Central Queensland. I have confidence in their ability, and in the ability of those who are given the task of implementing their decisions. I am sure that before very long we will see a new Central Queensland emerge, a Central Queensland which in every respect, including tertiary education and all the other departmental considerations, will be the equal of any other part of Queensland.

[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.15 p.m.]

Mr. HANLON (Baroona) (2.15 p.m.): In rising to speak in this debate I join with other hon. members in congratulating the hon. members for Yeronga and Warwick in being chosen to move and second the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. However, my congratulations to the hon. member for Yeronga must begin and end there because he did himself and the motion little justice in advancing a narrow and sectional plea for the private road contractor, with whom, admittedly, he has had some association over a period of years. I have no objection to the point of view of road contractors being advanced, and the difficulties they encounter being brought to the attention of this Parliament and the public, but I believe that the manner in which the hon. member set about his task is not to be admired. He took the opportunity to make a cheap jibe at day-labour employees and used the rather corny old story about coming across some day-labour men playing cards when they should have been working. I do not say that could not have happened; he may have had that experience. However, it is a perpetual story that is told against the day-labour workers and it ill-behoves the hon. member for Yeronga to give such an example when he is purported to have told a Sunday newspaper that one of his reasons for seeking endorsement by the Liberal Party for Yeronga was that he was tired of playing golf all day and wanted something else to do.

What was his main complaint against this Government, and previous Governments, on behalf of the private road contractor? Looking at his speech we see that his particular grouch against the present administration of the Department of Main Roads under this Government, and previous Governments, was that the department calls tenders for hard rock sections and keeps the easy construction work for day labour, thus giving the contractor no chance to tender for the whole job. He then said—

> "The contractors can find plenty of work in the remote areas where the going is really tough, where it is virtually impossible to find local labour or to hoid imported labour, and where an estimate that is the basis of a tender can be so far astray . . ."

His complaint is that the department under this Government, and under previous Governments, is doing what any sensible contractor would do. It is getting the best possible value for its money in the interests of the people to whom it is responsible—those who are paying the bill; in other words, the taxpayers of this State.

It is somewhat strange that the hon. member should criticise the present Government, or any other Government, about such a matter. That is exactly what the road hauliers do to the railways; they pick the eyes out of anything in which there is a profit and leave the unprofitable freight to a public transport authority. By his remarks the hon. member typified the Liberal approach of

capitalising profits and wanting to socialise losses. That is the attitude of Liberal members. The interests of the majority of the people in the State are subverted to those of the few. Apparently in his opinion it is the right of a few people to take all the profitable opportunities available in any form of contracting or capacity, and it is the duty of the remainder of the population to take care of those that are unprofitable. That is the basis of the incompatibility not only between the Liberal Party and the Labour Party, but also between the Liberal Party and the Country Party.

That is borne out by an examination of the respective speeches of the hon. member for Yeronga in moving the motion on behalf of the Liberal Party, and the hon. member for Warwick in seconding it on behalf of the Country Party. An examination of those two speeches does not reveal this narrow sectional plea which was made by the hon. member for Yeronga in the speech made by the hon. member for Warwick, because among other things the latter member sought an equalisation of the profit-making opportunities between country and city. He made a broad approach to the question and did not make a special plea for the fattening of some favourite calf of his or of the Country Party's. In the interests of the State, he advocated arresting the alarming drift of population from country areas to the city.

Before going any further, I take this opportunity to nail some of the untruths put forward last Tuesday by the hon. member for Nundah. He is well known for the role he adopts in this House of chief adviser to, and chief critic of, the Australian Labour Party, and the purveyor of alleged inside information of the domestic affairs of the Australian Labour Party.

Mr. Newton: He has dossiers.

Mr. HANLON: He has what he purports to be dossiers. I hope he does not pay anyone for them, because if he does he is "doing" his money cold. Speaking of hon. members on this side of the House, he said—

> "They came in for very severe criticism from the Q.C.E. for their failure to assist the endorsed Labour candidate in the Yeronga by-election."

That is an untruth.

Mr. Knox: You protest too much.

Mr. HANLON: I do not protest too much. I am going to produce the evidence to nail the hon. member's untruths.

He continued—

> "There was condemnation and criticism of the Leader for his failure to appear regularly at meetings in the Yeronga electorate, in contrast with members of this Government including Ministers, both Liberal and Country Party, who appeared in strength in the Yeronga by-election."

That is another untruth.

Later, he continued—

> "The campaign director for the endorsed Labour candidate made a very caustic report to the Q.C.E. on the behaviour of some of his colleagues during the course of that by-election. The hon. member for Salisbury was campaign director on that occasion. I know there was a considerable upset in the Labour Party that such a junior member of the House had been chosen as the campaign director."

He said that the hon. member for Salisbury was campaign director and described him as a junior member. Several Ministers, including the Premier, the Treasurer, and the Minister for Transport, were forced into the campaign in support of the Liberal candidate, so if he considers he is insulting the hon. member for Salisbury, I suggest he continue to do so, because in so doing I suggest he is paying him a great compliment.

He later said—

> "Nevertheless he was chosen by the Q.C.E. to do this job but he got very little co-operation from his parliamentary colleagues."

Since Tuesday, with the permission of the Queensland Central Executive of the Australian Labour Party, I have perused the report that was made to that body by Mr. Sherrington, M.L.A., and I shall quote from that report.

Mr. Knox: How about giving it in full?

Mr. HANLON: I am prepared to make it available to the Clerk of the Parliament, or any other independent person, so that it can be perused from beginning to end. I have not the time to read it all now. If anything in the report bears out one matter put forward on Tuesday by the hon. member for Nundah, I will be happy to withdraw any remarks I have made.

The report reads—

> "The official opening was held in the Moorooka Youth Centre Hall on Monday, 11th May, 1964. Speakers included Mr. J. E. Duggan M.L.A."

I am reading from what the hon. member for Salisbury has put in the report. I will read only the essential parts, which will refute the allegations made by the hon. member for Nundah. There are other parts of the report dealing with television campaigns, pamphlets, and so on, which have no relevance here.

It continues—

> "Saturday morning shopping centre meetings were held at select times on each Saturday during the campaign. Speakers at these meetings included Mr. J. E. Duggan M.L.A."

According to Mr. Knox, Mr. Duggan was castigated by Mr. Sherrington for not having assisted in the campaign. He opened the campaign and participated in Saturday morning meetings.

It continues—

> "E. Lloyd M.L.A., P. Hanlon M.L.A., J. Mann M.L.A., E. O'Donnell M.L.A., J. Melloy M.L.A., F. Newton M.L.A., F. Bromley M.L.A., H. Dean M.L.A., the Lord Mayor, Alderman Clem Jones, Alderman R. Lynch, Alderman R. Dent, and myself."

that is, Mr. Sherrington.

The final paragraph of the report gives the complete lie to what the hon. member for Nundah purported to put forward on Tuesday. It reads—

> "Finally I am at a complete loss, in view of all I have outlined, to understand that an article should have appeared in 'The Sunday Mail' of June 7th which stated that there was criticism of the handling of the campaign and that members of the Parliamentary party had been slighted and that the campaign could be discussed in the Parliamentary Caucus."

For the information of the hon. member for Nundah, I might add that the hon. member for Salisbury also included in his report something that I think is much more real than what was said by the hon. member for Nundah. It is this—

> "I feel the electorate could be won for Labour in a general election."

That gives the lie to the statement by the hon. member for Nundah that there has been criticism by the hon. member for Salisbury of the assistance rendered to the candidate in the Yeronga by-election by members of the Parliamentary Labour Party. The Queensland Central Executive and members of the Parliamentary Labour Party in this State were more than pleased with the efforts of the hon. member for Salisbury as campaign director for the Labour Party in that by-election.

I want to take the opportunity in the time available to me to deal with some matters that I consider to be of particular interest to the public and to Parliament at the moment. Two of them are related matters. I refer firstly to the present dissatisfaction with the arbitration system and its operations, and, secondly, to the recent blatant public theft of wage increases that were granted by Federal and State arbitration bodies.

Before I go any further, let me make it clear that I believe it would be a sorry day indeed for the ordinary worker in Queensland, and for the State itself, if confidence in the Industrial Commission decreased to such an extent that the system of arbitration collapsed or was discarded. However, there is no point in the Government, the Industrial Commission, or others, trying to deceive themselves by thinking that in recent times there has not been an erosion of confidence in the Commission and the system of arbitration followed in Queensland. As shown by the very thoughtful and balanced articles that appeared recently in "The Courier-Mail" by spokesmen for both employee and employer interests, there has been a lessening of confidence in the Commission among the general public.

It is quite apparent to anyone who faces up to the situation that the Industrial Commission has become increasingly conservative in recent years, and possibly even longer. The trend to conservatism has accelerated in the past decade, particularly in the period during which this Government has been in office. The great majority of its major declarations of a general nature have been, generally speaking, rubber stamping of decisions made by the Federal, or some other, body. The State Industrial Commission has not, to my mind, shown any inclination to pioneer or lead the way in the granting of industrial benefits that have been long overdue and have been granted almost without exception first in other States during the last six or seven years. Even in the case of decisions of the Federal tribunal, we find that they have often flowed from the inescapable evidence of their practicability and economic soundness demonstrated by their being granted by legislation by a Labour Government in New South Wales. The granting of three weeks' annual leave is one example.

Last week the Treasurer, I think when the Appropriation Bill was before us, took some pride in the fact that whilst the average male earnings in this State still lag far behind those in other States, particularly New South Wales and Victoria, there has been some fractional percentage improvement in the Queensland growth rate in the past seven years. He neglected to say, however, that those average earnings reflect a number of over-award payments and negotiated increases, such as the 22s. 6d. a week recently negotiated by the metal trades group of unions, which the Premier condemned this morning as having been obtained by industrial duress and not through the Commission. I might add that that increase has also been the subject of some, to my mind, rather sulky and unwarranted comments from the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission because it was secured outside the Commission's official ambit.

