

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 1964

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following Bills reported by Mr. Speaker:—

Common Law Practice Act Amendment Bill.

Main Roads Acts Amendment Bill.

Charitable Funds Acts Amendment Bill.

QUESTIONS

EXEMPTION OF COMMONWEALTH VEHICLES FROM PARKING REGULATIONS.—Mr. Coburn for Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

Are cars owned by any Commonwealth authority exempt from the payment of parking meter fees and other traffic laws and regulations concerning the parking of cars and vehicles? If so, will he inform the House fully on the matter and the reasons therefor?

Answer:—

“No.”

FINES IMPOSED BY INDUSTRIAL COURT ON TRADE UNIONS.—Mr. Newton, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Labour and Industry,—

What fines have been imposed by way of penalty arising from industrial action on (a) trade unions and (b) employers' organisations or associations under the Queensland Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act in each year from 1944 to 1964, giving the names of the trade unions and employers' organisations or associations involved and the penalties imposed upon each?

Answer:—

“I table a statement containing the information sought by the Honourable Member.”

*Paper:—*Whereupon, Mr. Dewar laid upon the Table of the House the statement referred to.

BETTING TAX RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS.—Mr. Davies for Mr. Hanlon, pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

For the period since the 1961 amendment to the Racing and Betting Act provided for both legalised off-course betting and an on-course turnover tax to the most recent convenient date for compilation, what were the (a) gross receipts of taxation from the Totalisator Administration Board, (b)

amount of (a) above rebated to the T.A.B. for establishment expenses, (c) amount paid plus estimate amount payable to date to clubs by the T.A.B., (d) gross receipts from off-course turnover tax, (e) amount of (d) above both paid and held in credit for payment to clubs, (f) gross receipts from on-course turnover tax, (g) amount of (f) above both rebated and held in credit for rebate to clubs, and (h) relevant taxation currently derived on a normal Saturday's racing from the T.A.B., off-course turnover tax, on-course totalisator tax and on-course turnover tax, respectively?

Answer:—

“The information requested by the Honourable Member has been compiled to September 30, 1964. The Answer to his Question is as follows:—(a) £815,169 14s. 11d.; (b) £326,067 17s. 11d.; (c) £430,355 was paid to June 30, 1964. An estimate to September 30, 1964, is not readily available; (d) £150,790; (e) £30,158; (f) £1,958,390; (g) £311,418 between September 28, 1962 and September 30, 1964. In this behalf I draw the Honourable Member's attention to Section 95c (2) of the Racing and Betting Acts; (h) The information is not readily available.”

FIRST-YEAR APPRENTICESHIP EXAMINATION RESULTS.—Mr. Houston, asked The Minister for Labour and Industry,—

At the annual apprenticeship examination of 1963 for first-year apprentices, how many apprentices in each trade (a) sat for the first-year examinations, (b) passed these examinations and (c) were allowed to proceed to the second-year course in 1964? (*Originally asked October 30, 1964.*)

Answer:—

“I table a statement, setting out the information requested.”

*Paper:—*Whereupon, Mr. Dewar laid upon the Table of the House the statement referred to.

COLLEGE COURSES FOR APPRENTICES.—Mr. Houston, asked The Minister for Labour and Industry,—

What trades at present have (a) a five-years college course, (b) a four-years college course, (c) a one- to three-years college course and (d) no college course? (*Originally asked October 30, 1964.*)

Answer:—

“I table a statement, setting out the information requested.”

*Paper:—*Whereupon, Mr. Dewar laid upon the Table of the House the statement referred to.

PAPERS

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

Reports—

Committee of Inquiry into Matters concerning the Development of the Livestock and Meat Industry.

Insurance Commissioner for the year 1963-64.

Department of Works for the year 1963-64.

Council of the Queensland Institute of Medical Research for the year 1963-64.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

The State Electricity Commission Acts, 1937 to 1964.

The Southern Electric Authority of Queensland Acts, 1952 to 1958.

The River Improvement Trust Acts, 1940 to 1959.

The Liquor Acts, 1912 to 1961.

Regulation under The Art Union Regulation Acts, 1930 to 1956.

Reports—

Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission for the year 1963-64.

Operations of the Brisbane Market Trust for the year 1963-64.

LAND TAX ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

NATIONAL TRUST OF QUEENSLAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

SUPPLY

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—ESTIMATES—SEVENTH AND EIGHTH ALLOTTED DAYS

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

ESTIMATES-IN-CHIEF, 1964-65

THE TREASURER

TREASURY

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Chatsworth—Treasurer) (11.12 a.m.): I move—

“That £2,790,254 be granted for ‘The Treasurer—Treasury’.”

As this is the Vote on which opportunity no doubt will be taken to review all the activities that come under the general heading of “Treasury”, I do not propose to

offer any detailed comment narrowly confined to the Vote itself. Instead I propose to bring to the attention of the Committee some developments within the Treasury Department that have happened, in some cases, since the Estimates were brought down, or which will expand the information available to hon. members.

The first matter about which I should like to say something is the computer installation, an announcement of which has been made but on which this is the first opportunity to say something within this Parliament. Tenders were called in April of this year for the supply and installation of an electronic digital computer in the Treasury. No fewer than seven companies tendered in reply, and some of the most advanced equipment available in the world for office data processing was included in their proposals.

Mr. Duggan: Did you lay down a general specification?

Mr. HILEY: Yes, we laid down a very impressive specification. As a matter of fact, I shall try to have a copy brought to the Chamber. I am told that it was one of the most voluminous specifications of its kind, and it set out a series of work targets that the machines had to be capable of performing and the time in which they' would have to achieve the target.

Mr. Duggan: I ask now because I did not want to interrupt you as you went along.

Mr. HILEY: The hon. gentleman has probably had another letter from John Burke.

Mr. Duggan: No, I have not.

Mr. HILEY: It must be the first time the hon. gentleman has not had one. He must have got tired.

A most rigorous scrutiny of the proposals was carried out and detailed consultations were held with all manufacturers regarding the nature of their equipment and its performance on the applications to be undertaken.

Detailed consultations also took place with the officers of the Main Roads Department, since that department was also proceeding towards the installation of a computer. The advantages that could flow from the acquisition of similar equipment for the two departments were foreseen from the beginning. These lie in the ability of two comparable installations to give each other mutual support in emergency and in periods of heavy demand, and the facility for setting up common staffing and programming standards. These are important considerations in the choice of equipment, and the final recommendation of the officers concerned was for the acceptance by each department of the proposals submitted by International Computers and Tabulators Australia Pty. Ltd.

Mr. Duggan: What are the disadvantages of having one unit to serve the two departments instead of two units? Is that not feasible?

Mr. HILEY: It is too big a task. The Main Roads Department has somewhat different requirements. They have to check difficult mathematical calculations, whereas the type of machine needed by the Treasury Department is one with a very high functional purpose in handling infinitely repetitive programmes—things such as teachers' pay, Public Service pay, examination results, and electoral rolls. Whereas our machine had to be capable of infinite repetition of quality and quantity at speed, the machine for the Main Roads Department had to be capable of fast calculation of the engineering requirements they wanted. Whilst one machine could be devised to do both it would have meant, as it were, putting a Rolls-Royce engine into a working truck. It was considered best to buy two specific machines with so much of common equipment that we could manage if one broke down. If their machine broke down we would see them through; if our machine broke down they would see us through. International Computers and Tabulators Australia Pty. Ltd. is a British-based firm of wide repute.

The Treasury installation will consist of an ICT 1904 computer and will include 16,384 words of memory, six magnetic-tape units, high speed printer, card reader and card punch. This computer forms part of a group of machines recently released by ICT which are of the most advanced design and incorporate many features not yet available on any other equipment. The power and flexibility of the computer is such that it can work on the programmes for up to four separate applications simultaneously. It may be of interest to note that the computer can add a pair of numbers in seven-millionths of a second and can print data at the rate of 1,350 lines a minute. For instance, the pay in the Department of Education would take a matter of minutes. It can handle 1,350 transactions in a minute.

The equipment will be purchased outright at a price of £173,220 plus a maximum of £9,900 for importation charges, transport, insurance, etc. This price must be considered as the very lowest at which such equipment could have been obtained. In addition, the company has undertaken to deliver the computer during May, 1965, and will be under heavy penalty for failure to deliver by that time. The company has also given certain guarantees concerning the assistance it will give in setting the installation up and preparing the programmes for the first application.

The decision to purchase outright is justified by the fact that there is no fear of obsolescence due to technical development. This has been specially catered for in the design of the computer, which allows devices to be replaced when worn out, or

the system changed as necessary to take advantage of new developments as they become available.

Unlike other machines available up to date, it is one total unit that is constructed of sections or units. If one unit becomes obsolete and something better becomes available, that unit can be pulled out and the replacement with greater capacity put in. The indication is that this machine, by progressive modernisation, can be kept perpetually up to date.

The work to be undertaken initially will consist of the teaching staff payrolls. It is planned to process the first batch of these in July, 1965, and to complete their take-over by the end of 1965. In addition, the results of the 1965 Junior Public examination will be processed on the computer. Further work relating to payrolls, government accounting, the indexing of births, deaths and marriages, the maintenance of the electoral rolls and other tasks will be developed during the following years.

In addition, the computer will be made available for use by the technical departments, and it is expected that the very fast computing speeds available in this machine will be of special interest to them in their work.

The staff who are required to investigate the existing systems, prepare them for computer operation, and write the machine programmes for each application, have been recruited entirely from within the Public Service. Courses are being organised by the manufacturer to train the staff in Brisbane.

Leadership on the electrical side of the preparation was entrusted to Mr. Pope, who was brought in and added to the Public Service staff some two years ago. He was a young man with extensive experience in electronic computer installation in England.

His family migrated to Australia. He has proved to be a very sound and helpful officer to us. With his work and the preparatory work that has been done we should be able to do this job using entirely Public Service-trained staff who have been undergoing courses in preparation for it. When we get a machine of this nature we have to make it functional. The fear I had that we might not be able to get adequate staff has proved groundless. As I say, all the necessary staff will come from within the Public Service.

The computer will be located on the ground floor of the Treasury Building in a suite of rooms occupying the corner of the building bounded by Queen Street and George Street. It will be directly underneath my office. It will be necessary to provide special accommodation. Air conditioning, special wiring facilities and things of that nature will be required but the Department of Works has that work well in hand.

Mr. Duggan: What is the anticipated saving from the installation of the computer?

Mr. HILEY: That has all been examined. May I answer in very broad terms by saying that in the repetitive type of work we will be doing I expect there will be some small labour saving when the full programme is eventually carried through and the machine is brought under its full load factor. The advantage of these computers is not that they are a great economy. Their greatest contribution is that they so facilitate and expedite the carrying out of work that they allow one, within the accounting system, to command with speed and ability results that one would never attempt on the old conventional basis. In other words, it is a much more efficient tool of management rather than a more economic tool of management.

The experience in many parts of the world is that many people, apparently influenced by the idea of trying to keep up with the Joneses, put in computers only to find that instead of making savings it is costing them more. Here we hope that we will see some slight saving but the real benefit will be the speeding up of the process. For example, any one who has had experience of electoral roll work knows what a slow process it is putting the names into alphabetical order and making the necessary changes, but the computer will do the whole thing. It can read alphabetical sequence, sort the names into order and print at the rate of 1,200 lines a minute in such a way that it can go straight to the printing office. By a photographic process the rolls can be printed straight from the printed material. It is the speeding up that is the real benefit.

I turn now to the subject of freight rates on starving stock and drought relief. Earlier the suggestion was made that the Estimates were padded in this direction. In August, when the Budget is being framed, we cannot accurately forecast the weather. All we can do is study the signs as they then show out. If the Department of Primary Industries is declaring a number of districts as drought-stricken, that is regarded as a bad sign and we provide for it fairly heavily. When the Budget was brought down we made provision for £150,000 for freight rebate on starving stock, and for a further £200,000 as drought relief. When these figures were prepared there was no indication of a break in the drought. Had it continued or extended, the rate of movement of stock to agistment or slaughter would have increased tremendously.

Furthermore, the Government had approved that once the drought had broken freight rebates would extend to the re-stocking of those farms that had suffered a major depletion of their herds. In other words, it is not sufficient to say when the drought breaks, "We helped you to get your stock away." We are finding that it is just as important that stock should be moved back

to the places that were drought-stricken. Consequently, the freight-rebate scheme extends to re-stocking farms that have been depleted, either through the death of stock or the removal of stock to save them.

The experience of the freight rebate scheme for the first three months of the financial year was not a happy one. We had to meet claims totalling £57,994. Indeed, at that stage I had some grave doubt as to the accuracy of the amount provided. As hon. members know, there were widespread early spring rains which provided welcome relief, and reports of areas being removed from the drought-stricken category are being received from stock inspectors almost daily. For the freight rebate Vote, the estimate which at first sight may have appeared over generous but which, after three months' experience, gave rise to some fears that it was inadequate, now appears to be exactly sufficient.

On the Vote "Amount to be credited to Drought Relief Fund", for £200,000, I can now inform the Committee that it is expected a substantial under-spending will result. I am happy to be able to make that report, and the further it falls short of the estimate the happier I will be. Nobody likes drought and nobody imagines that the result of a drought is measurable in the terms of the small Votes we are able to make to meet the situation. The real loss to the primary producer through the drought is infinitely greater than the small relief we are able to afford.

Mr. Lloyd: This was mainly in the central western areas?

Mr. HILEY: It was bad west of Chinchilla, to Taroom, Miles, Condamine, Surat, the St. George basin, and all the Western Maranoa area. It really plays havoc in the closer-settled areas. In the larger areas the rate of stocking is not as heavy, and the people there are accustomed to the hazards of drought and take precautions. In the closely settled areas the drought can really hurt and the people there are more apt to ask for the movement of fodder into the area to keep stock alive. That is where most of the claims arise. The men on the large properties and in the real Far West never feed, because it is physically impossible. The areas mainly affected are in the smaller settled areas where droughts hit harder, as in dairying areas and the smaller stock-holding areas.

Another item about which some query was raised was the Public Service Award. Late in 1963-64, the various Public Service unions lodged a claim with the Industrial Commission for a variation of the Public Service Award and related awards. The Commission determined the salaries for key positions and ordered the parties to confer on salaries in the intermediate range. The decision was handed down just prior to the presentation of the Budget, too late to ask departmental

heads to include the rises in their departmental estimates. Consequent upon the Commission having determined the key positions, it was a relatively simple arithmetical exercise to calculate as an amount of about £1,000,000 the total extra cost for the entire Public Service. Hon. members will see from the Estimates that that amount was included in the Treasury appropriation and I have heard one or two statements—I do not think they were made openly on the floor of the Chamber—by some hon. members who said that I had £1,000,000 up my sleeve. I wish they had been right. When the Commission determined the 26 key positions it was not long before agreement was reached in conference on the remaining eleven, which brought the total determination up to 37. That agreement was taken back to the Commission and ratified, and it is now possible to apply the effect of the increases to every Public Service position and to measure the result. A review of the cost, now that all salaries are known, shows no variation from the original estimate. The officers who made that estimate of £1,000,000 made it with almost decimal precision, and I am sorry to say that the full £1,000,000 will be consumed in complying with the award of the Commission over the entire Public Service.

The next matter I should like to refer to is the Commonwealth Savings Bank Agreement. This matter is under consideration now; it is likely to come before the House in some form or another in the next 12 months, and I feel that something should be said about it now. As hon. members are no doubt aware, the State shares, with the Commonwealth Savings Bank, profits and losses on the Bank's operations in Queensland. In addition, the State is entitled to 70 per cent. of the increased Savings Bank deposits at a concessional rate of interest. As the year 1963-64 was a profitable one for the bank, no provision is required to meet losses, as has been done in some recent years. Instead, we receive in revenue £94,853 as our share of the profits.

The arrangement with the Commonwealth Savings Bank dates from 1920. The State agreed to vacate the savings bank field in favour of that bank. Over the years, Queensland has benefited quite considerably from the agreement, both in the sharing of profits and in the provision of loan funds. At present some £70,000,000 State's debt is Commonwealth Savings Bank loans, at very favourable rates of interest.

The agreement expires at 30 June next, and discussions are currently being held between my officers and bank officials with respect to renewal. No obligation rests with either party to renew the agreement, but a mutually beneficial arrangement is being sought. I am hopeful that it will be possible to continue what has been quite a good arrangement to both the State and the bank.

Mr. Duggan: Apart from any policy consideration, would you care to outline briefly the impediments to our having our own State bank?

Mr. HILEY: I thought I had done that on previous occasions. We would start off in a field which is now heavily catered for by a number of strongly established and well spread organisations. The Government of the day in 1920 felt that it should retire from this field when there was only one other savings bank, namely, the Commonwealth Savings Bank. Today there are six or seven savings banks.

We have no staff, no premises, and no experience in the savings-bank field. I say this because I feel I must say it, although I realise that no doubt "Hansard" will be read by officers of the Commonwealth Bank and that they will feel that they might be in a slightly better bargaining position when these negotiations are taking place, but the point is properly raised and I should say something about it. My own conclusion is that to start a savings bank we would have to find quite a substantial sum of money—some millions of pounds—for premises in order to give a banking service to the State, we would have to go through the painful process of recruiting and training staff, and we would be faced with initial losses until we had a sufficient volume of transactions to overcome the initial over-heads and hope that we could conduct it without losses. It would be a very great task for any State Government to come anew into the savings-bank field.

Mr. Duggan: If the extension of the agreement is approved by both parties, what will be its duration?

Mr. HILEY: That would be one of the terms discussed. The previous terms were 25 years initially, and in 1945 Mr. Lacombe extended it for another 20 years. That has been the pattern of it.

Mr. Lloyd: It is 15 years at the moment.

Mr. HILEY: Then either the first one must have been 30 years, or it was carried on for some little time without authority.

Mr. Lloyd: From 1947 to 1950 it was carried on without an agreement.

Mr. HILEY: That is probably the explanation.

The next matter with which I deal is fisheries. The Estimates of the Department of Harbours and Marine provide this year for an expenditure of £29,785 under fisheries contingencies. That is such a large sum that I consider I should give some details. It includes funds to cover the purchase of a new fisheries patrol launch and a mobile patrol unit, the printing of a new book on Queensland fishes, and the cost of additional research work on the programme associated with the protection of bathers from stinging jellyfish. That is a problem which has beset us so much in the Far North. Separately

provided in the Estimates are sums of £67,000 and £31,794 to finance respectively the shark-catching programme and the second phase of the Gulf of Carpentaria Prawn Survey.

I shall now comment on each of these matters. A fisheries patrol vessel is being constructed for use at Maryborough, where it will be required to carry out patrols in the southern part of Hervey Bay and in the Sandy Straits as far south as Tin Can Bay. The vessel, which provides accommodation sufficient to allow the conducting of 10-day patrols, is a replacement for the old Maryborough fisheries launch "Alma", which was sold recently. The new vessel will be able to stay out much longer. It will be able to travel at high speed and so improve patrol efficiency in the area. Fisheries patrols ashore are carried out by inspectors who travel with mobile units comprising vehicle, camping gear, and a 14-ft. outboard motorboat with trailer. These mobile units have been highly successful in the eight centres in which they are located, and a new unit is now required for use in the Bundaberg district, where an inspector has recently been appointed to take up his duties. This will be the first time that a fisheries inspector has been resident in Bundaberg.

The book entitled "Know your Fishes", which was first published by the Department of Harbours and Marine in 1959, has been out of print for some time. The book has been completely re-written and many new colour plates are being incorporated. Funds are included under "Fisheries Contingencies" to cover the cost of publishing this new book on Queensland fishes, which is to be entitled "Guide to Fishes" and is expected to be a popular and valuable contribution to the literature.

Last summer some research work on stinging jellyfish was financed in the north of Queensland. This work, which was carried out by Dr. Barnes in Cairns with the assistance of officers of the Fisheries Section of the Department of Harbours and Marine, included the collection of some 400 specimens of the extremely poisonous stinging jellyfish known as *Chironex fleckerii*. Dr. Barnes was able, by means of a new technique, to extract from the specimens a quantity of material believed to contain the actual venom in a relatively uncontaminated form. This material has been tested at the University of Queensland and has been shown to be extremely toxic to prawns. Its effect upon mice and similar organisms has not yet been demonstrated.

It appears that the poison is highly selective in its action and that, whilst only very small quantities are sufficient to kill invertebrates such as prawns, which are the natural food of the jelly fish, it is relatively much less active when administered to vertebrates such as mice. The quantity of material collected last year was not sufficient to demonstrate this point.

It has been suggested by Dr. Barnes, as a result of his studies, that two approaches are possible to the problem of protecting bathers from the effects of this jelly fish. One approach relies upon the development, through study of the symptoms produced by the toxin, of satisfactory first-aid measures that can be applied at the beach; the other upon the prediction of the presence of jelly fish in an area at any time.

The effect of the venom upon the human organism appears to be concentrated on breathing and heart action. If, by suitable first-aid measures, the patient can be kept alive for a period of 20 minutes or so, there is a strong possibility that he will survive. The jelly fish seems to prefer to remain within water of a particular salinity and temperature, and knowledge of its exact preferences should enable predictions to be made concerning its movements up and down the coast. A programme of work designed to study both these aspects of the problem has been worked out, and Dr. Barnes, with the assistance of officers of the department, will carry out a second programme of work during the coming summer using improved equipment and techniques.

Estimates include the sum of £67,000 in respect of the programme aimed at providing protection against shark attack. This programme includes the continuation of beach protection work on the near north and south coasts, and also on the beaches near Cairns which were given protection during last year. This year certain beaches on Magnetic Island and at Mackay will be provided with protective gear on a long-term basis following the completion last year of a brief trial operation at each of these places. During last year's operations, 1,243 sharks and 339 young sharks were taken. Of this number, 812 were over 6 feet in length, the largest being a White Pointer measuring 15 feet 2 inches. Two hundred and ninety-five sharks were taken off the beaches near Cairns, compared with 761 on the near north and south coasts. When the amount of gear used is taken into account, this indicates a substantially greater density of sharks in the northern area. These figures represent a catch for each standard net for last year of almost 37 sharks in the Cairns district, compared with slightly fewer than 24 sharks in the southern areas.

Reports from the beaches indicate that very many fewer shark sightings have been made, and southern mackerel fishermen have reported that far fewer fish have been taken from their lines by sharks. It is too early even to guess at the effects that this programme may have upon the total number of sharks infesting our waters, but such evidence as is available supports continuation of the work.

A further sum is provided in the Estimates of the Department of Harbours and Marine to cover the cost of the second phase of the prawn survey in the Gulf of Carpentaria. Hon. members will recall that this survey, which is directed by the scientists of the

C.S.I.R.O. and administered by the Department of Harbours and Marine, is financed equally by the Government of Queensland and by the Commonwealth Government through the Fisheries Development Trust Account, which it controls. During the first phase of the operation, 1,040 experimental trials were made in the south-eastern corner of the Gulf of Carpentaria. At each of these stations data were collected on the number of prawns taken and their biological characteristics; on the nature and quantity of all other organisms caught in the net; on the type of sea bottom; and on the temperature and the salinity of the water. Prawns of 22 different species were taken, seven of which may offer some prospect for commercial fishing development. Tiger prawns appear to be present at all seasons; banana prawns are quite widely distributed and were taken on one occasion—but only one—at the rate of 600 lb. a half-hour. The operation of the vessel that was chartered to carry out the survey has been highly satisfactory, and the results to date, when compared with the results of a similar survey carried out on the east coast of Queensland in 1957 to 1958, suggest that the Gulf should yield at least the same tonnage as does the east coast, and possibly more.

At this stage, I wish to take the opportunity to say something on a matter that attracted prominent headlines in our local Press and was paraded in a manner that might well have triggered off an international incident. I refer to the removal of Japanese fishing gear from spots off the Queensland coast.

The incident round which so much attention focussed should be stated. On the authority of the skipper of the "Toni Christine", Mr. Norm Otto, the lines of buoys and markers five miles in length had been set across the Barwon Banks. He then went on to say that these banks run close to the 3-mile limit off the South Queensland coast. In a separate statement he said that the Japanese line was inside the 3-mile limit and inside the Cape Moreton line when he took it aboard.

Now, I detect some serious inconsistency in these statements. If the line was cut close to the Barwon Banks, it was miles outside the 3-mile limit and well into international waters. If it was cut inside the 3-mile limit, it could not have been anywhere near the Barwon Banks. These banks lie 25 miles slightly to the east of north of Cape Moreton. Their closest point to shore is 22½ miles from Caloundra Headland, 23½ miles from Point Cartwright, 22 miles from Point Arkwright, and 23 miles from Noosa Heads. So, quite clearly, if they were in Queensland territorial waters, they were nowhere near the Barwon Banks but were on a stretch of the coast overlooked by a series of prominent headlands such as those I have named. If the lines were near the Barwon Banks, then they were out on the high seas in open international waters.

I want to make it quite clear that all my understanding is that the Japanese authorities are most anxious to avoid any conflict with Australian fishermen in their traditional fishing grounds. Indeed, it has been put to us from time to time that if we have any complaints we should bring them under the notice of the proper authority, the Commonwealth, and, on conveying these complaints to the Japanese Government, they will take pains to ensure that the difficulties are removed.

That is how the Government wants this sort of problem handled. I say quite deliberately that I regard it as extremely dangerous for anyone to behave in the manner that was reported on this occasion and even more dangerous to have photographs taken of what, on the fisherman's published story, is not his property and was forcibly removed by him without the owner's authority. Incidents such as this may have had a place in history in a previous century, but are quite uncalled for and undesirable today.

Almost without exception our local fishing craft which go out into these waters are equipped with radio and are able to communicate fluently with the authorities on shore. That is their proper remedy. To take the law into their own hands in the manner that has been published might easily lead to someone being charged with theft, or even piracy on the high seas. To add to the initial mischief with talk of rifles and shotguns can only be described as inflammatory exhibitionism, and that will receive no encouragement from me.

On this matter, it is refreshing for me to be able to put on record that I have found an extremely responsible attitude on the part of members on both sides of the Chamber. Both the hon. member for Sandgate and the hon. member for Redcliffe have discussed this matter with me and have made it abundantly clear that they give no support to these wild threatenings, and both are strongly of the opinion that there are no offences within the territorial waters of the State.

Let me repeat that the territorial jurisdiction of Queensland stops at the 3-mile limit. Outside that limit, the Commonwealth Government has some powers and responsibilities. I have never found the Commonwealth fisheries authorities unresponsive to any complaint which has been communicated to them and, where a genuine complaint is established, they are always ready to take it up with the representatives of the nation concerned. That is the procedure that should and must be followed. The Government will have no sympathy for any persons who attempt to take the law into their own hands.

On pilotage and navigation services, expenditure for 1964-65 includes £33,000 for new navigation facilities at Gladstone and £25,000 for payments for new pilot launches under construction and projected.

The Gladstone Harbour Board is embarking on a programme of improved channel depths and other port facilities necessary to meet the requirements of the coal trade and, later, the alumina industry, and concurrently with this the department is providing the necessary new navigation marks on Wild Cattle Island and South Trees Island.

Three pilot launches are presently under construction and should go into commission within the next two or three months. Two of the three vessels are being built at ports outside Brisbane. The construction of a launch for use at Rockhampton was entrusted to F. W. Woodnutt and Co. of Cairns, and this firm has done an excellent job of work. Capricorn Charters of Maryborough has the second vessel in hand for service at that port, and the third launch, for Brisbane, is being built by Norman R. Wright & Co. in Brisbane.

Two new pilot launches are projected for Gladstone and Cairns, and work will be put in hand this financial year.

A new survey launch having the most modern equipment is under construction at a cost of £55,000. Here, again, it was possible, on a competitive basis, to award the contract to a yard outside Brisbane and F. W. Woodnutt and Co. of Cairns, who has built one of the new pilot launches, was the successful tenderer.

A modern amenities building for waterside-workers is being built at a cost of £33,000 to serve Pinkenba Wharf. This is one of our old wharves, one of the few the State owns. The amenities buildings were long since outdated and the new building going up there is a lovely building that should serve for many years to come.

At Cairncross Dock a new brick toilet and ablutions block for the use of crew members of ships in dock is almost finished, involving an expenditure of about £27,000.

In order to cater for ships which are to serve the oil refineries, two contracts were let in 1963-64 to provide depths of water for tankers up to 55,000 tons capacity, namely—

(a) Dredging East and North-West Channels—1,000 feet wide to 40 feet and 42 feet 6 inches at L.W.S.T. respectively—Christiani and Nielsen, for £421,266 13s. 4d. They are the owners of the dredge which overturned recently with such tragic loss of life.

(b) Bar cutting—400 feet and 500 feet wide to 38 feet at L.W.S.T. and Luggage Point Swing Basin; 1,800 feet wide to 40 feet at L.W.S.T.—Standard Dredging Company of New York, for £1,529,612 10s.

Christiani & Nielsen's part of the work is finished, the dredged spoil having been dumped at sea or in selected areas in Moreton Bay. Work under the second contract is still in progress and is to be completed by 31 December, 1964. In this case, about one half of the spoil is being pumped to

reclamation on Fisherman Islands, and, later, will be placed on Luggage Point and on both sides of the bar cutting.

In October, 1962, following requests from operators of sand and gravel dredges and coal barges trading up-river, an estimate of £115,426 was made of the cost of deepening the southern channel at 17-Mile Rocks to nine feet at low water for a width of 100 feet. At that time it was envisaged that dredging would be of hard material. We thought it was a hard rock bar. The work was not undertaken, but in the meantime borings disclose that the material to be dredged can be removed more easily than was expected. It is true that there are some hard layers of rock but they overlay considerable gravel. Once you are through the hard rock it is very easy to remove the gravel that underlies it. The case has been discussed with representatives of the river interests, and the question of width and depth of channel has been reopened.

On the information supplied by users and the opinions of our officers it appears that a new channel 120 feet wide carrying a depth of 12 feet at low water is required if the cost is acceptable. Accordingly tenders are being called for deepening the southern channel at the Rocks for a width of 120 feet, with alternative prices for depths of 9, 10, 11 and 12 feet respectively. It depends how high the tenders are which one we can afford to accept. With this channel available, sand and gravel companies will be able to work extensive deposits upstream of the Rocks.

