

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 1967

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

QUESTIONS**INVESTIGATION INTO ADMINISTRATION
OF CAPRICORNIA REGIONAL
ELECTRICITY BOARD**

Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Industrial Development,—

(1) Did Mr. Priestley, manager of the Townsville Regional Electricity Board, recently spend some time conducting an investigation into certain aspects of the administration of the Capricornia Regional Electricity Board?

(2) If so, (a) over what period was the investigation conducted, (b) what aspects of administration were investigated, (c) what other persons, if any, assisted Mr. Priestley in the investigation, (d) has any report been made on the matter by Mr. Priestley and, if so, to whom and (e) will Parliament be apprised of the terms of the report and, if so, when and in what manner?

Answers:—

(1) "On the recommendation of its manager, the Capricornia Regional Electricity Board, in September, 1966, sought the assistance of the State Electricity Commission in arranging for an internal review of the Board's organisation, staffing, and procedures, with a view to advising the Board on the most efficient use of its technical and administrative resources, and its capacity to meet future abnormal growth in the demand for power in Central Queensland. In response to the Board's request the Commissioner for Electricity Supply appointed a committee to undertake this work, comprising:—Mr. L. R. Thornton, Chief Engineer, State Electricity Commission of Queensland (convener); Mr. H. T. Priestley, manager, Townsville Regional Electricity Board, with the prior consent of the Board; and Mr. K. D. Viertel, secretary, State Electricity Commission of Queensland."

(2) "(a) This review was conducted at various times convenient to the Board and to the persons undertaking it between December 1, 1966, and November 14, 1967. (b) Engineering and administrative organisations, staffing, and procedures having regard to the abnormal growth rate to which reference has already been made. (c) See Answer to (1) above. (d) Yes. The committee has submitted a report to the Commissioner for Electricity Supply, who has transmitted it to the Capricornia Regional Electricity Board. (e) The committee's report, which was prepared at the request of the Board, is a confidential Board document on its internal organisation, and its disposal is a matter for the Board."

RURAL EXTENSION DEPOSIT SCHEME,
TOWNSVILLE REGIONAL ELECTRICITY
BOARD

Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Industrial Development,—

(1) Has the Townsville Regional Electricity Board borrowed money individually from potential consumers to finance the necessary connections to their property under the board's rural expansion programme? If so, what amount has so far been borrowed?

(2) Has the opinion of the legal advisers of the board been sought as to the legality of this form of borrowing? If so, what was the opinion?

(3) Were most of these loans to the board negotiated through an insurance company? If so, what is its name?

(4) Has any legal opinion been recently conveyed by the insurance company to the board? If so, what is its text?

Answers:—

(1) "The Townsville Regional Electricity Board, in common with all Regional Electricity Boards, has introduced a rural extension deposit scheme which enables prospective consumers to advance money to the Board as a deposit against the payment of future electricity accounts, this deposit being used by the Board towards the cost of extending a supply of electricity to the person who makes it. This scheme was introduced because of lack of normal loan capital to meet all the requirements of the electricity supply industry, and it was designed to give prospective rural consumers the opportunity of helping themselves to obtain a supply of electricity, and helping their electric authority to provide it, in the absence of which rural electrification would be greatly impeded. The scheme is similar in all respects to a scheme which has operated in the State of Victoria for many years, and which was introduced there for similar reasons. Contributory schemes of one sort or another are in practice in all States. An amount of approximately \$400,000 had been deposited with the Townsville Board up to September 30, 1967."

(2 and 4) "Any opinion which the Townsville Regional Electricity Board may have received from its legal advisers, or from any insurance company, is a matter for that Board. However, certain legal aspects which have been raised in connection with the scheme are at present under consideration."

(3) "Under the Rural Extension Deposit Scheme the sources from which a prospective consumer may obtain funds for the purpose of making his deposit with the Board are a matter for him. I believe that these are varied, and that a number of financial institutions have been interested."

RECOVERY OF FEES BY HOSPITALS
BOARDS

Mr. Houghton, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

Are Hospitals Boards restricted in any way from adopting recognised legal or other processes to secure the payment of charges imposed for intermediate or private wards, particularly where it has been established that such patients declined accommodation in a public ward because they considered it socially unacceptable?

Answer:—

"Patients electing to use intermediate or private ward accommodation are required to pay fees prescribed in the regulations under *"The Hospitals Acts, 1936 to 1967"*. Hospitals boards are bodies corporate and may use the full processes of relevant law to recover such fees."

RESEARCH INTO RESTORATION OF
SAND-MINED AREAS

Mr. Sherrington, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

With reference to a recent Press article in which he, at the opening of the treatment plant of Queensland Titanium Mines Ltd., Rainbow Beach, is quoted as stating, *inter alia*, "With the assistance of the Mines Department and Soil Conservation Branch they were constantly developing new techniques for the restoration of dredged areas, whether they were located in high dunes, ocean fronts or back areas",—

(1) At what location is experimentation being carried out on high dune restoration?

(2) What is the height and area on which the research is being carried out?

(3) What ocean beaches and back areas are presently the subject of the research?

(4) What methods of restorative work are under investigation?

(5) How many persons are actively engaged in the research?

Answers:—

(1) "Experiments in high dune restoration are presently in progress on Special Mineral Leases Nos. 931 and 974, North Stradbroke Island, held respectively in the interests of Titanium and Zirconium Industries Pty. Ltd. and Consolidated Rutile Limited."

(2) "Research in regard to restoration of mined areas is in progress on dunes up to approximately 100 feet above sea level on Special Mineral Lease No. 931 and approximately 300 feet above sea level on Special Mineral Lease No. 974, North Stradbroke Island. The size of experimental areas presently would be of the

order of 5 acres in the case of Special Mineral Lease No. 974 and of the order of 15 acres in the case of Special Mineral Lease No. 931."

(3) "Stabilisation of beach surfaces is proceeding on Special Mineral Lease No. 84, Maryborough, in the Inskip Point area, and in back areas as indicated in (1) and (2) above. An excellent example of restoration of a recently mined back area can be viewed on and adjacent to the old Railway Reserve at Tugun."

(4) "The planting of grasses and trees, the use of mulch and various types of cover designed to arrest sand drift and thus promote early establishment of these various species."

(5) "Exact numbers cannot be given as various crews are rostered to these tasks, in addition to other duties, as operations progress."

ERROR IN JUNIOR EXAMINATION PAPER

Mr. Hughes, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to a typographical error appearing in Question 7 of Business Principles and Practice, Second Paper, in the 1967 Junior Examination, such error showing Premises Account as \$1,000 whereas the figure should be \$4,000?

(2) Is he aware that this error has misled students and caused loss of time, confusion and anguish?

(3) Will he issue instructions to examiners to take this error into consideration when marking papers?

(4) Will he ensure that students are not penalised in any way because of the error?

Answers:—

(1) "A fault which developed in the reproduction when the examination papers referred to were being printed resulted in the figure '4' appearing to be the figure '1' in some papers. This fault would not have been apparent when the proof copies were being checked by the chief examiner and the assessors."

(2 to 4) "It is appreciated that some students could have been confused by the fault, and in such an event examiners always make allowances in favour of the students. This will be done in the case of this particular question."

COSTS OF SALK AND SABIN VACCINES

Mr. Hanson, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) What are the details of the comparative costs of Salk vaccine and Sabin oral vaccine?

(2) Does his Department give any subsidy to Local Authorities for launching campaigns involving the use of the vaccines?

Answers:—

(1) "I would inform the Honourable Member that Salk vaccine and Sabin oral vaccine are supplied free by the Commonwealth Government. For this reason, the comparative costs of these immunising agents are not available to this Department."

(2) "No. The Queensland Health Education Council supplies local authorities with the pamphlets and posters necessary for use in an immunisation campaign free of charge and, as stated above, vaccine is supplied free by the Commonwealth Health Department."

USE OF PHENACETIN

Mr. Hanson, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to recent adverse comments by the Commonwealth Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee concerning the use of phenacetin?

(2) As there is also adverse opinion available from leading medical practitioners and as there are suitable substitutes now on the market, has his Department considered the banning in retail establishments of powders or tablets containing this dangerous drug?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "The availability of phenacetin as an analgesic was discussed by the National Health and Medical Research Council at its meeting in April, when it was decided: (a) That a warning label, similar to that required by the United States Food and Drug Administration, drawing attention to the possible dangers of taking phenacetin should be required on all preparations containing phenacetin when sold without prescription; the warning should read as follows:— 'WARNING—THIS MEDICATION MAY BE DANGEROUS WHEN USED IN LARGE AMOUNTS OR FOR A LONG PERIOD'. (b) That following the introduction of such warning labels the Medical Statistics Committee be requested to investigate and report upon trends in the incidence of renal papillary necrosis in selected hospitals, and that further consideration then be given by Council to the possible need to list phenacetin in Schedule 4 of the Uniform Poison Schedules, that is, available only on a doctor's prescription. The necessary amendment to the Food and Drug Regulations has been made to provide for the warning notice and the trade is being given a reasonable time to sell existing stocks. Action will be taken to implement the regulations from January 1, 1968."

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST OUTBREAK OF
FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE

Mr. Porter for **Mr. Lickiss**, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Is he aware that due to an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the last two weeks in Britain, more than 50,000 head of cattle and sheep had to be destroyed?

(2) As the outbreak is reported to have occurred near the English-Welsh border and has already spread to a large number of counties and owing to the rapid transport system between Britain and Australia and the constant danger from aircraft and ships' refuse, is he satisfied that adequate precautions are being taken to protect the Queensland livestock industry from this and other dreaded diseases?

Answers:—

(1) "I am aware that foot and mouth disease recurred in the United Kingdom in recent weeks. Although I have no details of the number of outbreaks or the number of stock destroyed at this stage, I have been informed that the outbreaks were of such proportions as to warrant sending a senior veterinary officer from the Commonwealth Department of Health and the chief veterinary officer from the Victorian Department of Agriculture, to England, at short notice, to gain experience in eradication procedures at first hand."

(2) "I am advised that, in addition to the normal careful quarantine measures taken, the clothing and footwear of all travellers from the United Kingdom who have had any contact with farm animals or abattoirs during the past three months, are now receiving special attention from the Commonwealth Quarantine Service. I am satisfied that the Quarantine Service, both general and animal, is alive to the additional risks in the present situation and is acting accordingly."

ENTRANCE TESTS AND TRAINING OF
POLICE RECRUITS

Mr. Bromley, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

Further to his Answer to my Question on November 3 regarding entrance tests and training of police recruits,—

(1) With regard to part two of his Answer, does this mean that (a) police recruits are given no aptitude or intelligence tests to discover whether they would be suitable as policemen and (b) the examinations in English, Arithmetic, and General Knowledge are made up by the recruiting officer wherever he might be and are not standard for the State?

(2) Will he establish in-service courses for policemen wishing to improve their knowledge and ability in matters relating to the law and the Police Force? If not, why not?

Answers:—

(1) "(a) The Police Depot training period of a recruit, at present approximately four months, and the first year of his service as a constable are considered to be lengthy periods of testing of his aptitude and intelligence. If at any time during those periods he is considered to be unfit to continue in the police service he may be discharged. (b) The preliminary examinations in English, arithmetic and general knowledge are made up by the recruiting officer at the Police Depot on a standard pattern for the State, and are forwarded as requested to centres at which applicants sit for examinations."

(2) "Funds are not available at present to provide staff and facilities for in-service courses for policemen generally. This subject will continue to be reviewed from time to time in the light of availability of additional funds. The Department frequently issues written instructions to all members of the Police Force concerning matters affecting their duties. Every member of the Police Force has been supplied with copies of a number of Acts and regulations and a manual containing approximately 850 pages of information relating to law and police duties."

EXPENDITURE ON NARBETHONG STATE
SCHOOL FOR VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

Mr. Bromley, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) Adverting to his speech on Supply on October 24, as recorded in *Hansard* No. 10, page 1121, when he said *inter alia*, that \$40,000 would be spent in this year at Narbethong State School for the visually handicapped, will he detail the work to be undertaken and the individual amounts allocated for the work?

(2) When will the work commence and when will it be completed?

Answers:—

(1) "The additions to the Narbethong State School for the visually handicapped, proposed to be commenced in this financial year, include two classrooms, library, principal's office, staffroom, stationery and equipment stores, canteen and garage. Individual amounts have not been allocated for the work."

(2) "Subject to Executive Council's approval of the expenditure involved it is proposed to commence the work in the first quarter of 1968. It is expected that the work will be completed before the end of that year."

EXTENSION OF ELECTRICITY SUPPLY TO
CHILLAGOE

Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Industrial Development,—

In view of increased mining activity in the Chillagoe area and as a power supply would greatly assist local residents and

would also permit lighting of the Chillagoe Caves, will he consider extending electric power from Almaden to Chillagoe?

Answer:—

"The position concerning the extension of electricity supply from Almaden to Chillagoe, as conveyed to the Honourable Member in Answer to his Question in March 1967, is unchanged. The Cairns Regional Electricity Board has accepted this extension as a future construction project. However, its inclusion in the works programme will depend upon its economic justification in relation to other projects in the region. Any increased demands for power which may occur as a result of the mining activity referred to by the Honourable Member will improve its prospects. However, the Board at present has no evidence of any such increased demands."

PAPER

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Statements in connection with the Operation of the Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Fund for the year 1966-67.

SUPPLY

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—ESTIMATES—ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH ALLOTTED DAYS

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

ESTIMATES-IN-CHIEF, 1967-68

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS

CHIEF OFFICE

Debate resumed from 14 November (see p. 1677) on Mr. Fletcher's motion—

"That \$1,820,112 be granted for 'Department of Lands—Chief Office'."

Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT (Mackenzie) (11.22 a.m.): I enter the debate this morning to have something further to say about the Department of Lands. Yesterday there was extensive debate on the brigalow lands, and today hon. members have an opportunity to discuss the whole ramifications of the Department of Lands.

Before proceeding, I again pay a tribute to Mr. Eric Muir, who is to retire at the end of this year, and give my thanks to Mr. Roy Sallows, who retired earlier in the year and who played an important part in the growth of the townships of Moura and Blackwater, where so much development is now proceeding. I should also like to convey my thanks to Mr. Gordon McDowell and Mr. Brian Heffernan, who are members of the Land Administration Commission, and other officers of the Department of Lands who have assisted me in any way.

In common with many other hon. members, I have had my problems over the years, particularly in relation to sub-standard areas which did not provide an adequate living for settlers in various parts of my electorate. I thank the Minister and his department for what I might term "coming to the party" and, wherever possible, granting additional areas to those with sub-standard blocks. The settlers concerned are grateful for the assistance they have received, and they have now become useful members of the community. If settlers are prosperous, the whole district benefits.

Much was said yesterday about brigalow areas, and comments have been made about pre-development. I wish to clear up a misunderstanding that has arisen on this point. There will be pre-development only where the country is very difficult. That is the position, I take it?

Mr. Fletcher: That is right.

Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT: There will be many blocks in Area III from which settlers will be able to derive income right from the start, as the land will contain a large amount of forest country on which a considerable number of stock can be run immediately. This area also contains much more water than the other areas. Careful planning and designing of the blocks will be needed, because thousands and thousands of acres of land in Area III will be inundated in times of flood; but, as I said, I am pleased that the department will undertake pre-development only in instances in which the country is particularly difficult.

Another point on which I wish to comment is the suggestion that has been bandied about the Chamber that a man must have \$200,000 to make a success of a brigalow block. I hope that impression does not get abroad, because men such as Jack Lingard, who lives not very far from my own property, who has 7,000 acres of brigalow country and who had no opportunity of getting money under a scheme such as the brigalow lands development scheme, will confirm that he went onto that block with no more than \$24,000 in hard cash; today he is a very successful settler and a very useful member of the community in which he lives. For that reason I say it is wrong to give the impression that a settler needs \$200,000 when he takes up a brigalow block.

More men of the Lingard type are needed, and there are many of them in Queensland. They should not be allowed to go in with less than \$24,000, but, at the same time, I do not wish to deny anyone the right to try to make a success on a limited amount of capital. If a person wishes to undertake a crash programme, which, of course, is the ideal, he must have a large amount of money. On the other hand, hon. members want to see good Queenslanders on the land, men who will work their way up, and men of that type usually have only a limited amount of finance. I again stress that a settler needs

a reasonable amount of finance, otherwise he is destined to fail, and there must be a minimum. In my opinion, it should not be less than \$24,000 in hard cash, not in assets that cannot be readily converted.

There has been much discussion in this Chamber of the Nogoia Dam scheme, which is another facet of the progress in Central Queensland. I believe that it will be of great importance not only to Central Queensland but also to West and North-west Queensland. Because of its ideal situation, it will result in fodder being available in Central Queensland at a much more reasonable price than at present.

I have always argued that the Commonwealth Government should "come to the party" with taxation concessions on fodder, because I think more people would store fodder in good times and have it available in times of drought if the relevant taxation concession was made more liberal. Any hon. member who has had experience of buying fodder knows that at the beginning of a drought one can feed cattle or sheep, whatever it might be, at a fairly reasonable price; but before the drought ends, when the demand becomes great, one is paying six to eight times the original price for fodder. In many cases a person would have done better by allowing the stock to die or by selling them to the meatworks or someone else for what he could get for them. In my opinion, therefore, the storing of fodder should be encouraged at all times.

That brings me to the point that I believe that bulk silos should be erected in the central and north-western parts of the State so that fodder can be stored, and I suggest that the Commonwealth Government should again be asked to grant a taxation concession to the people who store fodder.

I wish to say something in this debate about the need to develop the Cape York Peninsula area of Queensland. I am one who has always believed that we must have balanced development. We must have the small man, the large man, and the large company. Without those three categories, we cannot get very far. That is evidenced by the fact that in the electorate of the hon. member for Gregory, and also in the Quilpie district and other areas, there are men who years ago had tremendous bank balances and were good tenants of the Crown, but who today are in serious financial difficulty.

It would be completely ridiculous to expect young men with limited capital to settle in those parts of Queensland. That is one reason why I, for one, go right along with the department's approach in trying to have something done in the Cape York Peninsula area. If this country is made available, irrespective of how it is financed it will be all to the good of Queensland. If one travels through the peninsula area, as I have done in my capacity as adviser to the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs in the management of its properties, one must realise that this is a big man's country; it is for

the big man, not the small type of settler. One sees there properties such as Mitchell River and Edward River, which contain 1,792,000 acres but are running only about 6,000 head of cattle. Up to the present we have not had a complete bangtail muster to ascertain the correct figure, but my estimate is that the cattle that have been mustered on the two properties would not exceed 6,000 head. Weipa is another property. It contains 876,000 acres and would be running about 600 to 800 head of cattle.

If one looks at the properties that have been bought by the group led by Sir William Gunn, including York Downs, Silver Plains, Gibber Gunyah, Laura, and Batavia Downs, one sees the very same thing—huge tracts of country with virtually nothing on it because the people who owned it did not have the wherewithal to do the job.

We are living in an age when we must have this sort of development—and we are getting it. Batavia Downs comes quickly to mind, because while travelling through the area I had the opportunity of seeing something of it. It was owned by a gentleman named Kelly, who had many leases tied up through that part of the peninsula and was doing virtually nothing with them. He had a property known as Cody Hill, at Bamaga, on which he had not run a beast for 10 or 15 years. That sort of thing is not good enough and it is time something was done about it.

I pay tribute to the department for getting in and trying to do something in this area. We must have settlement and people, and the only way to get them is by getting the necessary capital in to have the job done. What is more, these people have not been allowed to go onto these properties and obtain special concessions; they are getting only the normal type of lease and they must effect some \$200,000 worth of improvements on each lease. They will employ people and get cattle into the area. What is more, these cattle will not be the substandard cattle we so often see today in the peninsula area.

One has only to look at the Mitchell River area to see some very good country. I know only too well that the Government and particularly the Minister in charge of the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs, is conscious of the need to get moving. We will be able to carry out the job and do something for the Aboriginal people there. It is an excellent property. Of course, it is isolated. It takes 28 days' droving to get cattle out from Mitchell River to Mungana, from where they are railed to Mareeba. We must have big money in there to do the job, because the problems are far beyond the capacity of the small man to handle. Only recently it cost \$23 a head to rail 41 bulls from St. Lawrence to Mitchell River. That gives some idea of the heavy cost of transporting stock to that area.

Before hon. members opposite become critical of these things, they should have a look at the problems first hand. Once they

appreciate the difficulties they might be able to offer something constructive. It is no use their being critical of the fact that these people—

Mr. Pizzey: Any one of them could get a lease if he wanted it. That includes the hon. member for Port Curtis.

Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT: Probably he would have the finance, too.

I am always interested in talking to the hon. member for Tablelands about the problems in the Cape York Peninsula area. Living in that area, he probably knows more about certain aspects of them than I do. At the same time, by visiting the area I have been able to find things out for myself. All we want to do is a good job for the State. We do not want to place on a political basis something that is very necessary.

Many members of the Australian Labour Party amaze me with their criticism. I can think back to March, 1954, when Croydon was sold. That property contains 334 square miles of country; it is situated 132 miles from Rockhampton and is served by a bitumen road. No resumption rights or developmental conditions were placed on the sale of that property. I do not think it would be possible to get a better deal than that. That is what happened under the Labour Government. It was a property owned by the Government, being part of the Queensland-British Food Corporation aggregation. If hon. members opposite wish to be critical of the present Government's history of land development, I remind them that their party has nothing to be proud of in its record.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT: There was a time I thought the Labour Party had a pretty good land policy. That was when it opened up Mundubbera and Biloela. However, when it found that it was getting prosperous people on the land rather than peasants, it changed its policy. It came in with substandard areas, such as those at Gibber Gonyah and Wallaby. They are the types of blocks that this Government has had to face up to and provide additional areas. Do not let us revert to that stage; let us get on with the job and adhere to adequate areas rather than substandard areas. I am always prepared to pay tribute to a good scheme, but at the same time I am entitled to be critical of schemes that are not good.