There is no doubt that the Commission is often in a difficult position when an increase is negotiated by the unions with a particular employer or a particular industry well able to afford to carry an additional margin of pay for employees and it is then used as an argument to try to secure a general award increase. Let me make it plain that I am not saying that the industrial movement is not entitled to try to use such agreements, where possible, to secure a general increase for employees under all awards. However, the wage increases in the metal industry, for example, and a number of others that could be mentioned, are not just isolated instances of agreement between unions and one wealthy employer, an employer who has cornered the market or who has such a monopoly that his profits are greater than those of most other

employers in a particular group. These are increases that have been agreed to by a number of representative employers in the metal trades industry. Consequently, I do not think the Premier was warranted, when answering a question this morning, in decrying increases that have been agreed to by a number of employers in the metal trades industry and saying that they have arisen from industrial duress, that there is something suspect or nasty or distorted about them because they have come by agreement and not through the normal wearying channels of the Industrial Commission.

If we examine the Act, I think we can say frankly that the Industrial Commission is not doing its job in this State. That is partly because of the Act that has been foisted on it by the Country-Liberal Government. If anybody in Queensland issued a public vote of no-confidence in the Industrial Commission, it was the Nicklin-Morris Government of 1961, because, as you will recall, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in Clause 12 of the 1961 Act that Government had the colossal hide to introduce a provision that gave the Commission jurisdiction to reduce or abrogate bonus payments from time to time but not to increase them. It specifically wrote into Clause 12 of that Act a provision that bonus payments were to be a matter for negotiation between employer and employee. In other words, it told them not to go to the Commission; that it was no use going to the Commission; that the Government did not have any confidence in leaving to the Commission what Labour Governments had left to the Court in the past. It took away from the Commission the right to increase bonuses and virtually instructed employers and union representatives under the Act to go away from the Commission and negotiate these things, although it did include a milk-and-water provision that a Commissioner could be allowed to mediate, if required.

On the other hand, it did not hesitate to allow the Commisison to retain the right to reduce bonus payments. To those who are eligible for bonus payments they are virtually the same as award payments, and any Government that writes into the Arbitration Act a provision allowing the Commission to reduce something but not to increase it makes a mockery of arbitration and encourages everybody in the State to do the same.

This Government, whether it likes it or not, must accept the responsibility for being the first to point the bone at our Industrial Commission. The reasons why I say that I do not believe the Industrial Commission is doing the job, firstly that it should be doing, and secondly that it could be doing, I shall endeavour to point out in the time available to me. I believe it is evidenced, firstly, by the conservative nature of the Commission, to which I have already referred and as a result of which Queensland is lagging behind and always rubber-stamping improvements that have been granted in other States. One case in point is the three weeks' annual leave granted in New South Wales some years before it was granted here.

Secondly, when the Commission does make a basic wage declaration, as it did recently with a 14s. increase, we see blatant pirating of that increase by unscrupulous business people. I am not referring to them in general but to so many of them that it gives a bad name to business generally, and the Commission takes no action whatever in the matter.

The time is long overdue for the Industrial Commission to be given the responsibility of not only setting down minimum wages, margins and so on, but also of quite clearly ensuring that when it makes these awards the employee is not robbed of them within a matter of weeks by price increases, the majority of which cannot be justified.

It is quite true, as I pointed out previously, that there is probably in every case an industry or two which cannot carry some of these increases as easily as the great majority can, but it is equally true that though we recently received a 14s. increase in the State wage and a £1 increase in the Federal wage, the 14s. has already been more than absorbed by price rises, without taking into account the impact of the Federal Budget introduced by Mr. Holt, and prices are on their way towards absorbing the full £1 increase granted by the Federal Arbitration Court.

The definition of "industrial matter" in the State Act is—

> "Any matter or thing affecting or relating to work done or to be done, or the privileges, rights, or duties of employers or employees, or of persons who have been or intend or propose to be or may become employers or employees not involving questions. . . ."

and so on.

It goes on—

> "Without limiting the generality of the foregoing provisions of this definition, the term includes any and every matter relating to——"

And, going down to (i), it states—

> "Generally all questions as to what is fair and right (having regard to the interests of the persons immediately concerned and of the community as a whole). . . ."

Section 13 (3) of the Act provides—

> "Without limiting the generality of the power conferred by the two immediately preceding subsections, but subject to this section, the said Full Bench may from time to time make declarations as to—
>
> (a) The cost of living;
>
> (b) The standard of living;
>
> (c) The basic wage for males and/or females;
>
> (d) The standard hours.

> The basic wage of an adult male employee shall be not less than is sufficient to maintain a well-conducted employee of average health, strength, and competence and his wife and a family of three children in a fair and average standard of comfort, having regard to the conditions of living prevailing among employees in the calling in respect of which such basic wage is fixed."

Having taken some little time to read out that section of the Act I point out that when the Industrial Commission in this State recently increased the basic wage by 14s., it did so according to subsections (4) and (6) of Section 13 of the Act. The basic wage was to be not less than is sufficient to maintain a well-conducted employee and his wife and family of three children in a fair and average standard of comfort. By that declaration, at that time an increase of 14s. was necessary but the Commission then sits back and allows a spate of price increases which have deprived the adult male employee, his wife and family of three children of that fair and average standard of comfort which it declared a 14s. increase was necessary to bring about.

If an individual employer underpays one of his employees by 10s. a week he can be dealt with under the provisions of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act for breaking the award. If he underpays an employee 10s. a week it means that he is cheating that employee of 10s. a week. That is quite a serious matter and I should be just as happy as anybody else to see an employer who would do that dealt with under the Act. But what if a business enterprise cheats someone of 3d., 6d., or 1s. when he buys its products? What about the hundreds and thousands of people who buy that product every day or every week? What about the millions of purchases of that product every year? What outright pirating or thieving it is when the price increases are not warranted! It would amount to an astronomical sum in a week, let alone a year. I would suggest that the Industrial Commission has a responsibility under the Act to do more than merely shake its head and say that it cannot do anything about price increases. I will admit that if the Act were strengthened to make it quite clear that it has a responsibility in this regard it would be better armed to deal with the position. It is already given the responsibility of ensuring that it makes declarations as to wages, and so on. It has been suggested many times, and again recently, in union circles that the price increases which have followed so quickly on the basic wage increases are tantamount to contempt of the Industrial Commission inasmuch as they seek to distort or make null and void a declaration made by the Commission based on the information placed before it. With the glaring example we have had recently of the 14s. increase being virtually absorbed in price increases within four or five weeks, the unions and the average citizen would have a great more respect for the Commission if it said, "We are going to make another declaration and add another 14s. to the basic wage to make up for all these increases, which we do not consider warranted." The Commission has not given any indication whether it considers them warranted or not. "If you want to have another lot of increases we will put it up another 14s." All the economists would throw their hands up in the air saying, "That would be dreadful. It would be inflationary. It would send up our costs," and so on. But they are not concerned about costs of the family man who has to pay the extra 3d., 6d., and 1s. so that in the end he is getting less real value in his wages than he was before he was granted the increase by the Industrial Commission, which is responsible for carrying out these functions in the interests of the public and the State.

I suggest that the Industrial Commission should indicate to the public that at least it is having an inquiry made into these things. The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act provides in Section 11 (1) (b), dealing with the jurisdiction of the Commission—

> ". . . on the application of any person interested or of its own motion, or by direction of the Minister, to hold an inquiry into or relating to any industrial matter."

It is no good the Commission's saying, "Why doesn't somebody apply?", because it is given the authority to proceed of its own volition. The Premier has already side-stepped the approach by the Housewives' Association, so it is not much use looking to the Government to take the initiative. As I have mentioned, in the definition of "industrial matter" it is made quite clear that these price increases, which are in an indirect way robbing the employee of the award which has been made by the Commission, are quite obviously an industrial matter if the Commission wishes to utilise its powers in that regard. In any event it has the general power under Section 13 to make further declarations.

Before I conclude my speech I wish to deal with the shocking delay which the people in my electorate, and in the Brisbane electorate as well—some of these matters affect the boundary area of the two electorates—have had to suffer with traffic problems. There has been much disappointment and dismay in the minds of people in the area because the Minister has not honoured his promise to alleviate some traffic hazards in the area. I am pleased to see that the Minister is in the Chamber. I refer particularly to the intersection of Kelvin Grove Road, L'Estrange Terrace and Prospect Terrace, at Kelvin Grove. In my opinion, Kelvin Grove Road is one of the worst roads in Brisbane for traffic accidents. It was the scene of a very unfortunate accident in which some council employees were killed. A number of pedestrians have been killed at different places on the road, and in May 1963 I approached the Minister to see if he would expedite the installation of traffic lights at the intersection

to which I refer. I was very concerned because several school children from the Kelvin Grove school had been injured at this intersection, which is adjacent to both the Kelvin Grove High School and the Kelvin Grove State School. After some time, on 11 December 1963, the Minister advised me that he had approved for inclusion in the current financial year, that is, 1963-64, a proposed programme of traffic signal installations and a set of lights at the junction of Kelvin Grove Road and Prospect Terrace, subject to the carrying-out of certain preliminary roadworks that would be necessary before the signals were installed. Over the months nothing has been done, and again children from the Kelvin Grove school have been injured when trying to cross the road. I know that the Minister may say that policemen attend during peak hours, but children do not cross the road only when a policeman is there—they may be detained for school work or sport. In any event, not only is it difficult for children to get across; it is also a hazard for anyone who is not fleet of foot.

I again approached the Minister to ascertain why nothing had been done although we were well into the following financial year, and I received a letter dated 28 August 1964 in which he advised me—

> "Pressure of other urgent work has precluded the Traffic Engineer from completing the final scheme for submission to the Traffic Commission and, in any case, owing to shortage of funds, it does not appear that it will be possible to implement any scheme this financial year."

I understand that, with the rapid growth in the number of vehicles on the road and in the population of Brisbane, there are a tremendous number of jobs to be carried out, but I do not think I am unreasonable.