It might be interesting at this stage if I remind the Committee how fortunate the city of Brisbane is in being able to command through its river gravels aggregate for building purposes which costs only roughly half the comparable aggregate costs in every other capital city of Australia. It means that concrete construction in the city of Brisbane, the Ipswich area and the south-eastern corner of the State is infinitely cheaper than corresponding construction in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. We are very anxious to retain that advantage. It is shown out in the Queensland Housing Commission's being able to build in no-fines concrete with such advantage. We should hate to see that slip away from us. Once we open 17-Mile Rocks, on our estimate the available deposits will see us through for 15 to 20 years.

The hon. member for Ipswich East will be interested in what I say now. As we go higher up the river the sand and gravel is no longer confined to the bed of the stream; it is there in great alluvial flats alongside the stream. A great depth of water is needed to take advantage of it. My officers tell me that the proper course to follow—this can be done much later—is to use the opening of the 17-Mile Rocks to take advantage of the deposits by conventional dredging methods and then to put in a lock at the Moggill Quarry. With the level of the stream, say, five feet higher above that point they could reach back to the alluvial flats.

Enough sand and gravel will be reached in that way to prevent Brisbane being short of it in the foreseeable future.

Mr. Donald: With this depth of channel, how will it be for the coal barges?

Mr. HILEY: Excellent. They are delighted about it. Instead of having to confine their movements to the tides it will mean that they will be able to go through upwards at any stage of the tide and when fully loaded coming down they will need only a little bit of tide. It will be a tremendous help to them in their operations. Having to work with the tides so much at the present time, they cannot always use daylight hours. This can be a problem, particularly in the winter when the mist is rising and often you cannot see your hand in front of your face. These barges have quite high little bridge houses. They get up there in the hope that they will be above the river fog and able to see the tops of the trees on either side. That is the only way they can bring the barges down.

Mr. Donald: They have been doing that for years.

Mr. HILEY: Yes.

The Committee will also be interested to know that provision has been made in 1964-65 for the further development of Macarthur Avenue, the new road that is to serve the Hamilton Lands area and forms the boundary between industrial lands and the port area. Half the cost of that work will be borne by the Land Administration Commission which will have the land as a result, and the other half by the port authority, whose task it is to develop the port area. It is being designed as a major, two-chain road. The first part to be built will be the southern half section from Remora Road to a point in the vicinity of the B.H.P. steel wharf, the estimated cost being £55,000.

The Committee will be interested in the change that is taking place at the pilot station at Sea Hill on Curtis Island. That station has been kept open since pilotage was available for the port of Rockhampton. Sea Hill is one of the really historic points on the coast. It is the hill that Flinders climbed, hoping to discover the mouth of the Fitzroy River. Although he climbed it he still could not see the river. He judged that the river came in there somewhere, but he went away without knowing how or where it entered the sea. Sea Hill became the location of the pilot's residence, and three or four coxswains and some of the boatmen were in residence there. They were isolated. The island is terrible for its mosquitoes. Never in my life have I seen mosquitoes such as those on the island. The families had no school facilities and no medical attention; they had to get their supplies once a week, and in summer-time the meat would be tainted or rancid because of the difficulties in getting them there.

Mr. Pilbeam: There is a good herd of goats.

Mr. HILEY: Quite often, to manage, they had to kill goats. We were very anxious to close the station and to transfer the families to a place where they could enjoy better conditions. The conditions were all right in the pioneering days, but today I have not much sympathy for the notion of unnecessary pioneering. If we can work out a way to give better conditions to people, I think we should do so. We have shifted the pilot station to Port Alma, now that it is open. We have provided residences for these people directly opposite the school. On Saturday afternoon I had the pleasure of calling in and visiting the families. I said, "How do you like this compared with where you were?" They said, "It is just lovely here. Instead of Mum having to wrestle with correspondence lessons we are right opposite the school." I might tell the Committee that one mother had seven youngsters and we can well imagine the job she had to give seven youngsters correspondence lessons. Now, the youngster of high-school age catches the rail-motor or the bus and attends the high school. They enjoy pleasant conditions compared with their previous location.

The same thought is behind our thinking in establishing a shore-based pilot station for Brisbane. For long enough we have kept a floating hotel anchored off Caloundra. The men have had to remain out there in good weather and bad. It has been a horrible expense and has not been a terribly convenient way to handle it. For a long time I have been seeking an alternative that would be kinder to our employees and a bit easier on our pocket as well. It has been established that the best position for a shore-based pilot station for Brisbane is at Mooloolaba. There is no doubt in the minds of my departmental officers that that is the best place and that the pilots will be better served. In addition, there will be a very considerable saving in costs. The decision has been made to establish this shore-based pilot station for the port of Brisbane and, as well, we will get a boat harbour and a fishing port on the Mooloolah River at Mooloolaba. It is a very nice combined exercise, and it looks as if it will serve its purpose.

I do not like taking all this time, but as hon. gentlemen no doubt realise, because I have to get away I will miss the final day of the discussion on these Estimates. I hope, therefore, that they will forgive me if I take a little longer at this stage. I am not putting up arguments; I am trying to give information which I hope will be of interest and help to the Committee. One matter that concerns hon. members—the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has expressed his concern about it—is whether the Harbour Dues Fund is soundly based, particularly as it relates to concessional revenues associated with oil companies.

Trade through our ports has been steadily rising, particularly in recent years. That is for all ports. This increased trade is reflected in improved revenues into our Harbour Dues Fund and in increasing activity in works financed from the fund. Figures published by the Deputy Commonwealth Statistician for tonnage of goods passing through Brisbane and all Queensland ports combined since 1954-55 show that the percentage increases have been as follows:—

	Percentage Increase 1963-64 over 1954-55 Per cent.
Brisbane—	
Cargo discharged ..	34
Cargo shipped ..	71
Queensland—	
Cargo discharged ..	46
Cargo shipped ..	110

That is impressive enough. But no other year has shown the growth that occurred in 1963-64. It was quite remarkable, as is indicated by the following figures:—

	Percentage Increase 1963-64 over 1962-63 Per cent.
Brisbane—	
Cargo discharged ..	25
Cargo shipped ..	41
Queensland—	
Cargo discharged ..	24
Cargo shipped ..	35

That is a fantastic increase. Harbour boards generally up and down the coast are enjoying the best revenues they have ever received. This applied to the port of Brisbane in common with the others.

Trade from Queensland will continue to grow, not only with the development of our primary industries and mining (sugar, wheat, meat, beach sands, coal, and other minerals) but also with the development of manufacture. On the percentages I have just given and the known prospects for the future, there is no room for pessimism as far as our port revenues are concerned, whether port revenues to the Corporation of the Treasurer, which is the matter before the Committee, or port revenues to any of the harbour boards up and down the coast. Indeed, only two boards are in some twilight of difficulty, and in each of those cases there has been some indication that before long we will have not only a great number of very strong, healthy, and even wealthy ports, but no sick ports. That is the present trend.

The Harbour Dues Fund covers certain ports under the control of the Corporation of the Treasurer. The revenue from harbour dues in the port of Brisbane has improved from £670,159 in 1956-57 to £929,432 in 1963-64. The balance of the fund for this port, apart from dry docks, has moved from a debit of £19,309 in 1956-57—it was overdrawn at that stage—to a credit of £1,088,290 at 30 June, 1963. During 1963-64 extensive port development works, such as

dredging and reclamation, reduced the balance to £419,839. This work was done without borrowing any money; we did all of it out of revenue.

Mr. Lloyd: That is the Port Development Fund?

Mr. HILEY: No, it is apart from that.

As a result, the balance was reduced to £419,839. This year the total Vote of £2,181,000 is expected to eliminate the carry-forward balance. We expect to reduce the carry-forward balance to nothing, so much capital work are we doing out of revenue.

Major developmental works are provided for as follows:—

£378,000 at Mourilyan Harbour for dredging and the provision of a bulk molasses tank;

£261,000 towards the completion of the Brisbane River dredging;

A further £60,000 for Bulwer Island reclamations; and

£50,000 for a new survey launch.

All this work will be carried out without the necessity to go into debt.

A contract for the sum of £365,930 has been let to McDonald Constructions Pty. Ltd. to further deepen the entrance channel to Mourilyan Harbour to 28 feet over a width of 300 feet. This work is due for completion in July, 1965. A complete resurvey of the harbour entrance was made in June, 1964, with a view to extending the swing basin to cater for the larger bulk carriers that will be able to negotiate the entrance, and this work will be undertaken as soon as practicable.

Following the expansion of the export trade in molasses, bulk storage facilities at Mourilyan Harbour have been extended. This work will cost about £116,000.

These are the interesting stages of the development of the sugar ports. Following a conference convened by me in November, 1963, at which recommendations of the Sugar Industry Inquiry Committee regarding the provision of greater depths of water at various ports were considered, it was decided that geophysical surveys should be made in those ports to secure reliable information on the nature and volume of material to be dredged. This would allow accurate cost estimates to be made and, it was hoped, more favourable tenders to be received for the work in due course if contractors knew exactly what they were up against.

The highest priority for these surveys was in respect of the ports of Gladstone, Townsville, and Cairns. It was deemed desirable, following investigation and with the concurrence of the respective harbour boards, to call tenders for both a seismic survey and a complementary programme of drilling. The surveys and drilling have been completed at a cost to the Gladstone Harbour Board of £8,744, to the Townsville Harbour

Board of £6,958, and to the Cairns Harbour Board of £8,087. Consideration is now being given to extending the programme to the ports of Lucinda, Bowen, Mackay, Port Alma, Bundaberg, and Urangan.

Seismic surveys take the blind stabbing out of dredging. A contractor knows exactly what is there and is able to bring in the right plant for the job. He does not have to make any allowances for unforeseen circumstances. He knows just what he has to shift. The Co-ordinator-General of Public Works learnt the value of this method in preliminary work on the foundations of the Bribie Island bridge. That was the first occasion on which we used seismic surveys for the study of underwater foundations. It is a process not unlike that used by oil companies in exploring the horizons of oil basins, and the results obtained from it at Bribie Island were most encouraging. When asked his opinion of it, Sir James Holt said that the experience of his department was sufficient to encourage the use of this method elsewhere. The chairmen of the three harbour boards concerned were called together, and the use of seismic surveys was "sold" to them. It was not hard to sell them the idea. Its results are now available, and I expect that they will lead to a similar pattern of exploration in all ports.

The prospect is that Townsville and Cairns will, within the next two years, be improved to the point where they can accommodate 25,000-tonners, and Gladstone to the point where it can handle up to 35,000-ton vessels. Only slight work will be needed to lift Mackay to the 25,000-ton capacity and, whilst the Brisbane entry and swing basin will be capable of handling 45,000-tonners, the port upstream from the Lytton Rocks cutting will have its present capacity. During the same period, I expect Weipa capacity to match that of Gladstone.

I pause to say that, with the programme to be carried out over the next two years, Queensland will have more really big ports than has the rest of Australia. With our long coastline we are fortunate to have the type of cargo that warrants large vessels, and ports that can be developed to accommodate them. Queensland will, in port development, have roughly half the total Australian development.

Mr. Davies: You have the better port of Urangan still in reserve.

Mr. HILEY: As soon as the cargo is available to warrant expansion, make no mistake about it, Urangan will be brought in. Ports are not built unless one can see heavy use being made of them. For the trade offering at present, Urangan is satisfactory. It is handling tankers and newsprint, and that is about all. However, something will turn up one of these days and I am confident that, when it does, the organisation that is doing so much for other ports will not let Urangan

down. If the hon. member finds the trade, we will not let the port down. I think that is fair enough.

The healthy state of revenues for the port of Brisbane and the trend for trade to expand rapidly shows that there is no reason to fear the full expenditure of available port funds. The harbour dues concessions that have been given to attract basic industries will increase further its development and trade, with a consequent further improvement in port revenues. The future for the port of Brisbane, and, indeed, for Queensland ports generally, is a bright one.

I know that some doubt was expressed about the concessional harbour dues for oil, and I think the hon. member for Kedron had a feeling that in one set of circumstances the present oil revenues of the port of Brisbane could disappear completely.

Mr. Lloyd: No, remain stationary.

Mr. HILEY: The worst that could happen would be that the oil revenues would remain as they are. But let me go to the other extreme—this will never happen—and suppose that not one gallon of the product of both Queensland refineries was consumed in the Brisbane area and all had to be exported. We would still get some revenue from all the white spirit that was brought in, and, in addition we would get revenue on half the total quantity of oil brought to the refineries. They could get a rebate in respect of only half the quantity. So if the situation arose—it would be quite preposterous—that not one gallon of the product of either refinery was consumed in the Brisbane area, the Government would still be in a position to double its revenue from oil.

Mr. Lloyd: Mr. Munro was not in a position to tell me what petroleum fractions would be produced by the refineries.

Mr. HILEY: That still would not affect the harbour dues. There is no doubt in my mind that the refineries will endeavour to cater for the local trade. Nothing will persuade me to believe that the refineries will not put in units to meet the requirements of ordinary motorists and industrialists and, I would hope, aviation interests.

Mr. Lloyd: There is a great deal of cross-trading between Kwinana and the eastern States now.

Mr. HILEY: Yes, but the hon. member should not forget that the capacity of Kwinana is greater than the State of Western Australia can absorb. Some must be exported to the eastern States. The refinery at Kwinana has an exchange agreement under which it supplies all the companies in Western Australia. That is logical from the point of view of transport, although it may offend the purists who wish to buy petrol that is Boron-boosted, or something like that, which is only a bit of advertising nonsense.

As I understand it, the refinery at Kwinana produces more spirit than can be used in Western Australia.

Mr. Nicklin: There is a big surplus of fuel oil, too.

Mr. HILEY: Yes.

Without going into detail, this will be another big year of activity under the Commonwealth Aid, Marine Works, Fund. The boat harbour at Ross Creek, Townsville, will get a big boost; it is the biggest single item of expenditure—£33,000. We have not yet found the ideal answer to our problems at Cabbage Tree Creek, Sandgate, but we have £20,000 on the programme for work there and are hoping to find an answer that will enable the work to proceed. For work at Cairns, £12,000 is being provided. We have not yet spent any money in that area on the provision of boat harbours. When I point out that when mentioning each of those three instances I have nodded at a member of the Opposition, I do not think my worst enemy would accuse me of not trying to do what is best for the community.

Mr. Houghton: I should like to hear what is going to be said about Redcliffe.

Mr. Hiley: I am coming to Redcliffe. The hon. member will be all right but the harbour will be at Scarborough, not at Woody Point as has been suggested.

Mr. Bromley: What about Norman Creek?

Mr. HILEY: So far I have not heard anything about Norman Creek.

Finally on this question, I should like to draw the Committee's attention to what has been done in the matter of reclamation. This is something not completely new in this State but we claim that reclamation has now spread to virtually every port up and down the coast as a result of my persuading my colleagues that picking up valuable silt and dumping it at sea was a rather unimaginative way of handling the problem. I know I had to fight one or two of my advisers early and I got to the stage of telling them not to dump one barge-load of silt at sea without telling me about it and without having very clear reasons for such action.

As a result we are now reclaiming tidal and semi-tidal land contiguous to harbours up and down the coast by spoil won from dredging operations in the course of developing the harbours and maintaining them. Brisbane is a notable example of this. The port area and industrial lands at Hamilton have been created in the course of many years' dredging of river channels and wharf berths. For example, in 1963-64 about 2,500,000 barge yards of soil, won by departmental vessels engaged in river maintenance, was pumped ashore to reclaim industrial sites. The figure for the previous year was 2,200,000 barge yards. Hon. members know of the major project undertaken in recent years in the reclamation of

Bulwer Island. We are 100 acres ahead of our obligation there. We were to reclaim 250 acres but we have reclaimed 350 acres.

Mr. Hanson interjected.

Mr. HILEY: We did bring in some extra plant from the south to get it done. It is a good job; I do not think there is a better reclamation job anywhere in the State. Every bit of the material required for the reclamation of Bulwer Island has been, and will be pumped from river deposits in the vicinity of the island.

About one-half of the material dredged by the contractor in the course of deepening the bar cutting and swinging basin to accommodate tankers serving the two refineries will be pumped to reclamation on Fishermen Islands, and later will be placed on Luggage Point and on both sides of the bar cutting. In dredging the Ampol terminal and approaches at Lytton, the contractor pumped the material ashore onto the company's refinery site. It also went over onto the adjoining White Island.

At the outports, too, the reclamation of land by both dry fill and pumping from the sea has been instrumental in providing areas required for port works and for industrial establishments. For example, when dredging for the new port of Bundaberg, portion of the material was pumped to reclamation to enlarge areas which later were made available for the bulk oil terminal and molasses terminal. This area was previously a very unattractive swamp. Those who have seen it will realise just how this lovely white sand has improved Bundaberg.

In Gladstone, the harbour board has pursued a very progressive policy in the reclamation of land, mainly by dry fill, as a result of which substantial areas have become available for the erection of bulk oil terminals, with a consequential benefit to port revenues, and also for the storage of bulk cargoes such as coal, grain and pyrites awaiting shipment. That is all stored on reclaimed land.

The new wharf at Port Alma involved some immediate reclamation by dry fill of the flats adjacent to the waterfront to provide an area to accommodate road and rail connections to the wharf. The dredging of the new berth has provided material for further reclamation in the area. In recent years an area was reclaimed by dry fill at Port Alma for the erection of an oil terminal.

In Mackay the levelling of existing sand dunes has provided land adjacent to the harbour on which the bulk sugar installations have been located. This land will accommodate the extensions to the installations and will make available substantial areas for industrial development.

Low-lying land required for harbour facilities in Townsville, including the bulk sugar terminal, has been reclaimed, in the main, by material obtained from the removal

of Flagstaff Hill. However, the oil terminals are located on land reclaimed from the sea by pumping operations. My prediction is that much of the industrial area in Townsville heading down towards the mouth of the Ross River will come about by reclamation from the sea.

The preparation of the area at Lucinda Point on which the sugar sheds are situated was achieved by carting sand onto the site. Suitable material for pumping was not available.

At Mourilyan Harbour the sugar terminal and molasses terminal are on land partly reclaimed by dry fill from the excavations for those works. Rock removed in the course of the deepening and widening of the entrance channel is being used to construct a wall at the western end of the harbour to retain fill that has been pumped to reclamation in dredging to extend the swing basin.

A reclamation project at East Cairns is worthy of mention. This work, which is a partnership effort of the Department of Lands, the Cairns Harbour Board and the Cairns City Council, covers the reclamation of 254 acres of tidal and semi-tidal land, partly for residential but mostly for industrial purposes. The harbour board is making available fill which is taken in the course of dredging operations, over 400,000 cubic yards of material being deposited last year. The bulk sugar terminal, which the Premier opened last month, is located on land reclaimed as part of that project, and other industries have been similarly placed. Over a number of years the harbour board in Cairns has done a limited amount of dry-fill reclamation on the Esplanade.

When it is convenient and economic to do so, material dredged in making a boat harbour is placed to reclamation. We see small examples of this at Manly, Urangan and Bowen.

It is interesting to note that so far the new land gained by reclamation at ports from Brisbane to Cairns is now over 1,000 acres in extent. In close proximity to the ports we now have an additional 1,000 acres of excellent usable land—1,000 acres of new Queensland that is well worth having.

Mr. Bromley: Has that amount been reclaimed by silt or dry fill?

Mr. HILEY: Both—some by pumping and some by dry fill. There are other matters which, no doubt, would justify some interesting comment but I feel that I should not take up an undue amount of the available time. For reasons beyond my control I cannot be here on Thursday. I feel that I should devote as much time as possible to listening to the observations of hon. members so that I can reply to them tonight.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (12.23 p.m.): I realise the necessity for the Treasurer to speak as long as possible this morning. In

the circumstances, I do not think there can be any great objection from this side of the Chamber.

While the Treasurer was speaking it struck me how different was his attitude today from his attitude when he was introducing his Estimates and reading his Financial Statement up to the time of the Federal elections in 1961, when the finances of Queensland were in a rather parlous state and the Queensland Government could not afford to do all the work required. At that time it was necessary for the Treasurer to divert as much as possible of the available finance to building up the fund for the Mt. Isa project so that that important work could be completed. Today we have heard the Treasurer speaking of the projects envisaged in various areas and the work that has been carried out, at the same time telling us that all the money that was allocated last year had in fact been spent on very essential works. I may have very little argument against that.

The Treasurer said earlier that while he was able to divert £150,000 into the drought relief scheme, quite an amount of that sum would be spent on railway freight rebates and in other directions. That is certainly the case and no doubt the £121,000 used last year for the acquisition of land at Fort Lytton will also be spent in the current financial year, as will also a considerable amount of money which was diverted to some other accounts at that time.

Fortunately for the Treasurer and the Government, railway finances have improved as the drought areas have recovered, and the revenue coming into the Railway Department should guarantee some stability in the Government's finances in the next few years. We certainly hope it will.

We may excuse the Treasurer and the Government for diverting so much money this year into funds such as the Port Development Fund, which accrued £560,000 last year, as much of that money will be spent this year. However, it indicates how well off the Treasurer was last year in being able to do that. No doubt, benefit will accrue to the State with some degree of higher employment. However, we might clash with the Government on one or two matters that are very important to many people in the industrial movement, and to hon. members on this side of the Chamber.

The Treasurer spoke about the work to be undertaken at the Evans Deakin shipyards in their extension, the work to be done at Cairncross Dock, and amenities to be provided at a number of other places. While he was speaking I could not help thinking that the Government's attitude in these matters compares unfavourably with its attitude to boilermakers and other tradesmen employed at the Cairncross Dock in refusing to extend to them the over-award payments received by similar employees in outside industry. The Treasurer has often said that it is possible for these men to apply to the

Industrial Commission for increased wages, or the same wages as those paid to outside employees. However, I am sure he realises, and I think we all realise, that the Commission has a definition of a just wage. The Commission has informed the unions that unless they come to an agreement with the employers it is useless for them to approach the Commission. In view of that statement, I think it is the Government's responsibility to ensure—when it speaks about a shortage of skilled tradesmen and is sending delegates overseas in an attempt to get them—that we have a suitable work force in the Government service with the same conditions of employment and pay as employees in outside industry. It is all very well for the Government to say that it is short of skilled tradesmen, but there are men at the Cairncross Dock who do not receive the same rates as employees in outside industry.

Mr. Hiley: Not when they go on strike. If they "pull" another strike we will leave the docks and that will be the end of it.

Mr. LLOYD: That is typical of the Government's attitude in many matters relating to Government employment. These docks were established during the war years when no private employer was interested in the national welfare. They have performed a fine job. It is the Government's responsibility to meet these men and to conciliate when it is obvious that the Industrial Commission, under the terminology of a "just wage", cannot award wages equal to those applying to outside employees. It is very important to the State that the Cairncross Dock and other docking facilities should be continued by the Government, and it is equally important that the employees should receive the same rate of pay as those in outside industry.

Unfortunately, the time at my disposal does not permit me to cover all the matters mentioned by the Treasurer. However, one matter concerns the creation of a State bank and the finances flowing by way of loans and debentures from the Commonwealth Savings Bank to the Government. No doubt it is of great benefit to the Government to receive that money at the rate of 4 per cent. interest. At the same time, I mention one case in point. The Treasurer said that essential money allocated by the Australian Loan Council for housing and for works and services must be taken on the basis of what the Government believes it can use for housing compared with the necessary works and regular services it must carry out. Therefore, it is up to the State Government to decide how much of the allocation it will take for housing each year. That money came to the State last year at a rate of interest of 3½ per cent. or 3¼ per cent.; or 1 per cent. lower than the ruling long-term Commonwealth bond rate. It is cheaper money than the State Government is receiving from the Commonwealth Savings Bank at present.

An examination of the accounts for the last few years discloses that whilst the Treasurer has been in this rather generous mood because of the amount of money coming to him from the Commonwealth, and from increased revenue, he has been diverting from his Loan Fund Account to the Commonwealth-State Housing Fund an amount of money each year. This year there is somewhere in the vicinity of £3,800,000 owing by the Commonwealth-State Housing Fund by way of debenture loans. Last year approximately £590,000 was borrowed from the Public Curator and the Commonwealth Savings Bank at 5 per cent. There is at least £3,500,000 that the Treasurer has taken from his Loan Fund Account in the last few years, mostly by way of debenture raisings, and transferred to the Commonwealth-State Housing Fund. If he had reduced the amount received from the Australian Loan Council for works and services, an additional allocation to the extent of £3,500,000 would have come to the State at an interest charge of 3½ per cent. or 3¼ per cent., whatever the ruling charge was on money coming from the Commonwealth to the State in that particular year, whereas because of the reduced allocation from the Australian Loan Council we have to secure that money by way of debenture at a rate of interest higher than that payable for receiving it by loan from the Australian Loan Council.

Mr. Hiley: You realise that if we did so, the two arguments you always use to attack us would be illustrated: the more you put into the Commonwealth-State Housing Fund the greater the percentage that goes to the building societies, and the more that goes to service housing?

Mr. LLOYD: That would be correct, but so far as the financial affairs of the State Government are concerned there would be so much less owing to the Commonwealth Government at the high rate of interest and so much more at the low rate of interest, and the money the Government has been diverting from spare financial resources—from the Loan Fund Account—could have been used for other purposes. A great deal of the money that has been put into the Loan Fund Account and subsequently diverted to the Queensland Housing Commission and the Agricultural Bank has in fact come from revenue, that is, from money coming from the Commonwealth Government to the State Government by way of non-repayable grants for the relief of unemployment. So that a great deal of the money being lent by the State at present was a non-repayable grant, and in fact revenue, so there can be no argument on that point.

If we take an extra allocation, certainly the building societies receive 30 per cent. of it, but most certainly it would cost the State Government less to get that money at the cheaper rate of interest than at the higher rate. Much of the present loan raisings is

coming from debentures at 5 per cent. and 5½ per cent., so there is an argument there on purely arithmetical grounds.

The Treasurer has said from time to time that it is necessary for the State to keep expenses down. Over the last few years almost £3,500,000 has been taken from the housing allocation and added to public works and services, where in actual fact the money could have been going to housing at a cheap rate of interest and coming from non-repayable grants from the Commonwealth Government.

I am afraid that I cannot accept the Treasurer's statement that it would be uneconomic or impossible to establish a State savings bank in Queensland. There is already in existence within the structure of the Agricultural Bank machinery by means of which borrowers in effect conduct banking business with it. Although it is not a savings bank, it is possible for borrowers to work in conjunction with the bank itself. The Rural Bank of New South Wales has done much more than advance money for purely rural purposes. It has financed the building and selling of the great majority of houses made available under the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement in New South Wales.

In the Agricultural Bank and the Queensland Housing Commission the Government has the beginnings of a State bank. Outstanding balances in the books of the Agricultural Bank at present amount to £22,000,000. Advances by the Queensland Housing Commission to borrowers amount to £20,000,000, and, under the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement, outstanding balances are £15,500,000. Although the indebtedness is considerable, no doubt these operations could be readily transferred to a State banking system. I am sure that all who have been financed by those two authorities in Queensland would be encouraged to transfer their banking business to a State savings bank if the opportunity were given to them.

The Treasurer would know much more than I do at present about the cost of implementing such a scheme. It is a subject that I have not studied in detail. I do believe, however, that it would not be beyond the capacity of the State Government to establish this very important authority. The State Savings Bank of South Australia, for instance, has done much wonderful work in that part of Australia, and so have State banks in other States. Although there may be considerable difficulty in establishing such a bank on a sound basis immediately, it should not be dismissed as an impossibility. It merits greater consideration than the Government has apparently so far given to it.

The other matter that I want to mention concerns harbour dues charged by the Treasurer and the expenditure by the Department of Harbours and Marine on dredging channels in Moreton Bay

and the Brisbane River and the reclamation of Bulwer Island. Obviously the total cost of dredging at the present time has been almost £2,000,000, with approximately £740,000 being repayable by Ampol and Amoco to the Government. This reduces the expenditure by the Government to approximately £1,200,000.

The reclamation work at Bulwer Island has cost £740,000, and 250 acres have yet to be fully reclaimed. In all probability the cost will reach £1,000,000 before 500 acres have been reclaimed and the work is completed. I made the point in a previous debate, and I make it again now, that under the worst possible circumstances the construction of the two refineries might result in no increase of revenue in the Harbour Dues Fund. It will cost the State Government, which means the people of Queensland, more than £2,000,000 to have the two oil refineries built in Queensland, and in all probability that £2,000,000 will never be amortized unless definite and stronger action is taken by the Government on this matter.

In the last few days we have seen another failure on the part of Union Oil-A.O.G. and Ampol to reach agreement on the price of Moonie oil. It is a shocking state of affairs that oil produced in Queensland cannot be refined and marketed here. If oil from other parts of the world comes into Queensland at a price lower than that at which it can be bought at Moonie, obviously the stage will be reached, as the Treasurer said a few weeks ago, that all the crude oil produced at Moonie will be exported—in other words, the Harbour Dues Fund will receive a return from the export of oil produced at Moonie. The people of Queensland will not get any satisfaction from knowing that oil is being produced in the State if it is not produced at a lower price than imported oil.

Mr. Hiley: Are you suggesting that this has the faintest relevance to the Vote under discussion?

Mr. LLOYD: I am getting back to harbour dues, and I intend to relate what I am saying to an answer the Treasurer gave when I asked him why, if the general scheduled rate of harbour dues on exports of oil and petroleum products was 6s. 3d. a ton, it was possible to charge only 4s. a ton on the export of Moonie crude oil. I think that is a question that should be answered, in the light of the statement made by Ampol that it will not refine oil produced at Moonie unless it can buy it at a competitive price on the world market. If the Government continues giving Ampol, under those circumstances—

Mr. Hiley: I assure the hon. member that the concession on export oil will apply only while there is no refinery here. It is only a bridging concession.