North Queensland really needs development, and I urge my Government to continue to press forward. I want to remove any impression that I am one who always wants small areas. My belief is that we need good, common-sense, balanced land development.

Mr. HANSON (Port Curtis) (11.40 a.m.): I am very grateful for this opportunity to participate in the debate on these Estimates, because the Department of Lands, with all its ramifications, plays a very important part in the functions and activities of government. In view of the widespread functions controlled by the department, and the vast area of our State, we must exercise extreme caution in our approach when determining matters of importance pertaining to the land.

During the first 50 years of its political history, this State did not make very much progress in land matters. However, after the State received the benefit of a Government which looked after the interests of the little man and removed from the Statute Books many of the iniquities and oppressions that were imposed under the powerful influence of the "squatocracy", which prior to the turn of the century used its power to control the vexed question of land settlement, the situation changed.

Prior to the advent of the Labour Party in this State a considerable area of Crown land was alienated and passed into the hands of the very powerful people who dominated this Parliament. Thanks to the good sense of those who eventually formed the great party of which I am proud to be a member, many of the major injustices inflicted on the State as a whole over the years were removed by various amendments to legislation which gave the little man greatly increased opportunities for a better livelihood.

In speaking to these Estimates, I join with other hon. members in tendering my congratulations and thanks to many of the grand men in the Department of Lands who have materially assisted not only me but many other members of Parliament. They have given the State very valuable public service. Many of them are of the old school and work assiduously for long hours in the interests of the department and the Public Service. I tender my thanks to the many officers who are retiring, particularly the Chief Commissioner of Lands, for their services over the years.

I also thank Mr. Roy Sallows, who retired early this year. I knew him long before I entered Parliament. He was a very valuable officer and was very popular in the Central Queensland district. I recall that he served in the Lands Office in Monto and was well known to many graziers with whom I am friendly. They speak in very eulogistic terms of the wonderful service rendered by Mr. Sallows.

Yesterday I listened intently to the debate on the brigalow land development scheme, and on Tuesday I listened intently to the speeches of hon. members on the Government side in the debate on these Estimates. There have been some excellent contributions, in which the Country Party has come to the fore. It is indeed refreshing to note that many of them have studied the subject, and I commend them for their contributions to the debate. I do not know whether the Cabinet

vacancy that is looming on the horizon has anything to do with this, but I notice that the hon. member for Mackenzie, for the second time in two days, rose to his feet this morning and made a very enlightening speech. That is only what could be expected from a man of his vast experience in land matters.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the hon. member that we are not discussing a Cabinet vacancy.

Mr. HANSON: Many of the statements made by members of the Country Party on land matters are very much in conflict with those of their so-called political friends and allies, the members of the Liberal Party. The Labour Party is unequivocally opposed to the freeholding of rural land. That has been part and parcel of our policy for years, and we feel very strongly on this point. It was only as a result of the system propagated by the Labour Party that many people in the community were able to obtain and work their own blocks of land. Many people anxious to obtain a parcel of land would have been debarred from doing so by the high capital cost involved in many freehold ventures.

The Labour Party has nothing to be ashamed of in its record. For instance, as the hon. member for Mackenzie mentioned, in the 1920's Labour Governments under Theodore and McCormack were responsible for opening up considerable areas of brigalow land surrounding Biloela and Monto, and the Callide Valley and in part of the Upper Burnett district. The old Public Estates improvement depots carried out wonderful work in those centres. In the allocation, subdivision and development of that land we were responsible, as a Government, for seeing that many people obtained land on very low deposits; the first year's rent, one-fifth of the survey fee and a few pounds as a deposit put many a man on the land. Years after, through sheer hard work, many of them became quite wealthy. It is not true, as the hon. member for Mackenzie suggested, that Labour's land policy changed completely because of this. Possibly, as the settlers grew affluent they tended to forget the good work done by Labour years ago.

I firmly believe that members of the Labour Government, and the Labour Party as it exists today, are fired with ambition to see that Queensland has considerably more people in it than at the moment. This can be done only with the implementation of sensibly planned land settlement schemes throughout the State. We can keep this country for ourselves, enjoy the heritage that has been handed down to us, and live in this great land of sunshine, with its wonderful resources, only by encouraging people—a considerable number of them—to work and develop it. If some plan similar to that of the Labour Party is not undertaken by the present administration within the next few years, envious eyes will be cast on our land by people

who are certainly not our friends and who are desirous of obtaining large areas of our vast open spaces.

I am very pleased at times to receive the recognition of the hon. member for Mackenzie. He makes a fine contribution when speaking on land matters, and is one member of the Government parties who acknowledges the wonderful work and schemes promoted by the Australian Labour Party some years ago. Arguments do, of course, arise from the differing lines of thought in the parties comprising the coalition, and this is seen at times in this Chamber in criticism of the Minister for Lands by some members of the Liberal Party. That is something that in my opinion is not conducive to good government and sound administration. I—and, I am sure, the general public—would prefer to see members of the coalition parties settle their differences within the party rooms, instead of openly engaging in all sorts of backchat and argument every time land matters are before Parliament, or when headlines can be obtained in the Press.

I do not say that in any nasty way because, after all, members of what is known as the "ginger group" of the Liberal Party do make a very detailed and studious examination of many matters pertaining to rural policy. They obviously spend many hours on research, and their contributions are very fine indeed. Although I do not agree with them politically, I concede that they show a considerable sense of responsibility in these matters and make very effective contributions. Indeed, they are quite willing to go out on the hustings and openly demonstrate to the public how strongly they are in opposition to the Minister for Lands and the policies that he implements. "The Courier-Mail" of 24 February, 1966, reveals that this same group in the Liberal Party brought to Queensland a senator from Western Australia, who appeared with some of them at the saleyards at Nerang, in the South Coast area. The report says—

"A group of Liberal Party members yesterday defied the roars of bulls to take their rural policy to a crowd of Gold Coast dairymen.

"The Liberals spoke at the Nerang saleyards, eight miles from Broadbeach, where the Country Party was holding its conference."

Those who were there included the hon. members for Clayfield and Mt. Coot-tha, a former mayor of the Gold Coast—Mr. Harley, a great friend, though an opponent, of the hon. member for Albert—and the senator from Western Australia. This gentleman said there that the Liberal Party was second to none in its interest in rural matters, and had made many improvements, including the establishment of the Development Bank for long-term rural investment. He went to great lengths in eulogising the rural policy of the Liberal Party.

At times in this Chamber the rural committee of the Liberal Party is referred to in sneering terms by members of the Country Party. They refer to them as "city cow-boys", and want to know when they are going to wear jodhpurs and broad-brimmed hats in Queen Street. Country Party members strive to convey the impression that their Liberal allies know nothing at all about land matters. Although I have not the slightest agreement with members of the rural committee of the Liberal Party on many matters—indeed, I am diametrically opposed to them politically—I acknowledge that they carry out a considerable amount of research.

The visiting senator from Western Australia, who is chairman of the Liberal Party's Federal Rural Committee, incurred the anger of the Minister for Lands, who said there were minor elements within the Liberal Party who were carrying the banner for land aggregations and corporations. He openly slayed his friends in the coalition.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member for Port Curtis is going to deal with the Lands Estimates and will discontinue the line of argument he is pursuing at the moment.

Mr. Davies: It is something the public should know.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HANSON: I was attempting to make the point, Mr. Hooper, that the public is very unhappy about the policy of the Department of Lands in general, and particularly unhappy about the division within the administration on land policy.

Government Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HANSON: Not only is there political disputation relative to the land policy in Queensland; there is also inter-departmental disputation relative to it. The Department of Lands guards jealously the land that comes under its control, and there has been considerable argument over many years between the Department of Mines and the Department of Lands about land matters. There is a further intrusion upon the control of the Department of Lands by the Department of Industrial Development in the field of industrial land, and considerable disputation has occurred between the two departments because of that. The Department of Lands, ever-eager and ever-anxious to safeguard its rights relative to land, is finding that it is up against a department that is continually crying out for land for industry and trying to usurp some of its functions. If the administration does not face up to this problem and ensure that the allocation of land is approached in a sensible way, no matter by which department, the State will suffer, because the present land policy is very detrimental to development. I do not wish to pursue that matter any further.

Let me turn now to harbour lands. The former Treasurer of the Country-Liberal Government, Sir Thomas Hiley, brought down amendment after amendment to the Harbours Act, so much so that authorities desirous of vesting under their control land on the waterfront have at least three different ways of doing it. I should mention that on many occasions their applications have been dismissed by judges in appeal courts. That is very much to be regretted, and it is certainly not in keeping with what one would expect from a good, sane and sensible Government embarking on a planned system of land development.

I note that mention is made of weedicides and poisons in several sections of the report of the Land Administration Commission. For many years it has been the policy of the department to supply weedicides and poisons to graziers and farmers at cost, freight free to the nearest rail centre, for the treatment of noxious plants and timber on their holdings. Recently a chemical known as Tordon has come into prominence. It has revolutionised the destruction of trees and has done away with a considerable amount of the labour and hardship involved in ring-barking. I have seen an area in my electorate that has been treated with Tordon, and the treatment has been very successful indeed. I have asked the administration to embark upon a policy of making this chemical available free on rail at cost price to landholders, in the same way as other poisons and weedicides are made available. Unfortunately, it cannot do that because the company that manufactures Tordon will not release it to the Department of Lands.

This is something very much to be regretted. After all, the graziers and landholders are paying for this chemical and I maintain they are being ruthlessly fleeced. As a matter of fact, the cost per gallon of Tordon would be no more than a couple of dollars—actually, it would be about \$1, but it costs about \$19 or \$20 when the grazier buys it from the retailer. It is manufactured by Dow Chemical Co., which is involved in the setting-up of the fertiliser-manufacturing plant at the mouth of the Brisbane River. A couple of weeks ago we saw considerable concessions given to these people relative to the land they will occupy. If they are getting these concessions from the Government—they come into this country with the desire to invest their capital—they are obliged in return at least to play the game and see that people are not, as I said, ruthlessly fleeced and charged exorbitant prices for the products they manufacture.

I wish this chemical well; I feel it is revolutionary. As many graziers have explained to me, it possibly could be improved upon, but even as it is it will relieve much of the arduous work associated with the ring-barking of properties.

Before resuming my seat, I should like to mention matters pertaining to estate improvement and reclamation. Whilst I

do not want to be parochial in any sense whatever, I feel it is imperative for the department to take strong action on the delay by the Commonwealth Government in seeing that the rifle-range area in the town of Gladstone is opened up for settlement. I raised this matter in my maiden speech in this Chamber in 1963, and I think it is imperative that more action be taken. The rifle-range area has not been put to any use for many years. It had a road through it that the water engineer used to get to the Gladstone water scheme, but apart from a couple of cars that might occasionally park there and at times a game or two of "swy", this land has never been used in the interests of the people. It is very good land, close to the town, and for its future development it is necessary that the Commonwealth should abandon its present dog-in-the-manger attitude. I think the Minister should get tough and for once show a bit of strength and see that this land is brought under his control. If he does not want to develop it himself, he should see that tenders are called and have it thrown open for development.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: Is there somewhere else that they will be able to have their game of "swy"?

Mr. HANSON: They can easily be accommodated.

I should like to see this matter conscientiously looked into by the Minister. I firmly believe that the future progress of the town will be retarded unless some action is forthcoming in this regard.

In the matter of estate improvement and reclamation, there are several areas throughout the State that have shown marked improvement, but in growing communities such as the one I come from, and in the Cairns and other areas, there is room for considerable further improvement. It is a pity there is not enough money available, while the chances for investment are present, to see that the needs of industry, as I might class them, are met. This is vitally important, as I have said, to the future of this community at least.

I should like also to impress upon the Minister the necessity for encouraging young men to join the Department of Lands. I understand that his office is having a very difficult time in obtaining competent staff. One has to be in the office for many years before being able to hold a major position within the office.

(Time expired.)

Mr. E. G. W. WOOD (Logan) (12.5 p.m.): Before addressing myself to the Estimates, I propose to make some comments about the Minister for Lands. I do not propose to eulogise him in any way, because his standing in this Chamber and in the community is such that there is no need for such comment from me or any other hon. member. I am greatly concerned that some hon. members

are talking about the Minister's replacement in the Lands portfolio. I view such a suggestion with considerable concern because, without doubt, the holder of this portfolio must be a man who does not wilt, bend or break under pressure. For that very reason I, for one, would be very sorry to see the hon. gentleman replaced. These useless conjectures that we presently hear should be left to the future. I assure the Opposition that the coalition Government is quite able to conduct its own business without the assistance of hon. members opposite—and it will do so.

I pay tribute to the departmental officers for their courtesy towards me and the local authorities in my electorate. They have been of extreme assistance from the local-authority point of view. Although I had many years' experience in the Department of Lands, during recent years I have dealt mostly with the departmental officers through the local authority. I wish to thank them particularly for their efforts on behalf of the Redland and Albert Shires. Their efforts at Stradbroke North in opening up Point Lookout have been commendable. They have done splendid work there. Amity Point itself is disappearing by erosion, so the Redland Shire proposes to open up a new township of Flinders. It is receiving the assistance of the Department of Lands in this direction. The assistance of the Minister and his officers has been most helpful to that council. The amount of money made available for Stradbroke North has been very acceptable, as it has been in the Redland area and other parts of my electorate. I thank the Minister and the department very much.

I have had many years' service in the Department of Lands. I propose to weary the Committee for a brief time by relating my experience over this State so that hon. members can evaluate what I seek to put before them. I was a land commissioner in the Cloncurry, Roma, Mackay and Toowoomba areas. I also served in Brisbane and other parts of the State. I was seconded to the Commonwealth Government to split up the Northern Territory on the basis of the report of the Payne-Fletcher Commission. I spent several years in the Northern Territory.

I mention these matters merely to show that I spent a number of years dealing with valuations in the Land Court, the Land Appeal Court, and other tribunals. Although I do not set myself up as a valuer I have had fairly successful experience in that sphere. Nevertheless, when I raise my voice on the issue of the Hardie Report I do so with some diffidence because my leaders have not come to any agreement on it. For that reason I do not know whether it is ethical for a member on this side to speak about it. So much has been said, however, that I propose to speak on it also, and put forward the other side.

When the hon. member for Windsor spoke in this Chamber the other night and submitted various principles of valuation, he prefaced his remarks by saying that he had no personal interest in the matter. I assure him there was no need to say that. Every hon. member in the Chamber was well aware that he was speaking in the interests of the State and giving us the best possible advice. I agree with what he said, legally, for he is an able barrister.

The principles of valuation are clearly set down, and they can be followed. However, from my point of view it is useless to claim that valuation is a precise science. It is nothing of the sort. As the hon. member said, certain well-defined valuation principles can be followed. They are inculcated into valuers in a series of examinations and teachings throughout the State and as a result, valuers have certain standards. But let it be very clearly understood that some of the best valuers in the country areas are unqualified men—men who have not passed any examinations.

The hon. member said that valuing is a science, but to me it is nothing of the sort. If two valuers kept within the boundaries of the valuation principles as they are clearly set out, whether it be in London, Queensland, or elsewhere they could not arrive at anywhere near the same figure; they would be at least 20 per cent. apart. That is a common occurrence.

Mr. Smith: That is not right.

Mr. E. G. W. WOOD: I accept that interjection from the hon. member. I acknowledge that he is a legal authority. However, when we in the shires get valuations both from the Valuer-General and from a local man, they differ to that extent. The Minister will agree that, in cases in which the department is not satisfied with original valuations, those made by his independent officers vary. In such circumstances, it cannot be said that valuing is a precise science and that valuers will get reasonably accurate results. Valuing is obviously an opinionated guess, and learned judges in the history of this State have used exactly that expression.

I accept the contributions of the hon. member for Windsor and, on the same terms, I accept those of the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha. I do not doubt that the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha is completely sincere in attempting to raise valuation standards in this State, and I should say that he has a very keen knowledge of the position. But so, too, did Sir William Payne, who was a barrister and had much more experience of valuing than either of those two hon. members. Sir William Payne sat on many commissions; he was even sent to Malaya to report on land matters in that country. He was virtually a world figure, a barrister in his own right, and President of the Land Court, yet he propounded the theory of equity and good conscience, which, in broad terms, is the round-table principle of valuation.

If valuers succeed in doing away with the Land Court as the tribunal for fixing valuations and establish a court wherein the rules of evidence are strictly applied in an attempt to get a precise valuation—when a precise answer cannot be given—and if the usual round-table discussions in the Land Court are to be set aside, I emphasise that no truer valuation will be obtained in the proposed new court to be established under the Hardie Commission findings than would be obtained in the Land Court. That is one of my reasons for opposing the Hardie Report.

The hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha mentioned a large number of organisations, including the Queensland Council of Agriculture, that gave evidence before the Hardie Commission. I speak for the local authorities, for my own people, for the small people. Make no mistake about it; once a person has to go to a higher court where the rules of evidence are applied he must have legal representation, which is very costly. The smaller people will go overboard.

In the 1940's, when I was a land commissioner, I was present at an appeal from the Valuer-General to the Magistrates Court, if I remember correctly, at Cloncurry. I knew the valuations precisely. I saw the magistrate attempting to give judgment on the matter according to the strict rules of evidence. The result was chaotic. If, after years of experience, men like Sir William Payne evolved the principle of equity and good conscience and continued with the round-table atmosphere of the Land Court, it is not for me or anyone else to say that it should be altered. I quite agree that we must improve and must raise our standards as the years go by. But there are certain basic principles of valuation that will not alter in the next 100 years and there is no reason to replace the present tribunals.

Mention was made that the Land Court is an administrative authority. It is nothing of the sort. It is a completely independent tribunal, over which the Department of Lands has no control. It was also said that as all these matters eventually come to the Land Appeal Court, what is the difference? Let me give some figures in this regard. Cases dealt with by the Land Court, in open court, relating to decisions during the year ended 31 December, 1966, were as follows:—

Rental determinations (all tenures)	2,915
Determinations of unimproved values of land for the purpose of lessees' applications under the freeholding provisions of the Act	484
	<hr/>
	3,399

Appeals were lodged against these decisions of the Land Court in 41 cases out of the 3,399, as follows:—

Appeals from rental determinations—
By lessees—12 (7 subsequently withdrawn)

By Crown—1 (subsequently withdrawn)
 Appeals from freeholding values—
 By lessees—15
 By Crown—13

The Land Appeal Court is the only ultimate authority for the Land Court. It is not used to a great extent. Therefore, we should look very closely at the Hardie Report. I have dealt with this matter at some length, although I felt somewhat diffident in doing so as the matter should have been left until a later date when the Government has certain matters for our consideration. However, as it was raised, it would be quite wrong for me not to state my opinion.

Another important issue raised in the Hardie Report is retrospectivity. The report says that if industrial land is being held as residential land and has more value as industrial subdivision, two valuations, namely, one for industry and one for residential, should be put on the land, and if the land is subdivided in five years' time the owner should pay the higher rate for that period of five years. It has been suggested that this principle be applied also to farming or rural lands. In a lot of cases rural lands are subdivided only when a farmer dies, so that in addition to the amount that the widow would have to pay in ordinary death duties, there would be a five-year backlog in rates.

I should like to know how any valuer could possibly put a subdivisive value on land in broad acres if he is not an engineer, if he does not know how many allotments are to be produced, if he does not know the drainage difficulties, and if he does not know what the requirements of the local authority will be for five, six or 10 years. How can he possibly arrive at a subdivisive valuation. There are also other matters concerned in the question of retrospectivity which could make it completely iniquitous, and I have very strong feelings on it.

I have dealt rather extensively with valuations, and in the short time now at my disposal I wish to say something about timber treatment on proposed freeholding areas. In my opinion, the purchase of timber is becoming much too complicated a procedure. The intention was that the Crown should retain the timber under certain conditions, and remove it later. That is a very unsatisfactory arrangement. If a person owns freehold land, he does not want the Crown controlling the timber on it. Timber has a value only while limited quantities of it are on the market, and its value to the Crown is realised in royalties only when it is gradually introduced to the market and goes to the mills. Timber has only a potential value, not a present value. There is throughout the State a good deal of leasehold land, and on it there is a lot of standing timber. Even if it is necessary to go 70 or 80 miles away to find a basic property with somewhat comparable timber, I think that from it, with appropriate adjustments, a value could be arrived at for timber on land to be freeholded, without

all this paraphernalia of trying to adjust the value over the years to one that does not exist today but is created only when timber reaches the mill. Let us go to the nearest comparable timber-stand sale, no matter how far away it may be, and fix the value of timber for all time. Standing timber has a value only in relation to the market for it. That is something that I think has been lost sight of.

I heard the hon. member for Port Curtis eulogise the previous Government in its handling of land matters. I served under that Government for many years in the Department of Lands, and consequently I know its good points as well as its shortcomings. Its policy was not wholly bad—no policy is ever wholly bad—but it had some serious deficiencies. At St. George the land was subdivided into 1,280-acre blocks; now, 10,000 acres, with about 3,000 to 4,000 sheep, is regarded as a living area. That was an unrealistic policy, and similar examples are found throughout the State. It is a matter of trial and error, and hon. members opposite were not astute enough to learn quickly. We have been much quicker to learn than they were.