In the 1963 State election I did not try to make any political capital out of this matter because I realised that the crossing in question was not just an ordinary school crossing with a set of lights straight across the road. I realised that it was a full-scale intersection, embracing five roads, and would require a detailed design. However, the Liberal candidate for Brisbane was not half as shy as I was about making political capital out of it, despite the fact that it was the responsibility of this Government. He attacked the hon. member for Brisbane and me because nothing had been done. As soon as that happened I was obliged to say, "After all, it is a Liberal Government that is supposed to be doing this work." I immediately approached the Hon. A. T. Dewar, who was then in charge of traffic, and the matter has continued from there. The Minister for Main Roads now tells me that the Traffic Engineer has not been able to complete the final scheme and, in any case, even if he had completed the design there would not be any funds.

I do not wish to be parochial because I realise that this is only one of a number of similar places, but I was given an assurance last December that the work would be done. I expect to get some priority but the Minister has not given me any indication as to when it is likely to be done. How many children have to be injured or killed at Kelvin Grove, or any other place, before the Government will provide the necessary funds and staff for this type of work? Does the Minister require instances of a dozen children injured or killed, or how many must be injured or killed before he will give priority to this work? Must other members bring details of a certain number of cases from their areas, too? This could be happening in areas represented by Liberal and Country Party members. I do not think it is unreasonable to ask the Minister to give priority to such work. I say that the Government will have to make the funds available, and make them available quickly.

Mr. Evans: That applies in Mackay as well.

Mr. HANLON: I do not doubt it. I would wager with the hon. gentleman, as he is a betting man, that the funds that should have been used at Kelvin Grove were spent at Stafford. I realise that a serious problem existed there, but the Government has to face up to these matters.

I refer also to Coronation Drive, where a similar position exists. The Premier wrote a letter to Mr. Philp, chairman of the protest committee, telling him that all parking restrictions in Coronation Drive would be lifted between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Signs were erected the next day indicating exactly the opposite—that there was to be no parking between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.—so that nobody took any notice of what the Premier had said.

When that sort of thing happens, one wonders who is running the Government. I hazard the guess that most of the members of that committee would not be Labour supporters—most likely more the other way—but that has nothing to do with it. These people wrote to the Premier and he gave an answer, but exactly the opposite was put into effect. I do not know whether the Premier was careless in the wording of the letter and did not realise the import of it, but it is a pretty poor show when, after the Premier has given an assurance to a body of citizens, a public servant goes out the following day, and erects signs contrary to the assurance given by the Premier. There is justification for the people in Coronation Drive, like those in Kelvin Grove, being disgusted with the Government's action in that regard. I have endeavoured not to make political capital out of this matter, even when an election was on, because of the difficulty of the position. It seems that unless we kick up a song and dance and put the responsibility were it belongs, the Government will treat us with contempt.

I should like to pay tribute to you Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Parliamentary Buildings Committee, which carried out the

improvements in the House. As a member of that committee, I feel that is was the lead given by you, and particularly your drive, that brought about the good results. It is true that old habits and customs, like old armchairs, are difficult to throw out, but the new arrangements were necessary. Although some things are not as familiar as they were, all members will agree that you should be congratulated for the initiative you displayed in bringing about the transformation of this Chamber.

Mr. HUGHES (Kurilpa) (2.54 p.m.): I desire to associate myself and the electors of Kurilpa with the expression of loyalty to the Crown, and I take this opportunity of voicing appreciation to His Excellency the Governor, Sir Henry Abel Smith, and Lady May for the tangible and noticeable interest they have shown not only in local community affairs, but in all aspects of civic, commercial, and industrial life in all parts of Queensland. It has been most noticeable in recent years that people in all walks of life wherever they may be, have at some time or other had the opportunity of meeting His Excellency. That sort of thing not only makes a wonderful bond of friendship but is an inspiration to all in the tasks that they have to perform.

I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Clark, officers of the Department of Works, tradesmen, workmen, and all others who have done such an exceptionally good job in the refitting and furnishing of the Chamber. There is no doubt that it was long overdue, and you are to be congratulated on the way in which the present facilities have been provided for hon. members. I congratulate all associated with it.

I must take the opportunity to refer to the matter of seating in the Chamber which has received Press publicity quite out of proportion to its significance. I make no apology for wanting to sit with my political colleagues, because I have no reason or desire to relegate to the background or repudiate the party to which I am proud to belong. For reasons of mutual interest, I desire to sit with my colleagues because I am a metropolitan member. I have not as much interest in some country matters as I have in the Brisbane Town Plan or other matters which are more specifically of concern to the metropolis. For that reason, I like to be able to discuss these matters during the course of debates with my colleagues who have mutual interests. This is in no way evidence of disloyalty within the coalition Government, much to the chagrin of hon. members sitting on my right who would love to see a split in the co-operation and harmonious relationship that now exists.

Mr. Sherrington: You want to be alone.

Mr. HUGHES: I am far from being alone. I belong to a body which, with the Country Party, has gained greater support from the citizens than the hon. member's party is ever likely to have. He will remain relegated to the Opposition benches for many a long day. He should get used to his seat there and warm it, because, although he might be fortunate enough to retain it, he will certainly continue to sit where he is now. There is a prophecy which in the years to come the records will no doubt show to be true.

I do not have to hold hands with my friends of the Country Party to co-operate in matters of State and work harmoniously with them. The social intercourse and personal relationships between members remain the same. An article in "The Courier-Mail" of 28 August stated—

> "Most State Liberal members of Parliament have been annoyed by criticism of the Premier, Mr. Nicklin, by a few Liberals."

I should like to say that I have no knowledge of the source of that information. I do not know of any grain of truth in it. That has never happened, and I do not think it is likely to. I dissociate myself from it. I hold the Premier in the highest esteem, as do most of the people of this State.

We are happy to serve in co-operation with other hon. members for the benefit of the State. This is a good Government. I believe it is the best that Queensland has ever known, and that it will continue in that way. The Labour Party will remain in the political wilderness because people recognise the administrative ability of members of the Government and want them to continue in office. We jealously guard our right to voice criticism in the party room or even on the floor of the House. We are quite free to act as our consciences dictate.

Mr. Bromley: What conscience?

Mr. HUGHES: I know that the hon. member would have to search for a long time to find any skerrick of a conscience not only in himself but in other hon. members on that side of the House. We know that they are mere puppets of the Trades Hall and tools of outside dictatorship.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: I am not labelling them as Communists. I know that they are worried and that it must often embarrass them to succumb to the dictates of the Q.C.E. and the Trades Hall. I feel somewhat sympathetic towards them at times, and I am very happy to be on this side of the Chamber where I can speak and act according to my conscience. Hon. members on the Government benches have shown on many occasions that they can act according to their conscience.

Mr. Walsh: You had a unity ticket with them at one time.

Mr. HUGHES: I do not know of any unity ticket. Again, that must be the figment of somebody's imagination or mere Press speculation. I know of no evidence of any unity ticket. As I said, I am happy that hon. members on this side of the House are able to use their discretion as they see fit.

Mr. Sherrington: What does Tom Lissamore think about it?

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member has mentioned a name. I could mention a few names, too.

I congratulate the hon. member for Yeronga upon his election.

Mr. Bromley: You organised it.

Mr. HUGHES: I helped in whatever capacity I was able to help. The hon. member for Yeronga has applied himself diligently to his task, and I am sure that he will be returned at the next election with an increased majority. I know that Labour had high hopes that it was on the march again. We heard statements by Peter Clarke the organiser, and the campaign director, that their candidate was going to win, but again the electors proved that they did not want the Labour Party.

Mr. Walsh: Clem Jones was on your side.

Mr. HUGHES: It may have been because he was not on our side that we won. The Labour Party has its problems; it will have to sort them out itself. We were very happy that the electors of Yeronga placed a vote of confidence in the Government. The proof of the political pudding is in the ballot box, and we were very satisfied with the result.

I am not here to waste time on incompetents and carping critics. If there are any malcontents in my own party, I give them short shrift, because that is what they deserve.

I now turn to a matter of great community interest—shopping hours. It is the law of Queensland that trading in certain food lines shall cease at prescribed hours. We know that from a ministerial statement and from a notice in the Government Gazette. While it is the law I do not counsel breaking it, but I question whether it is a good law. For a law to be obeyed, it must be respected, meet the needs of the community, and have the support of the community, and in my opinion the regulations that were tabled by the Minister relating to the restricted trading hours of what I call the corner store and the little grocery shop are an infringement of democratic rights and an unwarranted intrusion on people's liberty. I have the highest regard for the Minister of Labour and Industry, the Hon. Alex Dewar. He is a hard-working and sincere Minister, and I respect him. But I wonder whether in this particular instance he has been led astray by his advisers. When an Order in Council or regulation is made and tabled in Parliament and it affects the public, I and other members on this side of the Chamber reserve the right to discuss it and criticise it, if necessary.

Mr. Houston: Wasn't that a court decision?

Mr. HUGHES: Yes, and I will deal with that as I go along. As I said before, in my opinion, it is a bad law and cannot gain public respect. If the time ever comes when members are gagged from offering constructive criticism in these matters, it will be a sorry day for this State.

It is true the Commission prescribed the hours but, as I say, I question the wisdom of its decision. In my opinion, too little thought went into the matter because within a few weeks of the Commission's first proclamation an Order in Council was issued amending the list and adding goods such as cocoa, coffee, and margarine.

Exempt shops may trade 24 hours a day if they so desire provided they sell only the items set out in Regulation 31 of the Factories and Shops Act. If such a shop carried bobby pins or kitchen soap, it would be breaching the law or would be unable to trade. There would be very few shops, if any, among the 7,000 registered in Queensland that could honestly comply with that list of requirements. Exempt shops may open 24 hours a day if they adhere strictly to the exempt goods list under Regulation 31. Small shops can open between the hours of 7 a.m. and 7.30 p.m. on week-days and Saturdays, and from 8 a.m. to 12 noon and 5 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. on Sundays and some public holidays. The non-exempt chain stores and others can open between 8.15 a.m. and 4.40 p.m. Mondays to Fridays, and from 8.35 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. on Saturdays.

Although the Commission prescribed those hours, it did so by sitting in judgment on an agreement made outside the Commission by a few organisations. I want to know whether the Commission made any endeavour to ascertain the needs or desires of the public. As a community service there should be an obligation and responsibility on the Commission to the general public, and I should like to know whether any attempt was made by it to ascertain the public's demands or requirements. In any case, why should the whole matter be shrouded in secrecy? These things should be properly ventilated and publicised. It is only in that way that we can bring in laws that the public accept and respect.