Mr. LLOYD: The Government should do that, and I think it could rightly take other action. As a matter of fact, the dredging and

reclamation work that have made it possible for the two refineries to be established in Brisbane have cost the people of Queensland a considerable sum of money, and the loss of revenue resulting from concessions in harbour dues granted to both companies could add to the cost still further. In view of this, I believe that the Government should hold an inquiry into the whole dirty business of oil in Queensland, perhaps in conjunction with the Commonwealth Government, if that Government can leave its friends in the oil industry alone for a little while and come to the party with the Queensland Government and the people of this State. That suggestion is a little outside the ambit of the Vote under consideration, but because of the money spent on dredging, the possible loss of harbour dues, and other matters, I thought I should make it at this stage.

The Treasurer mentioned that a good deal of work has been done from the Harbour Dues Fund, and I think he mentioned, too, that a great deal more work would be done from the Port Development Fund. It was quite significant that he said there was a debit balance in the Harbour Dues Fund in 1957, that it had been converted to a credit balance of over £1,000,000 at 30 June last year, and he added that considerable expenditure had reduced it to £400,000 this year, without any capital cost. I fail to understand that, because I thought that last year the Loan Fund made some contribution to the Harbour Dues Fund. I have not the figures with me, but I have it in the back of my mind that, either last year or the year before, there was a substantial contribution, either from Consolidated Revenue or from the Loan Fund, to enable the balance in the Harbour Dues Fund to be built up.

Mr. Hiley: It was the other way round. The surge in revenue was so great that I was able to take money back to Consolidated Revenue.

Mr. LLOYD: Was £300,000 taken from the Harbour Dues Fund last year?

Mr. Hiley: That is right.

Mr. LLOYD: It appeared to me that the Harbour Dues Fund had been built up to such an extent that much of the dredging work in the Brisbane River could be carried out under it. Of course, in the Port Development Fund there is provision for the expenditure of over £530,000 on improving facilities at Evans Deakin's shipyards, and this was unforeseen.

There will be a tendency in the years to come towards increased revenue in the harbours of Queensland as a result of increased production and decentralisation of population, but this will come about only if the Government changes its industrial laws. If it does, I believe that there will be more peace in industry and that production, particularly in the mining industry, will increase considerably. There will be a great deal more of all types of production for export.

One of the main reasons for increased exporting from Central Queensland has been the great success of the Peak Downs project which, despite the failure of some of the original crops, taught the people in that area that, given reasonable rainfall, the land was ideally suited for the production of grain, particularly grain sorghum. It was freehold land that was being held by the owners in an unproductive state. Because of that original project the Government has been able to increase production in the central part of the State, and that production will progressively expand as the years go by. This is due not to any one Government at any one time but to the forethought of many Labour Governments in previous years.

If we add the production that will flow from the construction of the Tinaroo Falls Dam, another source of increased production for export, our main concern at the present must be whether the demand for our production will be maintained. If it is, and the people in South-eastern Asia are educated to a higher standard of living, no doubt there will be further expansion in primary industry in Queensland, concentrated on varying types of food.

Mr. Hiley: I will make you a prophecy now. This year we will pass 5,000,000 tons of physical export after 105 years; by 1970 our exports will total 10,000,000 tons.

Mr. LLOYD: It is not a very great record after 100 years of history in this country. If we had a different type of Australian Constitution, and expenditure from time to time on progressive development—

Mr. Hiley: Plus a different type of Government in the past. You nearly said that.

Mr. LLOYD: I think that the financial resources of this country, from a Commonwealth point of view, have been very badly handled in the last 12 years. The financial resources we had at our disposal could have been utilised on much more essential work, but the geographical barrier that separates New South Wales from Queensland has had the effect of cutting back the necessary developmental expenditure in this State. The Treasurer knows the difficulty that was experienced in obtaining finance for developmental work prior to 1961. Following that, because of an election result, during the last three years he has been able to get the requisite money.

(Time expired.)

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) (12.49 p.m.): In the introduction of his Estimates, the Treasurer touched on a number of very interesting subjects. Of particular interest to people in the North is the establishment of a small-boat harbour at Townsville and the expenditure of £33,000 thereon during this financial year. I was very happy to hear that because boating has become a very popular pastime throughout Australia, and particularly in our area.

He also touched on the subject of shark meshing, and referred to sea stingers, which every year are a menace in the North. I will have more to say on that subject later. He dealt with the reclamation of land around harbours, which also is a matter that merits mention.

Representations have been made for a long time for the small-boat harbour that is to be constructed in the Ross Creek area. I realise, of course, that boat harbours were required at other places along the Queensland coastline and we have had to bide our time. Obviously our time has come, and we are very grateful for it.

One of the reasons we need a boat harbour in Townsville—I think we need others, too—is that we have such a great number of tourist attractions within our immediate vicinity. I must admit that they can be reached from other areas but I am speaking specifically of Townsville at the moment. The Barrier Reef is not very far out from Townsville and in calm weather it can be reached very quickly with high-powered speed boats. The Whitsunday Passage and the Hinchinbrook islands are a wonderful tourist attraction. In Townsville, small craft owners have sprung up like mushrooms. It is necessary that we provide facilities for those who leave their boats in the water and slipways for those who want to take them in and out of the water.

Magnetic Island is one of the main tourist attractions close to Townsville. The four or five miles from the mainland can be covered in a quarter of an hour or so by those who possess high-powered speed boats. After the Ross Creek boat harbour is completed, boating facilities should be made available on Magnetic Island. In the shallow waters in the reef area there is always the possibility of a south-easter blowing up suddenly. The weather can get quite rough very quickly. For that reason it behoves us to think about providing a safe anchorage somewhere on Magnetic Island. I am prepared to allow the experts to decide what is the best place for a small-boat harbour. The Treasurer might say that I am being greedy seeing that facilities are being made available at Ross Creek, but in the interests of safety a good look should be taken at my suggestion. Facilities should be available on Magnetic Island for those who, in the future, will need to run for shelter when bad weather blows up. It can happen in half an hour, and tragedies have occurred as a result. Although those who understand the weather up there may have issued a warning about the possibility of bad weather coming up quickly, people have gone out in perfect weather with tragic results.

The Treasurer may not be able to do anything immediately but I ask him to give thought to providing a boat harbour on Magnetic Island in the most sheltered bay, or wherever his officers may decide, so that there may be proper launching facilities for small boats. The Council has co-operated

on launching facilities, so that people may launch their boats from a ramp. However, quite often launching cannot be carried out in the deep sand beaches around the island and at the bays. At Picnic Bay a club is working hard, and I commend the members for their work. It is of paramount importance that clubs should be prepared to work to help themselves. They should not sit down and cry, "What will the Government do?" This club is prepared to do something and for that reason I am behind it and I believe that the Government should do everything possible to assist. Magnetic Island is a very attractive place; it is a wonderful tourist resort that is continuing to expand and boat-launching facilities on the island would be a great attraction.

I come now to the harbour reclamation project. This is not the first time, nor will it be the last time, that I refer to the dumping of silt outside Townsville Harbour. About a month ago I spoke about Magnetic Island and its attractions. There is no doubt that, being close to Townsville, it offers considerable attractions to northern tourists. However, to a certain degree its attractions have been ruined because the island is subject to silting by the dumping of material dredged from Townsville Harbour.

Mr. Hiley: Is that the island, or Cape Pallarenda?

Mr. TUCKER: I am talking about the island.

Mr. Aikens: There are big new silt beds at North West Point.

Mr. TUCKER: Yes. From Cape Pallarenda right back to the harbour, on the mainland, the beaches have been silted up so badly that anyone who goes for a paddle can sink over his ankles in silt.

Not long ago—I think it was only last week—my advisers on Magnetic Island told me that the silt is invading some bays on the island. Already it has ruined some coral attractions because a great deal of silt has covered the coral. At one time a company was interested in establishing an underwater observatory at one of the bays on the island. We knew what an attraction the underwater observatory at Green Island was, and realised that if a company was prepared to establish one at Magnetic Island we could say to many tourists, "Have you seen the underwater observatory at Magnetic Island?"

When the company was making investigations it sent skin divers to the island to see what was happening. They found that a fine coating of silt had already covered the underwater attractions and that, in fact, the coral in many instances had been killed by the fine coating of silt. The harbour board argues—although I do not believe its statements—that it is not coming from the dumpings. There is not a shadow of doubt in the minds of old residents, who can speak with authority about the beaches from Cape Pallarenda to the harbour, that the silt

is coming from the dumpings, and that it is spoiling the attractiveness of beaches on both the mainland and the island. I will keep hammering at this subject because I believe, as the Treasurer has said, that it is extremely foolish to dredge silt and cart it away to be dumped in the ocean when there are acres of land—possibly hundreds of acres—at the mouth of Ross River back to the harbour installations that could be, and should be, reclaimed with this silt. Instead, it is being dumped in the ocean and is spoiling the tourist attractions around Townsville.

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

Mr. TUCKER: Before the luncheon adjournment I was speaking about the dumping of silt dredged from Townsville Harbour in an area of the sea adjoining Magnetic Island. It has caused a great deal of damage to many tourist attractions in the area, such as reefs and beaches. This silt eventually becomes a disgusting sort of ooze on the bottom of the ocean, and not far from where it is being dumped there are a number of banks of this ooze building up towards West Point. It has resulted in ugly areas being formed around that part of Magnetic Island.

I believe that the current carries the silt from where it is dumped. The harbour board claims it does not. It is there for anyone to see. It is spoiling these places, which have tremendous tourist attractions. Not only is it spoiling the tourist attractions on Magnetic Island, but it is also spoiling the beaches around Townsville. When children paddle on Townsville beaches, they sink over their ankles into this mud. The Townsville Harbour Board is responsible for this situation.

The Treasurer mentioned that this silt could be used for reclamation purposes. That is true. Silt does not settle down as quickly as sand. It would take longer before it could be used for the building of installations. The use of silt and sand could go a long way towards reclaiming certain land in the harbour board area. I am not knocking the harbour board. We are proud of what it has done in other directions, but I am critical of its action in dumping this silt at sea. The board has done good reclamation work. Not long ago I made an inspection in the harbour board area of land which was reclaimed by pumping sand from the mouth of Ross River. After it was reclaimed retaining walls were built around it, and Amoco erected its installation there. It has become a wonderful area. Every thinking person who saw it would realise what can be done in the way of reclamation with sand and other spoil.

The Townsville Harbour Board has made available land for other facilities. At the liquid gas installation owned by the Townsville Gas and Coke Company, liquid gas has become a big business. It has been introduced as Porta-gas and under other

names. It comes into the port of Townsville and eventually finds its way all over the North as liquid gas in bottles under pressure.

That is the story of Townsville Harbour itself. It is a wonderful story. We have new harbour board offices, which the Treasurer opened some time ago. We are proud of them. All these things are indicative of the fact that Townsville and the harbour are doing very well. The city is going ahead. Reclamation work is vital to Townsville. We have low-lying land which could be reclaimed by the erection of a retaining wall and the pumping there of silt that at present is dumped into the ocean to become unwelcome ooze.

The Treasurer also mentioned jelly fish or, as they are more commonly called in the North, sea stingers. It is a strange fact that they are most prevalent in the summer. During the winter there does not seem to be much trouble with them. They appear with the first signs of summer.

Although Townsville has a very fine frontage to the sea, not many people take advantage of it because, when the weather becomes warmer, stingers can be seen floating with the tide, and most people, quite sensibly, do not enter the water. I feel that one of Townsville's needs is a rock pool in or near the city area, preferably near Kissing Point. Although enclosures to exclude sharks have been built, the danger from stingers remains. I believe that a properly constructed rock pool would be of great benefit to the city, particularly from a tourist point of view. After all, no-one would enter a jungle or forest knowing that a tiger was at large in it. By the same token, no-one will enter water if he fears that he could become the victim of a sea stinger. It is well known that such encounters have had tragic results.

I am wondering whether the Townsville City Council has ever approached the Treasurer on the construction of a rock pool. I know that it would cost a considerable amount of money. Townsville is a tourist city, and people have approached me and asked whether the Townsville City Council has made any direct approach to the Treasurer on this subject. The presence of a rock pool would allow visitors and local people to use the sea front. I ask the Treasurer to tell us in his reply if any such approaches have been made to him for this very necessary pool. These stingers do not seem to worry people at Magnetic Island. For some reason that I do not know, the stingers seem to remain in close proximity to the city and one can swim in comparative safety at Magnetic Island. A safe swimming place is needed, particularly for children and tourists, who quite often are anxious to enter the water and have to be warned that stingers may be present.

Mr. Windsor: We could send Jack Evans up there.

Mr. TUCKER: Possibly we could send the hon. member for Ithaca there and get rid of him very quickly.

Another matter to which I want to refer is shark meshing. There has been, and continues to be, a very good mackerel season in Townsville. I have been speaking with a number of Townsville fishermen, and many feel that shark meshing has assisted to bring this about. Once upon a time, of every three mackerel caught one would be landed, only the heads being left of the other two. No doubt it will take a little longer to establish whether shark meshing is producing this result, but at present it does seem to be a factor. Those particularly interested in the fishing industry say that this year there do not seem to be as many sharks about as there have been before. This could perhaps be due to the fact that over the last couple of years there have been, firstly, experiments, and, secondly, shark meshing under Government contract.

Lastly, I wish to deal with the jetty at Horseshoe Bay. I think it is very sad that it has been allowed to fall into disrepair. In reply to representations that I have made to him on several occasions, the Treasurer has told me that it is estimated that the maintenance required immediately would cost £1,500, and he has gone on to say that a half-tide jetty would cost £10,000. At the moment, I am interested in the jetty that is established there and needs maintenance near the seashore because a number of piles have rotted away. Because of its very sound construction, the jetty has not collapsed completely.

Last year we were fortunate not to have bad weather, but we are approaching the cyclone season again and I think the jetty should be maintained, even if repairs and maintenance do cost £1,500. It belongs to the people of Horseshoe Bay and Magnetic Island, and I believe that eventually quite a number of people will be living in the area that it serves. It was constructed originally to allow boats to pick up pineapples grown at Horseshoe Bay. Although the pineapple industry has now disappeared as a result of competition from growers in the southern part of the State, the jetty is still there. As I said, it is quite a sound structure and requires only maintenance and repairs. It appears to me that those who advise the Treasurer have given him poor advice, because, in my opinion, to construct a jetty similar to the one that is there at the moment would cost far more than £10,000, and an all-tide jetty would cost possibly £25,000. The present jetty could probably be classed as an all-tide jetty.

An argument was advanced that on occasions northerly winds would prevent people from using the jetty. However, I am a frequent visitor to Horseshoe Bay and I am quite a keen fisherman. As do many other people, I use the jetty, and at no time of the year have I seen the jetty dominated by northerly winds. We do not get winds from the north for many weeks of the year. The winds are usually south-easterlies, and Horseshoe Bay is quite calm. Other places on the

island have a certain amount of flat land, but the only really big area of flat land is near Horseshoe Bay where people formerly had pineapple farms. I believe that this will attract people to the area, and I look forward to the time when Horseshoe Bay will have quite a large population.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HERBERT (Sherwood) (2.29 p.m.): I take this opportunity of congratulating the Treasurer on his record term as Treasurer of Queensland. It is a record that will stand for a long time, not only in terms of time but also in terms of the constructive work accomplished.

I should like to make some comments on the Estimates, particularly as they relate to the Department of Harbours and Marine. Firstly, let me refer to the upper reaches of the Brisbane River that are within the metropolitan area and beyond as far as Ipswich and deal with facilities that should be provided for boating enthusiasts. One of the notable things in the boating world in recent years has been the tremendous numbers of operators in the metropolitan area. Every month we see sales of hundreds of boats to people in the metropolitan area and many of them use the bay for pleasure purposes. But we have in Brisbane one of the finest water-courses available anywhere for pleasure use if we had the facilities for the boat-owners who wish to use it.

Unfortunately, the facilities in the upper reaches of the Brisbane River are extremely primitive for people who want to use this area for pleasure boating. Good maps are available but facilities for mooring and getting ashore are, as yet, extremely limited. Most of them are overtaxed and it is possible to go for very long trips over the week-end without being able to get ashore at adequate spots.

I suggest that the Department of Harbours and Marine consider not only constructing mooring points—this has been given consideration and several recommendations have already been made—but also acquiring areas of land adjacent to the river bank for the use of people who want to use the river.

I think this matter should come within the jurisdiction of the Department of Harbours and Marine rather than the Brisbane City Council. Better still, in conjunction with the city council or the other local authorities involved, it should acquire certain areas of land on which mooring facilities can be installed for the use of boat-owners.

At the moment, most people who use areas of land in the upper reaches of the river do so through the generosity of the land-owners. Unfortunately, there is a percentage of marine bodgies who misuse land and, as a result, force land-owners to stop anyone from coming ashore. It is quite understandable that if a farmer finds his stock or crops being interfered with he will not agree to people coming onto his land at week-ends.

Mr. Hiley: Are the watermelons in the upper reaches of the river paying the price?

Mr. HERBERT: As the Treasurer points out, the watermelons in the upper reaches do pay the price for week-end visitors and one cannot expect these farmers to view too kindly trespassing by boat-owners. If certain areas were reserved for this purpose, the problem would be overcome. There are areas of land in the upper reaches where tributaries come in and form small promontories that have comparatively little use for farming purposes. They could be acquired and reserved for people who want to use the river for pleasure purposes and who do not want to stay on their boats for the whole day.

Of course, the entire river as far as Ipswich and the Bremer is navigable for small craft and there are many places that are used at the present time by boating enthusiasts without any trouble at all. With the increased use of land in the area, more and more of these places will become unavailable for this purpose so I recommend that there be provided at regular intervals along the river mooring facilities, with ramping facilities in some places, so that boats can be got into the river, together with facilities for people to go ashore. I suggest that these picnic facilities be established along the lines of the rest areas provided by the Main Roads Department along main arterial roads. Such facilities would lead to a much greater use of the river than at present. The river is not being developed in the way it should be for our boating population. In addition, this might encourage more people—novices in particular—to use the river instead of the bay. Many people go not only into the bay but outside the bay in types of craft that those with experience would not attempt to take outside.

I suggest also that in laying out these mooring areas and ramps we take care to ensure that they remain public property and are not provided totally for a group of water skiers. That is what is happening now at a number of landing areas close to the centre of the city. Groups of people indulging in water ski-ing take over these ramps. They should be available at all times for the use of all with pleasure boats.

Approval has now been granted for the construction of a landing facility at the Arboretum at Sherwood, which is a well-known beauty spot. Some concern has been expressed by local residents that possibly people may want to take vehicles into the park to get their boats in and out of the water. However, I understand that that is not the proposal, the Arboretum will remain as it is, closed to motor traffic, but mooring facilities will be provided so that people can visit that spot by boat. Beyond the Arboretum at Sherwood there is no specific place reserved for the use of private boat-owners. The Carrington Boating Club operates from Corinda and as its members

move upstream on many of their trips they have to rely on the hospitality of individual land-owners in the area for landing points. If we had three or four points between Brisbane and Ipswich they would be regularly patronised by boat-owners in the metropolitan area.

My next point concerns Oxley Creek. At various times people using Ipswich Road have been able to smell the pollution in Oxley Creek. This has been the subject of a long-standing argument between the Department of Harbours and Marine and the Brisbane City Council. The department accepts responsibility for the tidal waters of the creek but it is a local authority responsibility in its headwaters. The difficulty arises here because the Department of Harbours and Marine officers make an inspection in wet weather, when they point to a certain place and say that that is where their responsibility stops. On the other hand the Brisbane City Council officers wait until the weather is very dry and the salt water is farther up the creek. Consequently there is a no-man's land and this is causing most of the problem. A large meat-processing company has been suspected by local residents for some considerable time as being a major source of the pollution. In addition, sillage from the Inala area finds its way into Oxley Creek.

The meat-processing establishment has greatly increased its capacity in recent times and if local residents are correct, the pollution from this source will probably increase. Unless we can get some agreement between the Department of Harbours and Marine and the Brisbane City Council people in the vicinity of the Ipswich Road crossing of Oxley Creek will have grounds for much more complaint. The problem could be fairly easily overcome by a direct ditch to avoid tortuous bends in the creek. This would enable the regular flushing out of Oxley Creek, which would get rid of most of the offending rubbish. The nuisance will become noticeable at the new markets in the next long dry season unless something is done. For many years the few residents affected at Oxley have not been able to attract very much sympathy to their cause, but now that there has been further building along the banks of Oxley Creek it is a problem that we will hear much more about unless something is done.

My third point is one that has already been very effectively covered by the Treasurer in his opening comments. I refer to the Japanese long-liners who are fishing outside our territorial waters. I refer in particular to an article which appeared in "The Sunday Mail" of 25 October under the heading "The fishing 'war' that may become 'hot'." I have no particular reason for being fond of the Japanese Navy; indeed, I have very personal reasons for having the opposite feelings. On the other hand, what was done by these gentlemen who were foolish enough to have their photographs

taken as evidence is the nearest thing to piracy I have ever seen presented in the newspapers. By the location they gave, the men admitted that they were outside the three-mile limit. The picture shows very expensive fishing equipment. If I were a fisherman—Japanese or otherwise—and I caught any other fisherman stealing my equipment—and that is the only word to describe it—I should probably indulge in some of the hot war that is suggested. It was a stupid action on the part of the fisherman to take. I quote a small part of the article—

“Bad feeling between the Australian and Japanese boats was brought closer to a head earlier this week with the disclosure that an Australian trawler had ‘salvaged’ five miles of Japanese tuna line set across the Barwon Banks which run close to the international three-mile limit off the South Queensland coast.

“Yesterday in the 58-foot trawler, Toni Christine, skipper Norm Otto, 37, of Southport, displayed a hold half filled with thick piles of brand new Japanese tuna line, 30 Japanese glass buoys, and a large bundle of bamboo poles and lights with Japanese markings.

“Otto said that a Japanese boat came within 300 yards of the Toni Christine, just before he cut the line.

“He and his crew were concerned that the Japanese might recognise their boat again and attempt reprisals.”

They should be concerned about the possibility of reprisals because, as the Treasurer mentioned, the Barwon Banks are well outside our three-mile limit.

We should keep a very close watch on some of our fishermen. They may represent only a very small proportion of fishermen, but occasionally a man like this, with very little sense of responsibility, can affect the livelihood of scores of decent fishermen who venture out in the same area. The Japanese ship that lost all the equipment that was taken may not recognise the “Toni Christine”, and its crew may attack a quite innocent boat in reprisal. While we have fishermen in the community with such poor mentality as to go into the Mooloolaba jetty with bombs on board and dump them over the side, anything can happen. The men who indulge in this type of action endanger the lives of all their mates.

There has been a suggestion that fishermen should go out armed and take reprisals against the Japanese fishermen. That is a very foolish suggestion. The Japanese boats are a lot bigger and faster than ours, and if it came to a showdown and any Australian fisherman in one of our small boats opened fire on a Japanese boat outside territorial waters, I should not like to be on board because the results could be disastrous.

The Japanese come all the way from their own country to fish for tuna off our coast. We have had a long debate in this Chamber

about the possibility of developing a tuna-fishing industry. If the Japanese are prepared to do it, we should not interfere in this manner. The area is outside the province of the State Parliament. We can take no action because it is beyond the three-mile limit. The Federal Parliament has power, in certain circumstances, to act to protect fishing further out, but already wars are being carried on among Russian, American, Canadian and Japanese interests in Alaskan waters and near Russian waters, over who owns certain established fishing banks. The last thing we want here is a fight between Japanese and Australian fishermen, bearing in mind that the Japanese fishermen have far better craft and equipment than we have. We must remember, too, that they are fishing for tuna, which we do not fish for. It costs a lot of money to fish for tuna, as the equipment is expensive. If certain of our fishermen steal equipment on the high seas—and that is what it amounts to—and have their pictures appear in the Press with the evidence, with a sensational story suggesting that the war may become hot, the State and Federal Parliaments have a responsibility to step in before a hot war that will affect the genuine fisherman does commence. As I said before, if one or two marine bodgies act in this way and endanger the lives of other fishermen, it is time this Parliament took some action.

Mr. Davies: Have you any comments to make about the newspaper for printing it?

Mr. HERBERT: I think the newspaper has a responsibility to publish such matters so that at least the people will know what is going on. Many people who read this article would be as concerned as I am about the possibility of involving our fishing industry in a war with a presently friendly nation fishing off our coastline. They are not entitled to come within the three-mile limit. They must stay outside it. These lines were stolen from well outside the three-mile limit, in international waters, and there is no excuse for that. If there is any fouling of gear between trawlers and line fishermen, the remedy for clearing propellers and so forth should be available to fishermen, but not to take five miles of line that has been set by another boat and then talk about going out armed next time in case the owner tries to take some sort of revenge for the way he has been treated.

Mr. Davies: Don't you think that the newspapers should consult the Premier before they give publicity to such things?

Mr. HERBERT: No, I do not. I think this article covers the situation well. It does not take sides. It sets out the position fairly well. We have a responsibility to see that if there is any trouble it is settled at Government level so that everyone will know what the rights and wrongs are. There has been no statement from the Commonwealth Government on this subject.

The Japanese have indicated that they are prepared to negotiate. They do not want any repetition of the trouble they have had in

Alaskan waters over their rights to fish in certain areas. They are looking for every bit of protein they can get and are prepared to use the tuna grounds, which we do not use. If an occasional prawn-trawler gets into that deep water he has not the right to interfere with another fisherman's gear, any more than the Japanese have a right to interfere with lines that we might set in that location.

Some of the comments reported in the Press were completely stupid. It is stupidity for any Australian fishermen to say that they will go to sea with extra firearms on board just in case. Later on they were reported as saying that they were not making any threats. If the previous statement was not a threat, I do not know what is.

The fisherman involved in this incident said he would not make any apologies for taking the line. He said it was evidence that the Japanese are interfering with Australian trawling in our home waters. It is not evidence of that, because it was outside our waters. He admitted that fact by giving the location as Barwon Banks. The newspaper set out the comments made by the various fishermen. There are some comments about their representatives and the fact that they would approach the Minister in charge of Fisheries and the Department of Harbours and Marine on the matter.

The Treasurer has already said something on this subject. I am pleased he did, because there are many decent fishermen who are just as concerned as we are not only to stop this stupidity, but also to see that something is done to protect Australian interests. This is of paramount importance to us. Instead of letting the action of a couple of bodgies reach the stage where the Japanese boats have justification for taking reprisals, we should make sure that everything we do is strictly legal and that any action is taken at Government level so that there will be complete agreement on the areas in which we are allowed to operate alone and the areas in which we must operate together.

Mr. Davies: Would you say it is a good way to get headlines?

Mr. HERBERT: This sort of behaviour is a way to get your name in the Press. If you say that you "lifted" five miles of fishing line and had it in your hold as evidence, naturally the Press would make use of it. This action is risking the livelihood of many decent fishermen, and any hon. member who has fishermen in his electorate should examine this subject closely because action might be taken by Japanese fishermen against Australian equipment. The victims will probably be people who were completely innocent of initiating any of the trouble. The man who had his picture published will probably make sure that for some time he stays close inshore when trawling.

Mr. Davies: I thought the newspapers might have commented somewhat along the lines on which you and the Minister have.

Mr. HERBERT: This is a matter that is out of the hands of newspapers; it is something that requires Government action. I think fishermen can claim certain fishing areas up to 12 miles off-shore. We have, however, no justification for claiming areas that we do not use. We do not fish for tuna at all, and until there are people in this country prepared to put capital into the tuna industry there is no point in claiming fishing grounds that the Japanese are using.

Mr. Smith: Don't you think they quite misconstrued the position in the first place?

Mr. HERBERT: No, I do not think so at all. I can imagine the feelings of the Japanese who lost this gear. If by any chance they later find an Australian trawler in trouble they are just as likely to say, "That's probably the one who took our lines, so we won't help him."

Mr. Smith: I think the paper gave it prominence because it misconstrued the whole situation.

Mr. Dean: I can tell you that those chaps are worried men.

Mr. HERBERT: The Japanese are 7,000 miles from home and need the facilities available in this country in the event of sickness or distress. The last thing they want is any sort of a fight on their hands. If it came to the point of attempting to drive them off the fishing banks, I think the bigger Japanese boats would be the ones more likely to win. As a Parliament, we have a responsibility to ensure that some steps are taken to prevent what is described as the "cold" war from becoming hot.

Mr. Davies: Have you discussed this matter with any of these Australian fishermen before condemning them here?

Mr. HERBERT: I have discussed it with quite a number. As I mentioned before, this is not an attack on the general body of decent Australian fishermen. It is an attack on a few marine bodgies who cause far more trouble than their numbers warrant.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (2.53 p.m.): I compliment the Minister on the degree of personal interest that he has taken in the administration of his portfolio and, like that of his fellow Ministers, his approach to many matters. It is true that he has almost revolutionised many aspects of the Department of Harbours and Marine, including small-boat harbours.

I am very happy to join in the fray once again on the spoilation of beaches at Townsville and Magnetic Island. This matter has been raised before and been given a fair amount of publicity in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" as a result of remarks made by the hon. member for Townsville North and

me. I hope that "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" will again gird its loins and join in the fray with us.

It is quite true that, if the Townsville Harbour Board is allowed to continue dumping its spoil from the harbour, as it has been doing for the last couple of years, it will not be long before there are no beaches at Townsville or Magnetic Island. That is an indisputable fact. I have discussed this matter with the hon. member for Townsville North. Anyone standing on the beach at Townsville at low tide and looking across towards Magnetic Island can see large banks of black, slimy ooze that are building up between West Point and Picnic Bay. Those banks of slimy mud are growing along the beach front at Townsville and along the shores of Magnetic Island.

Those interested in establishing an underwater observatory at Magnetic Island sent down a skin diver to look at the coral on the sea bed. What happened? Another skin diver had to go down to pull him out of the slime and ooze. The first man might have been able to free himself later, but a second diver was sent down to pull him out. That is how bad the position is.

To be quite candid, I have discussed the matter with members of the Townsville Harbour Board and suggested to them that they should use the spoil that they are taking from the harbour, and even from the swinging basin that will be the small-boat harbour in Ross Creek, and use it for reclamation along the ocean front at Townsville. They have told me quite nonchalantly that the spoil cannot be used because its texture is too fine, that, if they pumped it out of the harbour bed or the creek bed, it would be more or less black water and would run out of the reclamation areas just as it was pumped in. That argument might be sound and tenable if there were not already examples of several reclamation jobs that have been done in the harbour at Townsville.