I have made a study of land matters since I entered this Parliament, and I can see the difficulties that the Labour Government experienced because of its limitation on the freeholding of areas. Let me take three places—Toowoomba, Warwick, and Roma. In the Toowoomba and Warwick areas a freeholding policy held sway in the early days. What is wrong with the Darling Downs today? Would the Warwick area and the Toowoomba area have been better off under leasehold than under freehold? The Roma area was virtually all under leasehold, and settlers suffered because they could not give security to their families. I think it was about 1931 that a Labour Government stopped issuing agricultural farm leases and converted to perpetual-lease tenures, and at that time the land subdivisive policy collapsed in this State.

Mr. Houston interjected.

Mr. E. G. W. WOOD: The land administration policy of Labour Governments was good in some respects, but it had serious deficiencies. The policy of the present Government is more fluid and buoyant, and more conducive to settlement. Consequently, I say that the Minister for Lands is to be congratulated on his efforts, and I again wish him every success in his office in the coming years.

Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (12.27 p.m.): It is rather remarkable that the discussion of these Estimates should coincide with the introduction of the Brigalow and Other Lands Development Acts Amendment Bill. Perhaps it is a good thing that the two debates are taking place so close together in time; in my opinion, the scope of this debate has been widened as a result.

I compliment the Minister on the manner in which he submitted his Estimates to the Committee and on the information that he supplied. I assure him that it was appreciated by all hon. members. In endorsing his kind references to retiring officers of the Department of Lands, I wish to refer particularly at this stage to Mr. Eric Muir, the Chief Commissioner of Lands. I have a very happy recollection of my association with Mr. Muir. As a matter of fact, during my term as Minister for Lands I appointed him to the office that he now holds, and I well know what he has had to put up with over the years. I shall deal with that subject later.

A number of other valuable officers of the department worked very closely with me, and I should like to acknowledge and say how much I appreciate the assistance given to me by Mr. Matthews, Mr. Sallows, and Mr. Burge, who have all retired.

You will remember, Mr. Hooper, that leasehold was the only tenure in existence when the Country-Liberal Government decided to introduce freeholding. The department never at any time told tenants, "In future, your tenure will be freehold"; it left it entirely to them, and no-one was forced to accept freehold if he did not want it. Whether the tenure is leasehold or freehold, problems arise, and I should say at the very outset that, although I had sat in Opposition for 20 years before taking over the Lands portfolio, I did not realise that land administration was so difficult, so contentious, and so different from the work of other departments. I think the Minister will agree that he, too, did not really understand what the problems were. It is not possible to cut a pattern and say that it will apply in certain districts and that another pattern will apply in other districts, north, south, east, or west. It does not work out that way.

There is a peculiarity about human nature that I think we must realise. It is that when we are sellers we are one type of person, and when we are buyers we are another type. We have to accept human nature just as it is. When a lessee had a complaint he would come to me and lodge it, and find fault with the administrative officers. It was very difficult to say whether he was right or wrong. I mention this point because Mr. Muir has had to take the brunt of all these differences. People would come to me and say, "He is the most unreasonable man in the world." I believe they were quite sincere in the statement, that they honestly believed what they said, but they were buyers and were perhaps looking for a better deal than they were getting.

I emphasise the point that at the time when we were freeholding, no Minister or Government would be justified in giving away the Crown estate. If we were going to freehold land, it had to be freeholded on reasonable conditions and at fair values. At that time, a lessee had the right to a

review every seven years. I amended the Act in that time to make it every 10 years, but at the end of every period, if he did not like it, the lessee could appeal to the court. However, when he entered into a freehold agreement it was for all time and he had to continue his payments.

I honestly believe that all the land has been freeholded on very reasonable terms. I do not think we can dispute that. In some cases it was freeholded at perhaps a good deal less than its real value, but since I have left the department people have come to me and said, "This man will have to go," referring to Mr. Muir, or some other officer. I can assure hon. members that whoever follows Mr. Muir will have to be prepared for a pretty tough job, and I think the least we can do is express our gratitude to Eric Muir for the service he has rendered to the State of Queensland.

When I went into the office as Minister, Mr. Muir was my Chief Assessor, and land commissioners, although capable men, are only human. When a dispute arose I would go to Mr. Muir and say, "I should like you to look at this and tell me what you think of it." If I was still in any doubt I would look at it myself, and, in fairness to Mr. Muir, in nearly every case I found him pretty right. There were no prejudices on my part. All I wanted to do was to see that everyone got a fair go. Somebody had to be the buffer, and as I said earlier, hon. members do not realise what one is up against in this department. Some of these men do not pull any punches. They do it in good grace, of course, feeling they are justified and right.

The hon. member for Port Curtis made a very excellent contribution on the question of freeholding, and I compliment him on it. Long before I entered this Parliament I was aware of the differing views on freehold versus leasehold, the advantages and disadvantages of each, and so on. Let us remember that a large part of Queensland is not suitable for freehold, and it would not be wise in the interests of either the Crown or the lessee to freehold some of the far-flung blocks. The people concerned certainly could not afford to freehold, and I believe that in such areas it is wise to have both tenures. However, when we get down to the question of actual development and improvement of land, the landholder wants security of tenure. If he is improving his land, particularly if it is a small block, he wants to know that it is his very own and that everything that he puts into it will be his. Unless that is so, it will be found that in a great many cases the work that should be done is not done. Experience in the past has shown that to be so. The reason we were given again and again was, "If I improve this land as lessee all you do as Minister is increase my rental."

I do not know whether that was right or wrong. In my opinion, it was not just. Again, I have to accept the fact that I am

a human being, and perhaps I could be wrong. Someone has to take the kick. The other day the hon. member for Barcoo spoke about the Minister's vacating his office. I do not propose to comment on that suggestion other than to say that after his term of office he will be glad to be relieved of the criticism that attaches to the occupant of his present office, criticism which, in many cases, is most unfair. To do one's duty to the Crown and, at the same time, please all the landholders in the State is not an easy matter.

I should like to deal with a few points that have been raised during the debate, and refer to things that actually happened during my time as Minister. I think the Committee should know these things. First of all, I refer to the hon. member for Salisbury. In what I say, I am not being critical of the hon. member. I compliment him on raising two matters on which I think the Committee should be clear as to what is actually happening. First, he mentioned noxious weeds. I agree that the threat of noxious weeds is a serious one. He referred to the need for biological control and for more research work in this direction. I point out to him that a lot of research work has been carried out. It is no use waiting until you get a suitable insect or beetle, such as *cactoblastis*, because while you are waiting the weed you are trying to control gets away from you. My advice to property-owners in the past has been to take off their coats, roll up their sleeves and get on with the job, because it might take many years to find the right insect. Many people expect another *cactoblastis* to turn up whenever one is needed.

I remember having a conversation at the agricultural college at Gatton with some C.S.I.R.O. people who were doing research work with the object of eradicating nut-grass. I said to one of them, "I suppose you will get something some day?" He looked at me in a surprised way and said, "What makes you say that?" I said, "Because of the *cactoblastis* and things like that." He said, "It is a b—— pity that happened. They expect us to find a '*cactoblastis*' for everything." That is very true.

While people are waiting for some means of control, the noxious weeds get away from them. I refer in particular to *Harrisia cactus*. The *cactoblastis* insect will not touch that pest. I have never in my life seen anything like *Harrisia cactus*. As an indication of its rate of spread, I point out that when I was in office, although we were spending £100,000—not dollars—a year in an attempt to eradicate it, it was racing away from us. When I went to Collinsville to have a look around I found that it was not only on the property of graziers but also on blocks held by miners under miners' homestead leases. They were working in the mines and did not care for their land to any extent. They were probably running a few head of cattle that

they looked after at week-ends. I am not saying they were wholly responsible for the fact that their land was growing noxious weeds, because they were entirely ignorant of the danger that was looming over their heads. There were big graziers holding 60,000 or 80,000 acres of which they were using only half.

That is why I say that whoever follows the present administrators must see to it that people do not get a great deal more land than they can use. If people do not make use of the land they hold, they let it go to ruin, with the subsequent spread of noxious weeds. Had the problem of *Harrisia cactus* been attacked earlier we could have dealt with it. When I returned to Brisbane I reported to Cabinet that I felt there was only one thing to do to attack *Harrisia cactus*, and that was to offer special leases with special conditions at a reduced rental if so much of the land was cleared of this pest every year. In his report the Minister has indicated that the holders of those special leases are not doing what is required of them and that he will have to look at their future position.

This is a serious matter and action is urgently required. If those people who took advantage of the special leases and special low-rental conditions offered in my time are not living up to their obligations, they should be called upon to explain why they have not fulfilled their part of the contract.

If this pest is not dealt with it will become a real threat to the whole of Queensland. Birds carry the seed for miles, and it grows prolifically in the shade of trees. When timber is removed it can be controlled as it does not make fast progress. The only poisons I know of that will kill it—unless there are some later refinements—are the pentoxides, which are deadly but are also very costly. Even after the *Harrisia cactus* has been sprayed, that is not the end of it. The seeds germinate prolifically and it has to be exterminated again. The only way to control it is to cultivate the land, and I know that not all of the land can be cultivated.

The hon. member for Salisbury said that the Government diverted a great deal of money to developing the Sunshine Coast. I think I should tell the story about the development of this area. If anyone is entitled to credit for this development, it is the hon. member for Cooroora, David Low. One afternoon about six months after I took office, he and Mr. T. M. Burke, of T. M. Burke Pty. Ltd., land developers, saw me in my office on the ground floor of this building. They placed before me a multitude of plans relating to the possibilities of the North Coast. The hon. member for Cooroora was chairman of the Maroochy Shire Council at the time, and he told me of the possibilities. I said, "This scheme has possibilities if roads are built. There is a lot of Crown land in

the area that is only growing weeds and breeding mosquitoes. We may be able to do something about it." As a result, we introduced the Crown Land Development Bill, which Mr. Matthews and the late Sir William Payne helped me to draft.

But for that legislation, the road through this area would not be there today. The road was built and the land was leased to the developers. They were not given any "throw-in". They agreed to pay rental for 30 years, and they are still paying it. They built the roads, which had to be approved by the department and the shires, and they did not cost the Crown a cent. The hon. member for Salisbury may not know that, and I am sure that many other hon. members do not. I repeat that the main road was built without cost to the State; other roads have been provided; the land has been opened up; and the company is paying rental. As the company sells the land, the Crown continues to get its share of the proceeds. If that is not good business, I do not know what is. A residential area cannot be opened up without roads any more than an agricultural area can.

I believe that this story should be told in fairness to David Low and the other people responsible for this scheme. When they brought it to me I said, "How can we implement it?" They said, "You have some good officers in your department. That is for you to work out." A scheme was worked out and that is how the Crown Land Development Act came into being. That is how the road was built and how this territory on the Sunshine Coast was opened up.

I shall refer now to the matter of a living area and a starvation block in the brigalow land scheme. I said earlier in my remarks today, and yesterday, that standard blocks as living areas are not feasible. It depends upon the class of land and what it can be used for. In many cases in this brigalow country 4,000 acres is sufficient because the land has agricultural potential and is situated in an agricultural area. In fact, settlers are growing grain 100 to 150 miles farther out. I am very keen to have some of this land reserved for real farmers. If it is made available to graziers, for grazing purposes, when it is agricultural land, we are not doing our duty. If it were farther out in the country I could agree that 8,000 acres would be little enough, but in the present circumstances, in a great many cases it should be made available to the small man.

I am always in the working man's corner—the small man's corner.

Mr. Davies: Oh!

Mr. MULLER: The hon. member for Maryborough does not know enough about it; he does not know my policy. If he had done half as much as I have for

the working man, he would have a seat in this Parliament for the rest of his life. There cannot be development unless the sons of farmers, who have learnt this work, are given encouragement.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. MULLER: It would be much better for the Committee if the hon. member for Maryborough remained quiet. His interjections are not helpful; in fact, they are not helpful to his own case.

A person who goes onto the land must use the land. We must not make land available only to people who will use it for grazing, and we will do that if we confine it to those who have a large amount of capital.

Mr. O'Donnell: What would you estimate as the cost of developing 4,000 acres of this land and putting equipment on it?

Mr. MULLER: Half what it would cost to develop 8,000 acres. The hon. member was told yesterday that it would cost \$200,000 to develop it fully. I have no doubt that it would, although it depends greatly on the work that is done. If the farmer pulls the scrub and swings a fence around it and then leaves it to the suckers, weeds and rubbish, he will get out of it for a lot less. But if he provides water facilities, buildings, and everything else that is required, he would not get much change out of \$200,000. The Minister admitted that yesterday, the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha has said it, and I say it, and, as I have been on the land for a long time, I have a pretty good idea.

I realise that isolated cases could be cited of farmers getting out of it for less. No definite amount can be fixed. As I said, one farmer could pull the scrub, put a fire through it and grow grass for a certain amount of money. His next-door neighbour could do the same work and his only reward would be suckers. It is just as impossible to say how much it would cost to develop as it is to fix an area of land in a particular district.

A farmer who goes onto the land must go onto it as a businessman. He must examine his costs before he starts. It will cost him \$200,000 to develop his 8,000 acres. He must look at the economics of it. With interest at 6 per cent.—and today that should be regarded as reasonably low—he must pay \$12,000 interest on the \$200,000, and meet other costs as well to run the place. In addition, he has to keep and educate his family.

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: How could a man succeed, without finance, on the blocks you handed out when you were Minister?

Mr. MULLER: That is not a problem at all. The hon. member cannot name one person to whom I gave less than a living area. He came to me and I was prepared to meet him, and I did so. But I did not give anyone 8,000 acres if I thought a smaller area would do. I respect the hon. member's

opinion on land matters, but I still believe that some of this land must be reserved for the small man. I am keen about this, because I have seen it happen in many districts. To go in for grazing a man needs a large amount of money, but that is a different proposition. With agriculture on small areas we require men who are prepared to work with less money. We must have farmers who understand the land. They have limited capital, so they cannot go onto big areas.

It has been claimed that this matter can be approached in different ways. I agree with much of what the hon. member for Mackenzie said. We should not be personal in these matters because they are only matters of opinion. In a big question like this, no personal element or bitterness should enter the argument. We should consider what is best for the district and for Queensland's settlement in the next 20, 30 or 40 years. I say it should be done now, because the land in question is reasonably conveniently situated. If some of the smaller men were given holdings in the area, the district would bound along. It is only in sparsely populated districts that progress is not rapid. Where there are more people, one helps the other and there are more to share in everything.

I know that there is a diversity of opinion on tenures, and some members on this side of the Chamber think the land should be auctioned. Although there might be a great deal of wisdom in getting down to real values by auctioning, the smaller men would be kept out as they could not stand up to the bidding of those with a lot of money. I think the hon. member for Mackenzie will agree that these fellows will find that their way out is to sell when the time arrives. But they will not sell the land developed; they will sell with a lot of it undeveloped, and someone else will have to take on the job. I think that is a pity, as the matter could be approached in a much better way.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HINZE (South Coast) (12.51 p.m.): I join with other hon. members in commending the Minister on the way he has administered the Lands portfolio. It is a difficult office, and I do not think that very many people would care to take over the problems that he has been coping with for the last seven years. There have been two Ministers for Lands since the Government took office—the hon. member who has just resumed his seat and the present Minister. I have watched the Minister at conferences and in debates in this Chamber, and I can honestly say that on all occasions he has been able to hold his own. I congratulate and commend him on seven successful years in office.

The Minister will shortly be saying goodbye to one of his trusted friends and loyal servants in the person of Mr. Eric Muir, who has been associated with public office for 43 years. As he has spent a lifetime

in the service of the State, I could hardly make a speech on this occasion without referring to him. He is one who has given wonderful service to the State, and is well respected on both sides of the Chamber.

Although I did not know Eric Muir very well, in local-authority work I did get to know Roy Sallows very well.

Mr. Bromley: A good bloke.

Mr. HINZE: He retired from the Department of Lands this year and, as the hon. member for Norman says, he is a "good bloke". I also express my appreciation of his great service to the State.

I am quite sure that in Gordon McDowell and Brian Heffernan the State has a couple of young fellows who can ably fill the shoes of Eric Muir and Roy Sallows. I have had the opportunity of meeting them at deputations, and I know that they have the qualifications necessary to carry on the good work done by Mr. Muir and Mr. Sallows.

I noticed in the Press this morning that the Minister is to be honoured by having named after him a laboratory for research into biological and chemical control of pest infestations in this State. It is to be opened shortly by the Premier. I think that is very fitting, and I congratulate the Minister.

I know from my association with local-government work how costly pest and weed control is to this State. I refer particularly to the simultaneous groundsel destruction schemes. For a number of years the Albert Shire Council has spent about \$7,500 on treating roads in the shire, and I know that the cost to the ratepayers is quite considerable. As hon. members know, the groundsel bush grows prolifically in the region along the Gold Coast, in the Albert Shire, and along the North Coast, and it must be admitted that at this stage it has not been beaten. However, it is being held in check, and I am confident that the work of the research laboratory will make it possible to eradicate the groundsel bush from the very valuable coastal lands.

I know that within the last 12 months or so local authorities have requested the Minister to set up a special fund from which they can recoup the cost of eradicating the groundsel bush from the properties of ratepayers who do not comply with the provisions of the Act. Although local authorities had power to enter properties and clear the land, they were unable to recover the cost from the ratepayers, and the department agreed to set up such a fund. If the cost of clearing the land is not met within three years, local authorities have the right to sell the land to recover the amount they have expended. I made inquiries yesterday from the Albert Shire Council and was told that the fund is quite healthy and that the accounts of private property-owners are being paid within a reasonable time. It seems to me that the scheme has been very successful.

For the information of hon. members who may not know much about the groundsel bush, I point out that it costs up to \$1,000 to clear it from some properties, and that is a cost which recurs and has to be met year after year.

Mr. Newton: Is that cost for aerial spraying, or for grubbing it?

Mr. HINZE: The work is done by contract; it can be done either by hand or by aerial spraying. In some of the hilly country aerial spraying is by far the best method, provided there are no small crops or fruit growing nearby. As the hon. member for Belmont will appreciate, the drift from chemical sprays can have a very adverse effect on growing crops.

The Minister said that he believes that the Land Development (Fitzroy Basin) Scheme for the development of brigalow lands will be recognised as the most successful venture of its type in the history of Australia, and I am sure that every hon member in this Chamber would like to believe it will. I know absolutely nothing about brigalow country, and I do not propose to pretend to the Committee that I do. But it appears to me, sitting on the sidelines, that there is a very real risk involved in the scheme. It is very satisfactory, of course, to get from the Commonwealth Government \$72,000 for each landholder, provided he has \$24,000 himself.

The question was asked a few minutes ago, "What is it going to cost to clear this land?" I have made some inquiries, and I understand that it costs about \$3 an acre to pull, burn and seed; I should say that is a very conservative figure. I was told that buildings would cost about \$3 an acre and fencing and road construction another \$2 an acre. An analysis of those figures shows that they work out to about \$88,000 for an 8,000-acre block. Yesterday I heard an hon. member say, "It is all right on paper." Having analysed those figures, I do not think it is all right on paper.

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

Mr. HINZE: As I was indicating before lunch, the Fitzroy Basin brigalow development scheme is a major development in this State and is definitely an interesting exercise. I put some figures down on paper with regard to it. I know how misleading figures can be when analysing a major project such as this, but I allow \$3 an acre to fell timber; another \$3 to burn and seed; another \$3 was allocated for the building of a homestead, dip, yards, etc., and another \$2 for fencing. This adds up to \$11 an acre.

In his address the Minister mentioned that it was necessary to try to establish on these properties settlers carrying 400 to 500 head of cattle. 500 breeders today would cost anything between \$50,000 and \$100,000—that is, if one could get them. Assuming they cost \$50,000, it would mean that to develop an 8,000-acre property it

would cost \$88,000 for the purposes I referred to previously and a further \$50,000 for cattle. That is getting into big money, as hon. members can appreciate. The only point I am making here is that such a debt would take a lot of servicing. However, I heard the hon. member for Mackenzie, the hon. member for Roma and the hon. member for Carnarvon, all very experienced men in this industry, backing the scheme, and that is good enough for me.

I believe this is an excellent proposition for a man who is already established and who wants to settle his son in this type of industry. He already has the backing of his own property. It is also an excellent proposition for somebody who comes into the industry with more than the nominal amount of \$24,000. For anyone who has sufficient funds, of course, it could be a very attractive proposition, particularly when Commonwealth money, up to \$72,000, at a very reasonable rate of interest, is available. I do not attempt to criticise the proposal; I am simply voicing a serious note of concern, particularly for the young fellow going into the area who will have to battle, as I am told, for some considerable time.

I am particularly interested in the conversion of Gold Coast properties to freehold. In answer to a question that I asked within the last couple of months, the Minister indicated to me that there are 1,273 leasehold properties remaining in the Gold Coast. 220 completed conversion in the year 1966-67 and 264 are at present before the Commission. The Minister indicated that a sum of \$95,418 is received by the Crown for rental on leasehold properties.

I commend the Government for the steps it has taken since it came to office in making it possible to freehold property in this State, and I recognise also the fact that within the last couple of years the Minister has introduced into this Chamber legislation to alleviate some of the problems encountered. I refer particularly to the fact that it was previously necessary to freehold over a period of 10 years at an interest rate of 5 per cent. This period has now been increased to 20 years, free of interest.

I express appreciation to the Minister for granting rental remission to people in receipt of pensions. These people are very grateful for the partial remission of annual rents. Those who receive less than \$1,000 a year are assessed at \$15 a year, those receiving between \$1,000 and \$1,500 are assessed at \$30, and those receiving between \$1,500 and \$2,000 are assessed at \$50 annual rent. These figures represent very worth-while reductions made by the Minister on behalf of the people concerned.