Mr. Walsh: This is not a law.

Mr. HUGHES: It is a law.

Mr. Walsh: It is a decision of the Commission.

Mr. HUGHES: It stands in our books as part of the Factories and Shops Act. If it is in the law and if the hon. member was a shopkeeper and contravened that law he could be dealt with under it.

Having dotted the i's and crossed the t's and been specific about it, I should now like to deal with the statement tabled by the Minister for Labour and Industry in this House on 19 August. In the opening paragraph he said—

> "During the last six months, at the request of the principal parties concerned with the Shop Assistants (General) Award —Southern Division, a number of conferences has been held with a view to endeavouring to resolve what was a most unsatisfactory position regarding the trading hours being observed by small shops."

To whom was it unsatisfactory? To big business? To unions concerned more with self than selflessness? Certainly it was not unsatisfactory to the public, which was benefiting from competition and community service.

The statement goes on—

> "The parties recognised that in regard to mixed stores, that is, the small shops, the existing trading hours for non-exempt goods not only imposed a burden on such shops but also deprived the community generally of an adequate service in regard to groceries and certain other lines."

That paragraph recognises that the community was deprived generally of an adequate service in regard to groceries and certain other lines. The order then proceeds to restrict the hours and times of such service, which I believe is hardly consistent. In the next paragraph there is a recital of the people and parties and interests that got together, but I do not see any representation of the public or any call or request to members of the public, such as the Housewives' Association and others, to express their views. It would seem that a nice little coterie of fixers became the authors of a restriction on liberty.

Let me take the matter a little further. As I said previously, exempt shops may trade 24 hours a day if they so desire provided they sell only the items set out in Regulation 31 of the Factories and Shops Act. That is extremely restrictive in the number of shops it could possibly hope to classify. It would be an infinitesimal proportion of the 7,000 registered. Then we come to the small shops, commonly known as "Mum and Dad" shops.

An Opposition Member: "Dad and Dave" shops.

Mr. HUGHES: "Dad and Dave" shops, if you like. For convenience these small shops are stated as "Mum and Dad" shops, but the average member of the public refers to them as "corner" stores. To what extent the shops in this new classification will be entitled to be called "Mum and Dad" shops is a matter of conjecture because they are by law obliged to restrict their service. The effect of this regulation is that it will allow the bodgie haunts to remain open for 24 hours unrestricted, but not the convenient corner shop. These corner stores give a community service but they will be restricted in their trading hours. While hotels will remain open until 10 p.m., Mother will not be able to get the family requirements at the corner store after 7.30 p.m. The hon. member for Bundaberg may think that rum is the only necessary food, but these stores will not be able to remain open to supply the essentials of life. It is a rather lop-sided state of affairs when hotels can remain open and the corner shops cannot. I am not a wowser—I am a social drinker on occasions—but it seems wrong to me that hotels can remain open until 10 p.m. whereas the corner shops cannot sell the goods essential to life. Hotels can remain open until 10 p.m. on Labour Day, yet these shops are restricted in their trading on that day. It is thought essential to allow man to have his drink on Labour Day, yet little thought is given to the convenience of the housewife. It is just too lop-sided and a rather Gilbertian situation.

How many, or, more pertinent to say, how few shops would qualify as exempt shops carrying items set out in Regulation 31 whereby members of the public would be able to avail themselves of certain necessaries of life at a time and place needed or suitable to them? They can obtain mineral turpentine in bottles, but not kerosene or methylated spirits. Probably one of the most popular dishes—sausages or frankfurts—is not to be stocked or sold.

Exempt shops may trade 24 hours a day if they so desire, as long as they sell only the items set out in Regulation 31. The small shops can remain open up to 7.30 p.m. Mondays to Saturdays and from 8 a.m. to 12 noon and 5 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. on Sundays and public holidays, with certain exceptions. Under the regulation tinned fruit is out, so are salad requirements such as asparagus, gherkins and pickled onions. Tinned fish, for example, salmon, is out. If kerosene or methylated spirits is needed for cooking or heating or light, or certain emergency use for invalids or sick persons, it is denied to the public. Toilet soap is available, but if you want to wash the family clothes you have to use toilet soap, not kitchen soap. How ridiculous can such an application to the Commission be?

This could have an effect on tourism. The Minister who made the statement is the Minister in charge of tourism. In some ways this could cause ill-will and misunderstanding in the tourist industry. What if John Citizen wants to take his family to one of our more beautiful near-city beaches, such as Redcliffe, for a picnic on Sunday? When it comes to 1 o'clock Mother asks her child to obtain a tin of salmon and a tin of peaches or locally produced fruit salad. The child would have to get to north of Bundaberg or to the western border to carry out the task. So a family picnic is spoilt by the heartless disregard by autocratic authority for the welfare and convenience of citizens.

We should look with understanding and tolerance at the desires of the small shopkeeper, and not put a brake on his initiative. He will remain open for two reasons, either because of a personal sense of serving the community of which he is a member, or from a business sense, because he finds it practical and purposeful. I do not subscribe to the view that he is taking business away from the big city interests, the chain-store group, or monopoly interests.

During this debate the Lord Mayor's name has been mentioned. Clem Jones does not want a dead heart in the city. This restriction would in no way cause that because I believe that the business which the small shopkeeper gets is business that the big city businessman would not get in any case. Australia has become a worth-while nation mainly because of the hard work and competitive spirit of the small business man. I believe most of us recognise this and, for my part, I am on his side.

An Opposition Member: Good on you!

Mr. HUGHES: I thank the hon. member.

I believe in free enterprise where there are rewards for the individual who will work, and rewards for industry. I believe in rewards justly earned, coupled with equal service to the people. Why put a curfew on community service? Good gracious and damnation! And all the other epithets that one may use. The housewife is getting less and less consideration as the years go by and is becoming the packhorse in the community. There are further and continuing restrictions in the matters of selection, choice, delivery, courtesy and service. We are continuing to put on the brake, and applying restrictions in these matters. Surely every one of us, in some form or another, has seen the degeneration that has taken place. Are the unions and businesses to go hand in hand regardless of service to the community in the understanding about limited trading?

Most of the shops affected by the order are conducted by self-employed persons and they should have the right to elect when they should shut their doors. That is the case in many other places throughout the world. In Victoria the hours generally in many shops are as late as 10 p.m. That is so in most places in Victoria. If one were to browse through the Library and do some research one would see that, in many places, there is all-day trading, as in America, yet we are very restricted. I do not suggest that we should have all-night trading; I am simply drawing an analogy with the conditions here. We seem to put the brake on and apply more restrictions as time goes by. I believe that, as a free-enterprise Government, we should lift restrictions, and that that should be a continuing policy. The people concerned want to give a service to the community. I ask the unions and the big business people to put service to the community before self-interest, even to the extent of considering a late shopping night, as in other parts of the Southern Hemisphere. If that were done there would probably be more employment. If there is a public demand there must be a lot of good in it. I want to know if the public is being considered, and I ask those in authority to give very serious consideration to this important question. I should like to deal with this subject at great length, and in more detail, but time does not permit.

Before resuming my seat I wish to refer to the Tennyson ash and grit fall-out.

Mr. Bromley: Oh, no!

Mr. HUGHES: If the hon. member was a resident of the area he would have a greater appreciation of the problem. If he had babies eating ash and grit, if he had to trample the grit underfoot morning, noon and night, and had curtains, fabrics and other furnishings rotted by corrosive matter, he, too, would have every justifiable reason for complaining. That is what the residents of the area have to suffer.

Mr. Bromley: You were a member of the city council.

Mr. HUGHES: I spoke in the council in opposition to the Lord Mayor against the cheap-skate methods employed by the C.M.O. council at the time in installing cheap equipment in an effort to economise. We have paid for that ever since. In many ways I raised my voice, and used whatever little influence and authority I had, coupled with public opinion, to try to alleviate this problem. People should have clean air if they demand it. The remedies to overcome air pollution are well known. Electrostatic precipitators have been installed in Australia—there was one at Broken Hill—and they are working very efficiently.

There are regulations of the Brisbane City Council that cover this situation. In the "Telegraph" of 28 July, 1964, Mr. Slaughter is reported as saying that the council had powers under an ordinance, Chapter 12, Part VIII, to prosecute for soot nuisance, It is rather a weak regulation because the maximum fine is only £50, and industry would laugh at that. But the council has an obligation and responsibility in this regard and it should discharge it instead of running for cover. As a local authority responsible for the good health and welfare of its citizens, it should take up the cudgel in this matter and negotiate with the Southern Electric Authority. I am sympathetic with the S.E.A. because it inherited this problem, but it should have considered this matter at the time of negotiation and priced the asset accordingly in the take-over. The council is involved in this problem, and, as I said, it should take up the cudgel on behalf of the citizens with a view to ensuring clean air. The health and welfare of the community certainly demand that it should.

Mr. Aikens: All coal-fired powerhouses create the same nuisance.

Mr. HUGHES: I agree, except that we are getting a concentration of this top-dressing morning, noon, and night, year in and year out. It is not increasing the land values by lifting the level of the ground higher above sea level; on the contrary it is decreasing them. I am still prepared to negotiate with the S.E.A., but that is difficult when one receives an arrogant reply, in effect being told to go and jump in the proverbial lake. I am still prepared to negotiate for the benefit of the community and try to get better results, but unless a more realistic approach is adopted, with tangible results, the citizens will not refrain from taking action which they are firm about, or from raising their voices in protest.

I should have liked more time to deal with hospitals and medical care. I have but a minute left, so I give notice that I shall deal with this matter during the Budget debate. I express appreciation to my colleagues in Parliament and members of the staff for their kind felicitations on the illness of my wife. I pay tribute to the members of the staff at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, particularly Dr. Powell, the superintendent, and Sister Flower and Sister Williams for their understanding. They are dedicated persons, and most of the time the medical staff, sisters, and nurses, are wonderfully controlled and I am pleased to be able to have this opportunity to publicly pay tribute to them.