I have been in Townsville for only 34 years. Last night, with the hon. member for Townsville North and other prominent citizens, I was at a dinner for the pioneers of Townsville. I felt like a babe in arms, because most of the people who were present had been in Townsville for 70 or 80 years, whilst I had been there for only 34. When I went to Townsville, I was employed in the Railway Department as an engine man, and it was part of my job at times to work trains down to the jetty wharf. At that time there was a railway station on the jetty wharf, with a little, dirty mangrove creek running through it and out into the sea. Today, scores of acres of land round that dirty, little mangrove creek are being used by oil companies, T.R.E.B., and other organisations, and they have all been reclaimed by pumping or dragging mud from the seabed and dumping it inside a retaining wall and allowing the water to run off. Some of it was dragged up with a sort of hollow horse-shoe type of arrangement; some of it was just pumped up

with a sand pump. A retaining wall was built first, and the black, muddy water was pumped behind it. The sand and sediment fell to the bottom and the water ran off. How can the Townsville Harbour Board claim that reclamation cannot be done by a series of pumping operations when there is the positive evidence of scores of acres of land at the Townsville jetty that have been reclaimed by this method? Oil companies and other companies have done it, and the land is there for everybody to see. Many hon. members will be flying over Townsville during the year—most of the southern politicians will be flying over it in the coming winter—and they will be able to see the scores of acres of beautiful reclaimed land that have been made available by the pumping system. In spite of this, the Townsville Harbour Board say, "We cannot use the pumping system," either because it is not economically feasible or because it is not mechanically feasible. I ask the Treasurer to examine very closely the argument put forward by the Board. To me, it is untenable because other people have already reclaimed land by this method.

Mr. Hiley: You are talking about the spoil being lifted from the boat harbour?

Mr. AIKENS: No, from the harbour itself. The Treasurer has been to Townsville and has visited the harbour on more than one occasion; he takes a very keen interest in it. I am saying that 30 years ago there was only a dirty, little mangrove swamp where the oil tanks and the power station now are. The oil companies and the people who built the power station put a reclamation wall round the area and pumped mud and slush behind it from outside. The mud and slush solidified and the water ran off. As I said, there are now scores of acres of very fine land on which oil installations and the power station have been built. The harbour board claims that this cannot be done with the silt from within the harbour, that it is too fine, and that it cannot use the process that was used so successfully outside the harbour. To my way of thinking that theory is completely untenable. I commend to the consideration of the Minister the old engineering axiom, "If theory will not confirm the practice, then there is something wrong with the theory." Anyone who knows anything about engineering will know that, if you can do a thing and someone says it cannot be done, then there is nothing wrong with the practice, because it can be done; there is something wrong with the theory that says it cannot be done.

The Harbour Board are acting purely and simply on a theory sold to them by somebody else, namely, that they cannot reclaim land in the vicinity of the waterfront in Townsville by exactly the same process as the oil companies, the regional electricity board and other instrumentalities have so successfully used. If they could do it, why cannot the harbour board? Instead, they load into barges the silt that they get from the harbour, and that they are now getting from the swinging

basin or the small-boat harbour, and dump it between Townsville seashore and Magnetic Island, turn the barges round and come back for another load. As a result great dunes, if I may call them that, of silt are forming on Magnetic Island and on the seafront at Townsville.

Now I want to deal with a couple of matters that come within the jurisdiction of the Treasurer and about which I feel certain it is time something was done. One was brought very vividly to my mind in Flinders Street, Townsville, on Saturday morning by a little old lady pensioner, who came up to me with a premium notice she had received from a private insurance company and said, "Mr. Aikens, where do I go to pay this?" I told her, "There is the Townsville office of this particular private insurance company." I did not want to throw it up at her but I said, "Why on earth are you insuring your home and its contents against fire with a private insurance company?" She said, "We have always done it." I said, "Look, I do not want to say this in any derogatory spirit of you but anyone who insures against fire with a private insurance company while the State Government Insurance Office is in business has more money than sense." I will not go so far as to say that they are not right in the head, but I said to this old lady, "Why don't you go round now? Don't bother to go to the private insurance company at all. Your policy expires today. Go round to the State Government Insurance Office, round the corner from the post office, and ask them to take over your policy. It will be better and cheaper this year and much cheaper next year and for all years thereafter because next year they will not charge you the 7s. 6d. stamp duty that the private insurance companies charge."

This stamp duty was not put on for the second time until the Government increased the moiety to be paid by all insurance companies to the Fire Brigade Boards. I think the Labour Government did it and it has been perpetuated by this Government. When that moiety was increased, the State Government Insurance Office did not increase its premiums and the private offices did not increase their premiums but they put the stamp duty on the second time.

Years ago, when stamp duty was introduced in about 1923, it was included in the premium although it was invisible; it was not specifically mentioned. The private insurance companies thought, "We will have to get a bit square with the Government. They make us pay 7d. as our moiety towards the upkeep of the fire brigades so we will charge the stamp duty and claim it is a new stamp duty." So now they charge their policy-holders stamp duty for the second time and put it in separately as stamp duty. Whereas, it had always been invisible, they now charge it separately. The State Government Insurance Office does not charge the stamp duty twice. It is included in the first premium and is not put on again.

Then I told the old lady, "Next year you will pay only two-thirds of this amount"—which I think was about £7 19s. 11d. I said, "You will get a 33½ per cent. reduction on this. Do not go looking for this insurance company. Go to the State Government Insurance Office."

I am absolutely amazed that the Treasurer, with his knowledge of business, with his knowledge of advertising, and with his keen political astuteness, has not done something about the shocking advertising that is indulged in by the State Government Insurance Office. I know that I cannot mention the Public Curator Office; they are the worst ever in advertising their virtues; if they were in politics they would do their deposit election after election. It is the same with the State Government Insurance Office. Why on earth doesn't the Treasurer, on behalf of the State Government Insurance Office, get out and tell the people about what he is trying to sell them? Why doesn't the Treasurer tell them of the virtues of the S.G.I.O.? Why doesn't he tell them about the double imposition of stamp duty by the private insurance companies?

Mr. Hiley: Did you read the report this year?

Mr. AIKENS: Who reads the report? Only a handful of members of Parliament and perhaps a few people who work in the office. If you advertised only for the sake of your political fanatical friends you would never get into Parliament. You advertise in order to tell all the people what you have to sell. Goodness me, surely the Treasurer should go out and advertise to all the people what the State Government Insurance Office has to offer, particularly in the field of fire insurance. If he were to do that, if he were to take a personal grip on the advertising of the State Government Insurance Office, particularly its fire insurance, I am satisfied that only the fanatically loyal supporters and policy-holders of the private insurance companies would bother to renew their premiums with them. Why does the Treasurer not go out and tell the people in plain, simple terms the difference between insurance against fire with the State Government Insurance Office and insurance against fire with a private insurance office?

Mr. Anderson: We will give you the job of publicity officer.

Mr. AIKENS: They could do a lot worse than that. It would not matter if I were blind, deaf, dumb, crippled and absolutely devoid of any intelligence at all, I could not put up a worse advertising campaign than that put up by the State Government Insurance Office. I am glad to have concurrence on that point from a very astute businessman in the person of the hon. member for Toowoomba East. Give the hon. member for Toowoomba East and me a go at advertising the virtues of the State Government Insurance Office and the

Treasurer will see how much business he gets in the next year and all the years that lie ahead.

I make that serious suggestion to the Treasurer. As a businessman, surely he must know that the advertising of the State Government Insurance Office is the last, gurgling blob. I have never known anything worse or anything less informative. If the Treasurer tells the people just what they can get by insuring with the State Government Insurance Office, particularly against fire, it will not be long before he will not have very many private insurance offices in business in Queensland.

Mr. Coburn interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: She was a very intelligent old lady. She lived in Townsville South. She voted for me; that is an indication of her intelligence. I am sure she went round to the State Government Insurance Office.

If I may digress a moment—some hon. members asked me today, "What was wrong with the great big centenary parade up in Townsville the other day? We read in the papers that they put up four or five stands for the people, but only a handful went to it." Of course only a handful went to it! Only a handful knew it was on! I live in Townsville and take a keen interest in everything that appears in the Press—every public man has to make himself au fait with everything that appears in the Press—and I did not damn-well know it was on! Even though I live there and take a keen interest in all the celebrations, I did not know it was on. The advertising of the State Government Insurance Office can be compared with the advertising for the centenary celebrations in Townsville. I can point to those two as inglorious examples of what should not be done in the way of advertising.

There is another matter I want to deal with, and I am sure that the Treasurer would be very happy to listen to me if the old chatterbox from Kurilpa would go away and let him. I got a letter from the Treasurer about this matter the other day. It is quite true that the Treasurer inherited certain principles from the previous Government, as other ministers did. Many of these principles and many of these matters of policy have been altered in conformity with the present Government's policy, and altered in conformity with each individual minister's idea of what should or should not be done. I agree that the Treasurer inherited the Workers' Compensation Act from the previous Labour Government and, to his credit, he has made many worth-while amendments to that Act. He has granted many concessions that were not given before, but I will not make political propaganda out of those matters.

The other day I had a case—and one lives and learns—in which I came up against an aspect of the Workers' Compensation Act which, I felt sure, the Treasurer would do something about the moment I drew his attention to it. Townsville, as most hon.

members know, is very peculiarly situated. Instead of the business centre being right in the population centre of the city, it is at what one might call the very end of a half-open fan, with the population areas two, three, four and five miles away from the city. We know where the hospital is situated, and where the State Government Insurance Office is situated. If the Treasurer had been looking for a population centre in which to erect the new State Government Insurance Office a couple of years ago, he would have put it in Hermit Park, but he did not. He put it right on the seafront, miles and miles away from everybody, just as the Townsville General Hospital is miles and miles away from the population centres of the town.

The case I refer to concerns a worker at Aitkenvale who was unfortunate enough to have a tree fall on him and break both his legs very badly. In discussing his case with some officers of the workers' compensation section, I was told that he was very lucky to be alive. He was taken to the General Hospital and they did a particularly good job on him. However, to get him back on his feet, to make him ambulatory again, he has to receive daily physiotherapy treatment, and in order to receive it he has to be taken to the hospital every day. He lives not on the outer fringe of the suburb but at Aitkenvale, seven miles away from the Townsville General Hospital, and his wife has to help him into the seat of the utility truck. Incidentally, after the doctors had finished operating on him, he had to be taken from hospital in the back of the utility truck, because some stupid sister at the hospital said, "No, you are not entitled to ambulance transport from the hospital to your home; you are entitled to ambulance transport only to the hospital." So, they put a mattress in the back of the utility and took him home. That is just by the way. Now, he has to be brought in seven miles every day from Aitkenvale to the Townsville General Hospital, and he has to be taken home again seven miles after each physiotherapy treatment is finished. I put the matter to the Treasurer and asked him to make some allowance. All that the man is asking for is the cost of the petrol in and out. He is quite prepared to supply the car. If he had not his own car he would have to go by taxi from Aitkenvale to the General Hospital, but, rather than go by taxi, he uses his private utility truck, driven by his wife because he cannot drive. I asked the Treasurer to make some allowance, purely and simply for the petrol to drive him to and from the hospital every day, a total distance of approximately 14 miles. I said to the Minister, "If you cannot do it in a statutory sense, you may agree to make an ex-gratia payment." Well, naturally, Ministers are very careful and they worry about making ex-gratia payments, not because they do not want to make them but because they

are afraid of the precedent they might establish. This morning I received a very long explanatory letter from the Treasurer. The Minister replied to me in detailed form, telling me that in accordance with a section of the Workers' Compensation Act, which he enumerated, you have to travel 15 miles to hospital and 15 miles back before you can get any transportation to and from the hospital for treatment that you require while you are still on workers' compensation. Now, the Act says—and I read it—"to or from" the hospital. I really think that when that went through, hon. members did not notice it. It should have read "to and from" the hospital. If it were "to and from" we could stretch it another half mile and get this chap up to 15 miles. What a shocking thing it is when a man, still in a critical state, has to be taken from his home to the Townsville General Hospital every day and he cannot get a penny allowance for the journey to the hospital or from the hospital unless he travels 15 miles each way!

Mr. Hughes: Unless he is a subscriber to the ambulance. Wouldn't he then get free transport?

Mr. AIKENS: No.

Mr. Hiley: If he is transported by the ambulance, we pay for it, anyhow. We pay the ambulance brigade £50,000 a year to handle these cases all over Australia.

Mr. AIKENS: I am glad the hon. gentleman mentioned that. I allowed the hon. member for Kurilpa to make his interjection in the hope that the Treasurer would come into it. There we run up against the ambulance people again. They say that they get a lump-sum payment each year to compensate them or recompense them for taking compensation patients to and from hospital, but they say that they are only patients taken to the hospital after an accident, and home from the hospital after hospitalisation. They claim that it does not include the general transportation backwards and forwards of patients for physiotherapy or other treatment which may be necessary. I can see the viewpoint of the ambulance on that.

Mr. Hiley: If it was a case that needed ambulance transportation it should be provided and should be covered by that sum, but many people do not need ambulance transportation; they can manage in a car.

Mr. AIKENS: This man is doing the fair thing. He is using his own utility truck, and his wife is driving it. Quite possibly he could go in by ambulance, but the Treasurer would not pay one penny extra for that transportation. I do not intend to allow the Treasurer to build himself up into a paragon of virtue on this, because, if this man said, "I am an ambulance case; I want an ambulance to cart me from Aikenvale," the ambulance would have to go from town to Aikenvale to pick him up, from Aikenvale

to the hospital, from the hospital to Aikenvale to take him home, and then from Aikenvale back to their headquarters, so they would travel 30 miles and the Treasurer would not pay them one brass farthing. He would say that that was covered by the lump sum which the State Government Insurance Office pays to the ambulance brigade.

Mr. Hiley: That lump sum is regularly reviewed. When the ambulance brigade can show me that there is a need for an increase, they get it. We have reviewed it many times.

Mr. AIKENS: We are getting useful information from the Treasurer. If he is prepared to keep reviewing the amount paid to the ambulance, and if the ambulance have a right to ask for a higher amount, I am happy, because I am sure that the ambulance people do not know about that. They say, "We get so much per year, and we have to cart all and sundry backwards and forwards wherever they like to go, and that is all we get."

(Time expired.)

Mr. HANSON (Port Curtis) (3.18 p.m.): I am pleased to have this opportunity to enter the debate on the Treasurer's Estimates. Since this morning I have had the somewhat unique experience of losing a couple of pounds in weight, because of a department under his control. Being possessed of an abundance of avoidipois, I am quite able to lose this weight. I do not suppose I will very much miss the few pounds that I lost. In the lunch hour I went to the Totalisator Administration Board's shop in Elizabeth Street—the the Treasurer administers the Totalisator Administration Board—and the conditions there were far from satisfactory. Being a modest punter and anxious to invest five shillings on my choice in the Melbourne Cup, I decided to go to this place with the hon. member for Mackay so that we might try our fortune. I cannot inform the Committee of the result, but we are not unhappy with it. I urge the Minister to see that next year, when the Melbourne Cup comes round again or when races of comparable interest are being run, steps are taken to provide better ventilation than there is now at the Elizabeth Street agency of the T.A.B. It was like the black hole of Calcutta. Hundreds of people were jostling on the street and trying to enter the premises in order to place a few modest shillings on the horses of their choice. There is close to the T.A.B. agency a place known as "Silhouette." The sign in front of this establishment could well have been transferred to the T.A.B. agency, because one could shed more fat in the T.A.B. this afternoon than the proprietors of "Silhouette" could remove in their sweat-boxes.

Thousands of pounds are passing through the T.A.B. agency this afternoon. If a little common sense were used, better

ventilation provided, and more interest shown generally in the health of clients, those clients might compensate the Government by investing a little more money. As the Treasurer is about to leave on a visit to the United States of America, I suppose the huge T.A.B. turnover this afternoon is giving him a considerable amount of satisfaction.

I read with interest in the Press this morning the announcement that the Treasurer is to visit the United States of America. As the main town in my electorate was mentioned, this item of news had particular significance for me. I trust that the Treasurer's negotiations overseas will one day be very satisfactory for the State, the workers generally, and particularly the people of Gladstone and the surrounding district.

Mr. Murray: Can't you go, too?

Mr. HANSON: As a matter of fact, the Treasurer might do better if I did. However, he is not being very generous on this occasion.

I express the hope, without wishing to be nasty, that the Treasurer has a little more success in this mission than he had when last he went to the financial moguls in New York in an attempt to raise finance for the rehabilitation of the Mt. Isa railway line.

There is a fund financed under the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act, 1959, known as the Commonwealth Aid, Marine Works' Fund. This fund has been of great assistance to some towns and ports in the help that it has given to the tourist industry throughout the State. My port has now a launching ramp for small craft. Although a little unpretentious, it nevertheless is a wonderful facility. I know that a number of ports along the coast have received assistance under this fund and have been very pleased to receive the amenities that it has provided.

The great increase in the use of small craft has produced an urgent necessity in many ports and towns for new boat harbours and extensions to those in existence. The Treasurer knows the problems of my port. I hope that benefits under the fund are granted to it and to many other ports so that boat harbour extensions are carried out in the interests of people who are now able to enjoy ownership of small craft. They have made their appearance in virtually every city and town and on almost every waterway over the length and breadth of the State. Even in inland areas far removed from ports the number of small craft has increased considerably, and many people living in country outposts are now using small craft on waterways that previously were unused. I trust that money from the fund will be made available to provide fishing and water ski-ing facilities for people in these areas.

The report of the Auditor-General on the Department of Harbours and Marine shows that receipts credited to Consolidated Revenue totalled £669,345, and included over £500,000

conservancy dues and pilotage. This is not without significance, because pilotage occupies a very important place in marine activities in Queensland. On 12 March this year I asked the Treasurer a question relative to Section 138 of the Queensland Marine Act, which makes provision for radio-telegraph and radio-telephone installations for transmitting and receiving messages on small craft of certain dimensions. I wanted to know why the Queensland Government pilot launch "Boyne", stationed at Gladstone, had no such installation. Three or four years after the Act came into force, the "Boyne" broke down within the limits of the harbour and was not able to send a message to the shore installation and did not have a dinghy on board in which the pilot could row himself ashore. At the same time, the department strictly enforced the provision and demanded that launch-owners should provide the necessary equipment. This is not a good example for a department to set. If it insists upon an installation of this type, I think it should ensure that its own pilot launches are properly equipped. The launches do not go very far outside harbour limits, I know. Nevertheless, seas in the harbours and just outside the heads can become very rough; no-one can tell me that they do not. If the launches get into trouble, the installations to which I have referred will be of great benefit to them.

In replying to my question, the Treasurer used what has become a stock reply from the Government—that the "Boyne" was one of the ill-equipped relics inherited from the Labour Government. Possibly he had no alternative open to him when he looked at the question, because the Government had been in power for seven years and the section of the Queensland Marine Act had been in force for three or four years. I think it is only right that the Department of Harbours and Marine should set a good example by installing facilities for transmitting and receiving messages on all launches used in the pilot service.

Included in Consolidated Revenue Fund receipts from this department is an amount of about £34,500 for sand and gravel royalty. This royalty is not without significance because many of the foreshores and rivers have quite large amounts of sand and gravel that could be very attractive and useful to companies who desire it.

Some nine to 12 months ago there was a sudden rush by building and contracting companies for gravel in the Boyne River, which has very large and useful gravel beds. To name some of these companies, there were Pioneer Concrete, Ready Mixed Concrete, Thiess Brothers, the Comalco interests, people named Wongung, who have been living on the Boyne for years, and the firm of Brown & Brown. The first to make application to the Treasury Department, some 12 months ago, were Brown & Brown, a subsidiary of Perini and Davies. They were referred back to the harbour board, which

decided that it had no control and referred them to the Department of Harbours and Marine. It, too, decided that it had no control and referred them back to the harbour board and the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply. This department did not know whether it had control of it, and there was quite an amount of fooling about with the company concerned.

This company has a considerable number of interests. It is the constructing authority for the dam adjacent to the Calcap power station and it was anxious to obtain a couple of large beds of gravel and to erect an installation on the river bank to screen the gravel so that it could be made useful for the building industry generally within Gladstone and the surrounding district.

I think the Treasurer's department should look at the position relating to these sand and gravel deposits and define once and for all the areas of certain rivers that are under the control of the Department of Harbours and Marine and those that are under the control of the harbour boards and the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply.

I know that the people who made the application are justifiably—I emphasise the word "justifiably"—disappointed at the deal they received. I do not think that the application they made some 12 months ago has yet been finalised.

Mr. Hiley: Didn't they get the deal through?

Mr. HANSON: I do not think it has been fixed up yet.

Mr. Hiley: As you know, I told the Gladstone Harbour Board that if they liked to apply to have a particular area brought under their control the matter would be attended to, but I have not heard from them since.

Mr. HANSON: The Treasurer may not remember the recent decision, which was that the harbour board would control from the traffic bridge right down to the mouth of the river and the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply from the bridge farther up, but the whole position is that before these people even made application there should have been certain defined limits.

Mr. Hiley: That is because the harbour board has neglected to have the harbour area defined for the Boyne River. I indicated to them what to do. All they have to do is ask to have the upper limits of Gladstone Harbour defined to such-and-such a point on the Boyne River and they will get it.

Mr. HANSON: The position is not peculiar to Gladstone Harbour. It would apply to every other harbour of that type.

Mr. Hiley: Every harbour that has a stream running into it.

Mr. HANSON: A large number of them have.

These people were justifiably disappointed because they could not get any satisfaction from anybody in regard to their application. It seemed very funny to me that applications were submitted after theirs and that certain people were getting fixed up. I hope that their case is reviewed and that some justice is meted out to them.

I do not want to get off home ground, but being down here so often I should like to refer to the large quantity of sand and gravel that is taken from the Brisbane River. When you sleep at the Lodge you realise that. I have been here for some time now, but it is music to my ears. However, I think that the Treasurer has a serious problem down here, one that has probably been raised many times. I refer to the 17-Mile Rocks. I hope that he will be able to give some assistance to the operators of the various craft who have to use the tides—

Mr. Hiley: Didn't you hear my statement on that this morning?

Mr. HANSON: No.

Mr. Hiley: It covered what you are raising now.

Mr. HANSON: I hope that something can be done for these people.

Although engineers of the Department of Harbours and Marine engage in designing work on behalf of harbour boards, there is a certain reticence on the part of the department to allow them to supervise actual construction work. I realise that engineers are short and that the Treasurer has many large-scale undertakings throughout the State, but now is the time to review the anomaly I have mentioned. I hope that in future the Treasurer can extend the scope of the services of engineers in the Department of Harbours and Marine. Once an engineer has designed a project he must feel very dissatisfied if he is not allowed to supervise its construction. In Gladstone the contract for the construction of the causeway has been let to Hornibrooks. The designing engineers are disappointed that they will not be able to supervise the construction work. There are some fine engineers in the department, and I pay full tribute to them, as I do to my good friend in the lobby, Mr. Sewell, who has been a great friend to harbour boards throughout the State and is always anxious to assist.

I notice in the report upon the operations provided for by Part III—Aid to Development of the Financial Arrangements and Development Aid Acts, 1942 to 1947, that £104,023 was spent on reclamation work for industrial land in East Cairns. This land will be very beneficial to the city of Cairns. It indicates a common-sense approach to the problem of acquiring land where it is needed. I ask the Treasurer to transfer his gaze and operations to our area because there is a serious shortage of industrial land. Inquiries are made every day about it, and the shortage will soon become

very acute. I know the Treasurer has demands to meet in Cairns and Mackay, but when Mackay is finished I hope he will focus his attention upon the problem of reclamation in Gladstone.

Mr. Hiley: Have you any particular area in mind?

Mr. HANSON: Yes, I have. One area is opposite Gondoon Street, across the other side of Auckland Creek.

Mr. Hiley: Behind the Fish Board.

Mr. HANSON: Yes. If that were built up it would be an excellent area.

Last year, when the Treasurer introduced a Bill amending the Harbours Act I said I was very disappointed that the legislation did not include provision to overcome the problems of harbour boards in land resumption. The Treasurer knows that Mr. Justice Stanley, Mr. Justice Hanger and Mr. Justice Gibbs made three different findings on litigation that came before them in the Full Court in the case of Austin Bros. v. Gladstone Harbour Board. The whole position seems to be in a turmoil. It was recently discussed at the harbour authorities conference. I trust that in the near future the Treasurer will investigate the matter to see if it is possible to bring down legislation that will be a guide to them.

Mr. Hiley: All you want is somebody who understands the law. It is easy.

Mr. HANSON: The three judges understood the law. They were working on the notice that was issued. That made all the trouble.

Mr. Hiley: Any time you want to resume, bring your problems to us and we will show you how to prepare the notice of resumption. There will be no trouble.

Mr. HANSON: There are three different Acts for resumption.

Mr. Hiley: Don't resume under the three or you will be in trouble.

Mr. HANSON: Mr. Justice Hanger said—

"The Harbours Act has conferred a power of acquisition, and, be it noted, a power of acquisition under the Public Works Land Resumption Acts, and it made the Board a constructing authority within the meaning of that Act for that purpose."

That is one authority.

(Time expired.)

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH (Tablelands) (3.43 p.m.): I listened attentively to the Treasurer this morning. He spoke about several items to which I wish to refer because they concern the northern area of the State and the comfort and safety of many of its people.

Firstly, I will refer to the remarks concerning Dr. Barnes and his aim to make the beaches of this State, especially in North Queensland, safer for children and adults. I

am sure that many hon. members were surprised to know that 400 different species of jelly fish frequent this area and have been captured and sent south for examination. On that basis, it will not be very long before adequate supplies of anti-toxin are available so that some degree of safety may be given to people who desire to enjoy an outing to the beach. Hon. members would be surprised to know the number of people who decide against going to the beaches in the summer-time, when these areas are very hot and humid. Many families are now extremely worried as to where to go to avoid this danger.

Mr. Hiley: Do you mean from Christmas-time to about March?

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: Yes.

Mr. Hiley: You said "now".

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: I meant in the summer months. The number of people seeking suitable picnic spots is increasing each week-end, and there is a tendency to go elsewhere and swim in fresh water. While that is overcoming this problem, it is putting a strain on the facilities at those fresh-water places. Swimmers at these resorts cannot be looked after to the same degree as on the beaches, where there are people, for instance, life savers and doctors, who are prepared to care for the safety of the public. As an example, there were the recent deaths of two 12-year-old boys who were bathing in the Herbert River, and of a young medical student in Babinda. They died, not because they were foolhardy; they died because they were in isolated places where there was no control or supervision as there is on the more frequented beaches. Australians are regarded as sun lovers who go to the beaches in the summer, and I pay tribute to Dr. Barnes for his dedication to the job he has taken on. I hope he gets all the financial assistance he wants. The Treasurer should realise the importance of his task, and if the State Government cannot give him the necessary assistance it should make representations to the Commonwealth or other authorities with a view to their assisting him.

When one thinks of the large expanses of ocean one would think the number of sharks caught along our beaches was trivial, and that we were wasting money in this regard. However, sharks appear to have a set pattern of moving parallel with the beaches and the shark-catching campaign has decreased the number of man-eating sharks, which are a menace to the swimming public.

I was surprised to learn this morning that jelly fish have a toxic effect on sea life, particularly prawns, so there is more than one avenue open to men like Dr. Barnes to prevent not only loss of life, but also to safeguard some very good industries that we are trying to foster.

A long and extensive survey is being made in the Gulf of Carpentaria of the possibility of finding suitable prawning grounds. I spoke to the head of one firm that is established at Karumba. He told me that they are more surprised each day to find prawns 80 miles from the shore in areas where it was thought they did not exist. In this vast gulf, from the Northern Territory to Cape York, there are many areas where there could be enough prawns to maintain an industry. This survey might take twice as long as was expected, but it should be continued until every part of the Gulf has been investigated.

The Treasurer said that the day of the pioneer has gone. He must have stopped at Port Alma, because there are still many pioneers in the Gulf country. Publicity was given to the man who sailed from America to Tully on a raft, and who no doubt was often forced to improvise during his trip. These people of the Gulf area are putting up with privations and improvising with equipment because they cannot get any locally and have no means of obtaining it readily from places farther away. They are carving out livelihoods for themselves and their families and are not asking for very much. I think the Treasurer knows what I am leading up to. They ask for a little consideration for the preservation of their boats and gear, and, indeed, their lives.

The hon. member for Townsville North spoke about the need for a boat harbour in Townsville. He said that sudden squalls blow up and some refuge should be provided at Magnetic Island. In that he is quite right. It is no good, however, having a harbour in only one place. The people for whom I am speaking have different types of boats. Into them they have placed all their savings, and their wives and families may also be on board. Everything owned by these men is on their boats. They have, however, no harbour and not even a beacon to indicate the mouth of a river.

I have raised this matter with the Treasurer on several occasions and do not like repeating it over and over again. I think he will agree that I am being very patient. I ask him to see the situation through the eyes of the people there. When they return all that they are able to see are miles and miles of mangroves fringing the coastline. They cannot find the opening of a river or see any landmark. Before they know where they are, they may be on a sandbank. If a storm blows up when they are aground on a sandbank, they are quite helpless.

I have received repeated requests to endeavour to have the river entrances marked. I am not going to name specific rivers as the Treasurer knows full well the ones I am referring to. People with homes or depots along the coast in the Gulf of Carpentaria should at least have a simple and straightforward marker buoy and a land lead to enable them to reach safe anchorage in each river.

Mr. Hiley: Are the Norman and Albert the two rivers in which you are mainly interested?