There are still some problems with the conversion to freehold in the Gold Coast area. I mention the people on fixed incomes—superannuation and so on—who

are presently paying a rental of \$50 or \$60 a year. The rapid increase in valuations has made the position very difficult for them. Valuations on the Gold Coast have increased 35 times in the last 15 years. The total valuation of the Gold Coast for rating purposes is now \$80,000,000, twice the figure of any other provincial city in Queensland. The greatly increased valuations pose a great problem to those on leasehold properties who wish to convert to freehold. One of my constituents indicated that he desires to freehold, but instead of paying \$60 a year he will have to pay something like \$120 a year under the new valuation. It would relieve the position somewhat if it were possible to extend the repayment period to 30 years rather than the present 20 years. Obviously that would assist those who wish to freehold. This would create no precedent, because a 30-year period is already applicable in other parts of the State.

Another of my constituents said that it was costing him \$4,000 to freehold, but he much preferred to pay cash for the conversion. If the Government was prepared to give consideration to discounting for cash transactions it would be greatly appreciated by that type of person. It should be possible for the Minister to negotiate privately with those who are in circumstances that do not bring them within the ambit of the two proposals I have mentioned. It should be optional for people to freehold over a period of 20 years or, preferably, as I have suggested, 30 years or, if they have the funds, to make it a cash transaction with a discount applying.

I had an argument put before me the other day by some landholders who believed that they have some equity in their leasehold properties. One of them asked me what the position is if a leaseholder dies when he is approaching the end of his lease period. He wanted to know what the succession and probate duties authorities would do should a leaseholder die only one or two years before his lease came up for reappraisal. He was interested to know whether they take into account only the fixed assets on the property or whether they consider that the lessee has assets other than the visible tangible assets. This man definitely believes that people who have leasehold land have a degree of owner's equity.

People in my electorate are firmly convinced that there should be only one valuing authority—the Valuer-General's Department. They are simple-living people and are confused when valuers of the Valuer-General's Department and of the Department of Lands hold conflicting opinions. They believe it would be far better to have only one valuing authority in the State. They do not want to be faced with the expense of approaching a number of courts. They want to have their troubles settled as quickly and as easily as possible in an independent court. In this

respect, I know that the Hardie Report recommends that such a court should be presided over by a Supreme Court judge.

Another problem in my area is that some real estate agents are misrepresenting leasehold allotments to people who wish to purchase land in the area. One of my constituents wrote to me along these lines—

"Further to domestic leasehold land, I find in my search for information that the Real Estate people are possibly at the foot of some of our troubles as they do not always present leasehold land in its true light when making a sale.

"I find that they rarely have all the facts of the land offered, and emphasise the low present rental, 'only shillings', they say, and gloss over or do not mention re-valuation.

"One agent I quizzed had a lot of leasehold land on his books for sale, but had only two cards showing the date of the end of the present tenure when re-valuation and re-assessment of rental would take place.

"You will agree that this must be rectified and you may care to place the following suggestions before the Minister of Land, Attorney-General or whatever department is concerned.

"I suggest that when leasehold land be listed for sale, a document supplied by the right authority, be filled out and when the sale takes place, is signed by the Vendor, Buyer and the Agent.

"In this way there could be no misrepresentation of the facts and no subsequent complaints.

"The document could read—

Description of property and area
Type of lease
Present lands department valuation \$.....
3% of \$..... is present annual rent of \$.....
Date of next valuation month
..... year.	

"Valuation will be based on sales of comparable land in the area and rent calculated at 3% of that value.

Next period of tenure at this rent will be 10 years.

Land may be freeholded at any time at a current valuation over 20 years free of interest.

Signed: Owner

Buyer

Agent"

Those suggestions should commend themselves to the Minister.

Members of the Real Estate Institute called on the hon. member for Albert and me recently and indicated to us that it was their wish to be given the right to sell Crown land on the Gold Coast. That request has been forwarded to the Minister. I am not opposed to this proposal, provided the land

is first put up for auction. If it is not sold, I am then prepared to let the real estate agents handle it, as long as they are registered. I would allow institute members to sell the land because, as will be appreciated, they are specialists in their field. If the land is left unsold after auction, I have no objection to these people being allowed to sell it provided they are registered. They should be allowed to try to make a sale on behalf of the Crown.

A request has been received from Riverside Coal Transport Pty. Ltd. to land its barges on The Spit. I am strongly and vigorously opposed to this type of development on The Spit. It should be retained mainly for the maritime and aquatic type of development. My colleague the hon. member for Albert is having some problems at present with the land made available by the department at Hollywell. This has caused some controversy on the Gold Coast. People in that area object to Riverside Coal Transport Pty. Ltd. transporting mineral sands from Stradbroke Island to Hollywell. The company's trucks then go through a residential area. I say quite clearly and plainly that it is not much use shifting the landing point from Hollywell to The Spit, because high-class residential development has taken place in the Main Beach area, and if the barges come to The Spit the trucks will have to travel through the Main Beach area and over the new Gold Coast Bridge. I am quite sure the Minister appreciates that this is not desirable.

The Minister also referred to the development of the wallum country in this area, or the coastal lowlands, which is a preferable term. There is a wonderful future in the development of wallum country. Mr. Wilf Bryam, of the C.S.I.R.O., has proved that the annual net weight gain on this country, with ordinary rainfall conditions, is as follows:—

	lb.
1 beast to the acre	429
1 beast to 1½ acres	482
1 beast to 2 acres	546

The wallum country stretches from the New South Wales border to somewhere near Bundaberg. It is serviced by all the facilities required in modern-day living. It has a wonderful network of roads, electricity, rainfall between 50 and 60 inches a year, and telephone services. Anything that the department can do to develop the wallum country will be of benefit.

(Time expired.)

Mr. BEARDMORE (Balonne) (2.32 p.m.): I join with the many previous speakers who have congratulated the Minister on the manner in which he presented his Estimates. In my view, and perhaps in the view of many others, those people who devote their lives to primary production are vital to the economy of the State, and are more or less in a class of their own. A love of the land cannot be acquired; it is something that is

born in people, although many of them choose a career which does not give them an opportunity to gain a knowledge of the land.

A knowledge of the many facets of land administration is a necessary qualification for officers of the Land Administration Commission. The people of Queensland and the Government should feel gratified that we have a team of valued officers who are dedicated in their work.

I was glad to hear the Minister say that people on the land are valued people. That could be an understatement when we consider the heartbreaks that are experienced by primary producers. They have an obligation to take the good with the bad. Very often they must contend with shocking seasons, often coupled with low prices for their produce. Their increased costs cannot be passed on as is done in secondary industry and other business ventures. This has always been so and probably always will be so.

There is always a desire by keen young men to go onto the land. Some make a success of it, and some do not. But in every case the Government, and particularly the Department of Lands, has a moral obligation to see that their areas are large enough to ensure that a reasonable living can be got from them. Is it not better to err on the side of generosity than to give a man an area so small that everything has to go right for him to make a success of it? Experience over the years has shown that good seasons cannot be depended upon, and I think it is generally accepted that it is better to have two successful landholders than three occupying the same area but with little chance of making a living, even in a reasonably good season.

I have spent a lifetime on the land, and I have no regrets about the tough times I have encountered. I have a feeling that the tough times do something for a person, provided they do not break his spirit. But the game is tough enough without having to battle droughts and low prices, and I respectfully say to the Minister and his officers that they should be careful not to make areas too small initially, and that, wherever possible, the mistakes of the past should be rectified. In many instances they are quite obvious.

I am not for a moment advocating the making available of areas that are too large. Closer settlement is needed, but, in the light of past experience, let it be generous and sensible land settlement. I feel sure that we will then have a happier and more prosperous community of primary producers who will be able to stand on their own feet and become assets to this State.

I wish to place some emphasis on the uneconomic position in which wool-growers, in particular, find themselves today. The average price of wool sold at the Brisbane wool sale on Monday last was 42.58c a lb., which is recognised as less than the cost of production. This is the position following a period of drought. When the cost of fodder necessary to keep the sheep alive is

taken into consideration, it would have been more economic, from the owners' point of view, to allow the sheep to die. If that had happened, from where would the sheep necessary for re-stocking when the drought is over have come? It is a vicious circle, and the landholder is left "carrying the baby", frequently without anything in reserve. In many cases his life's savings have disappeared, in addition to any money that he has been able to borrow. It is a gloomy prospect, but one that has to be faced up to by those hard-working men and women who know no hours when it comes to getting the most from their properties.

The drought has reached tragic proportions in many western and south-western areas of the State. We know that the Government, in an effort to help drought-stricken graziers who found themselves in financial difficulties, re-enacted the Farmers' Assistance (Debts Adjustment) Act. The new legislation provided for a compounding of debts owing to creditors, after which the Government proposed to take over the balance of the debt, repayable on extended terms, at a low rate of interest.

From what I can learn, this legislation is not providing the relief that was intended by the Government. In practice, applicants are in many cases being refused assistance, the reasons given by the appropriate board of review being that they are credit-worthy and should arrange further finance from their financial houses, banks or wool firms, as the case may be. However, these organisations, in their turn, are not prepared to make further advances when they consider that the remaining equity would not justify sending good money after bad. A stalemate therefore occurs.

As I have said, I doubt whether the Government's intentions are being carried out and, if my assessment of the position is correct, those who were meant to benefit from this legislation could find themselves much worse off. Having presented a budget with the compounding of their debts in view, this could well be an embarrassment to them and trigger off action by creditors to recover money owing to them, they having decided that their debtors have no chance of meeting their obligations from available resources. That legislation was complementary to Federal legislation under which Commonwealth funds were made available to the State Government for distribution in this way. It would be interesting to know how many applications for relief under the Act have been accepted and how many have been rejected.

Mr. Davies: Can't you find out?

Mr. BEARDMORE: It would be possible.

I am not condemning the legislation outright, because I know of many who gained lifesaving assistance when the legislation was first enacted after the depression years. I am not ashamed to stand here and say

that it was necessary for me to take advantage of the Act to marshal my resources, and with that help I was able to get out of my difficulties immediately after the depression years.

The money is provided by the Commonwealth Government, as I said, and channelled through the Agricultural Bank. Perhaps a closer look at the way the legislation is working would not be out of place, keeping in mind the fact that creditors were more ready to make a compromise after the depression years. A distinctly different set of circumstances exists today, and creditors are not so ready to compound debts. I think one can understand their attitude.

Other hon. members have dealt with various aspects of what is known as the Hardie Report. I say here and now that I heartily support the retention of the Land Court and the Land Appeal Court as presently constituted. It has been pointed out by other hon. members that the present set-up gives the applicant for conversion the opportunity to go to the court and bring evidence to justify his claim that rentals assessed by the Crown in a particular instance are too high and so secure a satisfactory adjustment. Two factors stand out: firstly, the Crown's inordinately high initial valuation; secondly, the landholder's costs involved in going to the appeal court.

In my opinion, the Government's decision to allow freeholding up to a living area in various stages is the most valuable and practical land legislation made available to the man on the land in the last generation. Not only does it give an inducement to develop land years ahead of the time when it would be developed under leasehold tenure; it also boosts the State's economy by bringing about a large increase in primary production. This, in turn, is of benefit to all sections of the community. The Government is to be commended for its implementation of this sound land policy, which has hastened land development in a wonderful way.

Unfortunately, but perhaps naturally, anomalies pertaining to valuations and associated areas have crept in, and it may have been possible to avoid this happening. The most outstanding aspect is the difference in valuations between district and district, where the different thinking of the field officers of the department becomes apparent.

However, as most of the applications for conversion to freehold have been dealt with on the basis of valuations available, the problems are more or less behind the Government, and I am sure that the Minister will see that the comparatively small number of outstanding applications are dealt with as soon as possible.

I have confined my remarks almost entirely to the problems of the wool industry, with which I claim I am conversant. Cattle-men have suffered equally and are still suffering losses from drought. Fortunately,

cattle prices are on a high plane; but, again, this is because of a shortage of cattle caused by drought losses.

I have here an interesting book entitled "Pages from the Journal of a Queensland Squatter". The author is one Oscar De Saige, who in 1868 became member for Clermont and represented that district in the Parliament of Queensland for a considerable period. He had come up the hard way, from a very lowly beginning. He eventually won himself a fortune as a result of his land dealings, having accumulated vast grazing areas extending from the New South Wales border to Cloncurry.

Referring to land settlement in Queensland—this might interest the hon. member for Gregory—he had this to say, at page 351—

"Such grazing farms paved the way at no very distant date for smaller holdings growing endless crops of wheat and corn, for the breaking up of big stations now taking place to introduce the smaller lessee means surely in course of time the 20,000-acre grazing farm will in its turn be considered a monopoly."

That was in 1869.

He goes on to say—

"... but there is much to favour the reflection that 30 years hence Longreach may be the Chicago of Queensland."

In spite of his intensive land experience, how wrong he proved to be. I commend this book, which is in the library, to anyone who would like to read of the early days of Queensland. It is extremely interesting.

In conclusion, I wish Mr. Muir, Chief Commissioner of Lands, a pleasant retirement from his important and arduous task. He will no doubt look back with satisfaction at the part he has played in the development of the department that has been his responsibility over a critical and important period of land development.

I mention only three other important officers, in the persons of Mr. Gordon McDowell and Mr. Brian Heffernan, present members of the Land Administration Commission, and Mr. Neville Cook, who has recently been appointed as secretary of the Department of Lands. In these three men we have competent officers who I am sure will continue to carry on the good work of the department as before.

I again congratulate the Minister on the good work he is doing as head of his department.

Mr. P. WOOD (Toowoomba East) (2.48 p.m.): In speaking on these Estimates, I wish to refer to local matters of interest to Toowoomba people. However, they are such that they may also be of wider interest. I refer to land which is owned by the Government and situated within the city boundaries of Toowoomba. The areas to

which I refer are Redwood Park and Jubilee Park. I think the Minister is probably familiar with those two parks.

Redwood Park has an area of 458 acres and Jubilee Park an area of 698 acres, the total area of the two being 1,156 acres. As I said, the land is owned by the Government. It is set aside as park reserve land and comes under the control of the Toowoomba City Council as trustee. The two parks referred to are on the Toowoomba Range, one on the southern side of a spur and the other on the northern side. Both parks are covered in natural forest and could be described as scenic areas. Around the top of the parks, although not in them, is a scenic drive which has been constructed by the Toowoomba City Council, and, in the same area, considerable residential development is now taking place.

Redwood Park was once a fauna reserve. When I was a boy this area was set aside for the preservation of fauna, but many years ago all the wild-life in the park was removed to other areas because Redwood Park was no longer able to support the animals.

At that time the Toowoomba City Council lacked the finance to develop either Redwood Park or the park on the other side of the spur of the range, Jubilee Park. To the best of my knowledge no moves have been made by the Toowoomba City Council in the last 10 years to develop either of these areas. Being on the side of the Toowoomba Range, both parks provide many scenic outlooks over the range and the Lockerby Valley and, as such, they have value as tourist attractions. To my mind their chief attraction lies in the fact that they are areas of natural bushland closely adjacent to the City of Toowoomba.

I think it is important that, in all areas of rapid residential growth, as much of the natural bushland as possible should be preserved. Not all parts of these parks would be suitable for residential development, if that should ever occur. I certainly trust that such residential development will never occur. A suggestion was made about two years ago that some areas of Redwood Park should be set aside and used for residential purposes. I am sure that could not be done without the authority of the Minister and, knowing the Minister as I do, I do not think such authority would be forthcoming. However, we cannot answer for future city councils or future Ministers. All the land in question would be extremely valuable at some future date if it were in fact set aside for residential development. At the present time, choice building blocks on the edge of the range at Toowoomba are being sold for prices around \$5,000. That gives an indication of the value of land in the area. I cannot foresee that in the near future there will be any serious move to use this land as residential land.

Mr. Walsh: I think you would be very wise to resist any attempt to take away the park areas.

Mr. P. WOOD: I would strongly resist any attempt to take away the park areas, and that is my purpose in speaking. Of course, I do not want my remarks to be construed as suggesting that the present Toowoomba City Council is considering any such move. To the best of my knowledge, it is not. If any move did come from interests in Toowoomba to have this land made available for residential purposes, I feel it would be opposed by the Toowoomba City Council. But, again, I cannot speak for future councils.

This area is of great importance to Toowoomba, and I hope that at some time it might be convenient for the Government to declare it as a part of the State's national parks system. Both of these parks are admirably suited to national park purposes because of their natural attractions. I realise that the administration of national parks does not come under the control of the Minister for Lands, but the land that I am referring to is Government owned, and it is on that basis that I am making these remarks. I believe that in the interests of future generations in Toowoomba all available land suitable for the purpose owned by the Government should be set aside for national park purposes. Then there would be no worry at all that future generations might decide to use this land for other than park purposes.

The parks that I refer to are situated on either side of the Katoomba Point spur of the range. They do not join. I do not think it would be a difficult process to acquire the land between the two parks so that they could be amalgamated into one. The land separating the two parks is very steep. It is covered with natural timber and is of no value for farming or grazing purposes. It is far too steep for residential purposes.

I do not know who owns or controls the land between the two parks. It may be Crown land. If it is not, I cannot foresee any great difficulty in acquiring it for the purpose I have outlined. I suggest that the Government should open negotiations with the Toowoomba City Council with a view to investigating the desirability of acquiring Redwood Park and Jubilee Park, and adjacent lands, for use as a national park.

I do not speak as a spokesman for the Toowoomba City Council, which is quite capable of speaking for itself and making any necessary arrangements. An increased number of national parks is extremely important, not only in Toowoomba but in all parts of Queensland. It has been clearly indicated in Brisbane that as much bushland as possible should be retained around our cities. That is my sole purpose in speaking to these Estimates.

Mr. WHARTON (Burnett) (2.56 p.m.): I am indeed pleased to take part in this debate, and I do so in the hope of making a useful contribution. The land policy in this State, is important to all hon. members on both sides of the Chamber. I do not wish to embarrass the Minister with tedious repetition but I must say that I appreciate the way in which he presented his report to us.

Mr. Walsh: He has a tough hide; it is pretty hard to embarrass him.

Mr. WHARTON: To continue, I thank the Minister for the excellent report he has presented; it is typical of him. Without labouring the point, let me say that his counsel is often sought in many other fields of activity and, therefore, it is only natural that he should make an excellent contribution. His counsel on land matters is always well received. He is respected in this Chamber and much further afield—indeed, throughout the Commonwealth. The Minister, however, could not present such a report without the assistance of dedicated officers, and I feel I must compliment Mr. Muir and others who have played an important role in preparing it. Its high standard proves beyond doubt their dedication, and I commend them on the job they have done. I pay a special tribute to Mr. Muir, and wish him well in his pending retirement. And I express appreciation for the help I have received from many officers in the department.

Much has been said about the development of the brigalow lands, and the western, north-western, northern and the near-northern areas. I agree with a lot of what has been said because I realise that it is indeed important to develop these parts of the State. The Government has done a great deal in developing those areas quickly. I am not saying that no-one else has done a great deal in this respect, but first things must come first. The coastal areas were developed first because of the natural rainfall, and it was left to this Government to tackle the problem of developing areas farther afield, in the lower-rainfall areas. The Government has carried out a worthwhile job in its freehold policy and the granting of living areas of a decent size to compensate for the varying rainfall and drought conditions.

While all those matters have been of great benefit the amount of finance that has been made available is even more significant. If the Commonwealth Government is providing the necessary capital to ensure proper development in these areas, we must thank it for helping to overcome the many problems. Development in western areas and under the brigalow scheme requires a good deal of finance—and long-term finance, too. I wonder if we in this great State have at our disposal adequate finance for this kind of undertaking. The lending institutions are doing a grand job but with the present high standard of mechanisation and high

cost of development generally we need more finance, and I welcome the entry into the lending field of further banks and institutions that might be able to render financial assistance to those who pioneer this development.

Freeholding has been a grand step. We must not get carried away with what has happened in the North or the Near North or the West; we must consider all the districts of the State in which land has been freeholded, and there is still some Crown land in those areas. Sometimes we get carried away with the big schemes. They are big schemes, and I commend the Government for having implemented them, but we must not lose sight of the efforts of people who are developing and working their land in a highly intensive way. Our land policy results in intensive development and high production, particularly in the closely settled areas and the brigalow lands. At one time it was possible to run cattle on large areas without providing more than the basic improvements. But today we have intensive development in the coastal areas, which are the better rainfall areas of the State. We must remember that this pattern is developing further afield. The people in the closely settled areas must not be forgotten because they constitute the great bulk of the community. Closely settled areas mean more people, and we need more people to share the cost of amenities and to ensure the progress we are striving for and deserve.

The wallum lands are in the belt of better rainfall, and it appears that their development will be greater than it has been in the past. My electorate contains large areas of wallum land. I appreciate the good job being done by the Department of Forestry in developing it. Forestry plots have been established on land suited to that use. I know that forestry is not the concern of the Minister for Lands, but the wallum land is, and I compliment him for the development that is taking place. I hope there will be more development in those areas. They have an assured rainfall and that is what matters.

In the drier western areas, as the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha said, bore-drilling schemes should be put into effect. This would be an important feature, even in the closer settled areas. We have some water-boring equipment but it is not nearly enough or efficient enough to cater for the needs of this great State where water is a basic need. We have good land—and the brigalow land is good land—and next in line of importance is water. Without it we have problems in the long-term development of our land. I suggest that the Department of Lands take over some of the functions of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission and incorporate in its land-development schemes some measure of irrigation or water assistance for stock so that we would be assured of progress in our land development.