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) (3.24 p.m.): Having listened to the speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor on behalf of the Government, and having had time to make a study of it, it is evident to me that, according to this document which has been presented on behalf of the Government, the State at present is very prosperous. The members of the Opposition are hopeful that that state of affairs will continue. Usually in the Address-in-Reply debate one of the first matters one refers to is unemployment.

Mr. Windsor: You haven't got to do that this time.

Mr. NEWTON: Not on this occasion, and I hope not on any future occasion while this Government is in power, or when there is a Labour Government. When there is unemployment, we on this side realise the undue hardship and suffering caused to families faced with the problem.

The Governor, on behalf of the Government, referred to certain Bills to be introduced this session. I do not intend to have much to say about them at this stage except to ask that the Treasurer, in his Budget speech, give some special consideration to what might be intended in legislation relating to raffles conducted throughout the State. I am a member of quite a number of youth organisations in my electorate and, with the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt, joint patron of one of the largest organisations of this nature in the metropolitan area. If this legislation is not carefully watched, the Government may be faced with subsidising youth clubs throughout the State.

Anyone connected with a youth movement catering for 400 members and needing approximately £3,000 to £4,000 each year, and more as it grows, to carry out its work of doing something for boys and girls and the community generally, will know that this subject needs to be watched very carefully. I do not think it is necessary for me, on behalf of the Greater Brisbane Youth Clubs Association or anybody else, to impress upon hon. members that the finance for such organisations is raised from the very thing in respect of which legislation is to be introduced. After all, the money comes from chocolate wheels, raffles, and things of that nature. The parents who support these clubs and spend all their spare time endeavouring to raise the necessary finance are very concerned about what this legislation may require. I hope that the Treasurer, and particularly those members of the Liberal Party who have had so much to do with child delinquency, will give consideration to this side of the question, so that legislative provisions do not cut across the good work done by youth clubs in the metropolitan area.

The other thing that I should like to mention is long-service leave. When this was introduced by legislation by the Australian Labour Party, it was a matter of great interest and something that I felt would be of great advantage to the workers. Unfortunately, because certain employers were unscrupulous in their methods, the Act had to be amended. After 20 years of service, a worker became entitled to 13 weeks' leave.

Even this provision did not work out as it should have, and the Act was further amended giving employees, if dismissed by an employer or leaving of their own accord, 6½ weeks' long-service leave after 10 years' service. This is far from satisfactory. There were credit squeezes in 1952, 1956, and 1960, and employees in all industries, particularly vehicle builders, were dismissed after eight or nine years of service without receiving the benefits of long-service leave.

I hope that when the Government introduces industrial legislation it will give this matter serious consideration, and that the subject will receive the attention that it deserves. It may be said, "When you were the Government, why didn't you do it then?" Acts passed by this Government have had to be amended because of faults found in them. On behalf of the workers of Queensland, I say that the only way in which long-service leave will operate in favour of employees who are sincere and who have given good service to the industry in which they are engaged is this: provide for 13 weeks' leave after 13 years' service; if they are dismissed by their employer or leave the industry of their own accord, pay them on a pro-rata

basis for the long-service leave to which they are entitled. No matter what the article is—a house, or something produced in the steel industry—the cost of long-service leave is added to the price of it. Employers make provision for long-service-leave payments, and if employees do not receive payment it means that the money is going back into the pockets of the employers. I think that aspect of the matter should be considered by the Minister for Labour and Industry when he is introducing the Bill.

I have noticed during this session that Government members have made an all-out concerted attack on the Brisbane City Council, which is the governing body of this city. This attack has been very evident in questions asked by members of the Liberal Party. I do not know whether that party is going to branch out into municipal politics or whether one of its members is contemplating standing for Lord Mayor in 1967.

Mr. Hughes: Do you think that the council should be above question or criticism?

Mr. NEWTON: I do not think that at all. That is the sort of interjection one would expect from the hon. member for Kurilpa. While I am on my feet, I will do my best to defend what the Australian Labour Party has done since it took over the administration of the Brisbane City Council in 1961.

Mr. Hughes: Have you had instructions from the Trades Hall?

Mr. NEWTON: I have not had instructions from the Trades Hall. I have been a campaign director for the Australian Labour Party in Queensland for some time, and I played my part in the 1961 municipal election. The Australian Labour Party was successful in 1961, and it followed that success with an even greater success in 1964. It also had great success in the Federal election in 1961, and I am sure that when the Senate election takes place later this year, three Australian Labour Party Senators will be returned by the people of Queensland as a protest against the Budget introduced recently by the Menzies-McEwen Government.

I give credit to the Brisbane City Council for the way in which it has assisted to remove absorption trenches in homes in Housing Commission projects. When the Country-Liberal Government came to office in 1957, it said it would provide sewerage for Housing Commission projects on a five-year plan. It has been in control of the Treasury benches for seven years, but because of the slow way in which this work has been carried out in Housing Commission projects in areas represented by Government members, very little, if any, progress has been made in projects in areas represented by other members of this Assembly. I inquired when State rental projects would receive attention. I was told of this five-year programme, and I was told that if work on projects in my area were to be started immediately, work would have to cease in electorates that are at present represented by other members.

Because of the nature of the sub-soil these absorption trenches will not do the job that they were originally designed to do. Some of them have been down since 1948, particularly those in the Mt. Gravatt East and Carina areas. Today they cannot do the job they were put there to do. Because the Government has not been able to provide sewerage, these absorption trenches and sumps are causing a considerable number of problems in Housing Commission areas. There has already been an outbreak of scarlet fever in Housing Commission projects in the metropolitan area because stagnant water is lying around them. The Queensland Housing Commission, in consultation with the Brisbane City Council, was given permission by the council to put this water into the stormwater drains in order to overcome the problem, yet hon. members opposite never lose an opportunity of attacking the Brisbane City Council about its failure to alleviate this problem.

There are many Housing Commission projects in my electorate and this matter has given me considerable concern. If this water, which is household waste water, is not drained from these blocks there could be a serious outbreak of disease in the city. So I want to place on record my appreciation of the action of the Brisbane City Council in reaching agreement with the Queensland Housing Commission in an endeavour to overcome the problem.

Since this Government came to office in 1957, and since I entered Parliament in 1960, quite a number of brochures have been sent to me from various departments dealing with plans that have been instituted by them. I have one here dealing with plans for transport in the metropolitan area and photographs of two gentlemen appear on the front of it. They are photographs of the Minister for Mines and Main Roads, Mr. Evans, and, as the brochure refers to him, the Minister for Railways, Mr. Chalk. They have apparently forgotten about transport.

So far as the Minister for Mines and Main Roads is concerned, I do not suppose I can attack him because I have had quite an amount of work done in my electorate to overcome traffic problems and improve the roads. Of course, I am not getting preferential treatment. The reason is that my electorate covers 33 square miles and includes many of the main outlets from the metropolitan area, including the Pacific Highway, the main road to Redlands and the roads linking those highways. I feel that the Minister for Mines and Main Roads is at least sincere in what he is endeavouring to do.

But I must attack the Minister for Transport, because I say he is not sincere. It seems that all he is out to do in this city is to bring transport to a standstill. In a city such as Brisbane enrolments in particular electorates are naturally established,

and when the re-distribution took place in 1960 a certain number of electors was allotted to each electorate. Today, in the outer wards of the metropolitan area enrolments have increased considerably, in some cases by 4,000 or 5,000.

In reply to a question that I asked the Minister for Transport as to what applications had been made to the Department of Transport by the Brisbane City Council to extend bus services to outer wards in the metropolitan area, I was told that the applications had been rejected. This problem has a serious effect on the Belmont electorate. I cannot understand the reasoning of the Commissioner for Transport in not allowing the Brisbane City Council to extend services to these areas. From the survey I have made it is quite evident that no inspections were made, that the views of the public living in these districts were not sought, and that no approach was made to me or to the local alderman, who is chairman of the Works Committee in the Brisbane City Council. When 200 or 300 homes are built in a new estate, either by the Queensland Housing Commission or by private enterprise, surely the purchasers are entitled to transport to the city. At present it is quite obvious that the Minister for Transport and his departmental officers are out to strangle any attempt to get the new services required. They are far too busy trying to find alternative transport in areas where railway branch lines have been closed.

In some parts of the areas where the new services have been applied for there is no public transport within a mile or a mile and a-half. The new service applied for by the Brisbane City Council to serve the Mt. Gravatt South area would run along Cavendish Road through to Creek Road, up Newham Road, across Broadwater Road, along Newham Road, and right through to Dawson Road, Upper Mt. Gravatt. It would not interfere with any private bus service. That applies also to the Carina area. The new service would provide a further service that is needed in the area. The proprietors of the private bus services in these areas fully realise that if they cannot provide the extra services necessary alternative services must be provided. When applications are made to the Department of Transport all the necessary steps should be taken to ensure that a full investigation of the request by the Brisbane City Council is carried out.

At times I shudder when I see how crowded are some of the school buses. The department has a responsibility to see that buses conveying children to school are not overloaded, and that everything is done in the interests of safety. I had hoped that a new school in part of my electorate would have been included in this year's Budget, but as it appears it will not be I had to apply to a bus company to put on an extra bus to take the children to schools in the Wynnum area. The company said it could do nothing about it. It said it could only apply to the Transport Department to take off a regular service from North Quay to Wynnum and start it as a special school bus from the Tingalpa Hotel to transport children to the primary schools in the Wynnum area. The Minister for Education replied to my question. I am pleased he is here this afternoon. He knows that when I raise a matter I hit from the shoulder and speak right from the heart.

A few days ago I went down to see how the children in this area were faring. I must give the bus company credit because it has provided not one bus, but two buses to transport the children in the area to schools in the Wynnum area. I do not know how surveys are conducted from a Governmental or departmental point of view. However, I do know that whether the Education Department, the Transport Department, the Traffic Engineer's Department or the Main Roads Department is concerned, whenever one applies for something one is told that a survey has been taken which shows that the request is not warranted at the time. There should be no excuse for the Education Department, which has avenues that are not available to other departments.

Mr. Pizzey: We take a survey covering every parent in every location.