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: Yes, and the Flinders River. Fishermen tell me they often run for the Flinders River. That is all that these people are asking for, and they are indeed pioneers. The pioneering days are not over in that area. The Treasurer mentioned what has been done at the Sea Hill pilot station. I believe that to be a step in the right direction. Here the Treasurer has gone out of his way to make provision for an entire community, and the building of houses there has cost thousands of pounds. I do not disagree with that action. Let us not forget, however, the man who wants only a small beacon on the shore and a 44-gallon drum with a high beacon in the mouth of the river. When those markers are provided, these men will find means of navigation. Faced with the possibility of losing everything that they own, even their lives and those of their families, they are not able to navigate safely at present.

The Treasurer said that there are more ports in Queensland than there are in any other State, and he qualified that statement by referring to the length of the Queensland coastline. I believe that we should be proud of our ports, and I see them improving each year. I hope that money will be channelled into them for the next few years at the rate envisaged by the Treasurer and that ports continue to improve. This is important not only to cope with imports and exports. In time of war or national emergency, a country must have the means of moving large quantities of goods and people. It is essential that we improve as many of our ports as we can by spending money in the right direction. People who are members of harbour boards tell me that this is being done at many ports.

At the end of July the Treasurer opened the Atherton Show, and I wish to deal now with a matter affecting Atherton. If people are enthusiastic enough to attempt to improve the area in which they live, I believe the Government is doing the right thing if it assists them. If it does not, it is really retarding the progress of the area. The Atherton Show Society has made several applications to the Treasurer for a trotting licence and for permission for betting on galloping races. It has met with a blunt refusal from the Treasurer, who probably is dealing with these applications as he would deal with those from other parts of the State.

I ask the Treasurer to view the matter in a different light because of the small number of races in the Atherton area. I have here a list of the racing dates of the North Queensland Racing Association, and the centre nearest to Atherton at which races are held is Tolga, which holds a race meeting once a month. Tolga is 4 miles away, and it caters for the racing public at Atherton. The

Treasurer will say, "Yes, but they have a T.A.B. there." I admit that there is a T.A.B. there, but people who can afford to do so prefer to go to a racecourse. They have no means of getting to Mareeba, which is 22 miles away, or to Cairns, which is 60 miles away, or Innisfail, which is 70 miles away, where races are held on alternate Saturdays. The Atherton Show Society Racing Club is asking that it be allowed to hold race meetings on the days on which races are not held at Tolga. The Treasurer said, after viewing the calendar, that he thought the area was better off than any other area in Queensland. If one looks at the imposing list of racing dates, one might be pardoned for thinking so. There are more dates on it than one would know what to do with. But where are they? They are in places such as Gilbert River, Almaden and Chillagoe. One would have to leave a day before the meeting and probably take all day to get there. There may be only one or two bookmakers at the meeting. One would then return to Atherton and put one's car into the garage till the following week-end because it would take that time to repair it. I hope the Treasurer understands the position. The show society wants to improve the sports grounds, and I think the Treasurer will agree with me that Atherton has one of the best sporting and civic areas in Queensland. It contains a bowling green, an Olympic swimming pool, public tennis courts, and a cricket field, and besides it is the show society's building, which is open for the show, a three-day wonder, and then closed for another 12 months. The grounds are used in the football season, but that is about all. The society is a non-profit organisation and every penny it raised would be used to develop and improve the grounds. I should say that in five years, if the Treasurer granted the society's application, the grounds would be transformed into one of the outstanding country sporting areas in Queensland. I hope the Treasurer will have another look at this matter and see whether he can come to some arrangement to allow this organisation to come into the field and get money to channel into its own locality and its own club.

Another item to which I should like to refer is workers compensation, which is administered by the Treasurer although it was not mentioned by him this morning. We in the Far North of Queensland are receiving a very raw deal in relation to workers' compensation. A man who has been on "compo" for a period suddenly receives a letter requesting him to attend at the State Government Insurance Office in Cairns to be examined by a visiting doctor. I have had many cases in which that doctor has said, "As from Monday, such-and-such a date"—possibly the following Monday—"your 'compo' will cease." The man concerned then goes back to his own doctor and tells him he will have to return to work on the Monday and will need a clearance, but his own doctor refuses to give it to him. I ask the Treasurer to try to understand the position

in which that man finds himself. If there is to be a dispute between two doctors, the worker should not suffer as a consequence.

In the Railway Department an employee must have a certificate to go off work, and he gets it from his own doctor. As I say, during the duration of that certificate he is suddenly summoned to attend another doctor who tells him to go back to work because his "compo" will cease on the following Monday. If his own doctor will not give him a certificate, what will he do and why does this sort of thing happen?

In one week I had four cases referred to me in Cairns and each was similar to the one I have just described with the exception of one, where the man involved received such a notification whilst he was in hospital with his leg being treated by suspension apparatus. He was told to report to Cairns the next day to see a doctor. What a fantastic set-up that is! That man and his wife were very worried. He called me in on it and said, "The doctor will not allow me to move."

Mr. Duggan: Was he still told to start work on the following Monday?

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: No, he certainly was not; he was in hospital for weeks after that, but that demonstrates the sort of treatment these people are getting. I made representations to the State Government Insurance Office in Cairns and was told that in many cases these men are malingerers. Malingerers are everywhere—they are in the Army, in the Navy and in every other type of employment—but when a man has a certificate from a doctor whose job it is to say whether or not he can work, surely his doctor is the man who knows. Why send him to another man in the same profession to cut across the first doctor? It is only the individual over whom they are arguing who suffers. He is the man I am representing and whom I want to see get justice. I have mentioned this to other people and the same thing apparently happens elsewhere. I am astounded that the matter has not been raised before.

I think it is a sorry state of affairs. People should not be sent back to work before they are ready according to their own doctor. If they are forced back early because no money will be coming into the home it could result in serious damage to them in their weakened state. They have to go back because they do not want their wives and families to be worried or under-nourished. I ask the Treasurer to see if this matter can be rectified or at least put on a footing whereby a sort of code is laid down for the medical profession where there is a doubt so that it is not a matter of simply getting at the patient, who is the only one who suffers.

I turn my attention now to the Agricultural Bank, which should be the saviour of many of the farmers in my area. I mention a problem that arises in an area where there is only one officer to cover the district.

At times he closes his office. A farmer who comes in to do business with him may find that he is not available. I am not pointing a finger at any officer, but I think it would be far better if the Agricultural Bank could be housed other than in a little office of its own. Once the door is closed no-one knows where the officer is. If he had a room, say, in the Commonwealth Bank, provision could be made to let people know where he was and when he was likely to be back. I know of an instance of a farmer who, on returning to his home, found that an Agricultural Bank officer was about to nail a notice on the door advising the farmer that nothing must be moved as the bank was going to sell him up. The reason was explained to me; I have the letter here. He did not make his repayments from the proper source. He was supposed to make them out of the proceeds of his dairy farm but because he made the repayments out of the proceeds from the sale of timber the bank refused to regard that as payment in terms of the contract. It is impossible for a farmer to confine himself to the particular field that he is supposed to. Bad seasons and loss of production from dairy cattle could make a big difference. In this instance the farmer did not have sufficient stock. How could he ever get sufficient stock if the bank foreclosed on him so quickly? He went over only about £400 in three years, yet the bank was going to foreclose because of non-compliance with the regulations.

Mr. Hiley: Because he did not make repayments from the proceeds of dairying?

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: Yes. I have the letter here if the Treasurer would like to see it.

Mr. Hiley: Yes. I suspect that you have only half the story.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: I will be very pleased to give it to you.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HANLON (Baroona) (4.8 p.m.): Firstly, I shall briefly refer to a matter drawn to my attention by the hon. member for Bulimba. It concerns some of the employees of the Department of Harbours and Marine at Bishop Island. The hon. member for Bulimba received a complaint that these men did not have the benefit of electricity although everybody else in the area has it. I made some inquiries from the department and was informed that it has been anxious to correct the position as soon as possible. Apparently a number of schemes have been considered. It was thought that some second-hand equipment might be used, but that did not prove to be satisfactory. I think that the Treasurer would agree that, at a time when we are carrying the benefit of its modern amenity to people in the Far Outback—and rightly so—there is reasonable ground for complaint when employees of this department living so close

to Brisbane have not got this amenity. The men thought that the private supply could be used to give them electricity but, from what I am told, that is not practicable. It is not a matter of the department's being too stingy to make the necessary arrangements; apparently there is just not enough power available to do that. Furthermore, it is envisaged in the development of Ampol and other firms that there will be much expansion in this area and it may be economic to await that development. However, I ask the Treasurer to try to ensure that it is not left any longer than necessary because it is a reasonable request. It is only right that employees doing a job for the department there should get the benefit of the amenities as soon as possible. I raise the matter today because it has been brought to my attention, and the Treasurer may be able to add something. I think we can be satisfied that the department will make every effort to get on with it, and if there is any delay, I hope that some effort will be made to provide temporary arrangements for the men.

Mr. Hiley: If we cannot get a power line down there, I think it is a fair proposition to put in a temporary plant. However, Bishop Island is very flat and swampy and we want to put a lot of fill in there. It is pretty crude at the moment.

Mr. HANLON: I appreciate that. When these matters are explained to people, they realise the problems. However, they see that private people have got it and they think, "We are just the mugs here working for the Government; we are not being looked after." The explanation I received from the department was reasonable but if there is any undue delay in the extension of the power line to the employees, a temporary plant could be made available, as the Treasurer has said.

My next point concerns third-party insurance. This matter has been brought to my attention more than once. I do not think that many people realise that they are liable for damages in certain cases. About a year ago a case came to my notice and more recently another case concerning a taxi-driver was brought to my attention, in which the third-party insurance did not cover a wife who had been injured. This matter concerns cases in which, apart from the injuries, a husband sues an allegedly offending driver for loss of consortium with his wife, or vice versa. It is a shock to people who are unfortunately involved in insurance matters of this type to find that they are liable. They think they are covered by third-party insurance. I am sure that 99 people out of 100 would think so. When people are sued for loss of consortium, they wonder what it is. I did not know what it was until I inquired. People are shocked to find that they are personally liable for it, over and above the third-party claim. I know that there are civil

rights available over and above the third-party rights, just as with workers' compensation. However, I am sure that the average driver is unaware of this comparatively rare claim that may be made. I do not say that such claims are always successful, but an ordinary person is shocked when one is made. I was wondering if the Treasurer had given any consideration to covering this by third party insurance. When we go 90 per cent. of the way it seems reasonable for the cover to be made fully effective. I do not know whether it is considered that such a provision might bring about a rush of claims under third party. We know the difficulties confronting this Government and other Australian Governments concerning third party. One of the tremendous problems to be overcome for the motorist is the third-party premium. As I mentioned when dealing with land tax, hard cases make bad law. It might open the door and make it a popular claim against third-party insurance and provide a bigger headache for motorists who have to finance it from compulsory third-party insurance. I am sure that those concerned in the particular case brought to my attention and others who have been similarly affected would appreciate some explanation of the situation.

I now deal with the distribution of funds to the racing clubs under the Racing and Betting Act since the establishment of the Totalisator Administration Board. In 1961 the Racing and Betting Act was amended to open the way for legalised off-course betting and to provide for an on-course turnover tax in Queensland. Since then the Totalisator Administration Board, which was not directly provided for in the legislation but was allowed to come into existence under an Order in Council, has established itself quite strongly in the State. At that time in 1962, from a Treasury revenue point of view the Treasurer cunningly provided for an on-course turnover tax, although the off-course bookmakers were not to come into existence for some months, and the Totalisator Administration Board has been established on a full basis throughout the State only in the last few months. Immediately the amendment became law in 1961, we extracted from the on-course bookmakers this substantial tax of 1½ per cent. The rate for off-course legalised bookmakers was 2½ per cent., and for the Totalisator Administration Board, 5 per cent. of turnover.

In answer to a question this morning the Treasurer gave some details of the return to the Treasury, which indicate that up to the present—and no doubt the ratio will alter in favour of the T.A.B. in the future—on-course turnover tax has been more remunerative to the Government since the 1961 amendment to the Act than either the Totalisator Administration Board or

legalised off-course operators, who have gradually died out as they have been replaced by Totalisator Administration Board agencies.

Since the amendment to the Act, the gross taxation receipts from the Totalisator Administration Board have been £815,000. The Government has rebated £326,000 of that to the board for its establishment expenses. Therefore the net return to the Government to date from the T.A.B. has been £489,000. I realise that the establishment expenses happen only once and that they must be approaching an end. The Government has paid for the establishment of the Totalisator Administration Board by rebating part of its tax. The net result to the State up to the present has been £489,000. Against that, £430,000 has been paid to the racing clubs by the Totalisator Administration Board up to 30 June this year. While the Treasurer did not have available an estimate of the figures to 30 September, I suppose, in round figures, another £70,000 could be added, making it £500,000. No particular quarter of the year can be taken as representing an exact ratio in the figures because no doubt revenue fluctuates throughout the year depending on when the larger meetings, such as that conducted today, are held. The hon. member for Port Curtis told the Committee of the great crush at the T.A.B. agency in Elizabeth Street today when once-a-year bettors would help to make returns for this quarter higher than those for the next. The larger local racing carnivals also would cause fluctuations in the quarterly figures.

It can be said that the T.A.B. has to date returned to the Government, in round figures close to £500,000, and to the clubs another £500,000, omitting off-course turnover tax figures because they are not significant now that the extension of T.A.B. activities has virtually eliminated off-course betting through legalised operators. On-course-betting revenue to the Government since the 1961 amendment has been £1,958,000, of which £311,418 was refunded up to 30 September, 1964. One cannot help drawing attention to the fact that from operations of the T.A.B. the Government has received since its establishment net revenue of £489,000, and £430,000 has been paid by the T.A.B.—or virtually the Government—to the racing clubs.

On the other hand, from on-course betting, on which there was no turnover tax before the beginning of 1962, the Government has received £1,900,000 and has returned £300,000 to the various clubs. I believe that these figures are disproportionate. On the one hand, the Government receives £500,000 from the T.A.B. and returns £500,000 to the clubs. In other words, the Government virtually splits the off-course take with the racing clubs. On the other hand, from on-course betting which is the betting of those actually in and close to the industry, the Government takes nearly £2,000,000 and refunds only about 300,000 to clubs. I know what the Treasurer will

say in answer to that. He will say, "You are not suggesting that the clubs are not doing fairly well financially, and are a lot better off than they were before?"

Mr. Hiley: What I will say is that in an Estimates debate you are seeking to argue legislative changes, which is quite out of order.

Mr. HANLON: If I had known that that was to be the Treasurer's interjection, I would not have allowed him to make it. Now that I have gone so far, however, I might as well conclude this point. Up till the Treasurer's interjection I was speaking on what has happened under existing legislation, and I was about to say what would have happened under amending legislation. I shall not go into that now.

From time to time statements are heard about how much the operations of the T.A.B. have given to the racing industry that it did not have before. I for one am only too glad to acknowledge that there is a lot of truth in that. The £430,000 paid to the clubs is quite a substantial sum. However, when one speaks of amounts coming in to the racing industry that were not coming in before the Treasurer introduced the 1961 amendment, one has also to look at the on-course turnover tax and see where £1,600,000 went out of the racing industry that previous Governments did not take out of it.

I am not saying that the clubs are not in a much better financial position than they were before the 1961 amendment; I should be foolish to say that; but I suggest that people who go to racecourses are entitled to share in the benefits, particularly when a substantial amount is being taken from on-course betting. Up to the present the clubs have concentrated mainly on improving prize money, assisting owners and trainers, and, incidentally, assisting the breeding industry. They have also provided rebates on various fees, such as shoeing fees. However, so far there has not been any marked improvement in the amenities on the racecourses.

On a number of occasions the clubs have objected to the drain made on their crowds by the various trotting clubs that operate and which are allowed to have bookmakers operating on galloping events. No doubt more people will go to racecourses as the population increases and I believe that, as soon as possible, some of the money returned to the clubs should be earmarked for improving the facilities in the various enclosures for people who go to the courses.

I suggest that some assistance could be given in this respect by a more equitable return to the clubs from on-course turnover tax. As I pointed out, they received £489,000 from the T.A.B. and £311,000 from the on-course turnover tax. But in view of the contribution that on-course sources make to revenue, one could expect the Government to be more generous in this regard,

particularly if it keeps in mind the need to ensure that course facilities are brought up to date. For example, there have been reports in the Press of the opening of a new racecourse, Sandown Park, in Melbourne, which was built at a cost of over £3,000,000. When one reads of the facilities available there it is quite obvious that local clubs in Queensland cannot hope to provide similar amenities unless they receive a greater return from money flowing to the Government from the on-course sources that they provide. In the winter months in particular, racing carnivals provided by the Q.T.C. and the B.A.T.C. are big tourist attractions. Although I agree that increased prize money and rebates of fees to owners and trainers have been of some assistance, I believe that, unless improved amenities and facilities are provided, both in the paddock and in the cheaper enclosures, tourists will feel that they are at some sort of a bush racecourse. They will not be happy to come to Queensland and put up with what they will consider, in a decade, anyway, to be very primitive conditions and over-crowding. An improved standard of amenities will also attract more local people to the racecourses; but the Government should have tourists more in mind because it has made quite a feature of publicity to attract tourists to Queensland. People may not come to Brisbane for a particular racing carnival, but racing carnivals are one of the attractions for them. As the Melbourne Cup attracts people to Melbourne at this time of the year, so the winter racing carnivals attract people to Brisbane. If good amenities are provided for them and they feel that they are well looked after, I am sure they will come back again, and local people also will get the benefit of improved amenities.

Mr. ADAIR (Cook) (4.30 p.m.): I take the opportunity of speaking on these Estimates. The most important matter I wish to deal with is sea erosion, which comes within the control of the Treasurer because of subsidies paid to local authorities and councils. I appeal to him to increase the subsidy the Government now gives for damage done to beaches by sea erosion. First of all, the subsidy is too low. It is a 20 per cent. subsidy, which I think is ridiculous for this damage, particularly that being done at Machan's Beach which will cost thousands of pounds to repair.

The Department of Harbours and Marine claims that a certain portion of the beach frontage at Machan's Beach belongs to it, particularly when somebody wants to take up land on the frontage. But when any damage is done to it, it belongs to the local authority or to people with homes on it.

The erosion at Machan's Beach at the moment is threatening several homes. The sea has washed right into the properties and eventually these homes will be washed away unless something is done about it. The local authority, the Mulgrave Shire Council, has

not a chance of finding the money necessary to arrest this erosion. The only way it can be arrested is by a decent hand-out from the Government.

As I say, in my view a 20 per cent. subsidy is ridiculous. I ask the Treasurer at least to look into the matter and see if it can be increased, particularly with Machan's Beach and Yorkey's Knob, which incidentally has had some assistance from the Government in arresting erosion. A wall of rock was put across from the hill to the rocks outside and up to the present time it has saved Yorkey's Knob. At the moment, however, the rocks are being washed away and the Government will have to come in with more monetary assistance to prevent further erosion.

I know that sea erosion generally presents a difficult problem. On the South Coast hundreds of thousands of pounds will have to be spent to repair the damage. As a matter of fact, it would probably cost millions of pounds to bring the beaches on the South Coast back to normal, but in the Far North, where the damage to beaches is not comparatively great, the cost would not be unreasonable. However, if it is allowed to continue neither the Government nor the councils will be able to do anything about it. I again appeal to the Treasurer to give more assistance to the Mulgrave Shire Council. So far as I know, Yorkey's Knob and Machan's Beach are the only places up there where this erosion is taking place.

Mr. Hanson: How long has it been going on?

Mr. ADAIR: For years. If something is not done these beaches will be wiped out. I again ask the Treasurer to make a bigger hand-out to the council for the prevention of erosion.

I congratulate the Government on the work that has been done in Queensland ports. The bulk-handling terminals are doing great work. Ports right up to Cairns have been assisted, but that is the end of the servicing. I do not think a dredge has been into Cooktown for years. Port Stewart has silted up. Annie River probably will silt up very shortly. The residents of the Cape York Peninsula rely on the harbours for ships to bring in their goods. At Annie River and Port Stewart the goods are landed onto the bank. There are no harbour boards up there to cater for the needs of these people. They have to rely on the Government to do what is required.

I do not think there is any other place in Australia where people are paying so much for the transport of their goods. They are really pioneers. It costs them about £10 to £12 a ton to bring goods to the port and then another £10 to £12 a ton to cart them to Coen. It means that they are paying £20 to £24 a ton more than anyone else in transport charges. Port Stewart is the most suitable port for Coen, being only 40 miles

away. However, now that it has silted up they have to go to Annie River. The person who carts those goods has to travel another 60 miles, which means 100 miles in all to transport overland from the port to the township of Coen. For four or five months of the year it is impossible to traverse the road. People living in the area have to get their goods at least four or five months before the wet season starts to make sure they have enough to live on during the wet part of the year. If a dredge went into Port Stewart for a week or two it could be made into a harbour that would give reasonable service to the residents of Coen. At Annie River there are no sheds in which to store goods. They are left out in the sun on the bank where they are open to pillage until the carrier arrives. The Treasurer is spending all this money on ports in the South and the people I am talking about are entitled to the same consideration. I make that plea to the Treasurer.

When I went home at the week-end I received a request from a person concerning workers' compensation. This is an unusual case concerning a married man with a family. The workers' compensation section should agree to the claim and pay up. I have written to the Treasurer about it although I have not seen him personally, and unless I tell him about it he probably will not know the full facts. The man in question was working on a wharf in Cairns—No. 6 wharf, I think it was—and it was very dusty where he was working. He sneezed, and his full set of false teeth fell into the sea. I know it is an unusual case, but he will have to pay £40 or £50 for a new set. He lost them while he was working. An attempt was made to recover the teeth, but it was unsuccessful as there was 25 feet of water at the wharf. He is a married man with three children, and he is on the basic wage. He claims that he cannot pay £40 for a new set. There were witnesses when the mishap occurred, and he reported it to the foreman. A claim was lodged but it was refused. I ask the Treasurer to review this case because I think it warrants acceptance. The man said that if his mouth had been cut or gashed he would have been paid. If he had bashed his mouth against a wall, the boat, or the pier—

Mr. Hiley: If he had had an industrial accident, surely. But the day a sneeze becomes an industrial accident, heavens above, we will sneeze ourselves into bankruptcy.

Mr. ADAIR: This was caused by the dusty conditions in which he was working.

Mr. Hiley: I will look into it.

Mr. ADAIR: I know of another case where a person lost his glasses when a punt sank and he went into the water. They were worth £10 or £15.

Mr. Hiley: It may interest you to know that I had to buy a set of teeth for a man who was a master. He was sick and lost them overboard.

Mr. ADAIR: In a genuine case such as this, I think the workers' compensation section should do something.

The hon. member for Tablelands has referred to cases at Atherton and Ravenshoe where workers who were on compensation were told to see another doctor. I know of several similar cases involving hardship for people in going to Cairns to see a doctor. Sometimes they have to get accommodation overnight, and that is an extra expense. I believe that the opinion of the doctor in their area should be sufficient. There are probably cases of malingering and so on, but 99 per cent. of cases are genuine. The opinion of the doctor who diagnoses a man's complaint should be accepted, and the man should not be put to all the trouble of getting transport to Cairns from Atherton, Ravenshoe, Mareeba, or any other town, to see another doctor to confirm the first doctor's opinion. Since I have been in Parliament I have had several cases in which the first doctor's opinion has not been accepted. Then the person concerned has to see a specialist. Dr. Ley, the specialist in orthopaedics, gives his opinion. This sort of thing is all right in Brisbane or in Cairns where not much expense is incurred in travelling to see the doctor, but some people have to travel great distances.

Mr. Hiley: If he travels more than 15 miles his fare is refunded.

Mr. Wallis-Smith: What if he has to stop overnight?

Mr. Hiley: He would get an allowance.

Mr. ADAIR: Owing to the time involved in making a claim to the workers' compensation office, most people consider it is not worthwhile.

Mr. Hiley: If he goes to 90 per cent. of the doctors in the State there is no question; it is only in the case of the few doctors who treat malingerers that there is trouble.

Mr. ADAIR: I know there are cases like that, but there are also many genuine ones.

Owing to the late allotment of the new cane assignments, and the unusual wet season experienced in the North, many new farmers are having difficulty planting a crop. The assignments were not notified until July or August, and then the farmers had difficulty in getting bulldozers to clear the land because they were all in use. Many new farmers—even those who had the land cleared—are not able to plant because of the season. I was in Innisfail at the week-end and saw two young farmers trying to prepare their land for cane. It was a hopeless task.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Campbell): Order! I ask the hon. member to relate his remarks to the Estimates of the Treasurer.

Mr. ADAIR: This comes under the Estimate of the Agricultural Bank.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Campbell): If the hon. member relates it to the Agricultural Bank, he may continue.

Mr. ADAIR: These farmers will be appealing to the manager of the Agricultural Bank about the repayment of the money lent to them for the development of their farms. Many of the new farmers will not have a crop to harvest next year. Those who will have a crop had their land cleared and prepared beforehand. Others are struggling to get a crop in. The ground is saturated, and they have to wait. It is really too late to plant cane, although some of them are trying. I ask that they be given favourable consideration in regard to the repayment of money they have borrowed from the Agricultural Bank.

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (4.49 p.m.): It was not my intention to participate in this debate but, owing to the lack of enthusiasm displayed by members of the Government, someone has to speak. In doing so, I have no hesitation in congratulating the Treasurer on the manner in which he presented his Estimates, and on the assistance he has given during the year to overcome the many problems associated with his department, particularly the State Government Insurance Office, and the workers' compensation branch of that office.

He commenced his address by informing the Committee that a computer had been installed in the Treasury. The Treasurer mentioned that the computer is a very sensitive piece of apparatus and would be operated by trained staff from the Public Service. It is now 10 years since I spent an hour in this Chamber during the Budget debate, whilst the Australian Labour Party was in Government, pointing out the advantages and disadvantages of automation and what would have to be done to meet its challenge in the lives of members of the community generally. In fact, I had to speak on a second occasion to try to create some interest in the problem to ensure that society as a whole would be in a position to meet changing circumstances not only at work but in life generally when automation was used to a greater extent in this State.

I tried to draw to the attention of white-collar workers my belief that they could be more inconvenienced by the introduction of automation than tradesmen and technicians generally. I think that that has been borne out. I am pleased to learn from the Treasurer that it has not been necessary to any great extent to have experts from the company that manufactured the computer show our officers how to operate it, and that

the challenge has been met successfully by officers of the Public Service. I think that is something of which we can be proud and with which the Treasurer can be justifiably pleased. Whilst not new, these intricate machines, the invention of scientists and others over the years, are nevertheless new to Queensland, and I, with other members on this side of the Chamber, express pleasure that there are in the Queensland Public Service men capable of operating them successfully.

The Treasurer went on to say that freight rebates on starving stock appeared at one stage to have been under-estimated but, with the improvement in the season, were actually estimated approximately correctly. Here is another matter on which we can rejoice with the Treasurer, as it appears that the position has not been nearly as bad as was expected.

At the same time, regret must be expressed at the pulling up of many railway lines, which are a great asset in assisting graziers faced with the need to care for starving stock. I feel that the closing of railway lines in many parts of Queensland should be approached with great caution. The railways have played a great part in the development of the State and are still necessary. If I had sufficient time, I could quote from today's "Courier-Mail" an article in which a prominent member of the United Graziers' Association draws attention to the inadvisability of removing railway lines. He makes the point, which has been made from this side of the Chamber again and again, that the Railway Department is providing a service just as necessary to the welfare of the State as are schools, hospitals, and the like. That is something the Government has failed to realise, and it was rewarding to read of a prominent member of the Country Party and the United Graziers' Association expressing views coinciding with those repeatedly expressed by hon. members on this side, unfortunately without success.

The Treasurer told hon. members that he was extremely pleased that drought-relief payments will not be as great as were expected. We can all agree with him and share his pleasure. Some have learnt from personal experience; some have not; but there is not one man in this Chamber or in the State who welcomes drought or refuses to recognise the damage it can do. It is not only the loss of many stock that is depressing; it is the loss of the fruits of not months but years of labour. People who have gone to a great deal of trouble to improve the quality of their flocks of sheep and herds of cattle by breeding better animals see all their work destroyed because nature is very unkind. They use up all their resources in establishing a property and keeping the cattle alive, only to see them die one by one or be destroyed by dingoes.

I did not quite grasp what the Treasurer said about the Public Service Award, but I thought he said that increases granted under it would add almost £1,000,000 to the cost of the Public Service during the year.

Mr. Hiley: That is correct.

Mr. DONALD: I hesitated to write it down, because £1,000,000 is a very large sum of money even at a time when we are accustomed to talk in millions of pounds.

Mr. Hiley: The Public Service payroll is virtually £1,000,000 a week, so it is not a big percentage.

Mr. DONALD: Probably it is not, but £1,000,000 seemed a lot to me, and I hesitated to say that the Treasurer was £1,000,000 up.

Mr. Hiley: Not £1,000,000 up. I provided £1,000,000; I needed £1,000,000. It has gone. We had to guess at it. Increases were granted to only a selected number of key positions and we had to guess what the final result would be. When it was worked out, the £1,000,000 was exactly consumed.

Mr. DONALD: It means that the increases under the Public Service Award add £1,000,000 to the wages bill?

Mr. Hiley: Yes.

Mr. DONALD: That is what I was trying to say, but I was afraid to say it because it was £1,000,000.

The Treasurer went on to say that the amount provided for drought relief will not now be needed, and this means that the economy of the State will be enriched. Firstly, it will not be necessary to provide money to relieve the suffering caused by drought; secondly, there will not be a loss to individual graziers or to the community.

Mr. Hiley: To use Shakespeare's phrase, it will be twice blessed.

Mr. DONALD: I think we can all agree about that and be happy about it.

The Treasurer then dealt with the savings bank. I doubt whether many hon. members in this Chamber know the history of the Queensland Government Savings Bank or why it went out of existence, so I think I should explain very briefly those reasons.

A Labour Government was in office. I hesitate to use the word "power" because I do not think that any Labour Government is ever in power. A Labour Government is in office, and it is always hamstrung by financial interests when it desires to do things. This was illustrated in no uncertain way when a deputation from Queensland went to London and prevented the Theodore Government from raising the loan money that it wanted to enable it to put its platform into effect. The Labour Party has never been in power; it has been in office. It has always done as much as it possibly could do, bearing in mind how greatly it has been handicapped by the opposition of financial interests.