I now turn to the areas around Bundaberg and as far afield as Rodd's Bay. The land there is reasonably good—a good deal better than typical wallum country—and the rainfall is more or less assured. Much of the land lends itself to pasture, and I believe that here is an opportunity for even more spectacular development than is being brought about by the brigalow scheme, the merit of which I fully realise. I emphasise that here is an area with assured rainfall, close to markets and good roads, and with electricity and all the other things that stimulate progress and development. I have said in respect of other areas that all that is needed is water. In the area to which I now refer there is an assured rainfall for pastures, and it could be developed with a feeling of security and a sense of pride.

I know that restrictions are placed on applicants, and whether they are likely to succeed is considered. That may be fair enough, but if we wait for only highly suitable applicants to come along, I am afraid we will be waiting for some time. I should like to see this area developed as quickly as possible. It is in an important part of the State; it has an assured rainfall; and it lends itself to secure development.

We should not lose sight of the many minor matters attended to by the Department of Lands. The provision of town allotments is one of them, and every encouragement should be given to people, whether they be small farmers, large farmers, pastoralists or householders, to obtain their own land. This is the type of thing that should be encouraged, and I agree with what the Government has done in this regard.

Industrial land, too, is important.

Mr. Hanson interjected.

Mr. WHARTON: A person who owns his land owns an asset, and I commend him for it. I thought the hon. member might have got the spirit of enterprise into his system and been a bit more forceful. I thought he would have shown more drive and energy and more spirit in pushing things along, instead of adopting an attitude of sharing and keeping everyone small and humble.

Industrial land is important to the State; it cannot be allowed to stagnate. Industry has to be encouraged to Brisbane, because of the number of people here, and then to other provincial cities and towns. The part played by the Department of Lands in the administration of land at Hamilton is well known. I am interested in the cold stores there. At Acacia Ridge, and many other places, land has been made available for industrial use, and every effort has been made to attract industry so that additional well-paid employment will be created and more people will be in a position to buy, and pay well, for what the primary producers produce.

Mr. Davies: Are you well satisfied with the prices that primary producers are getting?

Mr. WHARTON: If the hon. member for Maryborough was happy to spill over to primary producers some of his surplus spending power, which rises with each quarterly adjustment, primary producers would be very happy indeed.

Mr. O'Donnell: I have never heard such rubbish in all my life. You are trying to lop the heads off the consumers now.

Mr. WHARTON: I have never heard so much rubbish in my life. I am touching on many of the minor matters that have not been dealt with by other hon. members but which I do not think should be forgotten. The hon. member for Port Curtis referred to a weedicide—I do not know whether he said it was Tordon—

Mr. Hanson: I did.

Mr. WHARTON: It is called Tordon, and it is a very efficient weedicide. It is being used extensively in this State and much has been achieved with its use. Unfortunately, it is in short supply. However, as the hon. member for Condamine says, it is very costly, and when modern ways of doing things are introduced, there must be at least some consciousness of cost.

I commend the Department of Lands for the part it has played in providing weedicides for general use by landholders. Much has already been achieved in that way; I am sure that much more will be achieved. It seems that Tordon is one of the items that could be supplied, even if an additional charge had to be imposed.

Mr. O'Donnell: Perhaps if the Department of Lands switched over to arsenic pentoxide, this could be used later.

Mr. WHARTON: I appreciate what the department has done in the past, and its schemes today are good ones. I am only trying to add to them.

Even though the hon. member for Port Curtis seemed to imply that things such as this should be produced at cost, I do not think he really meant that. The person producing a weedicide must make some profit, and on this occasion I take the side of the people who control the enterprise and say that they cannot go on without making some profit. On the other hand, I believe that if Tordon were channelled through the department, the State would benefit greatly from what could be achieved. It is not possible to grow both trees and grass in the one area, and I should say that such wonderful results have been achieved with Tordon in the destruction of trees that it must be used.

It must be remembered that problems will be created if trees are killed overnight, and in some instances trees may be killed too soon. Scientists of the C.S.I.R.O. say that

the wholesale use of Tordon kills the legumes for a number of years. On the other hand, if the trees are not killed there will not be any grass; so it may be better to kill the legumes for six years, have the grass, and then put the legumes back. Tordon is used for the mass control of timber, and suckering and other problems occur when it is used for the mass control of brigalow. I point that out to hon. members because I think a warning should be issued that precautions should be taken if Tordon is included in the weedicides supplied by the Department of Lands. If all the trees are wiped out, it is only common sense to expect some repercussions, and I think the problem is worth considering from that point of view. I should hate to see it used extensively to wipe out whole areas of trees and then have problems worse than the original ones.

All hon. members know what a wonderful job the cactoblastis did in eradicating prickly pear. When I was a lad living in the country I had to ride to school with my feet up on the horse to avoid the prickly pear. Although that has almost disappeared, in the Gayndah-Biggenden area in my electorate there has been a reinfestation with tree pear, the seeds of which are carried by birds. I draw the Minister's attention to this recurrence of the problem. The hon. member for Fassifern made an interesting speech on *Harrisia cactus*. We have seen what was done in the control of prickly pear and we do not want to have a recurrence of this pest. Tree pear seems to be very difficult to control.

Mr. Davies: Won't the cactoblastis control it?

Mr. WHARTON: The cactoblastis insects attack the tree only slowly. They do not seem to be in sufficient numbers, and the tree is too strong for them to be effective. Tree pear is getting out of control and we have to look at the situation before we reach the stage when we cannot control it at all.

I wish also to refer to creeping lantana which is a real pest in my electorate and one which we have not found any way of controlling. It is a lantana which has a leaf like lucerne. It is a creeper and it will grow in dry times. It is deep-rooted and is creating a serious problem. It grows in the stony and rougher areas and to my mind biological methods provide the only way of controlling it. Much has been done in the control of Noogoora burr and something has been done in the control of lantana—but not enough. We cannot afford to wait until the bugs achieve control. The Minister sent an officer from his department to America to investigate what has been done there, but that was a year ago and no report has been issued. I urge the Minister to give us a report of the findings, if there are any.

Mr. Davies: Do you think the Minister is a bit slow in this regard?

Mr. WHARTON: It is 12 months since the officer went to America to investigate the problem and all I am saying is that in that time the lantana has been growing faster and faster and bigger and better, and it is getting away. I feel that it is economically impossible to control it with poisons. It would have to be done from the air and the cost per acre would be very heavy. I think the only way to control it is biologically.

The pest originated in America and there must be some means of control there. We sent an officer to America to investigate the matter. Let us have the information, so that we can apply it. I agree that we have a chance of controlling it with the insect we have but, to my mind, the sooner we obtain something more effective the better it will be for the future. If we do not control creeping lantana we will get infestation not only of our worst land but also of our best land and it will be ruined.

The next matter I raise may come within the administration of the Land Act. It is only a small matter, but recently a shire in my electorate had to deal with a breach of the Act in the droving of cattle. As the law stands, the drover must move his cattle so many miles each day. The Act, in effect, says that the person who is looking after the cattle has to be fined if he does not do so. In this particular case an employee was looking after the cattle on behalf of the owner. The law states that the fine is imposed on the fellow caught with the cattle. It seems to me a very silly law because the employee is merely doing his job as directed by the owner. I believe that the owner or the person who is actually responsible for the cattle should be fined, but not the employee, who could be doing exactly what he had been told to do by the owner and unwittingly breaking the law. I do not know whether this comes under the Minister's control. I think it would come under the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Act and be a matter for the Co-ordinating Board. The imposition of a fine is an injustice to the employee who is unwittingly breaking the law in carrying out his instructions.

(Time expired.)

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) (3.21 p.m.): I congratulate the Minister on the very efficient manner in which he has dealt with matters that I have raised with him concerning Crown land in my electorate. At times it is very difficult to ascertain exactly what Crown land is available in a metropolitan electorate. On each occasion I have taken the matter up with the Minister when I have been confronted with this problem he has gone out of his way to give me an early reply. He has always been quick to indicate what I wanted to know about any land I have mentioned to him in which some organisation or person has been interested.

Today there is a big demand for land in the metropolitan area from various organisations that are doing an excellent job. When approaches are made to me by such organisations for a small piece of Crown land, I naturally consider whether the purpose for which the land is required is an essential one, and one in which the Government would be interested. Nobody on either side of the Chamber would want to see Crown land passed over, willy-nilly, to any body that may want it.

The Minister for Lands is one member of Cabinet who does not have many opportunities to perform official functions in the metropolitan area. I was therefore very pleased that he and his good wife were able to accept an invitation to open a swimming pool on land that was set aside for recreation purposes and developed by the Carina Welfare Association. A number of leading citizens played important parts in providing those amenities.

The Minister occupies a portfolio that is very important to the State, and much of his time would be taken up in accepting invitations to functions in country electorates. After all, apart from handling the Lands portfolio, he comes from the land.

In debates of this nature there is always a great deal of discussion about what constitutes a living area for the man on the land. When one is travelling anywhere in Queensland, be it in the coastal areas or the far western areas, it is very disheartening to know that land can be described as either "clean" or "dirty". When the hon. member for South Coast was speaking, I interjected in an effort to ascertain the cost of getting rid of certain noxious weeds and how the job was done. When I worked on the land in my early days, the manual method was the only method available. Everything had to be grubbed out or pulled out by hand. Wild cotton was pulled by hand, and lantana and wild tobacco were grubbed, as were many other noxious weeds in the farming areas.

It is a pity to see, particularly in coastal areas, so much valuable land that formerly supported good dairying farms, but has since been cut up into smaller living areas on which people are trying to fatten cattle. Unfortunately, in the process, those areas are not being kept clear of noxious weeds, as they were years ago. Irrespective of the type of farming carried out, whether or not a block constitutes a living area depends a great deal on the ability of the person working the land and how he looks after it. If he allows it to become overgrown with noxious weeds, such as lantana, it will not be long before he loses his farm. Indeed, he will be very fortunate to have a clean area for his house.

The groundsel problem has been referred to in this debate, and I was interested to hear the remarks of the hon. member for South Coast on this subject. The metropolitan area is no different from any other

area from the point of view of the prevalence of this pest. Apart from what the Department of Lands does to get rid of groundsel, a great deal depends on the assistance provided by the local authorities in eradicating this weed in their areas.

I entered the debate mainly to deal with two matters, one of which I have referred to on many occasions in this Chamber. It is the matter of industrial lands. Brisbane's port facilities are moving towards the mouth of the river. We have already indicated what we believe will happen when containerisation comes to Brisbane. It seems to me that there will be a big demand for industrial land at the mouth of the river. The Minister's report indicates that certain land has been sold at the river mouth, but I am interested mainly in the growing industrial area from Lytton, through to Hemmant, and back to Colmslie.

Mr. Carey: Has it been town-planned for industrial development?

Mr. NEWTON: As far as I know, some of it has; some of the land has been set aside. An enormous amount of reclamation work is required in one section, which I am sure has been set aside for industrial purposes. Until the reclamation work is carried out, other land has been purchased in the locality to meet the requirements of firms that are interested in getting industrial land at the mouth of the river for export and import purposes.

The kill at the Brisbane abattoir has been reduced from 3,000 to 1,000 head of cattle a day. Today, in this locality, which is close to the river, numerous paddocks that were once used to hold cattle are now not being used. A move has been made by industries that realise the value of this land because of its location to acquire it from private owners. I hope that the Government will ensure that industries that do not require sites on the river, or towards the mouth of the river, do not acquire Crown land in this area. The location of industrial land purchased or set aside by the Government plays an important part in whether the Crown will benefit.

I was interested to hear the remarks of the hon. member for Logan on Crown land that was set aside between Capalaba and Raby Bay. I forget the name of the road, but last Sunday an advertisement was erected on this road to the effect that a number of Government sites would be sold, evidently for residential purposes. I would be interested to know if the Crown provided sealed roads and kerbing and channelling in front of those allotments. I do not complain about local authorities requiring that work to be done. We on this side of the Chamber have said time and time again that wherever possible the Government should make Crown lands available so that people can acquire comparatively cheap building sites. I have no complaint with what the department has done in the southern portion of the Logan electorate. I do not know the size of the

allotments—they are possibly 2½ acres, 5 acres, or 10 acres. This is a move in the right direction and will provide reasonably cheap home sites for people in small towns.

The report of the Rural Fires Board appropriately draws attention to the Tasmanian bush-fire disaster. Anybody who has worked, as I have, in the pineapple and fruit-farming areas around Nambour, where farmers farm the hill slopes, has seen the heavy undergrowth of blady grass and bracken fern there. There have been some disastrous fires in this district, which were probably started in the summer-time by sparks from the burning of cane falling in the blady grass. Hon. members can visualise how a fire would race through that type of country.

The activities of the Rural Fires Board draw attention to the disasters that can occur, and bring home the message that a much more important role needs to be played by this board. Although I am not saying that it is not doing a good job at present, I am a little concerned as a result of my recent experience. Only recently I became aware of fire protection problems in Belmont and at Mt. Petrie, where there is no water supply. On making inquiries, I ascertained that fire-fighting equipment was supplied to a police station in the locality, but that there was no real support for fire-fighting activities in the area. Although equipment was supplied, obtaining volunteers to use it was the problem. This is probably one of the problems that are met in extending the services of the Rural Fires Board.

No-one realises more than the Minister the dangers inherent in the spreading of fires, particularly in rural areas, even if they do no more than burn grass and other feed. The main point seems to be that even though equipment is made available, it is difficult to get people sufficiently interested to set up a local organisation. From what I have seen, at least equipment has been provided by the department. That is very important, because on some occasions when similar activities have been undertaken by Governments, irrespective of their political colour, people have been prepared to offer their services but they have not had the equipment required to do the job.

It is to be hoped that, in the work of the Rural Fires Board, heed will be paid to what happened not very long ago in Tasmania. It is to be hoped that a similar disaster will never occur here. However, in the light of summer conditions here, the possibility is not to be dismissed completely. If it does happen, let us hope that we will be better prepared to meet it than has been the case in the past.

Mr. CHINCHEN (Mt. Gravatt) (3.39 p.m.): I have been particularly interested in the presentation of the Estimates of the Department of Lands and the debate that has followed. I feel that many worthwhile things have been said, and it is fairly obvious that hon. members on both sides of the Chamber realise that the productivity of rural areas

plays a large part in the development of the State. That is a fundamental that has been indicated by what has been said.

It is obvious that production is important to everyone in this large country of ours. Queensland produces most of Australia's overseas credits, and, if land is to be looked at from any one point of view, it should be from the point of view of production.

I have been interested during the debate to note the accent placed by a number of hon. members on freeholding. I must say that when I came to this State about 15 or 16 years ago, I was rather surprised at the attitude of people in general to land tenure. I came from a State where about 60 per cent. of the land is freehold, and this probably represents all the worth-while land.

Mr. Davies: Which State is that?

Mr. CHINCHEN: Victoria.

Mr. Davies: And in that State they have had to buy back millions of acres.

Mr. CHINCHEN: In that State one cannot afford to—

Mr. Davies: You are on the wrong track.

Mr. CHINCHEN: The hon. member for Maryborough can make his speech whenever he likes—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am very interested in the speech of the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt. If the hon. member for Maryborough desires, he can make a speech later.

Mr. CHINCHEN: Having been brought up to believe in the right of a man to own his own land, whether it be his home site, industrial land, or rural land, I was surprised to find the situation that existed in Queensland. The reason for it is understandable; problems have to be faced in Queensland that do not arise in Victoria. There were a number of properties covering large areas; there still are. But the whole point is that men on the land should have flexibility. As all hon. members know, some people are able to manage on a small piece of land. That is what they want; that is where they want to live. Other people have larger areas of land; they are entitled to have them. They are not told, "This is your area. This is how you must exist. This is what you must do." They have the right to either increase or decrease at will the area of land that they hold.

There has been a certain amount of timidity in the introduction of freeholding—that has been fairly obvious—but now the idea is being accepted. I compliment the Minister and his department for what it is doing in this direction.

The boggy of aggregation has been raised on many occasions, and I think that question should be studied, and studied thoroughly.

I maintain—I have seen this in my own experience—that when a true value is paid for land—

Mr. Walsh: What is that?

Mr. CHINCHEN: I will tell the hon. member for Bundaberg in a moment. When money is invested in land and a commitment is made, it is necessary to produce. There is nothing else one can do. One cannot sit on the land and let it waste, as one can sit on leasehold land with a peppercorn rental. That is what has been happening in this State. With peppercorn rentals, the land has not been producing as it should have been.

Mr. Walsh: That is all nonsense. Perpetual leasehold is as good as freehold.

Mr. CHINCHEN: I saw a letter written to a member of this Assembly by a man from the South who took up land in Queensland. He had great ideas, he had money to invest, and he began to develop his land. He said in the letter, "What is the story in this State? Here I am, starting to develop my leasehold land and move forward, and my neighbours are telling me, 'Slow down, or you will lose some of your land.'" He said, "What is going on? Why should I lose some of my land?" Of course, that has been the experience of a number of other people. As their land is developed and attains a much greater capacity to produce, they lose some of it. That creates problems for the people who are willing to put money into their land. Of course, with freehold tenure that difficulty does not arise.

To get back to the question of aggregations, which seems to be causing some people a great deal of worry: the hon. member for Bundaberg asked me, "What is the real value?" It is based on supply and demand and productivity, and it reaches its own level. Unfortunately, entirely false values are being placed on land in the brigalow areas because too few blocks are available for the people who have sufficient money and who wish to settle there.

When money is paid for land, the land must produce to justify the expenditure involved. There are land tax and rates to be paid; there is interest to be paid on the money that has been obtained from some other source to enable a man to go onto the land. To meet those charges, the land must produce.

The hon. member for Fassifern made the point that he has seen areas covered with noxious weeds because landholders had too much land. If a person has paid money for land, he cannot afford to let it lie idle; it has to produce. Interest has to be paid on most money used for this purpose and it is necessary to produce to justify the investment. What happens with freehold land is natural subdivision rather than aggregation. It might happen that one man who has

big ideas might amalgamate, during his lifetime, two or three living areas. That is understandable, but what happens when that man dies? He might have two or three sons, so there is natural subdivision. If a man has only one living area during his lifetime, with better farming methods and better husbandry he may find that he can live quite adequately on half the area, so his son takes over the other half and a natural subdivision again takes place.

With the rising demand for land, surely if a person can sell a piece of the land that he owns to somebody else, and with the proceeds buy machinery or put down a bore or something else, that is the type of thing we want. One of the reasons for lack of development capital today is that very little freehold land is changing hands. What is wrong with people making a profit from land? All that happens is that somebody comes from somewhere else and buys half a block, and, with the proceeds, the seller is able to buy a new tractor or a new car or develop his land. That is what the State wants.

I feel that what the Minister is doing now in accentuating the move towards freehold will do much for this State. First of all, people will hold land knowing that it is theirs and that every improvement they put on it is theirs. The result will be that much better improvements will be put on these properties. It must be a terrible thing to think that any improvements to a property in the final six or eight years of a lease would be lost at the end of the lease. It would be a frightful thing not knowing what is going to happen.

I have been to the brigalow areas on three occasions. On one occasion I went with the previous Treasurer, Sir Thomas Hiley, and Mr. Muir, and we stopped outside a well-improved property. We had gone through some pretty rough stuff but we then came to this magnificent property, which was indeed very well developed. It was a picture. I said to Mr. Muir, "That is a wonderful sight." He said, "Yes, it is." I must compliment Mr. Muir on his memory and knowledge of properties in Queensland. He immediately said, "That is owned by so-and-so." He showed this ability wherever he went. But he then said, "But he won't have it for long". I said, "How is that?" He said, "He has too large an area. We will be taking half of it." I said, "What is the story? It is well developed." He said, "Yes, it is well developed". I said, "Has he any sons?" He said, "Yes, two". I said, "What about the sons?" He said, "They can go to ballot with the rest of the applicants".

Surely that is not the sort of thing that entices people to go on the land and work it. Fortunately there is a change in this sort of thinking. However, apart altogether from that, if leasehold is to be broken up I agree with the hon. member for Gregory,

who suggested that families should be considered. If two young men have worked all their lives helping their father develop a property, surely they should somehow be given preferential treatment when the land is to be cut up.

In the particular case I mentioned, a father and two sons, and maybe a mother and some daughters, had worked the property, and it was a picture. Some of this land had to go because the father had too large an area. Why should the boys have to go to ballot in the same way as anyone else to get some of that land—land on which they themselves had worked from early in the morning till late at night? Families have to be considered more than just employees on a property. They are more than that.

Mr. Walsh: Tell me how many companies are operating—

Mr. CHINCHEN: I would not know anything about companies. I am talking about land and our land policy at this moment. I am complimenting the Minister on his move into freehold—and it is a good move.

I think this will be one of the best things ever done for this State. It is a lot of hard work, but the department seems to be coping because the backlog is apparently not considerable. It is a move which in later years people will be very thankful about. They will have the flexibility of movement that is so necessary. There is nothing wrong with it if a person aggregates one or two living areas, because flexibility is a necessity for various types of farming.

We know full well that in the United States of America and other overseas countries the farmers are getting on to bigger areas. This must happen. If we restrict them to limited areas we will finish up not being able to compete with countries that are going in for bigger and bigger areas. Anybody who reads "Time" magazine will have read in an issue about three months ago that lettuce are being grown on something like 400-acre blocks, and an enormous machine picks something like 20 rows at a time. That is the sort of thing that has to happen here. It is not good enough to say, "That is enough." People vary; some will want less than that and some will want more. It must be left to their own discretion. I have the greatest regard for the average Australian, particularly the man on the land. He is particularly adaptable, hard-working, and resourceful. If these people are left to their own devices—

Mr. Davies: You want to wipe out the small market gardener.

Mr. CHINCHEN: I do not want to wipe anybody out. Nobody can sneer at progress. Things are going to happen. They will happen. They will be taken care of, not by direction but by the average man himself in the way he does his business.