Mr. NEWTON: I am pleased to hear that. To be quite honest, I do not know what the Government's policy is on how many children must be in a particular area before a school is provided. However, I do know that, when the A.L.P. was in power, if there were nine, 10 or 12 children in an area a school was provided, and that was the policy throughout the State.

Mr. Pizzey: It was not done in the city.

Mr. NEWTON: I do not know.

Mr. Pizzey: It is still being done in the country.

Mr. NEWTON: I have been in the city only since the end of the last war and I have never previously come across this situation. When the A.L.P. was in power, whenever schools were required in the Wynnum end of my electorate they were provided.

Mr. Pizzey: If there are any children living more than 3 miles away, we provide a bus service.

Mr. NEWTON: I do not disagree with that; that is the Government's policy. Evidently the Government expects young children of five, just starting school, to walk a mile or a mile and a-half to school, or the parents in the area must pay the fares.

Mr. Pizzey: That has always been the case.

Mr. NEWTON: That is what all the people are doing. However, there is a limit to it and, later on, I will give my reasons for that statement.

Mr. Hanlon: It depends on the traffic situation.

Mr. NEWTON: Of course it does. Many things have to be taken into consideration.

Mr. Pizzey: When it is warranted we will give you one.

Mr. NEWTON: I am pleased to hear that. When there are a certain number of children in an area the Government has a responsibility to provide a school.

The hon. member for Wynnum and I have asked for a hospital in the Wynnum-Manly area, which includes Lota West, Manly West, Wynnum West, Tingalpa, Gumdale, Belmont and Capalaba in my electorate. The hon. member for Wynnum and I have spoken about this matter on many occasions, apart from leading deputations and corresponding with the committee that is attempting to have this hospital established, and I believe that the Government can no longer make excuses about it.

Recently, at Pleasantville, I attended the opening of an 8-bed hospital which was provided for the patients there. It is a credit to the Government, as it furnished the whole of that hospital at a cost of £8,000. If an 8-bed hospital is warranted at an aged persons' home, surely a hospital must be warranted in the Wynnum area, where there are 50,000 people.

I support the remarks of the member for Baroona on the shocking treatment meted out to the workers of this State by the Industrial Commission. The Premier and his Cabinet should have convened a meeting of all people concerned with the problem associated with the increase in the basic wage granted by the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, and the application for increase made to the State Industrial Commission. It should be noted that apart from the trade-union movement, an appeal was made by Mr. James, secretary of the Queensland Employers' Federation, who was reported as follows—

> "Wants Talks to Save Arbitration.
>
> "A top-level conference of leaders on both sides of industry, arbitrators, and Government representatives should be convened immediately, Mr. J. R. James said yesterday. He said this should be an initial step to combat a campaign which threatens to develop into a full-scale war on the arbitration system."

These people, who are advocates in the Commission, together with the union advocates who have to present a case for an increase in the basic wage, or in margins, know that the position that has arisen in this State is very serious. I support fully the remarks of the hon. member for Baroona on this question. At the same time I condemn the action taken by the Premier and his Cabinet in not calling such a meeting as requested by representatives of the employers and the trade unions. Since then the Housewives' Association has approached the Premier on this problem.

The basic wage is the key to the whole wage system in this State. It is the measuring stick of what the margin for skill should be, irrespective of what may have been done during the past few years in comparing like with like, as was pointed out by the hon. member for Baroona. If the Commission wanted to compare like with like on this occasion, it would have granted a £1 increase, as was given in the Commonwealth Court, instead of 14s.

This Government, which produced the document His Excellency had to read, tells us that the prosperity of the State was never better, yet the Crown advocate went into the Commission and opposed the application of the trade unions for a £2 basic-wage increase, saying, "We will agree to 4s. only," not the 14s. that was finally granted. I want to put something on record so that somebody might start to give this matter some earnest consideration.

Mr. Duggan: It should be recorded that the employers thought that 10s. was fair and reasonable, yet the Government said the increase should be 4s.

Mr. NEWTON: I fail to see how the present basic wage of £15 will provide all that is laid down in subsections 4 and 5 of Section 13 of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. Like many other people, I push my wire barrow around the chain stores to get as much for my money as I can. I think it would do some of the Ministers good to take a trolley and do the shopping and find out how much can be bought for £1.

Mr. Walsh: What family have you?

Mr. NEWTON: Bypassing that interjection, I am referring to a man, wife, and three children, as specified in the Act.

Mr. Walsh: I know you have a big family.

Mr. NEWTON: I am not using myself as an example, or trying to push my own barrow. As I have done, I suggest that hon. members opposite watch these people paying for the articles that they have taken. It is interesting to note that families can be seen each week in the stores at about the same time and that they are paying about £6 a week for groceries. There are no luxury items among them, either. I challenge anyone to buy the week-end meat and see if sufficient to last Saturday and Sunday can be bought for less than £2. Allow a family £2 10s. for the remainder of the week and see what can be bought for the five days. Every family needs at least a couple of pounds of steak; the family of the ordinary working man, because of high prices, has only one meal of meat each day. Meat for the other five days has to be bought for £2 10s.

The baker and the milkman have also to be paid. Allowing £1 for each of them, the amount has already approached £14. Hon. members opposite can laugh, but these are facts.

Mr. Hughes: I am keeping a family of three on less than that.

Mr. NEWTON: The hon. member must be feeding them as we were fed in the Army—on dehydrated rations. One eats them, takes a drink of water, and they swell up.

Furthermore, to this amount has to be added what is being paid for the purchase or rental of a home. Repayments on a house amount to £4 or £5 a week. If the house is being rented, payments range from £5 5s. to £8 8s. a week. The Queensland Housing Commission is at present charging £5 a week for its latest houses and flats.

The poor housewife who is handling the pay packet then has to buy clothes for the children, and school requirements, which amount to a fairly considerable sum. Fares to and from work and school have to be paid, and the cost of haircuts has to be taken into consideration because there is not much of £1 left after four of them have had haircuts.

Fruit and vegetables are most important from a health point of view not only for children but for adults. Medical men advise that greens are necessary, whether they be peas, beans, cabbage, or cauliflower. There is nothing left for fish, and I have not even included it in my calculations. I have not included anything for electricity, rates, and other expenses that must be met by the working man. I put all this on record so that somebody might start to give these things some consideration. The basic wage is far too low to meet the price rises that have occurred since the Government took office in 1957.

Rent control has been lifted, and another Bill is being introduced to further increase rents. The position is bad enough now. It is said, "They can go to the Fair Rents Court and get reductions." The Government prescribed a formula by legislation, and all that the magistrate hearing these cases can do is work to it. His hands are tied. The Government then, through its advocate before the Industrial Commission, opposes any increase in the basic wage.

The industrial unrest now being experienced would never have happened if the basic wage was what it should be as laid down under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. If the £1 had its full value and people were able to buy the things that they need, there would be little or no industrial unrest in Queensland. Before the adoption by the Commission of the "like-with-like" principle, margins were granted on the basis that 3-7ths of the State basic wage was the margin for skilled tradesmen.

Mr. Pizzey: Obviously they would not be able to run a motor-car or have television.

Mr. NEWTON: On another occasion the Treasurer interjected along similar lines and I said, "Do you begrudge the people these things?" The only way in which they can get them is on hire purchase. What happens when there is a credit squeeze and workers are retrenched? The hire purchase companies repossess the articles and sell them to somebody else. Even though I am a member of Parliament, I do not own the motor-car that I drive. I am still making payments to the Commonwealth Bank—not to a hire purchase company, thank goodness—to pay it off. If I were defeated at the next election, that motor-car would have to go back to the people from whom I bought it; I could not afford to keep it on the road.

I wish to deal now with the dismissals that took place in the Department of Works in May this year. The Government introduced a Bill enabling it to use prison labour in the gaols. Now we find that, while it is using prison labour, it is sacking men who have given good service in the Department of Works. I asked a question recently of the Minister for Health, who controls prisons, about the amount of money that was being spent on these jobs. In one instance it was £50,000. Anyone who has had experience in the building industry knows that this amount would keep a number of building tradesmen in a job for a considerable period.

Mr. Pizzey: Those men who were dismissed were soon in employment elsewhere.

Mr. NEWTON: That is not an answer to the question. As I said earlier, the Government and private employers employ people and then say, "The prosperity of the industry is good. We can unload them." What about their long-service-leave entitlements? They begrudge them those, and after employees have given good service for six or seven years, the employers are quite happy to let them go to somebody else. Those are the things that concern us.

Mr. Pizzey: These were only casual employees.

Mr. NEWTON: I would have to ask questions to find out whether or not that is correct. Our experience is that people with almost 10 years' service in Government departments have been dismissed. Luckily, there are trade unions in this State that move very quickly when instances such as this are brought to their notice. They have got in touch immediately with the department concerned and it has reinstated particular employees to give them their entitlements.

Mr. Pizzey: You did the very same thing before we came to office. You dismissed 750.

Mr. Duggan: Not our Government.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. NEWTON: One would expect that sort of remark to be thrown in by the Minister. I shall have a look at the Government's record and see how many times it has done this in the Department of Works, the Railway Department, and the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply. If the Minister wants me to bring figures to prove to the people of Queensland what the Government has done, I can do it. I have had experience in these industries and I know what the Government has done. Even if we did make a mistake on that occasion——

Mr. Duggan: Vincie made it; we did not make it.

Mr. NEWTON: That is true, too. Hon. members opposite should have learnt something from that; but they have not, and they are still continuing to sack men today. What I am objecting to is the use of prison labour.

(Time expired.)

Mr. MURRAY (Clayfield) (4.5 p.m.): I associate myself, of course, with the various expressions that have been made in respect of the Crown and the Governor. I should also like to add my congratulations to the many that have been made in the Chamber during this Address-in-Reply debate to the hon. members for Yeronga and Warwick. I agree that they made first-class contributions, and no doubt, we will hear a great deal more from them and they will pull their weight in this Parliament.

On our very first day of this session, the hon. member for Bundaberg rendered a service to this House by raising a matter of privilege. Although his remarks were received somewhat facetiously and with a little disdain by some members, I believe that the matters he raised were tremendously important to us all.