We have heard a good deal about the Press today. One hon. member even endeavoured not to advertise the Press in any way. But the Press at that time engaged in what was virtually a campaign to persuade the people of Queensland to boycott the State Government Savings Bank, and we had the sorry spectacle of people withdrawing their money from that bank and depositing it with the Commonwealth Bank, solely because of political prejudice. It brought about the end of the State Government Savings Bank and the start of an arrangement with the Commonwealth Bank. I think that arrangement is still in existence, although it may have been modified or brought up to date, or altered in some way or other; but from the remarks of the Treasurer I came to the conclusion that he was perfectly happy with the arrangement now existing between the Commonwealth Bank and the State Government.

I feel it would be a tremendous cost to re-establish the State Government Savings Bank in Queensland. It is not hard to realise the cost, and whether it would be wiser to do so than to continue with the present arrangement with the Commonwealth Bank I am not in a position at the moment to say. I should not like to go on record as saying that we should be content with the arrangement made with the Commonwealth Bank, and the benefit the Queensland Government gets from that arrangement, and not proceed with a savings bank of our own, because I am mindful of the fact that that was a plank in our policy at the last two elections, and it would not have been there unless suitable thought had been given to it.

I was very pleased to see that the work of Dr. Barnes has been recognised and to hear it spoken of eloquently by the Treasurer in introducing his Estimates. We feel some gratitude to Dr. Barnes for his painstaking research and investigation and I feel sure every hon. member hopes that great success will follow his intensive research. If the danger from these vermin can be neutralised, it will benefit not only our own bathing public but our tourist trade as well. Very few Queenslanders can resist a dip in the surf. We are prepared to take the risk of being gobbled up by a shark or stung by a blue-bottle and our children suffer acutely at times. If, after Dr. Barnes's research, we cannot actually get rid of vermin such as jelly-fish and Portuguese men-of-war but we can take the pain out of the sting, we will indeed be very happy.

The Treasurer, with every justification, went on to speak of the improvements that have been made in our harbours. Again we can say, "Thank you" to him for what he has done in this direction. We have in Queensland some excellent harbours and the improvements to them were timely and necessary and, I feel, greatly appreciated by the public generally and particularly by those whose livelihood depends upon the efficiency of the harbours. Queensland is fortunate in

having so many good harbours, which have been of great assistance in the decentralisation of the State.

In the past, we the Australian Labour Party, claimed great credit for the decentralisation of Queensland and that credit must be given to the Australian Labour Party because it did set the example and did show to the rest of Australia the advantage of decentralisation. We have in Queensland more towns of great magnitude outside the capital city than any other State in the Commonwealth and perhaps more than all the other States in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Davies: We have a bigger percentage living in the country than in the capital.

Mr. DONALD: That is so; we have a bigger percentage in Queensland living in the country than in the metropolitan area and that is not so in any of the other States, or if it is, it is in very few indeed. We are fortunate also that Labour Governments over the years—and Governments before Labour—saw the wisdom of building railways to each of these ports, to serve the hinterland. At the back of our ports we have very rich hinterlands. In recent years our scientists have made great strides but unfortunately they have not been able to arrest the ravages of droughts or bush fires. Although we can prevent bush fires to a certain extent, and necessary steps have been taken to do so, we cannot yet successfully deal with devastating storms or ravaging droughts. To the ports come the products of the hinterlands for shipment intrastate, interstate, or overseas. It is true that we are not doing as well as we used to in the overseas trade. I can remember when I was a boy boarding a liner in Brisbane and going to Sydney. The liners no longer call here. Steamships of a German line used to come around Cape York and call into Brisbane, but vessels of that line have not called since World War I. Owing to the foresight of Australian Labour Governments, railway lines were built to the ports and the ports were developed. It is only natural that succeeding Governments should carry on the work of wiser Governments that went before, and ensure that these ports are improved to the necessary standard.

I emphasise again, as I have done many time before in the Chamber, the value of the Brisbane and Bremer Rivers as a means of transport. I have described them previously as a moving road. When we have so much congestion and delay with road transport, I cannot understand why the river is not used to a greater extent. It is a cheap means of transport but, of course, the 17-Mile Rocks create an obstacle. It is pleasing to learn that at last some definite move is being made to remove the greater part of this obstacle to shipping. It may surprise hon. members to know that a barge loaded with coal coming to Brisbane has to wait for the tide. If it could go straight through without having to worry about that obstacle, it could deliver its load and be back for another in that

time. If that seven hours' wait, or whatever it is, can be reduced to half-an-hour—is that what the Treasurer said it would be if the barges were fully loaded?

Mr. Hiley: No. If we take it to 12 feet, they will not have to wait at all. If the cost means that we can take it only to 9 feet, they may have to wait for a bit of tide.

Mr. DONALD: I asked the Treasurer whether it would facilitate the shipment of coal and I thought he said they would still have to wait a short time.

Mr. Hiley: That is if it is taken to 9 feet.

Mr. DONALD: Just to give hon. members an idea of the obstruction—if you go up with the coal barge you will see that the bow of the boat goes up in the air and then it goes over “plomp”. What is to be done will facilitate the traffic on the Brisbane and Bremer Rivers. There is greater depth in the Bremer River than there is in the Brisbane River. There is not nearly the same problem of navigation in the Bremer River. Mr. Campbell and his brother, who run the coal-barge firm, have done a very good job, not only for the coal industry but for other industries in Brisbane, in the navigation of the Brisbane River. At one time they hit the rock opposite Haigmoor. They put a buoy on it themselves. They have helped the Harbour Board to chart the river. There are numerous sandbanks in the Brisbane River which make navigation much more difficult. This morning the Treasurer was quite right when he said that fog in the river makes navigation tremendously difficult. In the early days masters had to stop their boats and go to a farmhouse where there was a telephone to let the management know that the barges were anchored in such-and-such a place and could not proceed until morning.

The Campbell brothers have made wonderful progress. They now have two-way radio contact between the ships, motor cars, the office, and Mr. Campbell's home. They have a very progressive firm and have developed the coal-mining industry on the northern side of the Brisbane and Bremer Rivers with a consequent reduction in the price of the fuel and a stabilisation in the price of electrical energy. They deserve a compliment for what they have done.

I should hate to resume my seat without referring to the State Government Insurance Office. I was indeed pleased—and I am sure that the Treasurer shares in my happiness—that at last the Jones case has been cleared up. Mr. Jones met his death in somewhat mysterious circumstances. It was thought that he had been electrocuted, but the post-mortem examination revealed that he had not. It is now over 13 months since he died and in that time the State Government Insurance Office has kept his claim open. Quite correctly, the office could not pay compensation without a certificate as to the cause

of death. I just do not know what caused his death but the workers' compensation section must know.

Mr. Hiley: It was as a result of successful representations to the Cardiac Board.

Mr. DONALD: I know that the Miners' Union refrained from disputing the claim and taking it to court. They were sensible enough to say, “Well, he did not die from electrocution because it has been proved otherwise. We know he had a heart condition and we amend our claim on those grounds.”

Mr. Hiley: He did not have a heart condition.

Mr. DONALD: That is what has been recognised.

Mr. Hiley: It has been recognised that there was cardiac failure which came like a bolt of lightning out of the clear skies.

Mr. DONALD: Whatever it was, I emphasise that the Miners' Union never gives up fighting for the rights of its members. No matter how arduous the fight, how heavy the handicap, or how gloomy the prospects may be, the union never gives up.

I think I should say, in all fairness to the State Government Insurance Office, that never at any time does it reject a claim unless there is absolute proof that the decision is right. The Act is administered very carefully indeed, to the advantage of the insured and the insurer.

I now wish to quote from the claims statistics for the workers' compensation section under the Workers' Compensation Acts, 1916 to 1962—

“The claim experience for the forty-eighth year under the above Acts is shown hereunder, and the figures for the preceding years have also been given wherever possible so that comparisons may be readily made.

The Tables are as follows:—

Table I. Number of Injuries reported and Claims re-opened and disposed of in the year.

Table II. Summary of Injuries.

Table III. Position at 30th June, 1964, of all injuries reported and re-opened and disposed of during the year.

Table IV. Analysis of Fatal Injuries and their Causes.

Table V. Analysis of Non-Fatal Injuries and their Causes.

Table VI. Analysis of Permanent Injuries.

Table VII. Analysis of Duration of Disablement.

Table VIII. Mining Disease Claims.”
(Time expired.)

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (5.14 p.m.): I regret that I was not in the Chamber this morning when the Treasurer introduced

his Estimates. I had to attend the electrical industries conference. I am entering the debate to speak on matters connected with local-authority finance, which comes within the ambit of the Treasurer's jurisdiction. I feel that I should speak on this matter because the finances of the Brisbane City Council will be somewhat curtailed following the immense industrial growth that is taking place in our State, and particularly in the capital city. The Treasurer must agree that this is becoming an increasing problem to the Treasury.

When the Brisbane City Council prepares its estimates, it looks first at what will be necessary to maintain existing services that it is obliged to maintain, and then at what it must provide for development of those services in consonance with the development of the city. Because of the industrial development that is taking place, a third problem seems to intrude on local-authority finance, that is, the question of assistance in the establishment of industry in our city. I feel that because of this I should refer to what I regard as some of the problems. No doubt the Treasurer will agree that he will, in the first instance, have to provide some solution to them.

The local authority of the Brisbane City Council prepares its estimates, and I understand that in the current year's estimates it submitted certain figures to the Treasurer on what would be required to maintain the normal services, and, in addition, to provide for the demand that additional industries would make on its financial resources.

Mr. Hiley: That is partly correct. We never get their ordinary requirements. That goes to the Co-ordinator-General. Where they feel they have a special case, they state it to me and I investigate it.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I agree in principle with what the Treasurer has said. Possibly he would not have the figures for the exact requirements of the city and of industry, but generally speaking there would be conveyed to him an overall picture on supplying the services, and I think there would also be conveyed to him the special needs of those industries that have come into the State.

Mr. Hiley: I get information from the Co-ordinator-General in relation to every council and every public authority.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I think the Treasurer will agree that he has some knowledge of the basic requirements of the city, plus those special circumstances that arise when a local authority is called on to provide services merely because industries have been established within its boundaries.

I think this matter is important because at some time in the near future we will be called upon to discuss the Brisbane town plan. I do not want to canvass it any more than to say that in the future this Parliament will make a decision on whether

it is desirable that the Brisbane metropolitan area have a town plan. Unless we are able to cope adequately with the whole of this situation the town plan will not be worth the paper it is written on, because there are contained in what has so far been developed in regard to the town plan certain specific proposals, such as the inner distributor road and an additional bridge at Kangaroo Point that will require finance. Unless we can cope with these problems and put into effect the technical recommendations of the town plan, that part of it will be completely futile.

It is true that the demands of expanding industry are making sharp inroads into the allocation of the Brisbane City Council. I do not think that can be denied. The Treasurer will no doubt agree, because of his knowledge of what is required, that these demands are making an inroad into the council's budget. There is increasing development in the State, particularly of secondary industries. This will lead to a situation in which greater and greater inroads will be made into the budget of the Brisbane City Council in providing services for the oil refining and other industries. I think the Treasurer would agree that that seems to be the general pattern at present. The recent budget of the Brisbane City Council indicated clearly that this development was making calls on the money available to the council for the provision of the ordinary services of sewerage, roads, electricity, water, and so on, required by the community.

At this point it might be proper for me to relate to the Committee the commitments of the Brisbane City Council in providing services to industry. On Lytton Road, which is part of the road leading to the Ampol refinery, the council will be required to spend £90,000. On Tingira Street, which is concerned in the Bulwer Island project of Amoco, the council will be required to spend £57,000. On Kingsford Smith Drive, which is also part of the roadworks required for access to Bulwer Island, the figure is £50,000. A brief glance reveals approximately £200,000 required from the council's budget this year to provide roads to the refineries.

Turning to electricity, we find that on the construction of 33 kV lines the council will be called on to spend £108,000 to provide electricity to the Ampol refinery. Similar work to provide power for the Amoco refinery is estimated to cost £136,000. To supply power to the plant of General Motors-Holden's Ltd. at Cooper's Plains £71,000 will be required, and £47,500 for the same reason in respect of I.C.I.A.N.Z. Approximately £350,000 is required to provide electricity for these industries that are developing within the State.

Water is vital to industry, and on the construction of 30 24-inch mains to the Ampol refinery the council will be called on this year to spend £100,000.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Campbell): Order! I ask the hon. member to relate his remarks to the subsidy the payment of which comes within the Treasurer's department.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am pointing out that, because the budget of the Brisbane City Council has largely to have the approval of the Treasurer, and his blessing for the loan allocation, it comes within his jurisdiction. I feel that it must be presenting quite a problem to the Treasurer. Because the capital city is expanding, I think the Treasurer will agree that there must come a time when practical assistance by means of subsidies and so on might have to be part of the pattern of development.

For the provision of similar water mains from Bartley's Hill to the Amoco refinery, the council will be involved in an expenditure of £280,000. All these things total approximately £1,300,000, which will be required to supply the needs of this industry.

Because it is evident that more industries will be established in the capital city and that this problem will therefore increase, there must be a case for the Government to increase either subsidies or loan allocations, or for the question to be raised of how much additional support local authorities can be given with money from the Commonwealth Aid Roads Grant.

I understand that the expenditure of money from the Commonwealth Aid Roads Grant is usually restricted to rural roads. There are very few roads in Brisbane that would come into this category and thus qualify for assistance under the grant. I have been informed that the construction of a large part of the Cahill Expressway in Sydney was financed from the Commonwealth Aid Roads Grant. I do not know whether the Treasurer can enlighten the Committee on this matter, but I understand that a case was put up and assistance was given under the grant. If that principle could be applied in New South Wales, possibly it could be applied to any move to provide an inner distributor road in Brisbane.

I urge the Treasurer to investigate the use of money from the Commonwealth Aid Roads Grant by local authorities. As there are very few roads in Brisbane on which money from the grant can be spent, an approach along the lines that I have suggested might enable the Brisbane City Council to use money from the grant to provide much-needed services.

One of the problems that arises in providing assistance to industry is that, unless aid is given through the Commonwealth Aid Roads Grant, the Brisbane City Council has to take the money from its normal loan allocation. It is thus prevented from carrying out a full works programme. Because it is part of the normal loan allocation approved by the Government, the Brisbane City Council has to go onto the loan market to raise the money, and in the long term its repayment has to be met by the ratepayers

of the city. The Treasurer will probably argue that, balancing this, industry will return revenue to the local authority by way of rates and taxes and in this way, because it is part of the community life of the city, reimburse the council over a number of years.

Mr. Hiley: I think they are a bit timorous over this. They are really convinced that industrial development and port development will break them. I will take a separate area and cut it off, if necessary, but they will come through all right.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am glad to hear the Treasurer express that opinion, because I think this is a pressing problem. I am not complaining because industry is coming here; I should be very foolish if I did that. The problem probably is not confined to the Brisbane City Council. For instance, Gladstone would have similar problems.

Mr. Hiley: We have them right and left, and I am glad we have them.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am not complaining that the budget is cut down because of developing industries; I think anybody who did that would be foolish. However, as I said, the money needed will have to come from the normal loan allocation to local authorities that the Treasurer approves, and it is true that the money will have to be repaid over a number of years. However, in the intervening period this inroad is being made into the loan allocation which in many cases not only will prevent the normal services being carried out but will also impede further development of the suburbs.

Mr. Hiley: In other words, it is a choice between developmental cake and suburban bread-and-butter.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That could be so, but I see in this an ever-increasing problem. If it was a problem of a temporary nature that would solve itself in two or three or four years possibly we would not have any quarrel at all, because everybody would say that for the sake of creating more employment opportunities and bringing prosperity to the State we could forgo all these amenities for a number of years. But I think the Treasurer will agree with me that as our development increases this will become a problem of greater magnitude.

I can foresee that, as this develops, there will be a smaller amount in every local authority's budget for its normal requirements. Possibly, in future Loan Council discussions, the Treasurer might be able to place before the Loan Council a case that if we adopt the city plan and if, as a result, urgent action is required to overcome traffic problems because this is a capital city, the Commonwealth Government could perhaps advance industry assistance loans which could be used for the specific purpose of allowing local authorities to meet this problem. They could then carry on their normal budgeting for necessary work and at the same time provide the services that will be required for industry.

It should not be forgotten that the Commonwealth Government was not hesitant about providing finance for the work on Lake Burley Griffin. Whether we consider that a worth-while project is beside the point; if it can be done for the Federal capital a case exists for making special allocations available for the specific purpose of allowing local authorities to provide the services required by industry without any interference with their normal requirements.

I think I have spoken sufficiently long to convey the point that this problem will continue to grow in intensity. I should be very grateful to the Treasurer if, when he is replying, he will say whether he considers it possible for this matter to be brought forward at Loan Council discussions. As I say, I think the problem will grow as time goes on and that this shrinkage of loan funds available for normal purposes will continue.

It is a rather interesting point that the Commonwealth Aid Roads Grant is mainly reimbursed from petrol tax collections. On this occasion the allocation to the Brisbane City Council was something of the order of £71,000 out of a total approximating £13,000,000 available to Queensland as a whole. Basically this money is to be spent on rural roads, but it is interesting to note that about one-third of the motor-vehicle registrations in the State take place in the metropolitan area and because of this the problem of the roads within the city area is accentuated.

Unless the Treasurer is able to extend to local authorities faced with the problem I have outlined additional finance from this grant, if he finds because of other commitments that he cannot assist through this fund, a good case exists for an approach to the Loan Council pointing out that Queensland at the present time is moving towards the development of secondary industry and that if we are ever going to be comparable with the capital cities of New South Wales and Victoria our case for assistance to industry merits favourable consideration. The rate-payers of a capital city should not be called upon to meet loan commitments for the supply of services to industry. Unless something is done to alleviate this problem the Brisbane City Council and other local authorities will be faced with shrinking budgets that will be insufficient to enable them to carry out their normal services.

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) (5.37 p.m.): I should like to say a few words about the development of the State Government Insurance Office. We have before us a rather pretentious document presented by that office. The importance of the work done by the State Government Insurance Office certainly warrants the preparation of such a report. The fact that this is the forty-eighth annual report of the State Government Insurance Office reminds us that the office was established in 1916. Its tremendous growth indicates quite

clearly to all the value of the contribution made to this State by the Labour Government in 1916 when, in the face of considerable opposition, it established the State Government Insurance Office. This was particularly evident in the field of fire insurance, when it succeeded in reducing the rather extravagant premiums being charged at that time. In addition, we must realise the value it has been to the State in general in making loan money available, particularly to local authorities.

A few important facts in the report should be placed on record. It contains some excellent graphs which clearly illustrate various points. I cannot remember a report being so well prepared in any previous year. Whoever was responsible for its preparation deserves congratulations. Opposite page 6 a graph is set out in the form of "A Pillar of Progress". I do not desire to make the debate a political one but I must emphasise that this is a magnificent answer to those people who speak of the failure of State enterprise. When Government speakers speak of State enterprises generally, they talk of cattle stations, forgetting that during the war other State enterprises saved people many millions of pounds. They never refer to the glorious success of the State Government Insurance Office. It is well known that the Treasurer recognises its value. I pay a tribute to him for his generous references to it in his various speeches at annual dinners when honours are bestowed upon the particular branch that has done the greatest business in the year and the Commissioner's cup is awarded.

At this stage I thank him for the magnificent building constructed in Maryborough. To a great extent, it is a recognition of the manner in which Maryborough and its districts have supported the State Government Insurance Office. On many occasions they have succeeded in establishing record business figures for the State. We must not forget—and I am sure that no-one recognises this more than the State Government Insurance Office—that the Maryborough hinterlands are possibly the most closely-settled areas in the State. We know that the statistical area of which Maryborough is the centre accounts for at least 10 per cent. of the State's consumption of petrol and oil. It is indeed fitting that this splendid building should be erected in Maryborough. No-one fully appreciates the support given over the years by the State Government Insurance Office to the Maryborough City Council in the form of loan moneys made available for various projects. I am pleased to say that, over the years, the city council has taken full advantage of this very generous help. The top floor of the new building is shortly to be occupied as the headquarters for the new Australian Broadcasting Commission Television centre to be established near Biggenden. The whole office is a tremendous improvement on the old one, which was outmoded and far too small.

I think I should pay a tribute to the manager and staff, who, in the last few years, when the business has been growing, have succeeded in carrying on the work efficiently, with records stacked here and there. Under the conditions it has taken almost superhuman effort to cope with the business. The tremendous improvement in the general conditions available for the staff are well merited.

Provision has been made at the entrance of the building for those who are partly crippled and have to enter in wheelchairs. The ramp and the other amenities that are provided in the building are excellent. I hope that the architect has managed to rectify the lighting problem in the windows, which were supposed to be anti-glare.

Mr. Hiley: I have already told him what I think of his sweat boxes.

Mr. DAVIES: I did not want to say anything because I knew the manager was concerned about taking it up with the Treasurer. I do not want to make a point about it, but I am glad that the Treasurer is giving it consideration.

Mr. Ewan: How is your band going now that Mr. Kelly has left?

Mr. DAVIES: Our band can beat the Roma band any time.

I am quite certain that every hon. member on this side has studied the report and has observed very carefully the amazing record of progress revealed in the graph. I join with the hon. member for Ipswich East in his recognition of the detail in which the Commissioner has prepared his report.

I hope that hon. members on the Government side will have something to say, but perhaps they will be gagged knowing that the Minister is going to the United States tomorrow on a very important matter. The Minister is prepared to wait until 9 o'clock to reply, yet not one Government member is prepared to get to his feet to support the Treasurer's remarks. I must put on record the fact that only one member of the Government has entered the debate. He made a very brief speech, and he was severely chastised by one of his own party for his very savage and vicious attack on Australian fishermen. No doubt the Treasurer has investigated the question carefully. I doubt very much whether the hon. member for Sherwood had given the matter any mature consideration or made the necessary inquiries. He did not know intimately the men involved. I thank the hon. member for Windsor for his timely remark when he said the hon. member should be a little more cautious in his attack on Australian fishermen. I felt that he somehow misunderstood the position. I was not satisfied with the information or the way the protest was made by the hon. member for Sherwood. If that was all he could say on this Estimate, I think it is a pity he spoke at all.

Mr. Ewan interjected.

Mr. DAVIES: I suggest that the hon. member for Roma interject less and get to his feet and say something about these Estimates.

Under the heading "A Pillar of Progress", the report shows that in 1939 the assets of the State Government Insurance Office were £6,212,280. No doubt some members of the Government are surprised to see that there was progress under a Labour Government, but in the period up to 1950, when we had that magnificent administration headed by the late Ned Hanlon, the assets rose to £13,797,444. The general economy of the State was directly controlled by the Chifley Labour Government up to 1949, and generally it may be thought that greater restraint was put on the economy of this country than in any other country in the world. Despite that, the assets of this office increased. The argument cannot be advanced that later there was a greater increase, because part of it would be due to soaring costs under the present Commonwealth and State administrations.

By 1955 the assets had grown to £25,784,195; by 1960 to £39,878,757; by 1962 to £48,424,386; by 1963 to £52,882,067; and by 1964 to £58,480,430. That is a remarkable story. It shows the magnificent success of a Government institution, and it is the complete answer to those people who claim that every Government institution must be a failure because it is controlled by the Government and not by private enterprise. We are proud of the work done by the staff, the managers, and the men who go out in the field seeking business for the State Government Insurance Office. They are a worthy band of Government officers. The result of their services is also the answer to the claim that day-labour is a failure, because these men are on day labour and are giving a service to the Government. They are not working for private enterprise. They are the means by which this department is made a magnificent success.

Mr. Ewan: Why were you against it in the Main Roads?

Mr. DAVIES: I suggest that the hon. member should rise and speak for himself. He does not rise to his feet and speak for himself; he just continually interjects. He should—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. DAVIES: I draw attention to the photograph of the magnificent building that has been erected in Maryborough. With the School of Arts, the lovely City Hall, and the beautiful trees, it helps to make this part of Maryborough one of the most attractive areas in any city in the State. When the Treasurer was in Maryborough, he said it would cost about £217,000. I regret very much my absence from the official opening; I was visiting mission stations in the North with the Minister for Education and I greatly appreciated the opportunity to do so.

There is one aspect of the department's activities that I should like to stress. I have mentioned it in previous debates. While the National Fitness Council of Queensland is under the control of the Department of Education, in particular under the Director of Special Education Services, it is directed by a State Council, on which are very able and noted citizens. Their activities, however, are very much restricted by shortage of funds. I appeal to the Treasurer—

Mr. Hiley: You cannot discuss that on these Estimates.

Mr. DAVIES: I am asking the Treasurer to make more money available.

Mr. Hiley: If you can raise that with me, you can raise anything under this Vote.

Mr. DAVIES: I know that the Treasurer is rather embarrassed by this.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have given the hon. member a very great deal of latitude. I shall have to ask him now to confine his remarks to the Estimates before the Committee.

Mr. DAVIES: If my remarks in connection with the State Government Insurance Office were out of order, Mr. Hooper, I wish you had then called me to order. I felt that I was being very restrained in my remarks expressing praise for this wonderful organisation established by a Labour Government. I shall discontinue my remarks on the failure of the Treasurer to make sufficient money available for the National Fitness Council of Queensland.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. DAVIES: I must find out from what source the money is obtained for national fitness activities. I thought it came from the Commonwealth Government and the Treasury.

Although the new boat provided at Maryborough does not come under the Treasury, I should like to refer to it.

Mr. Hiley: You are entirely in order in speaking of fishing.

Mr. DAVIES: The old boat was a sore point with officers in Maryborough who had to use it and I think the Treasurer recognises just how antiquated it was. His action in making available the money necessary to provide the new vessel is very much appreciated.

We now have two well-equipped boats for use in the general supervision of harbour activities. One was constructed by Capricorn Charters. I hope that its timber hull will not be damaged by any buffeting received when anchored close to buoys in rough weather. The old vessel had a steel hull. The boat itself is well equipped and much appreciated by those who will use it.

Although I cannot continue in this strain, I wish to point out the value of the fishing industry to Maryborough.

Mr. Hiley: You may talk to your heart's content about that boat. If you wish, you make take it apart plank by plank.

Mr. DAVIES: I thought I had that right. Apparently I misunderstood the Chairman's signal.

The other boat is used for fisheries patrol work. If this comes under the administration of the Treasurer, I urge that action be speeded up generally in the supervision of the fishing industry in Queensland. As the records show, Maryborough handles more fish than any other centre in Queensland, and it has many important towns close to it. If there is any reorganisation, I hope that its status will be raised. Any such change would probably mean the appointment of more officers, and the status of the present staff in the fisheries office and in the Department of Harbours and Marine would then have to be considered. One young lady in the department is doing a great deal of work, and I ask that special consideration be given to increasing her classification because of the responsibilities associated with her position. However, I do appreciate what the Treasurer has done already for the fishing industry.

The subject of launching ramps for boats in various rivers has been discussed by a number of hon. members, although it was raised originally by the hon. member for Sherwood. Usually a council has to make the first approach, and I thought that the hon. member would have emphasised that point. The number of people who keep boats under the house and carry them to the bay or to the river on trailers has increased greatly, and more launching ramps are needed urgently. As hon. members know, a car takes the trailer to the water's edge and the boat is launched, and this is a very difficult operation unless satisfactory launching places are provided. Many boat owners have approached me and asked me to urge that ramps be provided, and, although a council may have to approach the Treasurer, possibly the Department of Harbours and Marine could take the lead and endeavour to provide extra ramps.

Hervey Bay is not in the Maryborough electorate, but I am interested in the work of the department there because boat owners from Maryborough anchor their boats in the Urgan boat harbour. I hope that in the near future improvements will be made to that boat harbour to make it similar to the Manly boat harbour and boat harbours at other centres in Queensland. Many people from Maryborough who anchor their boats in the Mary River are hesitant about anchoring them at Urgan at present. I remember the Treasurer's prophesying that very few boats would be anchored in the Mary River when the Urgan boat harbour was built, but I cannot see people taking risks and

anchoring their valuable boats there until it is improved greatly. Admittedly a jetty has been built and other improvements have been effected, but much remains to be done. The beauty of Harvey Bay has not been exploited to the full to attract tourists to the area, and a boat harbour comparable with that built at Manly should be established there.

Mr. Hodges: What about Fraser Island?

Mr. DAVIES: Fraser Island could be a tourist attraction, but it has not been exploited yet, either. I hope that the good work of the staff of the department will be extended and that a boat harbour comparable with the one at Manly will be provided at Urangan.

[*Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.15 p.m.*]

Mr. HUGHES (Kurilpa) (7.15 p.m.): I enter this debate because we are proud and privileged to sit on this side of the Chamber not only as members of the Government but also because we have as our Treasurer a man who has shown himself to be so able and capable that we have been able to meet all our obligations.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: Interjections from the Opposition are to be expected, because there was a theory over the years that if we ever became the Government of this State we would close the free hospitals and deprive the community of other facilities as we would never be able to find money for them. We can now speak with pride because as a result of the capable administration of the Treasurer, who has been able to husband the resources of the State, we have been able not only to provide the facilities described in the Estimates in relation to harbour boards and other modern-day facilities, which have lagged under the administration of early Governments, but we have kept our promises on free hospitals and other matters.

Now let us get on to the business in hand. I should like to spend a few minutes in discussing stamp duties. I hear the hon. member for Maryborough say, "Tell us about socialistic practices." He can tell me much more than I would ever know of that subject. I have heard it said that if you look like a duck, quack like a duck and waddle like a duck you must be a duck. I can only say that members on my right are associated with persons in the community who delight in Socialism, yet they ask me about socialistic practices.

On the matter of stamp duties, in the Financial Statement which the Treasurer delivered in this Chamber some time ago he said that he proposed to give some relief from stamp duties on certain policies of insurance. While such stamp duties exceed 20 per cent. of the premium at present—6d. per £100 can be excessive on certain low insurance coverages.