Every man on the land, whether he be a farmer or a pastoralist, is a businessman. There is no question about that. He does not want to be shackled; he does not want to be told how he must do it and why he must do it.

I mentioned that I have visited the brigalow country on three occasions. I am not an expert on brigalow development, but economics apply in any business one may look at. My first visit goes back 3½ years. The sort of thing we are now all familiar with immediately struck me. I was concerned about the difficulties of a person going into that area owing £12,000 before he even starts to get any money from the Government. That is just not good business. That is the way a scheme of this sort can fail. Business is business, no matter what kind of undertaking it is. There are established prudent business methods. It is essential for any person who goes into any type of business to have a certain equity. If he has not that equity he cannot successfully carry on the business.

Mr. Davies: Do you think the scheme is not sound?

Mr. CHINCHEN: Originally, it certainly was not sound. I say that without hesitation. We have learned by experience. There is no question about it, this scheme is now developing on a much sounder basis.

As I was saying, it is entirely wrong for anybody to go into any type of business without an equity. A person cannot go into a corner grocery store owing money before he starts. He must have some equity or he will not get money for it. No competent banker would think otherwise. Those people on the brigalow lands owed money before they went on the land. The servicing of that sort of debt, plus the other problems associated with the area, would have made things extremely difficult, if not impossible, for many of them.

I am extremely impressed with the people I met who are going into this scheme. They are fine people. A person must have no more than half a living area when he applies. I imagine that in an area like this it is capital intensive. Surely this is an area where people on the land should be able to move from smaller properties to larger properties immediately they have more money and more experience. They need to have money behind them to make a success of it.

Obviously people cannot live on less than half a living area. The idea apparently was to attract onto the land people who had not previously owned a property in their own right. Perhaps they lack business acumen in relation to the land. This is one matter that worries me, as men with experience and money were not allowed to ballot.

I cannot understand why only 25 per cent. of the properties, which is the percentage stipulated by the Commonwealth Government, are permitted to go to auction. When

private capital is available for land investment it should be used. I do not say we should not have a settlement scheme if we want it, but the Government's prime job is to ensure maximum production. If we can do that with somebody else's money, surely we should do it. As so much money was available for this land, we should have allowed private capital to develop it. If all the land had been made available at auction it would have sold at a much more realistic price. Perhaps some of the people would have failed, but the responsibility would not have devolved on us. If they fail, somebody else will buy the land. It is therefore obvious that it was not our problem, as it is now.

Many people must be in great difficulties because of the drought. I should like to see more land opened up, because many land-hungry people would then be able to go on to the land. They are willing to pay for the land and they are the people we want on the land. Private money would be used to finance the ventures in these areas and the State would provide only the necessary services. In such a case, that would be all that the State would have to do. If it was thought that a land settlement scheme was needed for the other people the State could then say, "We have used up the other land; now let us use public money for a settlement scheme."

That would be a very wise approach to land development. We should be interested mainly in production rather than in land settlement of a particular section of our rural community, which seems to have been the concept of the original plan.

The freeholding of all land in this State cannot be accomplished overnight; that is a ridiculous idea. The main concern in the future development of this State is to ensure that our lands are productive. Our western lands perhaps should be controlled by a commission similar to the Western Lands Commission in New South Wales. That would be a sensible approach to the vast areas in the western part of the State. By this method, within reasonable limits we will be doing the best we can to attain maximum production and to make the people on the land happier, which is surely their right. We trust that they will have some good years, which has not been their lot for some time. I feel they must be due for better times. We know the plight of many of them and how difficult their circumstances are. Naturally, we all regret their plight.

A person with his feet on his own soil knows that everything he does benefits him. That is what the average Australian wants. I compliment the Minister on his approach to this matter.

Mr. MURRAY (Clayfield) (3.59 p.m.): I am delighted to follow my colleague the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt, because he reinforced, clearly and strongly, what I said in the debate yesterday relative to land matters. No doubt he will draw criticism similar to that directed at me yesterday by the Minister.

I said—and this is related to the Estimates of the Department of Lands—that we had made two mistakes with the brigalow lands. At another date, when we look back and study the economics of this scheme, many people will observe that we made two mistakes: firstly, that we decided to do this ourselves, and secondly, having decided that, that we would do it by ballot, and, in the main, finance settlers onto these lands rather than absorb the private money that was clamouring so much for these lands.

Mr. O'Donnell: I doubt that private money is clamouring for these lands.

Mr. MURRAY: It is quite obvious that these lands are being clamoured for. One thing among many others that has been to the credit of the Department of Lands is that its public relations in this regard have been outstanding. The setting up of trial plots to show what can be done, and all the lead-up, have been done well indeed. The officers have been tremendously enthusiastic. No-one denies the Minister's enthusiasm and dedication in the development of the brigalow lands, and no-one would take from his senior officers and the officers right down through all the strata of his department, their keenness and dedication in carrying out this scheme. It has received wide publicity, particularly because it has drawn Commonwealth support.

I have held the view—and I still hold it because it is my firm belief—that at this stage of our development we cannot afford to finance this type of land settlement, land settlement development, or land development—call it what you will—when there is private money available, or apparently available, to do the job for us. I wish we could afford it. It is tremendously desirable if the State can do these things—and it will do them ultimately—but for heaven's sake let us get our priorities straight.

Mr. O'Donnell: It is loan money.

Mr. MURRAY: It is all part of the total cake. It is taxpayer's money in some form or another. Governments have money available to them only from the sources of taxation, both personal and customs and excise. This is part of the total cake, no matter whether we use it for this purpose or for something else.

I suggest that these loan moneys would have come, and clearly could have come, in some other form which we may well have decided should have a higher priority than this scheme to which we applied them. It is terribly important to recognise this. We have private individuals who are prepared to accept the conditions of development laid down by the Minister and his department before they can freehold. They enter into this under these conditions quite willingly and take all the risks involved, and they are not, never will be, and never should be a liability on the State.

Mr. O'Donnell: Didn't the Commonwealth Government give us this money for this purpose and this purpose only?

Mr. MURRAY: Do not let us be so naive that we believe that the Commonwealth Government would not have lent it in some other form. It could have been for the Nogoia project or something else.

As hon. members opposite know, money flows for specific purposes, and this is an undertaking that costs a considerable amount. There is no doubt that revenue will be received from it, and we are outlaying a large sum—I think about \$4,000,000 has been appropriated this year—for the undertaking. The point is this: what can we afford? If all hon. members are satisfied with the provisions made for the other basic things that come within the traditional role of government, let us undertake such schemes as this. But are hon. members satisfied? Are they satisfied with the grant to education?

Mr. Sherrington: No.

Mr. MURRAY: No, of course not. Minister after Minister claims that he wants more money for his department. The Treasurer wants more money. The whole State wants more money. Every day some additional demand is cropping up on basic things, such as education, prisons, health, and so on. In each of those things there is a need for more money. I think we have to look very hard at this matter and see to what extent the basic requirements—the traditional role of government—are being met before ranging out and undertaking benevolent schemes.

I have no criticism of the development of the brigalow lands—I think it is a wonderful concept and a splendid undertaking—but I do question, and will continue to question, the prudence of finding priorities for the supply of money to such a project. Of course, the time for such questioning is running out because, by the time Area III is developed, we will be firmly committed. My point is that this developmental work could have been carried out by the private sector, under tight control.

The hon. member for Bundaberg is worried about the freeholding of land. If any hon. member opposite—or, for that matter, anywhere in the Chamber—believes for a moment that we are “selling the farm” piece by piece and rushing into freeholding, I point out that during the 10 years that the Government has been in office less than 1 per cent. of progress has been made in freeholding. Whereas, in 1957, 6.47 per cent. of the State was alienated, today the figure is 7.1 per cent.

Mr. Walsh: In other words, the people don't want it.

Mr. MURRAY: That could well be the subject of another discussion altogether. Setting aside the question of whether the people want it, only slightly over one-half per cent.

of the State has been alienated in 10 years. The hon. member can make it 1 per cent. if he likes.

Mr. O'Donnell: I don't think your figures are valid. There are 300,000,000 acres of the State that could not be freeholded at present, so the percentage should be based on what could be freeholded.

Mr. MURRAY: One could spend a considerable time discussing what could be freeholded and what could not.

As a guide, let us remember that the 20-inch isohyet runs roughly half-way through the State. Therefore, 200,000,000 acres, or 48 per cent. of the State, has a rainfall above 20 inches. When one considers that all the land north of the Tropic of Capricorn, other than the land in coastal areas on which sugar is grown, is in large areas that the Minister is rightly making available in long-term pastoral leases, and so on, because it is not yet ready for closer settlement, there is still a vast area south of the Tropic of Capricorn with an average annual rainfall above 20 inches, the greater proportion of which, excluding the Great Dividing Range, must be available for exciting settlement in this State.

Mr. O'Donnell: A lot of it would not be.

Mr. MURRAY: The hon. member may carry out this exercise in the Department of Lands at any time he wishes. In 10 years there has been progress to the extent of 1 per cent.

Mr. O'Donnell: 1 per cent.?

Mr. MURRAY: Less than 1 per cent.—a little more than half of 1 per cent., in fact. Let that silence the criticism, once and for all, that the Country-Liberal Government has rushed into a mad freeholding—selling the estate, alienating the estate.

Mr. O'Donnell: You have had 14,000 applications.

Mr. MURRAY: I am sure the Minister would welcome the opportunity of telling the hon. member how many of these applications are for the conversion of town lots.

Mr. O'Donnell: That is right; I will agree with that. But there are only 46,000 holdings in the State outside the cities.

Mr. MURRAY: One could go on indefinitely. Let us not have any criticism that the Government has alienated the lands of the State. In 10 years, under a Government that has a freeholding policy—admittedly, it had to get the administration under way—the figure is slightly over half of 1 per cent., and that is not significant.

Mr. Walsh: Can you tell me how many companies occupying perpetual-lease land in the Hamilton area want to freehold their land?

Mr. MURRAY: I honestly do not know.

Mr. Walsh: None of them!

Mr. MURRAY: I do not think the hon. member for Bundaberg would know. It is the type of question without notice that would have been better on the Business Paper.

Mr. Chinchin: What the hon. member for Bundaberg says is not right.

Mr. MURRAY: They have the right to do it, as all hon. members know. Let that silence the critics once and for all, and let it sit a little heavily on the conscience of those on this side of the Chamber who for so long have advocated freeholding that very little progress has been made in this direction.

On restricted title, I have only brief comments to make. It has been mentioned in this debate on the Lands Estimates that the Government has been a little harsh to Queenslanders and has prevented some of them from doing things that they should not have been prevented from doing. The correct way to begin in this game is to buy restricted tenure first and buy unrestricted tenure afterwards. But if one owns unrestricted tenure first and it is, by area or by unimproved capital value, coming up to the quantum laid down in section 147A, one cannot go out into this country. On the other hand, one can go out into that country first, get the maximum, and then go on a mad buying spree whenever one can afford to do so. I think that is a very unfortunate anomaly.

Another matter that I wish to deal with is the statement—I think it was made and then caught up by Sir William Payne in the Payne Report—which I have here—that "Land-minded men in Queensland regard the opportunity of acquiring land from the State, or at least entering a ballot for it, almost as a birthright." I think we have heard this from hon. members on both sides of the Chamber time and time again.

What sort of maudlin, emotional nonsense is this? It is absolute nonsense, because there is no restriction whatsoever. "Joe Stavinski", born in Hungary, can come to Australia and, provided he has had three years' experience out of the last 10 and satisfies the conditions of finance, he can enter the ballot. "Wun Bung Lung", or somebody else from China, can do exactly the same thing. And so can any citizen of New South Wales or Victoria. There is no such thing as a ballot for Queenslanders.

Mr. Fletcher: He must be naturalised, not only domiciled.

Mr. MURRAY: I draw the Minister's attention to the fact that the bar on aliens is now removed.

What sort of nonsense are we talking when we speak about the birthright of Queenslanders? The type of people I have mentioned can go before the selection committee, and I am sure the Minister would not say—in fact, it would be most improper if he did—to his selection panel, "Give preference to Queenslanders".

Let us get rid of this nonsense once and for all. These lands are available to all comers who have the necessary qualifications of experience and finance. Let us get away from the sentimental nonsense in the Payne Report that is still carried on by so many hon. members on both sides of this Chamber.

We are Australians first and Queenslanders second, and it would be a wonderful thing if we could afford to help the battler. I look forward very keenly indeed to that state of affairs, but until we satisfy the other requirements—and there are many of them that are as yet unsatisfied—I plead with this Parliament to hold back our eagerness to spend public moneys on ventures of this sort until we have alleviated poverty and set up decent standards of life and living, and until we get all we need in education, forestry, dams, and all the things that are the traditional roles of Government. Until then, let us hold back from spending public moneys when there is private money available for these things. When there is no private money available the land must be developed for the national and common good, but until then I say, "Don't let us enter into any more of these schemes. Grand as they are, the commitment is dangerous." It is long-term and dangerous if we cannot afford to do it, because there is so much else we would want to do.

Speaking of priorities in this regard, I think the Minister has been extremely able and dedicated in selling this project to the Government. The Government has gone along with him. I believe the Government made a mistake in doing it this way when other avenues were available to it. We are committed to it now; let us continue and make sure it succeeds, but let us pause and take a good, hard look at any undertaking of this nature in the future while there are so many other urgent jobs of obviously much higher priority for the State to carry out.

Mr. CAREY (Albert) (4.20 p.m.): I enter the debate because I feel it is necessary to add my contribution by saying "Thank you" to the Minister and his departmental officers for what they have done in my electorate. Especially do I want to say "Thank you" to the Chief Commissioner of Lands, Mr. Eric Muir, for the courtesies he has extended to me during my period of 7½ years service in this Chamber representing the people of Albert and wish him a happy retirement. I also thank Mr. Gordon McDowell and Mr. Brian Heffernan, the other two commissioners, for their assistance with problems that have confronted me in my area from time to time.

Actually I have not a great area of Crown land in my electorate, but there are some pockets of it. What is there is very important land. There is a big area of Crown land on South Stradbroke which I intend to deal with at length. A large portion of forestry reserve No. 727 was recently taken over by the Department of Lands. That land is now being put to

very good use by the department for the people who visit my electorate. Recently the Department of Lands handed over to the Department of Industrial Development an additional area of approximately 100 acres to be made available to manufacturers who propose to establish new industries in the area. A large area of land has been set aside for the Queensland Housing Commission, and I look forward to seeing 67 houses built on it at a very early date. The Minister for Works and Housing told me recently that he hoped he would soon be able to start on the construction of 13 of those houses.

In the main, the speakers during this debate have discussed brigalow land, land in the West, and the land held by graziers and farmers generally. At this stage I want to cross swords a little with the hon. member for Clayfield.

Mr. O'Donnell: You can cross swords with him as much as you like. He spoke a lot of rubbish.

Mr. CAREY: I want to cross swords with him a little. Each of us is entitled to have his say on all points at issue. I know that the hon. member for Clayfield is very anxious for the Government to stop developing land, and instead to hand it over to private enterprise—big finance companies, insurance companies, and so on—for private enterprise to develop and sell to the people.

Mr. Porter interjected.

Mr. CAREY: I believe that is what the hon. member for Clayfield said. I think hon. members will agree that is what his speech conveyed. Before he resumed his seat he said that while there was private-enterprise money available to develop the brigalow land the Government should not spend its money in this direction. I am not denying that those who would naturally take an interest in developing this land are insurance companies, finance companies, and other people with a great deal of money at their command.

Mr. Sherrington: Land speculators.

Mr. CAREY: That would be true; land speculators would be a "natural". I do not criticise those people. They are private-enterprise people who are in business to make a profit. When they develop the land they will sell it to smaller landholders at a profit. We should compliment the Minister and the Government for developing this land in the manner outlined in the brigalow land schemes presented to this Assembly from time to time.

Every hon. member is well aware of the fact that primary producers are given fairly reasonable tax concessions for work done in clearing, fencing, developing, water conservation, and so on.

A Government Member: Better than in your business.

Mr. CAREY: Very much better; we cannot get such concessions in the business field. However, we must not forget that primary producers deserve all they get, as they cannot pass on increased costs. In some way or another the Government must help them. It provides assistance in this form, which is a good way of doing it.

Commercial enterprises generally, including financial institutions—particularly those that have diversified their interests—are keen to find some way to spend their profits on water conservation, clearing, road-making, and so on. By this method they reduce the profits earned by their subsidiaries or diversified interests and, when everything is completed, they sell to buyers and make a capital gain, which is not taxable. In my opinion this is quite important, because eventually the buyers pay the piper. They have to pay for the capital gain and receive no advantage from the taxation allowances.

I do not wish to spend too long on any one subject in my speech, so I shall now refer to a matter raised earlier in this debate by the hon. member for South Coast, Mr. Hinze, who spoke about the residents of Hollywell, which is just north of Anglers Paradise. I know of this matter because I have received approaches from my constituents and also from many hon. members in this Chamber who have constituents who live in Brisbane and who own property at Hollywell. These people are very concerned and distressed that the Riverside Coal Transport Pty. Ltd. has been granted a lease right in the middle of a residential area. At the outset, I say these people have a just cause for complaint. They feel injured because this transport depot is to be located in a residential area without their being notified of the Government's intention to lease this land.

Mr. Hinze: Which area was there first? The residential development or the industrial development?

Mr. CAREY: Naturally the residential development was first in this area.

I am aware that the final decision on whether the transport depot is to be established on this area of 9 acres leased from the Land Administration Commission rests with the Gold Coast City Council. It has the right under the town plan to say whether or not this type of industry can be established. I ask the Minister to try to find some way, firstly, to assist these residents who have paid large sums of money for allotments in this delightful area, fronting the best water on the coast, because it is deep water with good fishing, and, secondly, to help the council to find a more suitable location for this terminal. I realise that we must have industry on the Gold Coast—and this is good industry. The sand-mining industry employs approximately 500 people, and nobody wants to see employment taken away. Every hon. member is anxious to see employment in his electorate

kept at a high level. I do not want to see this company pushed aside completely, but surely the terminal can be established in a more suitable location.

I quite understand that my friend the hon. member for South Coast does not want the terminal established on The Spit, which is an area I look upon as the Toorak of the Gold Coast; it is quiet and the only traffic there serves the residents in the area. But surely we can find a piece of land somewhere on which to establish this terminal to handle the mineral sands, which are so important in the provision of employment and the payment of royalties.

Mr. Davies: Is this the place to make an attack on the Mayor of the Gold Coast?

Mr. CAREY: I am not attacking the Mayor of the Gold Coast. I hope I am making a constructive contribution to the debate.

I naturally hope the Minister for Lands will take cognisance of what I am saying. I blame, in a constructive way, previous Gold Coast City Councils for not setting aside an area of land on our waterways for the establishment of industry. The waterway from Brisbane to Southport will become an important means of transport. In Wednesday's newspaper the Premier said that this waterway would become an important means of transport between Brisbane and the Gold Coast. If a previous council had set aside an area of land on the Nerang River or on the Broadwater for industrial development, we would not now be confronted with this problem.

I compliment the hon. member for Belmont on his contribution, because it coincides with my thinking. It is most important that industrial lands be set aside on our waterways. I compliment him, and agree entirely with the sentiments he expressed.

I now wish to say, especially for the hearing of the Minister, that my suggestion that he should bring the terminal of Riverside Coal Transport Pty. Ltd. closer to Southport is a double-edged sword. In the first place, if a suitable spot can be found for the unloading of minerals and other material closer to Southport, those operations will be moved from the projected area, which is in the heart of a residential area.

Mr. Davies: Where?

Mr. CAREY: I am coming to that.

It would also make this vacated 9-acre area available for the operators of pleasure launches and other tourist craft. If and when such a facility is required by tourists, a deep-water port will be necessary—and this is the other edge of the sword. The hon. member for South Coast has suggested that the unloading point be shifted to an area of reclaimed land just above the place where another mining company has closed its operations. The Department of Harbours and Marine would

then, as I have been advocating for years, be forced to dredge so that there would be a channel 7 feet deep at low tide so that the large barges could ply back and forth under the new bridge to the mineral sands plant. There would then be very satisfied residents in my area, and a deep channel which, as will be found in "Hansard", was promised during a speech by Sir Thomas Hiley when he was Treasurer in which he said that he would soon have dredged a channel 100 feet wide and 7 feet deep at low tide from Brisbane to Southport.

I am looking forward to receiving the support of the Minister and the co-operation of the Treasurer in having this transport terminal shifted to another place and a channel dredged so that sand-mining operations will not be disrupted.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Hodges): Order! I have allowed the hon. member to develop his argument along the lines that he adopted. I should now like him to return to the Estimates before the Committee.

Mr. CAREY: Thank you very much, Mr. Hodges. I appreciate your latitude.

I now wish to deal with something very near and dear to my heart. If I am on the wrong track, Mr. Hodges, I shall willingly accept a little help. I ask the Minister if he will set aside the remainder of South Stradbroke Island as State park land. I do not want it declared a national park, because from time to time is necessary for land to be made available to private enterprise for the establishment of amenities for those who wish to enjoy beautiful areas. I know the Minister is very sympathetic towards the preservation of wild-life, and I know that he is interested in creating reserves throughout the State. A few that have recently been declared are—

	acres
Pallarenda	500
Stradbroke Island	510
Palm Grove (in the brigalow area)	63,300
Caloundra	120

And so the list goes on.

I have made many approaches to the Minister to have land set aside as national parks, and I know I have the support of the hon. member for Salisbury because of his interest in the Wild Life Preservation Society, which has been doing such fine work in this field.