After all, the youngest student of the parliamentary system recognises immediately the position the Speaker occupies and holds in this Assembly. Without Mr. Speaker the House has no constitutional existence whatsoever. Mr. Speaker is essential to the House; he is a part of it but he is not, of course, above it. In a purely domestic sense, in the conduct of our day-by-day affairs and procedures in this House we are inclined to look at this book of standing rules and orders. This is natural, of course, because of the many limitations it imposes on the whole range of actions and conduct of the House and upon its members. They are capable of being enforced by Mr. Speaker as the need may arise or as he sees fit. So these rules and orders are generally accepted by all members without question, although no doubt a better understanding of them by some of us would considerably reduce misunderstandings which arise from time to time.

We are, of course, free to dissent from the Speaker's ruling and perhaps question it, and his interpretations, and it must never be forgotten—and the hon. member for Bundaberg made it abundantly clear as does Standing Order No. 332—that this House is free to change or modify its own orders and rules of procedure by its own independent action. This must never be forgotten. The uninformed or indifferent to these matters may consider that this book of standing orders is all that is necessary for us to live by; but we know perfectly well that it is little more, with its clearly expressed limitations, than a set of orders or rules designed to allow the conduct of the House to proceed in a proper manner. In fact, in one order after the other it expressly limits the opportunity for debate—limitations imposed by the House itself—by its members upon its members.

We also know perfectly well that behind the writings of this little book of standing orders lies the whole priceless history of our system of parliamentary government. It has been a system which in itself has caused this country and many other countries to make great sacrifices to preserve the way of life which it has given us.

Mr. Aikens: On the principle that Parliament is its own master.

Mr. MURRAY: It is on the principle that Parliament is its own master, as the hon. member for Townsville South says. Over hundreds of years procedures and practices have been formulated, tried, set aside or accepted by the great British Houses of Parliament which have been handed on to us and upon which we have based our own parliamentary law and procedures in this State of Queensland. Practice has developed over the years, much of it unrecorded in origin, referred to as "ancient usage" and needing no authority really other than proof of its de facto existence.

Those rules which are necessary for the conduct of the House so that it can carry on its discussions in an orderly manner are written into this handbook and the Speaker enforces them. There are some practices based on long-standing customs and procedures also written in them—for example, Rule of Practice No. 3 on page 2 dealing with the election to office of Mr. Speaker. This is a custom and a nice thing to do and it is done because it is the custom. Rule of Practice No. 6 is quite definite. It was referred to by the hon. member for Bundaberg. Again this is the custom—the front bench on the right-hand side of the Chair is reserved for members holding office under the Crown. This is certainly custom, and on this side of the House there is no question as to the right of Ministers to occupy the front benches. No members on this side of the House would dare usurp those front benches reserved for Ministers of the Crown.

An Opposition Member: They would like to.

Mr. MURRAY: Yes. There are those members who always yearn for and lean towards them, but none dare usurp them. This Rule of Practice No. 6 shows quite clearly that hon. members who have held

office under the Crown can, if they so desire, sit on the front cross-benches on either side of the Chair. Obviously, Mr. Speaker cannot force any ex-Minister to sit on the left front benches or on any of the front cross-benches, any more than he can force a Minister to sit in what we clearly regard as the Ministerial benches. All that is written into the Rule—this custom—is that in the case of Ministerial benches other members will keep out of and away from them. Custom has it, of course, that the Ministers sit together. It does not need an order or a rule to say that—it is custom; it merely needs an order or rule to keep other members out and away from those benches. An institution such as this is built on procedures and customs of hundreds of years, and we are aware of it. Standing Orders are only a small written part of these. Every new member taking his place in this or any other House of Assembly based on the traditions of the House of Commons recognises the atmosphere of history immediately he comes in here or into any Assembly. We have only to observe a member conducting a party of visitors through the House to realise how true that is.

No doubt it was the accepted recognition of these old practices which prompted one writer to observe that nothing tended more to throw power into the hands of administration, and those who acted with the majority of the House, than a neglect of, or departure from, these rules. He went on to say that the forms of proceedings, as instituted by our ancestors, operated as a check and control on the actions of the Ministers; and that they were in many instances a shelter and protection to the minority against the attempts of power.

Most who like to think of these matters seem to agree that modern trends and pressures of administrative and legislative programmes have allowed the Executive to form a closer-knit power group with a tendency to separate itself from Parliament and, at the same time, demanding a tighter control over Parliamentary business. This is quite a natural state of affairs; it seems a natural process for any new Government after it has spent a year or two in office. Time ensures the event; it always happens. It is just as natural that ever since men agreed to be governed by elected representatives they have been seeking ways and means to exercise more effective control over those they elect to govern them. So, when a Cabinet of Ministers, elected or chosen by a party or parties forming a Government—not by Parliament itself and therefore not as an official organ of the Parliament—attempts to make decisions which usurp the rights of Parliament itself, then I think we begin to see the danger signals in our system of parliamentary government. It is relevant to quote here from an editorial article which appeared in "The Australian" of 24 August. It is headed "Executive Power Must be Curbed", so it seems that this is a broad disease generally. The article states—

> "The Victorian Liberal Member of Parliament, Mr. Frank Davis, last week drew attention again to the decline in the authority of Parliament.
>
> "Authority, he said, was slipping away from Parliament to the Executive."

The editorial says—

> "He was right to raise this issue, but his tense was wrong. Power HAS slipped away from Parliament almost entirely.
>
> "The Executive controls Parliament through party discipline, the Prime Minister (or State Premier)"

as the case may be—

> "controls the Executive in a similar manner, and in the background are the shadowy figures of senior civil servants who are answerable only to Ministers, and who refuse to defend their policies in public.
>
> "The result is public disillusion with Parliament, virtually untrammelled power to the Executive, and power without question to the senior civil service.
>
> "There is one way to break this down—by establishing a committee of the Parliament with power to demand evidence on oath from civil servants; it would be asking too much to get Ministers before such a committee.
>
> "The Public Accounts Committee had the germ of such a reform, but it has been stifled.
>
> "Another possibility would be for the Senate to assert itself—"

referring now to the Commonwealth Parliament—

> "much more vigorously, through the exploitation and development of the technique of joint committees."

We have joint committees and it is quite relevant to draw attention to some of them. I wish to draw attention particularly to the Parliamentary Buildings Committee. The hon. member for Salisbury is on that committee and he said that he was proud to be on it. No doubt it is a very good committee and has done a very good job. What I wish to say strikes a little discordant note with some of the remarks that have been made. I make it perfectly clear that I am not reflecting on any individual. This is purely symptomatic of the slow process which has occurred over many years under our predecessors; it is a degeneration of the proper customs, forms and processes which we should go through. This is where the danger exists and I must draw attention to it.

Standing Order 330 is quite clear. It says in effect that a committee of seven members shall be set up at the commencement of each Parliament to manage the Library, another

to manage the Refreshment Rooms, and another to manage and superintend the Parliamentary buildings and the Lodge.

Mr. Sherrington: You are not whingeing.

Mr. MURRAY: No, not at all. These committees are essential. In the years that I have been a member of this Assembly the only report I have heard—there may have been others—is from the Library Committee which, I understand, prior to this Government's coming to office never reported to this Parliament—it never reported.

Mr. Aikens: They never met.

Mr. MURRAY: That may be so. The order does not say that these committees will report to the Parliament or to Mr. Speaker who, in any case, presides over them. It seems then that they must report to Cabinet if they meet and report at all—and I understand they do. One would hardly think they would act autonomously or independently. I am sure they do not. I have no argument whatsoever with the Buildings Committee about maintenance and day-by-day domestic arrangements. However, where does it stop? This is the point: surely there is a line somewhere beyond which the Buildings Committee must report to Parliament. It is very interesting to note that the terms of reference, powers or instructions given to the Buildings Committee state quite clearly that it will be responsible only for maintenance and minor repair work within the Vote allowed it by Parliament. In fact, the first instruction it gets from Parliament is that it will cause to be effected all necessary minor improvements and repairs to the buildings and furniture which can be carried out within the limit of the Vote placed at its disposal. That is No. 1 on the list. Does anyone seriously suggest that the work that has been carried out in this Chamber is maintenance or minor repair? I pose this question, because I think it is important in regard to what I am saying. It is a process which has been ignored for so many years. Is there anything more important in the parliamentary buildings than this Chamber?

Mr. Bennett: Don't you agree it is more important that it be used more frequently during the year, and not vacant for eight months?

Mr. Aikens: It is all right for the metropolitan members who use it for their own convenience.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MURRAY: I think the Parliament should have been apprised of it.

Mr. Bromley: Are you having a shot at Mr. Speaker again?

Mr. MURRAY: No, I am not. This is something which we have inherited as a result of 40 years of Labour's shoddy rule. Apart from the cost, we should have been apprised of the whole re-design and construction, and should have had the opportunity of discussing it. We had no opportunity of being apprised of the intention that this work was to be carried out.

Mr. Sherrington: Don't the members of your party on the committee report to your caucus?

Mr. Aikens: What about me? Nobody told me.

Mr. MURRAY: That is exactly the point. It is the Parliament that really matters. This Parliament is expected to agree to hand on to successive Parliaments a reconstructed and re-designed chamber. Perhaps this has been the most important change and decision for over 100 years in the Parliamentary buildings without the opinion or consent of Parliament itself. To me, that is quite a fantastic and alarming state of affairs. It is disturbing to me to find that the Buildings Committee does not report to Parliament, that it is Cabinet which makes the decision without going to Parliament, and when a decision is made, the work is carried out—I am not sure of the procedure—by the Department of Works or whoever it may be. The work is carried out without Parliament being apprised of the intention or the fact that it is being done, unless one visits the Chamber.

Mr. Aikens: The first the majority of the members knew about it was when they read it in the Press.

Mr. MURRAY: Surely there should be a limit to this. I want to make a suggestion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Townsville South has made himself rather obnoxious during the debate, and I ask that the hon. member for Clayfield be heard without further interruption.

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. I am greatly interested to know that there is one hon. member prepared to protect the rights of private members.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MURRAY: I make the suggestion that we should set a figure, a sum of money, that the Buildings Committee must not exceed unless it reports to Parliament for permission to proceed. Perhaps in this case it may have been a useful exercise if all the members of the Assembly—presumably they are all members of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association—had been given the opportunity not only to be acquainted of the intention, but also to express an opinion on it. There are some aspects of this re-design and construction which are disagreeable to me personally. I have discussed this matter with you, Mr. Speaker, and you know all about it.