This is a matter in which I take some pride in making representations to the Treasurer because we have in our society today certain charitable institutions that are doing a wonderful job for the community at large. We have, for example, hospitals conducted by religious and other organisations. Many of these institutions were being taxed quite heavily, a practice that was continued by this Government in relation to insurance policies. Of course, it brought in quite a healthy revenue from stamp duty but I, along with many others, felt it was a case in which not only anomalies but hardships were created. In fact, stamp duties charged by the Government were in excess of the premiums charged by the organisation concerned to cover hospitals.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: I would say that, modest as I am, I am quite proud of bringing the matter to the Treasurer's notice and, with others who made submissions on behalf of the organisations and churches concerned, I am very happy that our case has been recognised and that the matter has turned out in this way. It is now expected by virtue of the Treasurer's new arrangement that stamp duty will cost no more than half the premium, particularly in the case of brick buildings. The reduction would be most appreciable and noticeable in church hospitals and schools and certain buildings of organisations that carry on charitable works. We are most appreciative of the enlightened approach to these two problems of modern times.

In my view, perhaps the less we say about land tax the better. It makes my blood boil when I think of the Valuer-General. I have previously expressed myself on this subject in the Chamber. In many instances hardship has been inflicted on property owners because of the unrealistic valuations placed on land. Because of inflated land values it has been made necessary to adjust the land tax scale. I cannot see why we should have land tax at all. I sometimes feel that taxes introduced by Governments are somewhat iniquitous in that no real service is provided in return for the tax collected. Very often it is merely a source of revenue for a general fund. Ultimately the community generally gets a benefit from it but should there be a tax imposed on a section of the community? The recent amendments to the Land Tax Acts increased exemptions but land tax is still a burden on many in the community who are striving to create a stake for themselves and their children. It always seems anomalous that the "I'm all right, Jack" attitude crops up in a community. That this type of thinking can develop is due to some extent to the fact that Governments tax the initiative of those who are striving to get ahead. Although land tax is a source of revenue for the State I hope that Budgets at some time in the future will not contain this provision.

I pay tribute to the officers of the Department of Harbours and Marine—many of whom I know—from Mr. Peel, the director, down to many others who man the ships that convey the necessary requirements to lighthouse-keepers. They are men dedicated to public welfare and safety. Sometimes the lot of these men is not an easy one, and I pay tribute to them for the great work they do.

On many occasions we have discussed the family fisherman. The local chap who throws in a line at a bayside resort should have every protection provided for him. I know there are certain qualifications to be met before a person can obtain a netting licence, but I do not know that they go far enough. I think the Government should gazette family fishing areas or fishing grounds at the bayside resorts. These could be stocked with fish by the authorities. Good use could be made of such areas by city and near-city dwellers. Tourists would more likely want to go farther afield to the Barrier Reef or to fish for sharks in the bay.

We should consider stocking some of our local streams with certain fish to provide sport in leisure hours for the city family man. The department is doing an excellent job. However, we should not confine our thoughts to catering for the pleasures of the city dwellers. I hope that in the future there will be a concentrated inquiry and some research into establishing family fishing grounds that are stocked with fish.

An item in the Estimates refers to shark protection. In 1963 we allocated £51,000 for this purpose, and for this year the Estimates contain a figure of £67,000. That is an appreciable increase which cannot be attributable solely to the decrease in the purchasing power of the £1. I am certain that it indicates a genuine effort by the Government and the department to provide further protection against sharks.

Mr. Bromley: Is this spent in your electorate?

Mr. HUGHES: Most of the land sharks are in the hon. member's electorate, or in those near by.

Shark protection is a recent innovation and I believe that much more has to be learnt about it. It has a psychological value when we are promoting Queensland as a tourist State. The Minister for Labour and Industry is a vibrant and virile young Minister doing a wonderful job, and the fact that shark protection measures are being carried out to the greatest possible extent is tremendously important in promoting tourism in the State. I do not know that £67,000 is a sufficient sum to carry out all the shark-catching that is necessary along our coast. However, when we are cutting up the financial cake we must keep in mind the general financial needs of the State. I believe that, whilst there has been an appreciable increase in the sum allocated and

therefore a proportionate increase in the protection provided we can carry out further research into facilities for shark protection, bearing in mind the enhanced income that we may receive from tourists.

In the main, tourists come to Queensland because of its sun and sand. Most of them go to the South Coast, and quite a number go to the North Coast, and I believe that we should evolve some further means of protection. I do not know to what extent shark boats can be used or equipped in certain specified areas but if we carry out a full programme it can be widely advertised that protection against shark attack is extensively carried out.

Mr. Lee: Throw in the Opposition as a shark repellent.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member for Yeronga has suggested that we should let Opposition members swim around with them. I suppose it would be a family gathering, with sharks talking to sharks. Hon. members opposite are in the minority here, but we have not yet evolved anything sufficiently repellent for them. Ways and means should be found of providing launches to service specified bathing areas, and there should be an investigation into the use of a shark repellent or electric shock waves. There is a limit to the amount they can do, but at least they could patrol some of the areas regularly. We need the financial and physical help of the local authorities in the use of repellents or shock waves, in addition to shark netting in affording protection to the public.

I shall deal now with the State Government Insurance Office. While there are one or two matters of particular interest I should like to deal with, I shall defer speaking on them until a later date and speak on only one aspect, which was dealt with by the hon. member for Townsville South. He spoke of a man who was travelling to and from hospital; he was not being paid any fares or petrol costs, and was not being transported by the ambulance brigade.

I have been a member of the ambulance committee in Brisbane for 10 years. The hon. members for Sandgate and Redcliffe are also members. For some time we have felt that the State Government Insurance Office, through the Treasurer, could increase the payment it makes for the services rendered to it by the ambulance brigade. In Brisbane the ambulance brigade deals with the largest number of industrial accidents in Queensland. That is because of the density of population and the concentration of industry in this city. For many years the amount paid by the State Government Insurance Office to the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade has been made on this basis: there is the amount for services rendered. It has been £2,120. It has not been revised on an elaborate scale in the last three years, although our costs have increased tremendously and there has been an increase in population and industrial development which

has generated further calls on ambulance services. We are hard put to provide a good service. It must be admitted, of course, that the amount of £2,120 is subsidised and that the total sum is £3,180. The ambulance brigade charges for the transportation of accident cases, and if it charged for these State Government Insurance Office cases it would get somewhere near £8,000 for this work, which benefits the State Government Insurance Office.

The Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade is kept going mainly by public contributions, so that in effect we are subsidising the State Government Insurance Office in its operations dealing with industrial accident claims. Really, the boot is on the other foot. We have a genuine need which should be investigated. At one time the Treasurer took it upon himself to apportion these moneys, but since Mr. Riding has been manager of the State Government Insurance Office he has accepted that responsibility. An extra £100 was granted by the State Government Insurance Office to the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade executive, but the city brigade got none of it. We have a genuine case for further consideration of an increase in grant. If the ambulance brigade closed down tomorrow the Government would, of necessity, have to take it over and pay 100 per cent. of its costs. The State could not be left without an ambulance service.

Even though this is a semi-public form of service, I believe that it needs further consideration from the Treasurer. The State Government Insurance Office is probably the largest insurer in the State and makes very large profits from workers' compensation insurance. The Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade provides a service that should be paid for. We are not asking for £8,000, which would probably be just a little avaricious. I do feel, however, that the brigade has a just claim for a considerable increase in the amount allowed specifically to Brisbane, because that is where most industrial accidents happen.

I ask the Treasurer to give serious and sympathetic consideration to my appeal. It is supported by facts and figures, and I hope that in the next Budget there will be a greatly increased amount in this Vote.

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (7.36 p.m.): This morning the Treasurer gave an interesting review of administrative activities of some of his departments and spoke of developments proposed in the immediate future, particularly the installation of a computer to carry out work for various departments within the Treasury Building. Unfortunately I was unable to remain for the whole of his speech. I understand that some parts were of general interest, and I should like to have heard it. I do not intend to deal

particularly with what he said this morning except to say that it was an interesting survey.

In debating these Estimates hon. members are not afforded perhaps the same flexibility in offering suggestions, criticisms, and condemnations of departmental policy, as they are when discussing Estimates of other departments. The departments covered by this Vote deal in the main with financial matters, the State Government Insurance Office and the Fisheries Branch of the Department of Harbours and Marine being perhaps the only sections on which there may be differences of opinion.

I should like to pay a tribute to the principal officers of the sub-departments under the control of the Treasury. I refer to Mr. Sewell, Mr. Riding, and Mr. Miller, the Commissioner of Stamp Duties. All are very highly respected and competent public servants who have performed very valuable services to the State over the years.

There has been a reluctance by Government members to participate in this debate, largely to enable the Treasurer to wind it up tonight and leave tomorrow, with the Minister for Transport, on his visit to America. However, I feel that the Treasurer could, and perhaps should, give some brief indication of the purpose of the trip. I do not want to canvass, in the few minutes available to me, the merits or demerits of the type of construction of the proposed Moura-Gladstone railway, its route, or the economics of the proposal. The mere fact that the Treasurer, as a senior Minister, has been asked by Cabinet to proceed to America entitles us to ask, in the first place, why the unusual procedure has been followed of asking two senior Ministers to go to meet the board of directors of a private company domiciled thousands of miles away. There may be some features of the financing of the proposal that could be of benefit to the State and therefore justify the Ministers' trip.

There have been some vast construction projects started in Australia, ranging from the mammoth Snowy Mountains scheme running into many millions of pounds, in which overseas principals have been involved to a very large degree in making available finance, plant, technical know-how, and so on. The Treasurer may retort that in that instance a project was being developed for irrigation purposes and for the generation of electricity, and that the overseas firms were not customers of the instrumentality; in this case, if the construction of the railway line is proceeded with the major users of the line will be those who intend to increase the export of coal. I think it is time an indication was given of just where we are going in these matters.

Concern has been expressed already about the extent of penetration by overseas investment into Australia's manufacturing industries; alarm has been expressed in the editorial columns of leading newspapers as

recently as today about the ownership of the minerals in this country; and instances have been given of the number of overseas firms that are now virtually controlling bauxite, alumina plants, and iron ore, in Australia. The concern is not that a good deal of money is being injected into the economy; it is that, by the injection of that money into the economy, the control and destiny of great natural resources such as these are in the hands of interests whose primary concern is to serve shareholders domiciled outside Australia, not necessarily in the national interest. I think, therefore, that the Treasurer should indicate why the unusual procedure is being adopted of sending two ministers to the United States of America to discuss this proposal. Why the gentlemen concerned could not come to Queensland, I do not know. When the Mt. Isa project was under consideration, the main purpose of the Treasurer's visit to America was to get accommodation from financial interests in America, particularly from the World Bank, and that suggestion has not arisen in this instance. It is merely a private consultation with the board of directors of a firm.

Mr. Hughes: Didn't you say that Sir Thomas Playford had got industries for South Australia by going to meet people? Why shouldn't we do it?

Mr. DUGGAN: I did not say that Sir Thomas Playford left South Australia to attend every board meeting. I did say that he had given red-carpet treatment to people who came to South Australia, or even to Australia. I am not necessarily critical of ministers going overseas if they can promote the development of the State, but I think the public is entitled to more information.

Mr. Smith: Do you remember Mr. Hilton going overseas to sign contracts for houses?

Mr. DUGGAN: Yes.

Mr. Smith: Why couldn't those people come here?

Mr. DUGGAN: As a matter of fact, it was a question of supply, in the same way as the Government proposes sending a mission overseas to get tradesmen to build houses.

Mr. Smith: It is the same thing.

Mr. DUGGAN: It is an entirely different proposal, because in that case materials were made available by countries overseas. The finance was offered through countries overseas, and it might be said that there is a parallel there; but it was a question of getting the ability of firms specialising in prefabricated houses to cater for the Australian requirements. There are large-scale railway projects in Western Australia and other States of the Commonwealth at present none of which has made it necessary for overseas personnel to come here.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Hodges): Order! I have allowed the Leader of the Opposition a considerable amount of latitude to make his point. I now ask him to come back to the Vote under consideration.

Mr. DUGGAN: I appreciate that, Mr. Hodges, but I do think we are entitled to make some reference to it because the Treasurer is going. If the Minister for Transport were going alone, I should certainly be out of order in discussing the matter. But the Treasury obviously must be affected in some way when the Treasurer is sent on a mission of this kind, and I hope that, without transgressing the Standing Orders in any way, he will say something on the matter. The Opposition, and I personally, will listen to his submissions with an open mind. There is no sense in being antagonistic or nasty, but I think that, as a matter of public duty, we should get some information about it.

I shall now proceed to a general discussion of some aspects of the report of the General Manager of the State Government Insurance Office, Mr. Riding. I compliment him and the officers responsible for its compilation. I think it is one of the best reports I have seen, because it conveys very vital information in graphic form. I am a great believer in pictorial representations of what happens to the £1 that is provided, and I compliment those responsible upon the excellent way in which the information has been placed before us.

I think everybody is conscious of the increasing accident rate and the increasing number of claims against various insurance companies that has led to the recent substantial increase in the premiums charged by them because of the loss risk in handling this type of business. The State Government Insurance Office set out in very bold print that they propose to deal with this problem by offering discounts on no-claim applications varying between 25 per cent. and 50 per cent. over a four-year period. That is the very approach that I and many others in this Assembly—on both sides of the Chamber for that matter, and indeed the Treasurer himself—have advocated for a long period of time.

Undoubtedly many people are involved in collisions where there is no culpability on the part of at least one party. Many of these collisions occur because of forces beyond the physical and mental control of the driver of the vehicle. There may be slippery roads, mechanical troubles, and all sorts of circumstances not attributable to negligence. Nevertheless, there are many cases proven by statistics in which are involved age groups more prone to accident than older-age categories. Consequently the figures seem to support the idea that there should be some incentive to the careful driver, and the person who exercises a great deal of care in driving a vehicle, so that he should not be penalised for the mounting incidence of traffic accidents.

Undoubtedly for the ordinary citizen the ownership of a motor vehicle is becoming a matter of financial difficulty. I think Australia's ownership per capita of motor vehicles is among the highest in the world; it certainly is in the first four. The ownership of a motor-car is no longer regarded as the right of a privileged few, but, owning a vehicle does put a responsibility on the person and the ever-increasing insurance and registration charges have become expensive to finance from the ordinary workman's wages. I feel that many of these problems are due to increasing costs and, as the State Government Insurance Office, to which the previous speaker referred rather sarcastically, is a socialistic enterprise which this Government has fostered and developed, some way might be found to curtail these charges. Incidentally, the Treasurer has promoted the activities of the State Government Insurance Office contrary to the expectations of some people that when he assumed office he would curtail them.

It is difficult to prove that the charges are higher on insurance claims but there is a body of opinion, which may be unsupported by statistical evidence, that the charges made by garages for repairing a car covered by insurance are higher than those for the ordinary citizen who simply says, "What will you charge me to put my vehicle on the road?" As the State Government Insurance Office has acted as an instrument in keeping premiums generally lower in the State, which is shown beyond doubt in this table of workers' compensation, as it has acted as a brake on the rates that might otherwise have been payable to private insurance companies, and, although the move might be regarded as a socialistic enterprise, the State Government Insurance Office might consider acquiring a large repair establishment to undertake the repairing of vehicles covered by its policies. It is a matter worth probing because the State Government Insurance Office has acted as a brake on premiums and, it might well be that competition, which is said to be one of the elements of the philosophy of the Country-Liberal coalition at the present time, would be the means of putting a brake on the high repair costs that are so prevalent today.

In many cases, of course, even if garages have apprentices doing the work on vehicles, they charge the full tradesman's rate whilst any repairs are being done. I think something should be done to control this mounting cost of the ownership of vehicles. It has got out of hand.

The other allied problem, of course, is that of third-party insurance, where very large damage claims are made. For a long time Queensland was able to keep the awards down to reasonable limits but now it is quite usual for £15,000 or £20,000 to be awarded. Sometimes it is difficult to determine whether there was actual negligence on the part of the person concerned. In many cases claims are set in motion for very large amounts merely because people are covered

by insurance. While one has the greatest sympathy for those who are rendered unable to work or who have suffered mentally or physically from a motor vehicle accident, it really is not very different from the case of a person who, through no culpable negligence, finds himself maimed or injured while working in an industrial plant, in which case the maximum amount he can obtain is only one-fifth or one-sixth of what he might be awarded if he took action through the courts for negligence. Perhaps it would be easier to establish a degree of negligence in the workshop than on the road.

Mr. Hiley: You realise now that if negligence can be shown, the table of limits does not apply?

Mr. DUGGAN: With all due respect, I still think that some of the awards paid to motorists have been extremely generous. It is not my intention at the present time to attack the judiciary or the juries who may have been responsible.

I asked the Treasurer a question about differential rates on hire-purchase vehicles. I must confess that the figures support the attitude he indicated in his reply to me. The principle embodied in the recommendations of the Insurance Commissioner might well be applied to hire-purchase vehicles as well. The figures in the Queensland Pocket Year Book for 1964 disclose that in 1962-63, in respect of motor vehicles, plant and machinery, 72,850 agreements were made; the value of goods totalled £51,237,000, and the amount financed totalled £33,218,000. When we consider that in Queensland the number of motor vehicles on register at 30 September, 1964, was 512,316 and only 39,000 vehicles were involved in 25,625 accidents, I think there may be justification for the State Government Insurance Office to set the lead in allowing no-claim bonuses on vehicles under hire purchase when owners are not involved in any claim for two or three years.

Mr. Hiley: Third-party insurance is payable only when you are negligent.

Mr. DUGGAN: In the first instance, premiums paid on vehicles under hire purchase are higher than on unencumbered vehicles. The owner of a private, unencumbered vehicle gets a certain discount when he has made no claim.

Mr. Hiley: This is under comprehensive insurance?

Mr. DUGGAN: Yes. I think that principle might well be extended to the owners of vehicles bought under hire purchase. There is a further reason for that. In the main the person who uses hire-purchase facilities is one who can less afford these extra costs. The person who can make a cash payment, or is in a position to make private financial arrangements, is at an advantage compared with the person who is compelled to seek help through a hire-purchase company. The figure of 39,000

vehicles out of 512,000 suggests that this is a matter the Treasurer might well have a look at.

I should like to refer briefly to the report of Mr. Rutherford under the Insurance Act of 1960. It is a rather interesting one. He suggests that he should not subdivide the statistics according to the nationality of insurers into Australian, New Zealand, and British and foreign. He says—

“In view of the modern tendency of insurance companies to form financially-related groups and because some Australian companies are subject to overseas interests, this subdivision is becoming somewhat pointless.”

While that may be a reasonably factual presentation of the situation, there is some merit in getting the latest information on the extent of these foreign-controlled insurance companies. I think this interesting statistical information should be kept. In any case, on his own admission, although he mentioned the wisdom of having these re-insurance policies with overseas firms as witness the disastrous Townsville fire last year, the ratio of claims to premiums was something in the order of 124 per cent. However, the ratio for the preceding years was much lower. Obviously, over a period it has been profitable for the companies, whether they are Australian-owned or foreign companies; generally, it has been profitable for them. The overall position is that, if there are profits to be made from re-insurance, it could well be handled by Australian companies, because not many problems are involved if the risk is spread. I merely ask for this information to be collected in its present form for a longer period.

I should like to deal with the operations of the Fish Board because some aspects of it call for examination.

Mr. Nicklin: The Fish Board is under the Department of Labour and Industry now.

Mr. DUGGAN: Yes; that is right.

I have some reference to make to the Nominal Defendant Fund, which was established in 1961. We on this side indicated that it was a necessary measure and we gave it our full support. When I asked if the premium of 7s. 6d. was justified, the Treasurer said it was very difficult to assess at that stage, particularly in view of the failure of one of our large insurance companies, whether it could be taken from the general funds without this added premium. The demands on the general fund without this added premium, seem to suggest that the amount is more than adequate to meet the demands of the Nominal Defendant Fund. There are certainly a number of undetermined claims and it is perhaps a little early to determine the actuarial soundness of the fund but, despite the Treasurer's misgivings, the amount standing to the credit of the fund as at 30 June, 1964, was

£570,000, which is well in excess of the figure of £371,000 as at 30 June, 1963. I do not raise this matter to ask for a reduction in the premium of 7s. 6d., which is not an unduly onerous burden for motorists to carry in view of the protection afforded, but merely to refer the Treasurer to the fact that he said the establishment of the fund was to protect those who were severely injured in some way or whose property was damaged by people who could not be identified.

It is rather regrettable that, in the first case in which a damages claim was brought against the Nominal Defendant Fund, the presiding judge, Mr. Justice Stable thought it necessary to say that the Nominal Defendant had contested the claim with an intensity and ruthlessness at times approaching ferocity. I do not have time to refer to all of this article. However, I must say that the judge, after hearing all the evidence in the case is reported as follows:—

“His Honour said that during the hearing of the case Pearce was subjected to long cross-examination, as severe and biting as any he had heard in 30 years.”

His Honour later said—

“I suggest for the consideration of the Minister that all of this might be made the subject of a short cut whereby the long and expensive trial is not heard until the question of due inquiry and search has been determined.”

He made certain other observations about statements which reflected very strongly on Mr. Pearce's credit. It is a matter of regret that when the fund was established with very worthy principles and objectives, in the very first case the representative of the Crown should have taken such action as to draw a very scathing indictment from the presiding judge. Knowing the judge as I do I am sure he would not have made these observations unless he felt there was strong justification for them. I hope the Treasurer can find a moment or two to refer to the matter. I do not say that, because the Nominal Defendant Fund is involved people should be able to go along and get money without establishing a case. However, some very nasty reflections were cast in this particular case. The plaintiff lost his wife, and he was severely injured. It was virtually suggested that he had been responsible for turning the car over and indirectly responsible for the death of his wife. That is not how the Crown should operate, and it is contrary to the Treasurer's own opinion in this matter. I raise it in the humanitarian, spirit which has been one of the characteristics of our State Government Insurance Office over the years. I should not like to see any State instrumentality made a vehicle for oppressive and unnecessary treatment by people who feel that it has a duty on a strictly £. s. d. basis.

(Time expired.)

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Chatsworth—Treasurer) (8.1 p.m.): It has been very interesting to listen to such a wide variety of comment. I wish to reply to quite a number of matters, which may take some little time.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition complained that he still feels that the deepening of the Brisbane River and the reclamation of Bulwer Island could result in a cost of £2,000,000 to the people of this State. He was fearful that there would not be any enhanced royalties or other recompense in any field of Government finance to offset the expenditure in carrying out these two great projects. I confess that I have difficulty in getting this message across to him, but it is my firm conviction—I have been living with this and studying it all the way through—that there will be no charge on the general taxpayer in respect of this tremendous development.

First of all, the Harbour Dues Fund is strong. It has been improving its position by approximately £300,000 a year, largely because of the great and ever-growing oil revenues. It has grown so much that from a debit of £19,000 when I took over the administration of it, it was quickly converted to a credit of over £1,000,000. It allows us to carry out all sorts of things for which we would normally have had to go to the borrowing funds of the State. We have been able to undertake capital works and development out of the revenues of the Harbour Dues Fund. The strength of this fund alone would meet the interest and redemption, if not one penny came back from oil or other traffic, rentals, or anything like that. But there will be a return.

First of all, we introduced a new principle in this regard. It is a fair principle. I explained it to the Committee at the time. The harbour authorities of the State reclaimed land at their expense; the land was added to the public domain of the State and the rents went to the Department of Lands. I thought that was unfair, and that as the harbour boards had carried out the reclamation they were entitled to the title of the land and the rentals that arose therefrom. They created the land and were entitled to have it as a business exercise. They spent money in creating the land and should derive the rentals flowing from it. The Harbour Dues Fund will get the rentals from Amoco for the whole of Bulwer Island. Those rentals will be high initially, and every 10 years they will be revalued in accordance with the standard principle for revaluation of Crown leases. The principle that applies to leases of the Department of Lands will apply to the leases of the harbour boards. The rental will be reviewed, and I have no doubt that over the years that follow there will be tremendous returns to the Harbour Dues Fund from rentals alone.

Mr. Hanson: Will there be sufficient in the fund for such contingencies as the silting up of Luggage Point and the swinging basin?

Mr. HILEY: We have £300,000 a year surplus revenues, and they are growing every year. I do not think I have given the impression in this Chamber of being a Woolcott Forbes in my approach to these things. I can assure hon. members that it is my deep and utter conviction, having studied the matter for a long time, that only a sheer calamity which would break any system or prediction could land this fund in the red. There will be extra oil revenue. The refining capacity of the two refineries will be more than double the present Queensland demand for oil. Whatever happens, the movement of crude in, whether local, imported, or a mixture of both, and refined out will be infinitely greater than the present movement, when we merely bring in enough white spirit for the port's requirements. There will be a considerable outward flow, even if we are fortunate enough to experience a flow of local oil sufficient to meet the tremendous demand of these two great oil refineries.

Other things will follow. Already the port of Brisbane is assured of an aqua-ammonia plant. That is one direct and traceable link with the establishment of oil refineries here. At the moment there is an l.p. gas installation, which is drawing supplies by a small tanker from the South. As soon as the refineries come on stream here, that little tanker—she is a lovely little vessel that carries about 550 tons of l.p. gas—will move constantly from Brisbane up and down the coast transporting l.p. gas. There are two developments, and this is only the start. It is my absolute conviction that these refineries will impose no charge on the general taxpayers of Queensland. I am certain that, in turn, they will impose no burden on the port of Brisbane. Indeed, they will advance the day when so surging will be the revenue of the port that consideration will have to be given to a general all-round reduction in the rates of harbour dues. If it were not for all the capital work still to be done, we would already have been able to reduce harbour dues.

The hon. member for Townsville North raised the subject of more facilities at Magnetic Island, which is already in the happy position of having two jetties usable by the type of craft operating there. In this matter, I drove a hard bargain. I told Hayles Magnetic Island Pty. Ltd., who were the main commercial users of the jetty, that if the Government provided one at Picnic Bay largely for the use of this company, they would have to bind themselves to provide one at their cost, available for public use, at Geoffrey Bay. Magnetic Island now has two fine usable jetties. Since the pineapple trade from Horseshoe Bay, which provided the earliest justification for the jetty there, has declined, that jetty has deteriorated to the point at which it is no longer useful. Magnetic Island, with two jetties in fine, new condition, is pretty well off. I am more concerned with the islands up and down the coast that have not even one. All I can say is that when

every island that needs a jetty has one, that will be the time to consider giving a third to an island that already has two.

Mr. Tucker: I didn't ask you for that. I asked you to repair the one that is there already.

Mr. HILEY: Maybe it could be propped up for a while, but it is a rather old structure. I do not think that Magnetic Island really needs it at this stage.

The hon. member for Townsville North mentioned a rock pool. I have made inquiries on this subject and have been able to trace a proposal for a rock pool at Kissing Point. There was a request from the Townsville City Council in March, 1958, for a loan of £3,000. That would have been quite insufficient for the main purpose, and was presumably for plant. The matter was revived on this year's loan programme, when the council requested a loan of £26,540. The work was not included in the final loan programme approved by the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, and the matter of priority of works on the loan programme is largely a matter for the Loan Council, although not entirely. In the time available, I have not been able to satisfy myself whether the council gave this a low priority or whether Sir James Holt, in reviewing the works, said, "There are other things—sewerage, water for industrial expansion, and so on—that deserve higher priority in 1964 than a rock pool at Kissing Point." That is all I can tell the hon. member at this stage. If he raises the question again later, I shall find out what priority was attached to it and let him know.

The hon. member for Sherwood asked that boating facilities be provided in the upper reaches of the Brisbane River. This presents us with a physical problem. There is a flood rise and fall in the upper reaches of the river, but in the lower reaches the variation is not nearly so great. For example, at Redbank there is a rise of 15 feet, whereas in the Milton Reach or the Gardens Reach there is a rise of only 15 inches. Where there are steep banks and a flood rise and fall, it is very difficult to find places to put the suggested improvements without spending a great deal of money to make them so stable that floods will not wash them away.

The hon. member made quite a moving plea to me about the possibility of finding landing areas at intervals along the river bank for use by boat-owners. I do not think even 1 per cent. of the people of Brisbane know just how lovely it is on a winter's day to go for a launch trip up the Brisbane River. It is absolutely beautiful.

Mr. Duggan: You could get a launch and take us up the river one day.

Mr. HILEY: As a matter of fact, it would be quite interesting to take a run up the river when the House is not sitting.

Most of the land is privately owned, and this would present some problems. To be really effective for the hon. member's purpose, I think we would have to find little pockets that could be reached only from the river. If people were able to come to them from the land, I think they would become so popular that motorists would have the lot and the launch-owners would get none. It is a worth-while thought, something that appeals to me.

The hon. member for Sherwood also referred to Oxley Creek and drainage problems connected with it. That cuts across the associated, and worse, drainage problem at Dobby Creek, on which the hon. member for Bulimba and I have had some discussions. In my opinion, the position is quite clear. I have no doubt that the Brisbane City Council has full power to abate nuisances occurring on the creek, whether at tidal level or elsewhere. The Government has been having amicable discussions with the council, and the council is quite firm that it intends to clean these things up. It is taking steps in this direction already and a Supreme Court writ was issued in the last 10 days in connection with Dobby Creek.

Officers of the Department of Harbours and Marine and the Department of Health have discussed the problem, but water in a narrow tidal creek is almost like water contained in a vessel. Unless the stream is in flood from freshes at its head, the stage is reached where virtually the same body of water shuttles up and down with the tide.

Mr. Donald: They are silting up, too.

Mr. HILEY: It is the pollution that worries me. When industrial waste is discharged into a creek, conditions are much the same as they are in a septic tank. If a septic tank is not overloaded it will work quite satisfactorily; but if it is overloaded past a certain point everything goes wrong. A creek is similar. It can take a modest amount of industrial waste, oxidise it, clean it, and clear it to some extent; but if it is overloaded with industrial waste, a real chemical problem arises. Hon. members have seen these creeks. The water goes black and the smell is simply terrible. I will say now that I do not know how people live within the smell radius of Dobby Creek and parts of Oxley Creek when they are as bad as they sometimes are.