I have here a booklet entitled "Use of the Islands and Waters of Moreton Bay." I commend it to hon. members as a means of learning a great deal about the islands and waters of the bay. In it I read that on Moreton Island an area of 6,100 acres has been set aside by the Minister as a national Park. This is a remarkable achievement, because under the Labour Government no interest at all was shown in this area. Since

the present Minister has come to office he has achieved a great deal in setting aside areas for national parks.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Hodges): Order! I ask the hon. member to direct his remarks to the Minister for Conservation, under whose control these areas come.

Mr. CAREY: I just want to inform the Minister, in case he does not already know, that many thousands of tourists visit Stradbroke Island each year.

This booklet contains the following words:—

" . . . and at places on South Stradbroke it is only a 5-minute walk from the bay-side to the surf."

This is a great attraction to tourists, as they can land from boats in calm water and walk for only five minutes over the sandhills to the surf on the other side of the island.

Progress has brought with it an improved standard of living, which in turn has brought an increase in population to an area well endowed with natural resources. This all means that the tourists' leisure hours are spent in a most enjoyable manner.

It is essential that South Stradbroke Island, which is only 5,200 acres in area, should be retained for State park purposes, but in a way in which some areas of land can be leased to persons who wish to develop tourist amenities. I beg the Minister not to construct a bridge to South Stradbroke Island; let the tourists get there by some other means. There is an abundant supply of fresh water in the lagoons on the island, and wild-life also abounds. I know the Minister is interested in this fact—and I am rather concerned that I might be called to order.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Hodges): Order!

Mr. Bromley: Get onto the land now.

Mr. CAREY: Where does the hon. member think I have been? Does he think I have been on the sea?

I compliment the Minister on his Estimates and for the work he has done for this State. May he continue to do this fine work, and may his Commissioners give him the same service as he has been rendered in the past.

Mr. SULLIVAN (Condamine) (4.44 p.m.): A great deal was said yesterday during the debate on the Brigalow and Other Lands Development Acts Amendment Bill, and I agree with the remarks made by the hon. member for Mackenzie, whose electorate embraces such a large area of land, the hon. member for Carnarvon and the hon. member for Barcoo. They are practical men.

This morning, accompanied by the hon. members for Roma and Warwick, I visited the Cannon Hill abattoirs and saleyards. In the magnificent draft of prime young

cattle that we saw there, we had evidence of the benefit of the introduction of the plough in brigalow development. I should say that the grazier today has seen the need to become a farmer. Some have been forced into farming, but I believe that many have gone into it of their own volition. I commend the hon. member for Roma, Mr. Tomkins, for the example he is setting in his area. As hon. members know, Mr. Tomkins has developed brigalow country in that area and in recent years he has realised that if the grazing industry is to produce the type of beef the consuming public is demanding it is essential to introduce the plough. It was very pleasing this morning to see this magnificent draft of 180 head of cattle sent to Cannon Hill by Mr. Tomkins in such wonderful condition. When I tell hon. members that those Hereford weaners will dress at up to 400 lb., they will realise what a good job he is doing. He has proved just what can be done by the introduction of the plough in brigalow country.

I was pleased to hear the Minister for Lands say last night, in the debate on the Brigalow and Other Lands Development Acts Amendment Bill, that consideration is being given, at both Commonwealth and departmental level, to allowing settlers on these brigalow blocks to use portion of the money provided for the purchase of machinery. Whilst at Cannon Hill this morning I was privileged and pleased to meet a number of people who have been associated with land development and fattening of cattle, and to hear the great tributes they paid to the Nicklin Government. On quite a number of occasions they pointed out that the life of this Government has more or less coincided with the really bad drought years that we have experienced over the past 10 years. From the point of view of land administration, land men are beginning to refer to the era under review as the "Fletcher era". It is pleasing to hear men, who on their own admission had previously been fairly critical of the Minister and his department, admit that their thinking has changed; that, whilst they did not go along with his policy in the early days, they now agree that it is right.

Mr. Duggan: Have they changed, or is it the Minister's policy that has changed?

Mr. SULLIVAN: No; the Minister's policy has been proved to be right. He was referred to as a small farmer but I believe his policies have indicated to graziers that to survive and to make the best use of their land, it is necessary for them to become farmers. As I said earlier, some of them had to be forced into it, but I believe that greater use of our land is being made today, as a result of the Minister's policy, than was the case when he took office.

I join with other members in congratulating the Minister on the job he has done for Queensland and I pay tribute to his

officers, Mr. Muir, and others, who came in for much criticism but were big enough to take it. As the Minister said, for every wrong thing he has done he can claim credit for 50 right things. That is fair enough. We all make mistakes. Being human beings, none of us is beyond that. I join with other hon. members in congratulating the Minister on having a very excellent group of departmental officers—men like Mr. McDowell, Mr. Cook, Mr. Hefferman, and Mr. Sallows who has now retired but should not be forgotten. Another man who has been most helpful to me since I have been in Parliament is Mr. Paul O'Gorman. He is a most courteous officer who will always have the answer when a member wants to find out something. They are all men with a great future in the Department of Lands. I express my appreciation to them for what they have done for me.

I did not take part in the debate on the Brigalow and Other Lands Development Acts Amendment Bill because time was running out. During that debate lots of things were said with which I do not agree and many things were said with which I do agree. This morning the hon. member for Port Curtis made some comments that were fair enough, but others were far from being on the mark. I think we can make excuses for him; possibly his vision was obscured by all the brigalow scrub pulled in the Chamber yesterday. If some of the settlers in the Moura No. I and No. II Areas had been here to listen to the debate I think they would have gone home with the feeling that there was no more brigalow scrub to be pulled.

I believe that our policy is right. I cannot agree, as I said by interjection when the hon. member for Clayfield was speaking yesterday—

Mr. Houston: He would be a better farmer than you would be.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I respect many of his views. He has had practical experience. I could not get the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha to come in on some of my interjections. I do not think anybody could ever say that any of my interjections have been malicious. A little bit of that type of cross-discussion can often develop a point. For the life of me I cannot go along with the thinking of some hon. members that what we are doing with development on the "owner-driver" system, to borrow the Minister's term, is wrong.

Mr. O'Donnell: Did you hear what he said today?

Mr. SULLIVAN: Yes, I heard what he said today. As I said yesterday to the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha, by way of interjection, he must believe that under the "owner-driver" system every man who has drawn a ballot is destined to fail. I cannot go along with that. I am sure those people

who have drawn blocks will not go along with it, either. I did speak of the taxation benefits.

Mr. Lickiss interjected.

Mr. SULLIVAN: The hon. member did mention on several occasions yesterday that he believed that it would take \$200,000 to develop one of those blocks. If I had one of those blocks and he said it was going to cost \$200,000 to develop it, I would not have him managing my place. I have had some experience of this type of thing. I believe that people who successfully ballot for blocks do not value their time as highly as does the person in the city. I think they will develop their blocks for far less than that. As they go along and develop the land, what they earn from production will go a long way towards financing the development.

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: I would like the change out of \$200,000.

Mr. SULLIVAN: Here is Mr. Hewitt, who has lived his whole life in that area—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Hodges) Order! The hon. member for Mackenzie.

Mr. SULLIVAN: The hon. member for Mackenzie says that he would like the change out of \$200,000. Whom are we to believe; the man with the practical experience or the theorist? I would take the man with practical experience every time.

Mr. Hanson interjected.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I point out that I made excuses for the hon. member during his absence from the Chamber. I mentioned that possibly his vision was obscured by all the brigalow timber stacked in the Chamber yesterday afternoon.

I do not agree with the three-year period provided for the eradication of all brigalow; it is too short. Yesterday, when having a short discussion with the hon. member for Clayfield, I expressed concern about the tax benefits lost by a man going onto a pre-developed property. I always admit it when I am wrong. I have since discussed this matter with Mr. Muir and he assures me that it has been thoroughly investigated by State and Commonwealth officers, and that they are convinced that the benefits a lessee will receive by going onto a partially developed block (on which he can get into production quickly) will offset any loss of taxation benefits. I am therefore prepared to agree with Mr. Muir.

We know that in 1946, in the days of the soldier settlement schemes, soldier settlers were put onto blocks of land—in my area and other areas—and were paid a wage for 12 months or two years until they were able to get the blocks into production. It is only natural that a lessee will get into production

much quicker, and will gain benefits sooner, on a pre-developed block than he would on an undeveloped block. I have sufficient faith in our departmental officers to believe that that is so.

As I said at the outset of my speech, drought conditions over the last 10 years have more or less corresponded with this Government's life. I am sure that landholders appreciate what the Government has done to help them. I do not say that Labour Governments did nothing to assist the man on the land, but I am sure that hon. members opposite will agree that never before has the man on the land had such a prolonged, continuous, tough period as the last decade. The Government has been called upon to provide a great deal of money to assist landholders, and to assist local authorities to provide work for people normally engaged in rural industry so that they would remain in the locality. I commend the Government's actions.

One of the most helpful forms of assistance in drought areas is the extension of leases by up to three years and the remission of rentals. I suggest to the Minister that he consider the man who is freeholding and is in a similar position as a result of drought. If leases can be extended, relief could be given to a freeholder by waiving his freeholding commitments for one year, two years, or three years, to put him in a comparable position with the man given a remission of rent or an extension of lease. When a man's resources are completely exhausted in trying to keep his stock alive, and feed his wife and children, it is impossible for him to meet his freeholding commitments. I hope my suggestion will be considered. Perhaps the Minister can enlighten us in this regard.

Mr. O'Donnell: We could talk to the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. SULLIVAN: Fair enough. Let us talk to the Commonwealth Government. We have seen a great transformation in the use of land in many areas in Queensland. I refer in particular to the marginal lands which were previously used for grazing. Drought conditions forced some graziers into becoming farmers. It was pleasing last year to see that so many of these people in the area from Goondiwindi north were able to take advantage of the excellent winter rain and grow good wheat and barley crops, and in that way retrieve some of their losses.

I believe that people in this area must approach the practice of extensive cultivation with some caution. I commend the general president of the Grain Growers' Association, Mr. Les Price, for his advice to graziers in this area last year when he opened the Tara Show. He pointed out that as mixed farmers and graziers it was essential for them to retain a considerable area of grassland. As a mixed farmer on a small area of land running a considerable number of stock, I know how essential it is not to plough all the land and have no grassland.

If weather conditions turn against a person who does that, he has nothing whatever. In the brigalow country, if there appears to be not a good deal of fodder, it is marvellous how well stock will do on a little supplementary feeding with hay or grain. I commend Mr. Price for having given that advice to these farmers in what is not secure grain-growing country. Unfortunately it is not a safe-rainfall area. This was proved this year when no rain fell at the crucial period to finish off the wheat crop that many farmers had.

Mr. O'Donnell: That is a gamble, anyway.

Mr. SULLIVAN: It is. If I had a block of land in that country I would develop it as mixed farming and grazing, and if I got the rain to grow a crash crop of grain, so much the better. The economics of supplementary feeding through cultivation must be watched. Only the other day I met a man from Thallon who told me that last year, because he introduced the plough and cultivated to feed his 4,500 sheep, his wool clip increased by 40 bales. That shows the benefits to be derived from farming this country.

Mr. Bennett: He was disappointed with the price.

Mr. SULLIVAN: Maybe so. I do not think we should gloat over that. I am very sympathetic towards the wool-growers. Where I live the areas are pretty well defined and established. As members of the Government we must be concerned with the fellows who have this problem. The hon. member for Gregory suggested the measure I mentioned a while ago about extending the freeholding terms as a drought measure. In some parts of Queensland the pastures in the wool-growing areas have deteriorated. I know that this concerns and exercises the mind of the Minister for Lands. He has said so on many occasions. I believe that the wool-grower is gradually diversifying his efforts. Because wool prices are depressed, he is turning to cattle, and I believe that a mixture of sheep and cattle is a good economic measure for a grazier. It is most essential in flush seasons to have stock to knock down and break up the growth of grass. In some of the closer areas, such as round Charleville and Cunnamulla, I believe that, as a result of deflated wool prices and deteriorated pastures, it will be necessary, as leases expire, to consider giving graziers additional areas.

Mr. O'Donnell: I'm glad that you appreciate the flexibility of leasehold tenure.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I appreciate most things that are good. I ask the Minister to consider my suggestions. We cannot take into account merely our own electorates, where perhaps some of us are more favoured than others; we have to consider the problems encountered throughout the length and breadth of the State.

I believe that occupiers of the land in Queensland today are becoming very conscious of their responsibility to conserve the soil. Although there is a Minister for Conservation, this matter is tied up with the work of the Department of Lands, and it is pleasing to see that farmers, particularly in the older areas, are becoming conscious of the need to ensure that the land of which they have had use is passed on to the next generation in a condition at least equal to, if not better than, the condition in which they received it.

Mr. O'Donnell: The Department of Primary Industries has a good programme for soil conservation.

Mr. SULLIVAN: That is so. It is doing an excellent job, and I know that it has the co-operation of the Department of Lands. This is most apparent in areas such as Kingaroy, and I have discussed this subject with the Minister for Works and Housing, who represents that district. Farmers and graziers are now aware of the deterioration that follows continuous farming, and are conscious of the need to introduce fertilisers and trace elements to their soil. That is a very excellent thing.

In the couple of minutes remaining to me, I again state, as I mentioned earlier, that the present period will go down in history as the "Fletcher era". There has been unprecedented land development in the State. I think that freeholding has much to commend it, and is bringing about development. When a comparison is made between the present brigalow land development scheme and the operations, in virtually the same area, of the Queensland-British Food Corporation, in which nobody seemed to care what happened, I believe that the Government can hold its head high.

Mr. Hanson: You are talking nonsense. A good profit was made out of the Queensland-British Food Corporation.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I do not know who made it. No doubt many people made a profit.

(Time expired.)

Hon. A. R. FLETCHER (Cunningham—Minister for Lands) (5.10 p.m.): I do not think that the Queensland-British Food Corporation was, as has been suggested, a great success.

Generally speaking, I think it will be conceded that the debate has been interesting and instructive, and I think the contributions made have been meant to be helpful. Not as many hon. members spoke on these Estimates as I expected. Possibly this was because yesterday hon. members debated the Brigalow and Other Lands Development Acts Amendment Bill and felt that they need not contribute to the debate on these Estimates.

I should like to thank the hon. member for Barcoo, who led the Opposition in this debate, for the compliments he paid to

Mr. Muir and myself. I join him in complimenting Mr. Muir for the fine job he has done. I express thanks, too, to other hon. members who complimented him. I feel that compliments were called for because Mr. Muir has devoted almost his whole working life to a job that has not always been easy. I know how difficult his job has been at times.

At least the hon. member for Barcoo is consistent, for he stayed true to form on freeholding. With his comments on freeholding, we agree to disagree. The provision of leasehold tenure is nowadays no inducement to men to go on the land. In the past it may have been, but times have changed, and the security required by prospective landowners to obtain loans from banks for the taking up of freehold tenure is much greater than the security implied by leasehold tenure. One of my colleagues on the Government side has delved into this matter a great deal, and has found that in these days a landowner is required to spend a large sum of money on intensive development and must have security of tenure to get the necessary money.

Mr. O'Donnell: The Americans were not afraid of leasehold tenure in the Gulf country and the Northern Territory. They accepted it, and were prepared to spend money.

Mr. FLETCHER: Of course they were, because we gave them conditions that made the development of the Gulf country worth while. However, the matter does not stop there; there are never-ending attempts by the Americans to break down this leasehold policy because they realise how much better it would be if they could get freehold title to that area.

Mr. O'Donnell: They are still prepared to accept leasehold.

Mr. FLETCHER: They are, because it is demonstrably in their interests to do so. They have come to the conclusion that it is a worth-while proposition.

A Government Member: When the hon. member for Barcoo wears his other hat he does not disagree with freehold.

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not think so. He did evince some uneasiness about some of our special leases, and he cited the case of King Ranch. I am not sure whether he cited other cases. I reiterate my feeling about King Ranch—and I need not do so because I have told the hon. member before how I feel about this. King Ranch has developed into a very large, beautiful and valuable property, but when the Government was engaged in negotiations for its sale it was land for which no use could be found. We sold this land as an experiment, and the lessons learned have been of infinite value to us. In this "risk" proposition we had to use our judgment as to what was the best thing to

do, and we decided that after the company had expended \$60 to \$80 an acre it should be granted freehold tenure. We granted that, and I am not ashamed of it. We got our money's worth out of it.

Mr. O'Donnell: Why didn't Australians evince some interest in it?

Mr. FLETCHER: A couple of companies comprising Australian interests did evince some interest, but they turned it down because they did not think it was a paying proposition. They thought the risk was too great.

Mr. O'Donnell: What about the comments made by the hon. member for Clayfield? He said the brigalow land should be developed with private capital.

Mr. FLETCHER: We are not talking about that. I certainly do not agree with him, and I said so. The hon. member does not have to ask me that. The facts of some of the others—A.P.M., for instance—are that we have entered into fairly well-criticised schemes of special lease with power to apply for freeholding for certain parts of it once A.P.M. have it developed and planted with trees. They have done this. The value struck was \$10 an acre, which, in the light of present-day values, looks a bit low, just as the northern development does; but that is being wise after the event. It is trying to establish, on present-day standards, a set of values for the State some years ago. The position has changed. What we did at the time was done in good faith. I have no apologies to make for it. I think in both propositions we did the right thing, taking into account all we knew of it at the time.

The hon. member for Carnarvon, who is a practical man, was keen to come in and thank my department and me for making other arrangements on the survey costs in some of the areas that were worrying him. There was considerable merit in that; it took a lot of working out with the Titles Office and the Surveys Branch and those who finally had to make some arrangements to meet our practical problems. I think the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha is still worried about that, but our experts have decided it is a reasonable thing and meets our circumstances.

The hon. member for Carnarvon, of all men in this Chamber, is probably possessed of absolutely first-hand knowledge of the evils that accrue from aggregation—both pro and con—and he has, as I said, practical knowledge of what happens if there is no bar to aggregation of freehold land, because it is occurring in his area. That is a very good example of what can occur. It perhaps might not occur in many cases, but it can. There is nothing to stop it unless we have some sort of a bar to aggregation.

The hon. member is also apparently worried, not about ticks in this case, but about blowflies. His blowflies are using the

same tactics against the insecticides we use now as the ticks in the Biarra area are using, and becoming immune. This is a serious matter. Discussion is still going on as to whether there is a real danger of insects developing resistance to insecticides. It could be a very expensive matter for us down through the years, because insecticides of one kind or another are very important to us in primary industries.

I thank the hon. member for Tablelands for his tribute to Mr. Sallows, whom I had left out of my own recognition of my officers. This was quite a kindly thing for him to do, because Mr. Sallows was a loyal man and of infinite help to me down through the years, and, I am sure, a very friendly and helpful sort of chap to all hon. members.

The hon. member catechised me a little about brigalow regrowth, but I think I can reassure him, if he has not already been reassured by other practical men in this Chamber, that we are getting on top of the brigalow. We know it is a big problem but, as practical men, I think we can overcome it. There is nothing that men on the land cannot cope with if given the chance. In the long run they generally come up with a solution to every problem that is raised. I can assure him that the economics are not just guesswork. This was done on a considered basis. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics was very helpful, as were our own economists. We did not rush in and hope it would be good. That the economics of the scheme were sound was at least supported, in our view.

The hon. member apparently approves of what is being done by the American people in the North. I am glad to hear that. I should be very surprised if I found that was not so, because he is a practical man and he lives closer to the area than most of us. He would have a pretty good idea of what is going on. He is keen about reserves in the native areas. So am I. This is something I hope he will continue to support and bring to my notice and the notice of all other people concerned, especially the Minister for Conservation, because now is the time to do things up there. I have been up there and had a look around myself. There are some beautiful, unspoiled parts of Queensland in the native reservations on the western side of the peninsula. That area contains some beautiful bird-life and fresh-water lagoons, with aggregations of various types of water-birds in the estuaries. It is something that we will lose when we get a big population up there if nothing is done beforehand to preserve it. The area could become of enormous value to naturalists and others interested in nature. Indeed, it could be of enormous importance to us as a lure to tourists from all over the world who are looking for an unspoiled part of the world. As hon. members know, there are not very many unspoiled parts of the world left.

At Karumba we are experiencing an upsurge in development because of the prawn-fishing. I can assure the hon. member that what he suggested is in hand. At this very moment a commissioner is making a report on the availability of land, and the Department of Harbours and Marine is co-operating with my department in respect of a good many applications for land in that area.

The Rural Fires Board, to which he alluded, is doing good work in many places. I know how fires spread up the slopes in the area in Cairns that he spoke of. What happens is very obvious to those who know the area. The grass grows very high and a fierce fire quickly spreads up the hills into the remaining stands of native timber. Fires are having a very damaging effect there. The rangers are doing as much as they can in trying to educate people who hitherto—some of them have been Government employees—have not been as careful as they should be.

The hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha suggested that timber on freehold property should remain the property of the Crown. I explained this to him years ago. It was considered that this was an awkward thing to do. For timber on freehold land to remain the property of the Crown is out of character. The right of the Crown to go onto freehold land to inspect timber is out of character with the normal sense of freehold tenure. It is out of character with freehold tenure for the owners of land to have to apply to the Crown for permission to destroy or use any trees on it. I think that would be a very backward step. This is not even asked for by very many lessees. Most lessees want to own the timber.

From my experience I think there is a better chance of the timber being developed if it is the property of the owner rather than the property of the Crown. After all, if it is going to be the owner's timber when it grows, it is more likely to have a chance of growing. I have had personal experience of Crown lessees unashamedly telling me that they think a fire will get away in a certain area because the cypress pine, or whatever it may be, is getting too thick. They say that with a grin on their face, knowing I can do nothing about it. That is the attitude they adopt when it is someone else's timber. If it is the property of the owner of the land I think the result is far better timber husbandry. Indeed, in many cases this is already happening.