Mr. Duggan: You should be grateful to the Labour members on the committee, because on the original plan you were to be 50 yards further out.

Mr. MURRAY: This beautiful old Chamber, surrounded by cedar, has an atmosphere of antiquity, and it offends me personally to have a Chevron-Hilton type of convention room built into it. It will not be long before the Standing Orders prevent members from banging these little school-type lids, or hiding behind them. I am sure that they must be mentioned in Standing Orders before many years have passed.

An Opposition Member: We thought they might be handy for you to fire from behind at the Country Party.

Mr. MURRAY: What a silly thought! If Parliament had agreed to this arrangement after perhaps architects had submitted proposals and discussions had taken place on them, I would have gladly accepted it. That, however, was not done, and I think that perhaps a wonderful opportunity may have been lost.

The seating arrangement for members has been bandied about time and time again in this debate. I find myself in the disagreeable situation of once again agreeing with the hon. member for Bundaberg. He correctly pointed out that neither Mr. Speaker nor Cabinet can arbitrarily determine where members will sit. Now that individual places have been allotted, no doubt Standing Orders will be changed to give Mr. Speaker power to settle any question of seating that may be in dispute. I assume that is done in other Parliaments where individual seating is provided. Mr. Speaker certainly cannot decide where members will sit, nor did he arbitrarily, outside Standing Orders, order anyone to sit anywhere. I make that perfectly clear.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I trust the hon. member for Clayfield is not insinuating that I did give orders on where members were to sit?

Mr. MURRAY: I am trying to make it perfectly clear, with respect, that Mr. Speaker did not arbitrarily order or direct any member in this matter. I have said that twice in order to make it clear.

It is not laid down that Government and Opposition members will necessarily sit on the right or left of the Chair. Members determine these things for themselves. In the Commonwealth Parliament, in which I was privileged to serve for one short term, Country Party members, because of the seating arrangements there, sat on the left of the Chair and moved across to the other side, because of the availability of room, when voting with the Liberal Party in a coalition Government. These things are arranged domestically between the parties, as the parties wish.

Now that the hon. member for Bundaberg is free from the tight grip of Labour Party caucus control, and no longer in the shadow of the Trades Hall up on the Hill and watched over constantly by Big Brothers Egerton, Macdonald, and Dawson, I feel that he is in a very good position to look afresh at this Parliament and has a unique opportunity, with his experience and excellent memory, to see more clearly the dangers that exist to our Parliamentary system. They always exist, and previous Governments to which he belonged helped to create or ignore many of them.

Mr. Walsh: After what you have said about me I will bring my black Homburg in tomorrow and wear it.

Mr. MURRAY: It was refreshing to hear the hon. member for Bundaberg expounding his views on privilege, and as a Federalist, in this place. I hope he keeps it up. He has this unique opportunity if he wants to make use of it. He can watch over, and perhaps help to restore to this Parliament, any rights and privileges that he thinks may have been eroded over the years by carelessness.

The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt put forward, in his maiden speech last year, an interesting thesis on the philosophy of change, and I think it might do us good to consider and remember his remarks. In spite of the many great achievements of the Government, to which I am proud to belong, in seven years of office, and with complete acknowledgment of the fact, acknowledged freely by the people, that our two parties in coalition have governed with honesty and integrity, I feel that I must express from time to time, as I do now, my impatience, as did the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt, and also deep concern that we are still clearing the decks of much of the socialist litter and rubbish that we inherited and which has obstructed the State from getting into action as fast as we would have liked.

This is still happening. Our achievements in seven years are clear for all to see. We have done a tremendous amount, and the Leader of the Opposition knows this. His role in opposition is to doubt, attack, and pull down, but he recognises this full well. We have done much to wipe out the shabby memories of 40 years of Labour socialist rule in this State, and there is clear evidence everywhere in Queensland of the work that the Government has done in the fields of health, education, main roads, and many other fields. Anyone travelling round can see how we have changed the face of the State.

Mr. Mann: What about industrial unrest?

Mr. MURRAY: As they like to cause industrial unrest, so it exists. As the Kremlin likes to direct, so industrial unrest exists. But private enterprise, both at home and overseas, obviously recognises and appreciates the climate of political stability that we have created and which is necessary for prosperity and advancement, and therefore its attention is focusing more and more on Queensland. There is no doubt about that. Because of the opportunity that we have, I believe that we must continue to shake off many of the irksome controls that

now exist. We have shaken off many that are diametrically opposed to our political principles on this side of the House and which we think only retain and strengthen bureaucracy.

The hon. member for Kurilpa raised a matter to which I shall refer now, and I am glad that he did because I will come in behind him on it. I do not think we can be proud of the situation surrounding the 7.30 p.m. closing of small shops, proud of having fixed this hour after which it is illegal to buy a tin of powdered milk or a tin of baked beans but legal, apparently, to buy such necessary items for our daily sustenance as razor-strops and plants (potted)—they are on the list.

Someone said today that the Industrial Commissioner fixes the hours. Of course he fixes the hours; we know that. But I think we should come out from behind the Industrial Commissioner and accept our full responsibility for this stupidity—and I believe that it is stupidity.

Mr. Duggan: Are you suggesting that we should ringbark the Industrial Commission?

Mr. MURRAY: No, I am not suggesting that. The Commissioner fixes the hours because Parliament has give him the power and the instruction to do so.

Mr. Walsh: Not the instruction!

Mr. Mann: They instruct him.

Mr. MURRAY: We have told him to determine the hours, and it is his job to do it. I think that the imposition of this 7.30 rule for small shops—in my opinion it is a bad rule—has cut one of the roots of our philosophy just as it was finding its way down into the soil of Queensland. If a law is a bad law, it is soon broken. The old 20-to-5 rule was a bad rule, and it was soon broken and ignored by the people. It was broken by all the small shopkeepers who wanted to open at night to give a service and satisfy a demand by the public. They did not give a service for the fun of it or the love of it, but for cash reward, and I believe that the service was given mostly by little people who were prepared to work long hours to make money. I wonder what this Government, or any Government, for that matter, is doing in taking upon itself the right to deny anyone this opportunity. I think the Minister and Cabinet may perhaps appear to be satisfied—there are great difficulties involved, I know—because agreement was reached by representatives of various groups prior to going into court before the Commissioner. Perhaps with a sigh of relief they saw the matter apparently finalised. But we are not happy.

Mr. Mann: What do you want them to do, work the year round?

Mr. MURRAY: If they want to, yes, let them.

Mr. Houston: Why should they have to?

Mr. MURRAY: The hon. member knows. I feel it is an intolerable sectional imposition on the rights and freedom of the individual. I suggest it is sectional, in answer to the hon. member for Brisbane, because private enterprise has survived and prospered in the knowledge that it has every minute of every 24 hours of every day available if it has the will and desire to use it. And that is an important thing.

Of course, there are many matters such as award wages and conditions and public interest to be considered. We recognise those clearly and fully. That is a most important rule of government, and this Government is very aware of its responsibilities in regard to watching over such things as health, safety, and security. But, after satisfying those things, all I ask is that we set the people free and let any man win for himself and his family and his country and his State what prizes or rewards he can. I regard that as a tremendously important philosophy but we say, "No, he must not do this." I think it is a great pity.

It is said that 95 per cent. or more of the small shops in the metropolitan area are satisfied with the 7.30 arrangement. Perhaps many want to close at 5.30 or 6, and perhaps many do. We do not insist that they stay open for the prescribed hours but why shouldn't they stay open? The demand would differ from suburb to suburb. That is the point. For many it is uneconomic and a domestic nuisance to stay open later but for many the night would bring the principal revenue and reward.

Mr. Davies: Only because of habit.

Mr. MURRAY: Because the public differ. The hon. member talks of habit and regimentation. Because the public differ considerably in their way of life and their hours of work from suburb to suburb—and they have a perfect right to differ and thank God they do differ—because some suburbs have a high content of flat dwellers and others have not, there are people with sufficient enterprise in the community to want to cater for those differences.

That is the very basis of a modern, civilised, free-enterprise society, but we say that this is not to be and that we must have an ordered society with hours fixed to the minute—bully beef to 7.30 p.m.

I do not know who decides the items, these saleable goods which are black or white according to the hour. They are contained in regulations or Orders in Council so one must assume that the Government must take some responsibility for them. They must, I suppose, ponder over or argue whether a tin of powered milk should be an exempt item. I notice in the list that it is not, but condensed milk is. Apparently only items which it is considered may be urgently required by the public are added to the exempt list—such things as razor-strops and plants (potted). Toilet paper

is not. Toilet paper is not specifically mentioned on the list and I think it should be. I think we should clear this one up. But, in all seriousness, is it really necessary to have this type of restriction in this day and age in which we live? I do not think it is and it seems to me that to do it properly, if we are going to have this restriction, let us make a job of it and take it to its conclusion. Let us tell the farmer that he cannot plant or harvest wheat after 7.30 but that he can plough for 24 hours a day. And what about Mr. Whippy? Surely we could get at him and ask him to have another tune after 7.30 at night.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. MURRAY: No doubt hon. members would like to get at him now, but that is that sort of thing I mean. I know it sounds facetious and an over-simplification of the whole problem but that is the principle of the matter.

We on this side of the House are here because of a well-merited faith by the majority of the people in our electoral appeal and promise. The people elected us and expected us to set them free from the many controls and restrictions imposed upon them by our socialist opponents. They gave us a mandate to do this in 1957 and twice since. We have rid ourselves of much of the socialist disease in government and administration that we inherited. That disease still lingers on in certain places. I do hope that we can hasten the treatment.

We have put up the "Go" sign in this State. The Government to which I proudly belong has done a wonderful job. We have a good image—an excellent image—now. It is up to this Government to shake off as many controls as possible, and to help private enterprise to expand and prosper. I think we should keep out of any activity which competes with it except when it is a clear matter of preservation of public interest.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Mann, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 4.41 p.m.