Mr. Houston: I have not exaggerated.

Mr. HILEY: No, the hon. member has not. Frankly, I do not know how some of these poor people stand it. It has been put to us that we might solve this problem by getting the bends out of these creeks but our advice is that if the polluting influence remains it still will not help. If you can stop the pollution, then it becomes worth while to straighten the kinks in the creek when at least you might hope to get the stream restored to comparative cleanliness. I frankly confess that I do not know how these people endure it.

Mr. Houston: You will be able to reclaim many good industrial sites there, too.

Mr. HILEY: As a matter of fact, in the discussions and thinking we have been having about it, one of the things that has been seriously worrying me, and I think most people so far as the aesthetic side of things is concerned, and to some extent the public health side, is the nuisance created by car disposal yards. Many of them are shockers. The local authorities have kept them out of sight but they are still a nuisance. They are simply hiding the nuisance. They are left there to slowly rust. They become traps for water and breed mosquitoes, and I think they are a first-class nuisance. If ever we straighten Doboy Creek we will endeavour to take advantage of some of those deep holes. I will talk to the council and see if we can make some of these people drop their old vehicles into the deep holes. In that way we will at least start off cleaner than we are now. I do not know what is to become of the problem that exists in the community today. These car-dumping yards are being increasingly used; they are growing and getting worse.

Mr. Duggan: Old cars will have to be pulped up as they are in America.

Mr. HILEY: That is so, but so far nobody is doing that here on an official basis. The acreage is continually growing. On the Oakey Road outside Toowoomba—where the Cecil Plains Road and the Oakey Road separate—there is one growing at an alarming rate. Every time I go there I can see it continually spreading. At Burpengary, on the North Coast road, there used to be a dozen or so old cars; there are now acres of cars. It is happening on all our highways and I think somebody should try to stop it.

Mr. Sherrington: There is one point in connection with city council jurisdiction. The council can take out summonses but the court can only fine the person responsible for the pollution.

Mr. HILEY: We will soon be wiser on that point. The council has recently issued a writ, and I shall be very interested in the outcome. I do not know the exact ground it has chosen, but I understand it is trying to secure a court order to correct and abate a nuisance. If it can do that, the trouble will be over.

I understand that one of the big sources of effluent that is troubling the hon. member for Bulimba intends spending several tens of thousands of pounds on a treatment plant so that the material that that firm puts into the creek will be treated before it goes in. It will be reduced to a nil factor before it is discharged into the creek. Of course, higher up there is a wool scour, as well as a poultry abattoir, and a ham and bacon factory.

Mr. Houston: And a tannery.

Mr. HILEY: Yes, and a tannery. All that effluent goes into the one septic tank or cess-pool. It is a combination that needs attending to.

Mr. Houston: Do they ever build their own industrial sewers?

Mr. HILEY: If they do, or if the council asks them to, I think the problem will be overcome. Incidentally, I might inform the hon. member that the council is seeking a restraining order. If it succeeds in that, it will be a blow at what is a very real nuisance.

Mr. Sherrington: The weakness in many of these cases seemed to be that the court could impose only a limited penalty.

Mr. HILEY: If the council gets a restraining order, it will have real teeth. We have found the council extremely co-operative. It does not rush in madly but it has done everything it could to persuade these people to do the decent thing. Now that it has struck a bit of trouble it has taken firm action. I have nothing but regard for the way the council is attacking the problem.

The spoiling of the beaches at Cleveland Bay was again raised by a number of hon. members. That is not our responsibility to the extent that we have power, but it is our responsibility to the extent that we are interested in it. The foreshores of Cleveland Bay are part of the clear precincts of the harbour and as such come under the lawful jurisdiction of the Townsville Harbour Board. My officers are in no doubt that the complaints raised are completely justified. I have said it before, and I say it again: our people are convinced that the method of depositing dredging spoil and sludge in the Cleveland Bay area must result as it evidently has resulted. It is a very great pity that this has happened to the fine beach at Cape Pallarenda. It was a lovely beach, even in my memory. I was shocked to hear that sludge was starting to be deposited on the beaches at Magnetic Island. I have tried before to effect some settlement of this problem but all I can say at this stage is that the Crown will not be able to sit by and let this sort of thing occur. We think corrective action should be taken. I hope that the hon. members concerned will not fail to remind me of this matter. I am disposed to see that some remedial action is taken.

Many hon. members raised questions about workers' compensation. Some of them would take too long to reply to in detail. Quite plainly there is a rule that inside 15 miles, if a person needs an ambulance, we expect him to use an ambulance. If it is within 15 miles we feel that he should be able to manage that; outside 15 miles we pay travelling time and costs. If an overnight stay is necessary, that should be properly arranged and they will be entitled to payment for it.

One hon. member felt that there was a raw deal on workers' compensation in North Queensland. It is true that we have found it necessary to send doctors up to check on the certificates issued in some cases. Hon. members heard the tribute from the hon. member for Ipswich East, who probably has had more experience in handling and processing workers' compensation cases than all other hon. members put together. Upon my examination I am convinced that although the State Government Insurance Office is not infallible it has never set out to defeat a man, right or wrong. Indeed, I have been refreshed to find case after case where the office has leaned over quite considerably to give a man the benefit of the doubt. Although most doctors are extremely responsible, we find a tiny percentage who are not. There is the tiny percentage who over-treat—they have a man back to the surgery day after day which, to the other doctors, is just ridiculous. These doctors over-treat.

Mr. Duggan: Is that a polite way of saying "overcharge"?

Mr. HILEY: "Over-treat", of course, means "overcharge". We have to develop certain teeth to deal with a situation such as that. One of the methods we have adopted when we find a town with two or three doctors showing out extremely badly compared with the average is to send our men up to check. If the hon. members who complained about cases being referred and brought back for inspection sat down and wrote out the names of the doctors involved, I am sure they would be surprised. If they did not finish up with four of a kind, they would have a full hand.

Mr. Wallis-Smith: Don't imagine that we have doctors up there; we have only one.

Mr. HILEY: Some of them need to be spoken to. Some of them have the idea that because it is an insurance case they can do anything. Some doctors also get the notion because a man says, "I am an injured worker, fill in the forms," that they merely have to fill them in without considering the merits of the case. Fortunately there are very very few of them, but when we come across these cases we investigate them. Hon. members in the Opposition with extensive industrial experience know what goes on. I have been delighted, again and again, by the expressions of union secretaries about the co-operation and consideration given by the State Insurance Commissioner. That is not to say that nothing ever goes wrong.

Mr. Donald: The Attorney-General has helped us considerably.

Mr. HILEY: Yes, and so too has the Chest Board. It has helped quite a number of the hon. member's people.

If the hon. members who have complained about a raw deal come and talk to me about it I will be interested to know the names of the doctors. I think they will probably find

that when they give me the names I will grin. That will mean the name rings a bell with me. I know the villains. There are not many. In fact, I should say that there are only two wearisome villains in the State and, believe me, they are beauties.

Mr. Hanson: I am sure that my electorate is clean.

Mr. HILEY: Yes, the hon. member's electorate is clean.

The hon. member for Port Curtis spoke about congestion at the T.A.B. shop in Elizabeth Street. I have found that, for once, he understated the position. From the "Telegraph" report, it was infinitely worse than he said. That is the shop which has, I think, 14 windows. It is the big metropolitan one in Elizabeth Street, in the former Irish Club premises. For a normal Saturday or Wednesday loading, which would cover 104 meetings a year, it would be virtually empty. The Melbourne Cup is a "loaded gun" once a year. The shop opened at 7 o'clock this morning and I thought I would be facing a blasting criticism for opening it so early.

I suggest that the hon. member get out of bed a little earlier and his troubles will be over. He bumped into what is really a national institution, and I think we will find that there was congestion at almost every agency in the State. But one swallow does not make a summer. That is not the average experience. If it were, I should imagine that the T.A.B. would want to do something about it because, after all, it surely is very interested in handling its patrons. If it is swamped by them it would be the first to want to do something about it.

The hon. member raised the subject of fire equipment and radio on small craft. There is no radio on the "Boyne"; I entirely agree with him. Every new vessel, as it is turned out, is fitted with radio. From memory, I am not too sure of the vintage of the "Boyne". If she is marked for tolerably early replacement, when she is replaced radio will be fitted to the new vessel. If she has many many years of life ahead of her I ask the hon. member to raise the matter with me. I am inclined to think that we will do the fair thing and put it in because, to my mind, the days of waving a flag for communication purposes are gone. Radio is such a blessing with little ships that I believe we should fit it.

The hon. member also raised the matter of increased staff in the Department of Harbours and Marine. We increased the number of engineers by roughly 25 per cent. We are getting all we can reasonably expect. Not every civil engineer is suitable for harbour work. In the field of civil engineering many of them have no flair for it. The hon. member will have experienced in his own harbour administration that some people never seem to understand the physical problems of harbour work, and certainly not the economic problems of harbour work. Others seem to catch on from the outset. The same thing

happens with engineers. We were fortunate in being able to increase our staff by 28 per cent. this year.

The hon. member raised the question of additional industrial land at Gladstone. It so happens that I know the area behind the Fish Board that he referred to. All the land that is being reclaimed by the harbour boards has salt water over it and is not regarded as land; it is part of the seabed. We get a reclamation lease for it, pump sand over it, and then apply for a title to the land. I think all the land he spoke of, certainly as far as the causeway, is probably some form of reservation. If the council or the harbour board feels disposed, either together or separately, to work out some scheme for reclamation, it will find us reclamation-minded. We would definitely look with favour on any sensible proposal for reclamation. It will clean up the town and produce good usable land, and, as far as the council is concerned, will bring into rateability an area of land that at present is a worry and is useless. I suggest that the hon. member talk to the mayor and the harbour board, and if they like to come along separately or together with a proposal and we can help, I shall be happy to do so.

Mr. Hanson: On the same basis as has been done in Cairns for industrial lands?

Mr. HILEY: That was a partnership covering the council, the Government, and the harbour board. The harbour board did the dredging. It was Crown land. If this is Crown land, there could be a basis for a similar partnership in Gladstone. The area is well placed. If it is reclaimed it will be worth a lot of money. It should not be a loss. Once it is reclaimed, the proceeds will pay the costs of reclamation with something to spare. I would not mind having that piece of land and doing the reclamation as a private enterprise. I think it is a very good rewarding project, it is so well placed.

The hon. member for Tablelands raised the question of navigation lights at river entrances in the Gulf. I shall instruct my officers to look at the Norman, Albert, and Flinders Rivers to see if something helpful can be done. I could score a debating trick here and tell the Committee that the provision this year is seven times what it was last year but I have to come clean and admit that last year it was £7 and this year it is £50, so let us forget that one. I shall have the matter investigated to see if something can be done to help.

The matter the hon. member raised in regard to the Atherton Show Society is one with which both he and I are familiar. The Government does not propose to allow trotting and to have the facility of betting on galloping events killing a galloping meeting in the locality. It is as simple as that. If we can find a case where trotting can be conducted without hurting galloping we will allow it, but we cannot afford to be not

merely the tick on the bullock, but to kill the bullock while we are about it. The hon. gentleman can shake his head. He knows very well that he can have a licence to conduct trotting in Atherton tomorrow without wagering on galloping events, but he also knows that no-one would go to the trotting.

Mr. Wallis-Smith: No, I don't. You are not fair there.

Mr. HILEY: The hon. member can have a licence to conduct trotting at the Atherton Showgrounds tomorrow, but we will not allow him to wager on galloping events. I cannot have the position in the Atherton Tableland area where support of the meetings on the Tableland will be cut down because in Atherton, one of the main towns and a place which contributes nothing to galloping, there is an opportunity to wager on galloping events. We have to be fair about this.

Mr. Wallis-Smith: They are not hurting any courses.

Mr. HILEY: Aren't they! I think they are, and while I think they are a licence will not be granted.

The hon. member for Baroona mentioned Bishop Island and Cowan. Bishop Island is an attached station. Originally the signal station stood on stilts in the bay. It will be remembered that a bad navigator handled his ship poorly and sideswiped the Pile Light. It disappeared in a heap of broken timber, and the men on it had to swim for their lives. We were not prepared to risk another similar incident, and a signal station was established at Bishop Island. This is an artificial island that has developed at the mouth of the river from dredge spoilings. Steps were taken some years ago to enclose it with a rock embankment. The centre of the island was left insufficiently filled. I know most of the men there and call in occasionally for a yarn with them.

On spring tides, to get from where the houses are, which is just above the high-tide level, to the signal station it is necessary to walk through two or three feet of water. The signal station is rather rickety; I have climbed the ladder but would not be too happy to be up there on a windy day. I have spoken to the men about it and have told them that I think there should be a proper signal tower erected on a much more stable foundation. We are anxious to fill in the low-lying section of the island and make a reasonable mound inside the stone wall. When that is done, the houses can be raised and a lighting plant installed to provide the blessings of electricity.

The Ampol wharf will be fairly close to Bishop Island. If power is carried over the boat passage to the Ampol wharf, it will then be only a short distance to Bishop Island and it will be connected to the S.E.A. grid system. If that is not possible, there must be available somewhere a second-hand lighting plant that would serve their needs till

power is connected. It is difficult to realise that this sort of thing can happen so close to home. It is not good in 1964 to have people filling kerosene lanterns on Bishop Island, which is within the area of Greater Brisbane. I am glad that the point was raised. I think it was fairly taken, and the position should be corrected.

Cover for a wife under third-party insurance is one of the reforms that have been kept in mind by those with whom I have been discussing this subject, and I am hopeful that a solution will be found. My indisposition in the middle of the year prevented me from getting together with the committee with whom I have been working. Perhaps we may succeed in doing that now.

I acknowledge the point made by the Leader of the Opposition. I am becoming worried about the increasing cost of insurance to the motorist. At the same time, I do not think it fair to say to the taxpayers in general, "You must make up the difference." I am very anxious to find some means of providing the additional benefit of compensation to a wife for injury suffered as the result of the negligence of her husband, and at the same time avoiding an extra volume of claims with a consequent further increase in the burden carried by motorists. Limiting the amount of damages that would otherwise be awarded to a wife does not appeal to me. Courts make a fair assessment of damages and I do not think it fair to say, "We will meet the problem of the increased cost of insurance by giving a widow, instead of her full benefit, only 80 per cent. of it." That does not appeal to me at all, nor did it appeal to the committee that was assisting me in this matter.

I am hopeful that we will find the answer. We recognise the problem of the injured spouse. The present rule of law, of course, is that an injured spouse cannot claim for injuries resulting from the negligence of the other spouse. We are of a mind to correct that, but we want to find a way of commanding a correction without lifting the cost to the ordinary motorist. On the face of it, it seems an arithmetical impossibility; but the hon. member should not be too certain that at least some sort of acceptable answer will not be found before we are finished.

He also mentioned the distribution of funds under the Racing and Betting Act. I replied to some extent by interjection, but I give him this example: he is comparing the products of on-course betting, a system that was taken over in full blast, with the monetary product of a system that was started from the grass roots and which had costs of staffing, and so on, associated with it; whereas he ought to compare the results of the two systems for the last year. Eventually they will come fairly close together.

Mr. Hanlon: I appreciate that. My point was that you should have seen that the on-course system was in operation before you started the off-course system.

Mr. HILEY: I do not think that is a question for discussion under these Estimates.

The hon. member for Cook referred to sea erosion at Yorkey's Knob. I say quite plainly that the Government does not want to adopt the doctrine that it will have different scales of treatment for various parts of the coast of Queensland. In the case of subsidies, for example, we have tried to cling to the principle of dealing with every shire and every citizen on a completely uniform basis. The day we begin administering the subsidy scheme by having one rule for one part of the State and another rule for another part, we will never be out of trouble.

There is a limit to how far the protection of private property should be a burden on taxpayers generally. After all, some of it represents improvements. There were wise people who knew that it was better to avoid buying a block of land right on the brink of a sand dune and exposed to the full force of the sea. Others who were not so wise rushed in and bought land of this type and put a house as close as possible to the brink. How far do we go in accepting the doctrine that the cost of that mistake should be passed on to the citizens generally? It is a very doubtful and difficult doctrine. We have tried to go a little way by saying that if the local authority has a scheme to protect the foreshores, we will pay a subsidy of 20 per cent. The same subsidy is applicable from Cape York to Coolangatta, and the only exception to the rule is one case in which we went beyond that rate. It involved a tremendously expensive main road, and we were more concerned about protecting the main road than we were about protecting the property. The Minister for Main Roads provided a special subsidy because he was protecting the Pacific Highway. Even that is not enough, apparently, because a report in this morning's newspaper says that a deputation is to see me and ask for even more.

Mr. Adair: How did you arrive at the 20 per cent.? Why wasn't it some higher figure?

Mr. HILEY: If the hon. member likes to suggest a higher figure for this and a lower figure for something else, I will consider his suggestion. We have made it clear to the local authorities that £6,500,000 has been allotted for subsidies this year and that if they want more for this there will have to be less for that.

I noted what the hon. member said about new cane assignments. All I can say to him is that the Agricultural Bank considers on their merits the cases of all people who cannot meet their dues. In a case where

growers generally in a district are unable to plant because of excessive moisture, I am sure the bank takes that into account. But if there is a stretch of country where there are eight other properties and seven growers plant and one does not, I think the bank might well ask itself whether the failure to plant was due to bad husbandry by the farmer, not to a general disability in the district. I can assure the hon. member that each case is treated by the bank on its merits.

Mr. Adair: I think they are all affected similarly.

Mr. HILEY: If that is the case, it will be a help in concluding that it is a general disability and should be accepted as such. But do not forget that in every field some men will succeed while others, for various reasons, do not. Some men are quick and prompt to decide while others are slow either because it is difficult for them to make up their minds or because they get out of bed late and are lazy. It will have to be left to the bank to decide whether a case warrants some consideration.

The hon. member for Ipswich East said some very complimentary things about the State Government Insurance Office, for which I thank him. Coming as it does from a man of his lengthy experience, I think it is something that all of us can regard with particular interest and of some authority.

The hon. member for Salisbury raised the problem of local-authority finance. I think he was well outside the field. I have had quite a bit to say on this point on other occasions and I do not think this is the time to get into a general dissertation on the methods, merits and problems of local-authority finance generally.

The hon. member for Maryborough also referred to the State Government Insurance Office report. One of the first things Mr. Riding did when took over as General Manager was to come and see me and tell me that he wanted to make the State Government Insurance Office report not a formal public document but a selling document, something that his agents would want to carry around and show to people, showing in graphic form the progress and strength of the office. He set out to do that, and although I did have a very small part in some of its detail the whole of the format and all the graphs and methods of display were Mr. Riding's work.

The hon. member for Townsville South raised the problem of the poor standard of advertising by the State Government Insurance Office. He must have been listening to Mr. Riding, who is quite critical of the stereotyped method of advertising on those dreadful posters on railway stations. They would not sell ice-cream in Hades. There is no character or quality in them.

Mr. Riding, I think, is conscious of the fact that the State Government Insurance Office has a considerable advertising budget and he is determined to get all the value he can out of that advertising. Judging by the quality of the report, I should say that some of that thinking and outlook will be reflected in at least part of the advertising and that those who complain about the present unattractive advertising can look for something better.

Mr. Hanlon: If you let him go, he might take over some of the private insurance companies.

Mr. HILEY: He might well do that on his own.

The hon. member for Kurilpa raised the question of stamp duty. At this stage I cannot elaborate on indications given in the Budget speech. As soon as possible I will bring down a Bill for the detailed purpose of that amendment.

On the question of ambulance payments, I want to correct something I said by way of interjection when I said that I thought we paid a contribution of somewhere about £50,000. The State Government Insurance Office paid £100,000 to the hospital services and we pay an amount totalling £4,250 to the ambulance service. We pay that in a single payment for the whole State. Back in 1959-60 it was £3,000. We have revised that figure on three occasions since 1959-60 and all I want to say to those interested in ambulance work is that we are always prepared to look at a case if it is prepared and presented to us. I hope that some of the people who bewail that it is not enough will take a little time off to prepare a case. If, for example, the Brisbane brigade can demonstrate on its past record of calls that the amount should be so much greater, that is a fact we would take into account. We want something better than the bald statement, "I would like more." I get used to that. In fact, that seems to be the standard approach of everyone I deal with as Treasurer. The hand is always out; they always want more. But it goes deeper than that; they have a responsibility to show that they are entitled to it. To the brigade throughout Queensland I would say, "Prepare your case if you have one, and we will have a look at it." We have already increased it three times since 1959-60. If we can be shown that there is justification for it we will have a good look at it.

The Leader of the Opposition asked for a statement on the purpose of tomorrow's trip overseas by Mr. Chalk and myself. The Thiess, Peabody, Mitsui company asked the Premier for an elucidation and discussion of the financial aspects of a proposal for a direct railway from Moura to Gladstone. As this is a combination of railway and financial matters the Premier in his discussion with the company agreed that Mr. Chalk and I should be sent, as being the best able to assist. Neither of us regards the sudden call to make

this trip with any pleasure. It came on the shortest of notice. We expect to be away, at the shortest, seven days, and, at the longest, 11 days. Those who have had experience of such trips know that that is no joy-ride. The hurried trip involves the adjustment of my programme of legislation, which is half-prepared. It will be quite an embarrassment for me to fit in the rest of my legislative programme and to meet this call at the request of the Premier. I am sure the same applies to Mr. Chalk.

Mr. Duggan: If he wants some non-computer help there, I know of some willing fellows.

Mr. HILEY: That makes about 79 on the list. I have been inundated with offers. Even a woman who sold me a newspaper assured me with a smile that nothing would give her greater pleasure than to carry my port.

On this subject of trips to discuss important matters such as this, I think that one of the stories of Australian development in the 1960's has been the willingness of some of the men who have been signally successful in this field to do this sort of thing. One of my best friends in Australian politics is Charles Court, who is Minister for Development in Western Australia. I would say that he is rarely home. He will go anywhere in the world at any time if there is an opportunity to get something for Western Australia. Charles Court has been signally successful. As the Premier found the other day when we had some important American and English visitors, they know Charles Court. He has met them in London and New York. He goes anywhere at all where he can see the chance of getting something helpful for Western Australia. As for Sir Thomas Playford, we know the many excursions he has made. If there is a chance of a pulpwood factory for his State he drops everything and goes off to see if he can get it. He, too, has had a fair measure of success in this direction. Coming nearer home, it was not many months before his retirement from the office of Premier of New South Wales that Bob Heffron led a mission overseas and was away for many months. He told me himself that he found that it brought and promised New South Wales quite a number of interesting developments. I believe that if we adopt the attitude that we are going to sit at home and expect Mohammed to come to the mountain we will not be building many new mosques.

I believe that it is logical to show preparedness when the call comes, and we think the opportunity is worth it, to suffer some inconvenience in making a hurried trip. There is plenty of precedent for it. I hope that on this occasion it will succeed in a further enlargement of this tremendously important export trade, one that I can assure hon. members on world terms is highly competitive. It is not one where we can sit back and say, "We are sitting on top of the world; you come to us." If we do that we will miss out.

We have competitors both at home and abroad. We have to be prepared to move in order to get this development for Central Queensland.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the way in which the last adjustments were made in comprehensive insurance premiums, pointing out that premium rates were higher and that no-claim bonuses have been enlarged, so that at the end of four years the rebate would be as high as 40 or 50 per cent. There were two variations in that. Firstly, there was the age-group loading. I point out that the age-group loading, in terms of which those under a certain age are asked to carry a minimum franchise for every accident, is the result of cold, hard experience gained from a survey of accidents. It is a sad thing, but we have to accept it, that the nimbler the man and the more agile the limb—that is, the group under 25 years of age—the more accident-prone he is. The people comprising this group may have physical advantages, as in their speed of nervous reaction, but they miss out in some other way—in balance of discipline or some other feature—for the plain fact of the matter is that the average driver under 25 is much more accident-prone than the average driver over 25. Hon. members may ask me, "How do you draw the line of demarcation so precisely? These things are never precise. They are always vague; there is no fixed point." However, that is the age which statistics tell us is the logical division between the more accident-prone youngster and the sober and more sensible person.

Mr. Duggan: I think most of us accept that.

Mr. HILEY: The second point concerns the extension of the no-claim bonus for comprehensive insurance. I point out that the average claim for comprehensive accidents is still only for about £50. Sometimes people have two or three accidents a year. It is not at all uncommon for a man to have several comprehensive claims in the course of a motoring lifetime. However, that is completely different from third-party claims because, with third party, a person may drive for 50 years without a semblance of a claim, and then have one accident the result of which will swallow all the premiums that he and his children, and his children's children, will pay for the rest of their lives. A verdict may be given against him for £15,000 or £20,000, and hon. members can well imagine how long it will take to recover that sum. It is not the same as a no-claim bonus, which is a very apt and suitable incentive in the case of comprehensive policies, where, on the average, claims are small and fairly frequent. However, no-claim bonuses are not at all suitable for compulsory third-party insurance where the claims are relatively infrequent but, when they come, are for jolly big amounts. That is why it has been felt that no-claim bonuses are inapt in compulsory third-party insurance.

The Leader of the Opposition raised the point that that principle should at least be extended for the compulsory third-party hirers. It seems to me that, if that principle were accepted in relation to third-party hirers, it could not be denied in any compulsory third-party case. In other words, if it is right to admit a no-claim bonus for hirers, it must surely be right to admit a no-claim bonus for owners. The same disability applies commonly to both, and my feeling is that that is not a remedy which would be suitable. I repeat that I am not prepared to support anything that means that the injured person gets less than full justice. That is not where the remedy lies. Other matters have been considered by the committee assisting me, and I hope I will not have any interruption costing me several precious weeks in the middle of this year, and that we may be able to get together and bring to this Assembly something that will provide at least a measure of remedy for both.

Finally, the Leader of the Opposition commented upon Mr. Justice Stable's strictures—and I use the term "strictures"—in Pearce's case. That case upset me very considerably. I had a new board and I had found it necessary to say that, as much as I admired the work they had carried out in many aspects in setting up the Nominal Defendant Committee, I felt that their decision in Pearce's case had some evidence of un wisdom, and I was particularly unhappy about the way in which the case had been argued before the Court. I was somewhat upset over the fact that it had been contested; I thought that was a decision of doubtful wisdom. I was even more unhappy about the way in which it was argued. I was unable to persuade the members of the committee to accept my reaction to the judge's strictures. I left the committee in no doubt as to my feelings. I felt it would be very bad indeed for the Nominal Defendant Committee and for the whole theory of the nominal defendant practice if there was a repetition of the sort of stricture which had been laid down by Mr. Justice Stable in that case.

Mr. Duggan: The victim is at a distinct disadvantage because he cannot identify the party for a start.

Mr. HILEY: I agree. I sent the question of diligent search and inquiry—one of the matters raised by Mr. Justice Stable—to the committee, and gave them my view of it. I asked the committee for their comments and suggestions, but the committee so far have expressed difficulty and doubt concerning the appropriateness of the remedy. It seems to me that it is a simple case, and I will be interested later to hear the reaction of hon. members to it. Suppose I am knocked down by a motorist, whom I say is a hit-run motorist, and I cannot identify him. If I get word promptly to the police in the area, surely that is evidence that I

have taken steps to ensure that a reasonable search is made for that person. What is my power to do it? I am knocked down and am in hospital. Even if I am not in hospital, what can I do except roam around like an amateur private detective? The police are the proper people. The law insists that they should be notified. If a person who claims a nominal defendant injury caused by a hit-run merchant goes promptly to the police, co-operates with the police, and gives the police all the information in his power, my personal view is that he should be held to have discharged all the responsibility of diligent inquiry and search.

Mr. Smith: You will have to amend the Act.

Mr. HILEY: That may be, and I am quite prepared to amend it. I do not think that is an unreasonable approach.

Mr. Duggan: I will go along with that.

Mr. HILEY: Good. So far the reaction I have had from the Nominal Defendant Committee is adverse, but I have not let it go. It is still on our table, and we are working on it. Particularly in the light of what has been said tonight, I find myself in no disagreement with the general attitude adopted by hon. members to this point. We set up a Nominal Defendant Fund for only one reason, namely that we are shocked and appalled at the hopeless position of the victim of the hit-run motorist, and the unregistered motorist. This is a humanitarian act. When we start off with a humanitarian purpose, we cannot be too prudish about the measures we take to carry out that humanitarian purpose. I know there are a few trumpery cases—we have already struck some—but we cannot, because of those few cases, assume that every person who claims a hit-run is trying to take us on. There are genuine hit-run cases. I think we have to strike a happy balance and be reasonably careful in our approach, but not be so blindly insistent on casting on that person an onus of proof far beyond his capacity to reasonably discharge. Pearce was helpless in hospital for many weeks. Immediately he came out of hospital, he paid a visit to the scene of the accident, just above Yandina, and made inquiries. To me that was not consistent with the attitude of a man trying something on. He told the police while he was lying helpless by the wayside, within minutes of the happening. Then as soon as he got out of hospital he went up to this "S" bend near the Maroochy Bridge, just before Yandina, where the accident occurred, and inquired of the neighbours to see if he could pick up any clue; but the point was still taken against him that he failed to make diligent search and inquiry. My latest quarrel with the committee was that this matter was argued before the Court in a manner that was unreasonably harsh and restrictive. The committee does not agree with that. It is my personal view and I stick to it.

Mr. Smith: This is not the only one. There have been a number of these that have gone as far as the Full Court and been opposed by the board.

Mr. HILEY: Well, that is all that I can say. I have made my attitude clear, and I welcome any evidence placed before me. We have to give this provision a chance to work reasonably. I do not want to make it an open door so that some people can collect blindly and unworthily, but I am not prepared to see it become something of a Star Chamber in which helpless citizens face an impossible tribunal. That is my attitude.

Mr. Duggan: That is a fair one, and I approve of it.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Hodges): Order! By agreement, under the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 14 October, I shall now put the questions for the Vote under consideration and the balance remaining unvoted for the Treasurer.

The questions for the following Votes were put, and agreed to—

£

The Treasurer—	
Treasury	2,790,254
Balance of Department, Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds and Loan Fund Account	50,008,610

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 9.7 p.m.