Mr. Lickiss: You said you would not institute a restricted title. I was merely pointing out that the United Graziers' Association recommended this, and the Hardie Committee accepted the recommendation.

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not mind what the hon. member said. I am repeating what I said. This is a restriction that I think is an unwarranted and awkward one, and not a good one.

The hon. member then made an unbridled suggestion that the limitation of aggregation would bring the grazing industry to its knees. I do not think we can take that statement seriously. The hon. member is obviously completely out of his depth in this matter. He knows that the idea of the \$70,000 aggregation restriction was to prevent undue aggregation. He should know that it refers only to the transfer of land and that it does not affect anybody who owns land. It does not matter how the land increases in value. That has no effect. Even if the owner dies and leaves it to his son or someone else, it has no effect. It is affected only when there is a transfer of land from one man to another. When the transfer leads to an aggregation above the \$70,000 gross limit, the provision takes effect. The idea that it will have any effect whatever on a grazier is farcical. Indeed, it has always been recognised that this is only an attempt to get some sort of a value to give us a yardstick that is pretty reliable.

Anyone who talks of acres as being reliable does not know what he is talking about, because acres mean nothing; sometimes they are more valuable than the same number of square miles in another place. Any attempt to impose an acreage limitation would be silly. This is an attempt to get some sort of a reasonable yardstick in the system, and to recognise productive values in dollars—or pounds as they used to be—so that we may prevent an undue aggregation of land. I know the hon. member does not think there is anything to worry about, but I do, and as long as I as the Minister, and those who support me as the Government, think that aggregation has to be stopped if possible, this will be our practical way of doing it.

Mr. Lickiss: Will you answer one question? Is it a fact that your department is freeholding living areas for which, in some instances, the freeholding value exceeds \$70,000?

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not think that would be so. I will have to check it, but it will not matter anyway.

Mr. Lickiss: There is no aggregation of a living area.

Mr. FLETCHER: That does not affect my point of view in the least. I am not sure that that is true, and it probably is not. If it is true, it does not affect my feeling at all. If there is a need to change the \$70,000 standard we will do so.

The hon. member for Salisbury accused me of having soothed him with my bedside manner. I did not realise that I was doing that. It certainly did not seem to soothe him very much because he started to throw hormones and weedicides across the Chamber in a way that showed—

Mr. Sherrington: I just wanted to let you know that I would not be fooled by you.

Mr. FLETCHER: I am sorry; I misunderstood the hon. member.

I think the suggestion was that we had done too much, too soon, in developing the Sunshine Coast. The hon. member for Fassifern covered this subject very adequately. I think that what we have done has been very good. We have often been reproached by those on the opposite side for not opening up enough land and in this way artificially forcing up land prices by more or less starving the market. Nobody can say that we have starved the market on this occasion.

Mr. Sherrington: My complaint is that there is no demand for the land.

Mr. FLETCHER: This development has not cost us a cent, and we are getting rent and other payments.

Mr. Sherrington: It will eventually cost the purchaser twice as much as it should.

Mr. FLETCHER: The hon. member will not be able to prove that.

Mr. Sherrington: You can see the trees growing through the bitumen; the place is completely overgrown.

Mr. FLETCHER: I suggest that is not right. If the trees grow through the bitumen it has just about "had" it, but I have never seen any.

Mr. Sherrington: They are growing through it now.

Mr. FLETCHER: This, I will have to see. I will immediately send up an investigating officer if the hon. member lets me know where it is happening. In any case, we have not lost any money on this development and we have a great deal of beautiful development; there is a lovely drive right through it—and it did not cost the Crown a "bob". I do not believe the hon. member can castigate anyone over this development.

Mr. Sherrington: The whole area is overgrown with weeds and regrowth.

Mr. FLETCHER: Not a bit of it; it is a lovely place. I am quite sure it is a lovely place; it looked beautiful when I saw it recently.

The hon. member seems unduly worried about our endangering the rain forests in our efforts to kill lantana. We have not even gone close to killing it yet, and will need to go a lot closer before we will do an effective job and damp down its damaging effects. We are so far from removing the cover that would be valuable to the edges of the rain forests that the hon. member does not need to worry. We are worried because we have not gone as far as we would like in the destruction of lantana. We would like to go further and we certainly do not think we are in danger of causing any damage. The forestry officers and the department are not worried about this. We keep in constant

touch with them in case by accident or inadvertence we could cause some damage. I admire the hon. member for keeping this sort of thing in mind. I assure him that I would not willingly damage our rain forests.

I assure the hon. member that *Harrisia cactus* is still a grave problem. We hope we are getting on top of it but, as the hon. member for Fassifern said, it is still with us. I have had a look at it. I admit that I need to take more interest in it than I have. It is not that I am lazy or inattentive, but I have not done as much as I think I should have in constantly visiting the area.

Mr. Sherrington: You would agree that creeping *lantana* presents a greater problem?

Mr. FLETCHER: Of course.

I could not agree more with the hon. member on reserves. We gazetted 63,500 acres of brigalow the other day near the Carnarvons, and I hope to get some more in various other areas, including Area III of the brigalow lands and Cape York.

Mr. Sherrington: I referred to scientific study areas as distinct from reserves.

Mr. FLETCHER: They need not be distinct. They can be scientific study areas as well as reserves. They almost have to be both.

I was relieved to hear the hon. member for Townsville South approve of King Ranch and the Cape York development. He did say that we had not really proved any of our claims that there had been increased development in brigalow. I cannot quote chapter and verse and say exactly how much has come off it up till now, but I know that there are already 57,000 head of cattle on the 59 blocks that we have opened, and this completely disregards the retention blocks, which in many cases are bigger and better than those we have opened. If that is not evidence of a tremendous increase in the value of production, I will eat my hat. If the hon. member wishes to go up there I shall arrange his itinerary and try to get him transport, because obviously he is a pretty intelligent chap and once he had been there I do not think he would ask any more questions about the value of brigalow.

Mr. O'Donnell: Do you think he is too old to learn?

Mr. FLETCHER: No. I do not think anyone is too old to learn.

The hon. member for Tablelands was worried that the man with small capital could not get onto blocks in the brigalow or anywhere else. This is a worry I share with him. Sadly, I have to tell the Committee that anybody with small means will not be shown any kindness if he is encouraged to go onto the land in this day and age. It just cannot be done. It would be

the passport to financial ruin. We will help the battler, and we do. That is what the brigalow scheme is doing. It was evolved to help finance the man who normally could never get onto a block of his own. We have done that, and it has been a good thing. But we cannot do it for every battler. There is no way of making a living on the land with an axe and a hoe nowadays.

I have already said that the position at Karumba is being watched and taken care of.

The hon. member for Gregory has always been a supporter of freehold tenure, and on many occasions I have had to thank him for his support of our actions in this matter. He said, "We are on the march". That is a good phrase, because it is true. Much has been done since freeholding was started and those who have taken advantage of it have done a lot that is good for Queensland. New settlement has gone ahead with renewed vigour and punch, in spite of the fact that drought conditions have prevailed for virtually the whole time in which the Government has been in office. It is a matter of pride that we have been able to do as much as we have in an era that has been almost unrelieved drought.

I know that transport charges are stiff, but the Government has a very realistic idea of what it means to live in the West. It is rather worrying, especially with declining wool prices, for graziers and all those who live in western areas. When the price of wool decreases, everyone feels the pinch. So does everyone in towns such as Longreach and Winton, which depend on wool for their well-being. All I can tell the hon. member is that the Government is doing sympathetically all it can, and it will value his continued approaches and advice on developments in his area.

The hon. member for Windsor dealt very largely with valuations and his thoughts on the Hardie Report, to which he gave almost complete support. I support much of it, and many other hon. members have similar feelings, but there is some difference of opinion on Mr. Justice Hardie's attitude to valuations made by the Department of Lands and the Valuer-General's Department. I suppose that difficulty will be worked out of our systems when we discuss the matter further.

My friend the hon. member for Mackenzie is always worth listening to, especially as discussions on land matters now always seem to get back to the brigalow lands. It may have escaped the attention of some hon. members that quite a lot of reorganisation was necessary in the area of the hon. member because blocks allocated to settlers were too small. The reorganisation has reached an advanced stage, and I have received very few complaints for some years. I do not think the hon. member has much to complain of, either, in an area that used to be a trouble spot.

The hon. member warned of the necessity for care in the Isaacs and Mackenzie Rivers areas. I know that is a very difficult place. Those who have not been there do not realise how dangerous and difficult it can be. They are rivers that have "runners" which cut across some of the bends and isolate and drown cattle if a person is unwise enough to have them in such an area in the flood season. This is a risk area, and much care will have to be taken in the designing of blocks there. In some parts they will have to be fairly large because there are risk areas that cannot be stocked at certain times of the year.

I should now like to refer to the sum of \$200,000 stated to be necessary to develop a brigalow block. I state quite distinctly what I tried to say yesterday: when I am asked about this, as I am quite often, I generally say that, in my opinion, when these blocks are fully developed they will be worth \$200,000 each. I honestly believe that. I do not say that \$200,000 is needed to develop a block, because the sort of development I envisage would in fact need very much less than that.

All I can promise people who go onto brigalow blocks is the need to shed a lot of blood, sweat and tears, the need to do a lot of hard work and suffer a lot of deprivations in the early years. But I promise them, too, that when they have done all that and expended possibly \$40,000, \$50,000 or \$60,000, they will have blocks worth \$200,000. I emphasise that this large amount of money is not required to take up a brigalow block. Such an idea is ridiculous. That will be the value of the block after the owner has developed it.

Perhaps something can be done with financial assistance from some Government agency in providing storage silos for grain and fodder in the West, but I think that many problems will arise.

One hon. member opposite reminded us about something that happened on Croydon station, in the brigalow area. This is in an area in which we are making small blocks available to leaseholders. I do not know how much land the Labour Government gave back in one lease, but that fact rather destroys some of the arguments raised by hon. members opposite when they said that a lot of helpful things were done in the earlier years.

I thank the hon. member for Port Curtis for the tribute he paid to the Country Party, but I deplore the fact that apparently he has been brainwashed by what he called the "ginger group". He was being very obsequious and complimentary, and, I suppose, quite honestly trying to do a good job. Apparently the hon. members to whom he referred have done a good job on him. He tried to make the point—badly, I thought—that people were debarred from going on the land in the years when land was held under freehold tenure. I

remind him that times have changed. Whilst some of the things he said may have been true years ago, they could not possibly be true nowadays, for the reasons I have canvassed. The idea of going onto some of these blocks with one-fifth of the rent, or one-fifth of the survey fee and the first year's rent, is ludicrous. A person going onto a block under those terms would not even get off the ground.

Mr. Hanson: I suggested that we did something.

Mr. FLETCHER: The hon. member cited that as one of the things that should be done.

Mr. Hanson: We are frequently told that we did nothing.

Mr. FLETCHER: It is a very good idea that he will not have to do it again. If he had the choice of going onto one of my living areas or one of his, I feel sure that he would choose mine. If he did not, he would certainly lose weight.

I remind the hon. member for Port Curtis that we have made strenuous efforts to control noxious weeds. However, Tordon is a product to which we do not have access. It is manufactured by only one company, and the Department of Lands could not buy it any cheaper than could the hon. member for Port Curtis.

Mr. Hanson: Nevertheless, the company approached the Government and got a valuable concession at the mouth of the Brisbane River.

Mr. FLETCHER: That does not concern me in the least. It is no use saying that this company is making huge profits out of Tordon, because that factor is just not known. The company might be manufacturing it at a bare marginal profit; on the other hand, it might be making a lot of money.

Mr. Hanson: They are robbing the graziers.

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not think it is quite fair to say the company is robbing the graziers, because the expenditure of a lot of money is required in the development of a chemical like Tordon, and it is only reasonable that the company should make a profit. It is a good thing that somebody is willing to spend money on the development of a new chemical such as that. I do not know who else would be prepared to do it without the chance of making a profit.

The hon. member for Logan, who was once employed in the Department of Lands, and who is still respected in the department, said he does not believe that valuing is a science. I think there is some merit in that. I know something about valuers. When I was a member of a local authority

it asked six valuers to submit valuations, and received six different values. This demonstrates the fact that it is not an exact science. It could be as scientific as most things in that category.

The hon. member expressed his belief in the Land Court. This matter of equity and good conscience that has been bandied about is something that not many people know very much about. Some do. It is, in its essence, a good thing. It could be claimed, I suppose, that sometimes it has impeded justice, but in many cases it has been a tremendous boon to the humble man who is intimidated by ordinary court procedures. If that is what it was designed to do, it has done it, and, if it has done it, it has not been a wholly bad thing. If sometimes there is evidence that it has impeded justice or brought about a wrong decision, there are very many items on the other side of the ledger. However, that is something that we can probably agree to differ about.

The hon. member, by the way, supports me on Crown control of timber on freehold land. He could see my point that this is consistent with our ideas of freeholding.

My old friend and predecessor, the hon. member for Fassifern, gave his typical, down-to-earth, good-sense exposition on what he thought of freeholding. He started this freeholding procedure. I was his most loyal supporter and lieutenant, and I have never been anything else. I know *Harrisia cactus* and noxious weeds were things he had to worry about, and nobody had ever done anything about these things before.

I agree with the hon. member that there are small blocks that could be operated better than large blocks in some areas, and by some men better than others, but I explained my view on that subject yesterday. In all the circumstances we were faced with when we started the brigalow scheme, this is what we decided to do, and I think the decision was pretty good. It will attract men with families to the brigalow lands, and in the course of events those families will inherit the blocks, which by that time will be big enough for two or three families.

The hon. member for South Coast is worried about groundsel. We are doing what we can about this pest. We spend, I think, about \$60,000 a year in eradicating groundsel on Crown lands and roads. I know that is not enough, but much of the groundsel that is growing in the hon. member's area, and in most areas, is not growing on roads under one jurisdiction. It is mostly on roads that the shire council has under its jurisdiction and, generally speaking, I think councils vary a good deal. Some of them take their responsibilities very seriously and clear the groundsel, but there are others, regrettably, that are not so good.

Mr. Carey: I think you are to be complimented on spending \$60,000 on groundsel control.

Mr. FLETCHER: I thank the hon. member.

The hon. member for South Coast dealt also with the matter of putting 400 or 500 cattle in partly developed areas and said that this will cost a lot of money. No doubt it will. But it need not be all done at the start. It can be done in a small way at the start and gradually built up.

One of the hon. member's worries is freehold valuations on the South Coast. Indeed, I think the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha mentioned something about this, or referred to a matter that could be thought of in connection with the South Coast. Indeed, everybody is worried about valuations. Perhaps they have been too high, but we have to follow the due processes of law in coping with them and we have gone a fair way towards making it easier for people to pay for the land. It will now be paid for in 20 equal instalments, with no interest. That is not a bad way of paying for anything.

There has been a suggestion that we allow discount for cash, but we have had very few applicants for this concession. There are instances where it could be a good idea. Somebody might want to erect a multi-storey building, for example. If we received sufficient applications we might have to seriously consider amending the Act, but up to now we have had very little interest in it because of the ease of payment. With 20 equal instalments with no interest who would want to pay cash? Nobody does. Also, it could be inclined to flow over into the freeholding of ordinary grazing and farming land. It could be awkward; it could upset our financing generally.

The hon. member spoke about real estate sales in his area. If he wants to have real estate agents handling some of our sales, perhaps in some circumstances that could be done.

The hon. member for Albert referred to the argument going on in the South Coast area about Riverside Coal Transport Pty. Ltd. That is a matter that is just a little bit awkward. Everybody wants decentralisation; everybody wants industry in his area—but nobody wants it near himself. He wants it near somebody else. We are working this one out. It has not been decided where it is to go. We will listen to anybody who is reasonable about this. We hope that everybody will be reasonable. Nobody ever wants to have an industry beside him.

Mr. Carey: You have granted a lease for this?

Mr. FLETCHER: We have granted a lease of land, but the permission to use it for industrial purposes has not been granted yet.

The hon. member for Balonne referred to the problems of the grazing industry and spoke about some of those things that we should all know and think about. We know

that the difficulties of the grazier in the West have been intensified enormously by the drought. We know that some of them have fed sheep to the stage where they have eaten more feed than the sheep are worth. We know that sometimes these unfortunate men have lost their sheep. We know also that the Farmers' Assistance (Debts Adjustment) Act has not been of much use up to date. So far there have been about 10 or 12 applications, and they are still in the process of being examined. Some of them have been on my desk. I have tried to do something for them by way of interviews with bank managers and men in finance houses, but not with a great deal of success up till now. Some of them are apparently in dire straits, but the finance houses are very loath to "come to the party". I can only hope that that Act will be of greater help in the future than it has been up to now.

The hon. member for Toowoomba East was worried about Redwood Park and Jubilee Park. All I can say is: would he please come to me and tell me what he knows about this. I do not think the area is big enough for a national park. I do not think there is the slightest chance of those parks becoming industrial or residential areas. I believe they should be left under the control of the Toowoomba City Council. They are too small and too far from here to make them national parks, and the Toowoomba City Council is obviously the authority that should be doing something about this area.

The hon. member for Burnett pointed out some of the things that I have been saying—that this is the day when we must go ahead and do things, spend money and get development. We must have quicker development. He spoke of the wallum country, but there is not too much wallum country left—not in our hands. A lot of the wallum country has been alienated. It can be purchased from a lessee or an owner, but we have not very much of it left. We are dealing with it pretty quickly and there is not much of it left for us to get rid of.

The hon. member for Belmont can be assured that we are doing what we can in the Lytton-Hemmant-Colmslie area, in conjunction with the Department of Harbours and Marine, which is under the control of the Treasurer, and the Department of Industrial Development. We are keeping the possibility of containerisation to the fore. My friend the hon. member for Wavell had quite a deal to do with this as Minister for Industrial Development. We are doing what we can to bring this to a proper, organised conclusion, in the interests of the development of this State and this city.

The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt said that we depend a great deal on the land. Of course we do.

Mr. O'Donnell: It is about time he and his colleagues conceded that. They are always trying to prove that secondary production is outpacing primary production.

Mr. FLETCHER: Yes.

The hon. member said we were selling only a few blocks in the brigalow area and that the price was too high. That statement does not stand up to investigation. Previously, no land was available in the area. The hunger for land is always with us. By putting six, eight or 10 blocks on the market, we do not decrease the hunger. We are doing it as fast as we can.

His idea of big areas of mass production may be all right for some people; but I do not think we can agree with this idea, because a great deal of advantage is gained through "owner-driver" occupancy. We can sell our soul by going in for mass production and monopoly development of land at the expense of the ordinary man in the street—men like many of us here who own our own blocks. There is no room for everybody, because we have only one lot of land, and if we give our land away to corporations we have nothing left to work with.

The hon. member for Clayfield again referred to some of the things that he said were mistakes. I cannot take him seriously. He said that we should not do this ourselves; that we should leave it to private enterprise. I doubt very much that there are tremendous sums of private money about. In any case, why can't the private money go into the rest of Queensland? We are saving our private resources by bringing \$27,000,000 of the Commonwealth Government's resources into Queensland, and saving that much money for the development of the rest of Queensland. The rest of Queensland is available if they want to use it.

The hon. member then had the funny idea that less than 1 per cent. of freeholding has been achieved since we started this process. We can make figures lie like Ananias. On this idea of the 1 per cent. increase in freehold, I point out that when we started freeholding about 27,000,000 acres were held under freehold. I think that figure has since increased by 9,000,000 or 10,000,000 acres. If the 1 per cent. is calculated by including the Simpson Desert to get the lower percentage, I do not think that is a fair and honest approach to the matter.

An Honourable Member: Throw in the Northern Territory.

Mr. FLETCHER: It is a wonder the hon. member did not throw in the Northern Territory.

The hon. member spoke about the maudlin, emotional nonsense which he said we were talking. I think I know who is talking the maudlin nonsense.

I have noted the points raised by the hon. member for Albert concerning Stradbroke Island. I think we should approach this

area very carefully, and that it should remain Crown land. We should use it, with great circumspection, either for park land or industrial land, as the case may be.

The hon. member for Condamine supported me very well indeed, and I welcome his remarks because he is a man of the land, which I know so well. If I said some of the things I could say about what he said, I should merely be indulging in repetition.

I think I have given a fair coverage to the remarks made by those hon. members who tried to help me in the debate. As the custodian of this Government's ideas on land development, I can only express the opinion that we have gone a long way in the time I have been Minister. It gives me a great deal of satisfaction to stand at this time and look back on the record of achievement in my department during my time as Minister.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Hodges): Order! By agreement, under the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 12 October, I shall now put the questions for the Vote under consideration and the balance remaining unvoted for the Department of Lands.

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

Department of Lands—	\$
Chief Office	1,820,112
Balance of Department, Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds and Loan Fund Account	9,255,522

Progress reported.

PAPER

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Proposal by the Governor in Council to revoke the setting apart and declaration as:—

1. A State Forest of:—

(a) The whole of State Forest 137, parish of Burncluith containing an area of about 640 acres—and,

(b) So much of State Forest 756, parishes of Alcock, Bankton, Dirran, Ismailia, Jordan, Kirrama, Meunga, Ongera, Palmerston and Ramleh, as is comprised in all that piece or part thereof described as portion 31, parish of Alcock, as shown on plan Cwl. 1779 deposited in the Survey Office and containing an area of about 1 acre—and,

2. A National Park of so much of National Park 30, parish of Moss, as is comprised in all that piece or part thereof described as portion 3, parish of Moss, as shown on plan FTY 122 deposited in the Survey Office and containing an area of about 850 acres—

Under the Forestry Acts, 1959 to 1964.

The House adjourned at 6.3 p.m.